

FEGLEY TELLS OF MONTHS IN NIGERIA

14 October 1968

Friends,

What a delight it is to write to you of my first two months' experiences in Nigeria: there is so much to tell. On August 9, I arrived at the Ikoja airport in Lagos after a turbulent flight through the heaviest rainy season in memory in West Africa. Bob Taber, the Alma African Fellow I am replacing, met me at the airport and drove me north-erly along the forty-five mile route to Shagamu. Ikenne, and Mayflower School. We changed roles a week later, when I accompanied Bob back to the Ikeja airport to wish him godspeed and to watch him board the Pan American jet to return to America.

So in eight short days, scarcely enough time to adjust to my new environment, I found myself completely uprooted from my comfortable American existence and, as a farmer cultivates new seeds, preparing for new life. After Bob flew home, I spent the next few weeks reading books about teaching English, in preparation for a year of teaching English to Class I students,

or students roughly the same as seventh-grade American students. The principal, Tai Solarin, moved me to a new house in the early weeks. The five teachers who preceded me from Alma all lived in the same rambling house with three other expatriates. This year, however, since two of the expatriates returned to England, and because Tai needed a house for a family, the principal moved me to a smaller house where I am now living alone. I did not move into the house immediately because it was not vacant, so I lived in the principal's house for two weeks, at which time I locked myself into my room for two days and wrote the schedule for classes and teachers for the new term, emerging only to eat and wash. On September 13 classes began.

Teaching is such a new experience to me; I hope it always remains that way. English is the universal language of Nigeria, which means that every educated Nigerian must be bilingual. Therefore I am teaching English as a second language to my students, who are mostly Yorubas. My most limiting

factor is that my students are too young to understand the complex grammatical terminology of the English language concepts such as conjunctive adverbs, participles, gerunds, past tense, subjunctive, etc. so I must become a master of the simple explanation. By necessity, then, my emphasis in teaching lies upon drill work, hoping that, if the students repeat the English sentences correctly and frequently, they will learn the grammar intuitively. I am teaching from a Fine textbook series called the "English 900" series, published by the English Language Services in Washington, D.C. It is a two-year course in which the students study fifteen "basic sentences" each week, or nine hundred in two years, and the six textbooks are graduated in difficulty. So each day I drill my students with sentences like: "Get me a hammer from the kitchen, will you?" or "The restaur-

ant is across the street from the hotel." I have devised various ways for the students to respond; they respond as a class, by rows, in groups of two or three, and singly, and some times I pit one half of the classroom against the other in the conversations and reading selections. It is fun, and I am always eager to break the routine to answer questions about America, Alma College, why I behave so strangely on the Mayflower compound (which I will explain shortly!), and anything else that the students want to discuss. Such informal conversation is all practice in speaking English. I am delighted to have license to sit around and shoot the bull in class!

Discipline in class was a problem for a time. I think Mayflower students have a common compulsion to talk, especially the girls. I was

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STEP PROGRAM REWARDING

Personal satisfaction, experience and friendship - these are just some of the rewards provided by the Student Tutorial Education Program. It is often surprising to learn that disadvantaged children are not found solely in the inner-city. The essential needs of affection, praise, security and attention may be lacking in middle-class as well as impoverished environments. The STEP program, directed by Jeff Kenyon, an Alma College junior, attempts to offset some of these problems by providing individual assistance for such children. The relationships which develop between the tutor and the child have been shown to have a positive effect upon the child's attitude toward both learning and school in general. The 85 students enlisted in the program this fall spend about an hour during the

week aiding their child with reading and math, planning creative projects, investigating problems of particular interest, and just simply serving as an understanding friend. Recalling last year's successful Science Day and annual picnic, Jeff hopes that these events can be continued and expanded. One problem which the program faces this year, though, is the lack of funds. No longer receiving an allowance from the Student Council, the STEP activities are currently being financed by the local Kiwanis Club and individual contributions. Although there are an adequate number of volunteers at present, there is a definite need for students who could provide transportation to some of the outlying schools in the area. There is also a need for anyone interested in volunteering secretarial service.

Meet Dean Rentz

by CATHY GILMORE

Miss Rentz, our new Dean of Women (in the absence of Dean Kinkhead, who has multiple sclerosis), says that she would hope that the student body doesn't stereotype her as the old spinster with graying hair and horned rimmed glasses.

MISS RENTZ

Actually Dean Rentz has two titles. She is also the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs so she is available to the male population of the campus as well as the female. Dean Rentz is on campus Tuesdays through Thursdays but she is not here on Thursday evenings.

Miss Rentz feels that by talking

to small groups of students she will be able to become more personal and familiar with their problems) rather than hold the position of a figure head. She is trying to get away from the idea that a student's problem has to be pretty big in order to bother the Dean of Women with it.

Dean Rentz is originally from New York but she has lived in many other States while attending schools or working. She received her AB degree from the College of Mount St. Vincent in New York where she majored in Mathematics and Philosophy and minored in Education. She obtained her MS degree from Penn State University and is presently working on her PHD at Michigan State University. Dean Rentz was on the Dean of Women's Staff at Penn State and she was Dean of Women at Polytechnic Institute. She has taught at Michigan State and Lansing Community College.

Despite the impressive list of degrees and jobs, Dean Rentz is not graying nor is she in need of horned rimmed glasses.

In Nigeria

too lenient during the first week of classes, so by the second week the disturbance in class became intolerable, causing me to play the discipline game with my students. One day, toward the end of the period in all three of my classes, I simply picked up my books and walked out of the classroom, leaving my students shocked into speechlessness. The next day I gave each class a long lecture imbued with the Horatio Alger ethic, explaining how great men such as Abraham Lincoln and Obafemi Awolowo suffered such privation in order to obtain an education, and finally establishing three rules of classroom behavior:

stay in your seats, don't write homework in class, and don't talk unless recognized. My method of discipline has worked well. I have dealt with this topic for so long because deciding how to discipline my students was not easy. I wanted to avoid the traditional Nigerian discipline in the classroom: beating the students. I also did not wish to write my students' names in the punishment book in each class [a discipline committee checks the punishment books each month and levies an appropriate sentence, usually labor around the compound, for each violator]. I find it better to set a high standard of scholarship and behavior and then to ask the students not to disappoint me.

The daily schedule is quite busy for the students. They rise at 6 a.m. and assemble in the field enclosed by the classroom buildings for morning exercises and running. Breakfast is served between 6:30 and 7:00 a.m. Class monitors check the attendance at 7:15, and classes begin at 7:20, continuing until 1:10 p.m. There are eight classes each day, lasting thirty-five minutes with a five-minute break in-between. From 10:00 to 10:30 a.m. is the "big interval," during which the students and teachers break for refreshment. Lunch is at 1:10 p.m. The rest period fills the next hour, and from 3:00 to 4:00 p.m. is "prep", or a time when students are required to study. At 4:00 p.m. the students participate in physical work around the compound, such as working in the fields to raise crops such as maize, cassava, bananas, oranges, grapefruit, paw paws, rice, yams, and other food that is eaten in the dining hall. Tuesdays and Thursdays at 4:00 p.m. are the times when the Mayflower "societies" meet. Small groups or societies of students work to provide useful services for the school; there is a piggery society, poultry society, jam-making society, doll-making society [the dolls are sold], plumbing society, horticulture society, and others. The students are free at 5:00 p.m., and this is the hour for

athletic competition and practice. Dinner is served around 6 p.m., followed by an outdoor prep — the dining hall serves as the study hall, too, so the students study outdoors on the compound enclosed by the classroom buildings to allow the cooks and stewards to finish cleaning in the dining hall. Prep lasts from 7 to 9 p.m., and the students must go to bed by 9:30 p.m. The students in Class V [the seniors] may study till 10:30 p.m. because they must prepare for the School Certificate Examination, which is equiv-



Bob Taber—last year's African Fellow

alent to the American College Entrance Examination Board tests, although the School Certs carry a great deal more weight.

Nigerian students attend elementary school for six years and secondary school for five years, one year less than do American students, and the educational system is patterned after the English system. Each class is divided into three "streams," or three groups, in which the students are placed according to their ability, creating three streams of advanced, average, and slow students [red, green, and blue streams]. A classroom is assigned to each stream, so the teachers change classrooms every hour, not the students. Each student owns a desk and chair. He locks his desk with a padlock and when he advances to a new grade, he carries his desk and chair to the new classroom. The students sit in order according to the scores they receive on their final examinations. Like most buildings in Nigeria, and perhaps West Africa, the classroom buildings are constructed of mud bricks made from the hard red African dirt; the mud brick walls are plastered with concrete, and the roof is constructed of timbers and iron sheets; large windows barred with thieves bars provide ventilation and lighting; and the buildings are painted white with red borders two feet wide along the ground — red because that is the same color as the mud that the rain splashes onto the walls. Occasionally, when the rain falls very heavily during the monsoon season, a teacher may be forced to halt because of the loud, thundering hissing noise the rain makes on the metal roofs, and students shift their desks to avoid the rain, dripping through the leaky roofs. Some days the heat rises to the nineties, making the students restless and sleepy, and a teacher must work hard to interest his students. When a student's chair breaks [the school carpenters build all the chairs and desks, and the student must keep

his furniture all five years that he studies at Mayflower], he is obliged to have it repaired or to find a new one, and then he might seize the chair of an absent student or even the teacher's chair. For that reason, the students label their chairs and desks with the numbers assigned to them upon entering Mayflower, and the carpenters nail the teacher's desk and chair together with wooden supports in each classroom. While numbering students may seem bureaucratic and impersonal, it is really quite necessary because of a Nigerian

custom of changing names frequently upon whim or for other reasons, and a student might change his name two or three times during his secondary education. Numbering students is the only way to keep track of them! Those are some of the differences between Nigerian and American classroom activity. I should also mention, if it is not already apparent, that Mayflower is a boarding school with about 450 students. Boarding schools are more common than daily schools in Nigeria, even in the elementary schools, so the children leave their homes at an early age, returning home every three months for a month-long vacation.

I mentioned my strange behavior at Mayflower earlier in my letter. My students and other Nigerian friends tell me that I do not act like most white men in Nigeria, who hire servants, throw around their money, and lord it over Nigerians, whom they consider superior. I take

most of my meals in the dining hall with the students in order to meet as many students as possible and also to save money and the trouble of preparing my own meals, or the trouble of hiring a servant, paying him, and tripping over him all day in a small house. Customarily, the teachers sit at a staff table on the stage of the dining hall and ask passing students to get food from the kitchen and serve them. The students consider it their duty to show respect toward the faculty members, and I get the impression that they are happy to wait on the teachers. But I am uncomfortable when a teacher abuses a student caustically because the food was not hot enough or because the student forgot to bring water. I also am uneasy because teachers receive food of higher quality than that of the students. Thus, I serve myself at the cafeteria window, and I take the same food that the students eat. I usually sit at the student tables. I wash my aluminum plate and bowl in the big kettles of hot soapy water in the kitchen, just like the students do. Students do not expect their teachers to act this way, but I'm hoping to melt some of the formal barriers that exist between students and faculty by showing them that I'm not above participating in such menial tasks.

By now I have become fully acclimatized to Nigerian food. When I first began eating Nigerian food, I took only one Nigerian meal a day for a week, and the precaution helped me to avoid a serious case of diarrhea, although I could not help noticing that the great quantities of pepper in Nigerian food burned all the way through my digestive system — from my mouth to my stomach to my anus! Nigerian food contains more starch and less nutrition than American food. Therefore Nigerians must eat greater quantities of food to get the same amount of nutrition that Americans

[cont't on page 3]

Film Series To Show CLEO

The International Film Series presents the French work CLEO FROM 5 to 7 next Sunday evening [January 19] in Dow Auditorium. Screen time is 8 o'clock. Dialogue is in French, sub-titles in English.

Done in 1961, this film concentrates on ninety minutes in the life of Cleo, a glamorous, luxury-loving young woman. These ninety minutes fall between her visit to a fortune-teller and her appointment with her doctor to hear results of some tests which will tell whether or not she has an incurable disease. These circumstances induce her to perceive new realities: every sound and sight has a new meaning. The projection of Cleo's intensified emotions is abetted by the photography of the

film.

European critics have been almost unanimous in proclaiming CLEO a masterpiece. American reviewers, though they have expressed mixed reactions, agree that it is indeed well worth seeing.

The second film in this term's series of five works, CLEO is to be followed by Orwell's 1984 [on Feb. 9], by FORBIDDEN GAMES [on February 23], and by part I of Eisenstein's IVAN THE TERRIBLE [on March 2].

General admission is 75¢ each, with tickets available at the door. Series tickets for the winter and spring terms are also available. Cost is \$2.75 for each term or \$4.75 for both terms.

FLUSH FOR FREEDOM

November 10, 1968

Dear Sirs:

The Students for Violent Non-Action [SVNA] is planning a massive demonstration in protest of the existence of the new administration. On January 20, 1969, as Nixon says the last work of the inaugural oath [" - - - so help me God."], we plan to have every toilet in the country flushed.

We realize of course that we may not be able to reach every toilet, but we hope that, with the cooperation of organizations such as yours, we shall be able to reach a large majority of them. We are attempting to enlist the aid of students at every college and university in the nation as well as anyone else who wishes to join. The protest will require a high degree of organizational effort as we hope to flush the toilets not only of the dorms, apartments, and lecture halls in and around the campuses, but also downtown hotels, restaurants, railroad stations, and high schools, private homes, etc. Posters will be available at cost to aid in advertising from the SVNA.

If you are interested in lending support please write to:

STUDENTS FOR VIOLENT
NON-ACTION

1212 E. 59th Street
Chicago, Illinois 60637

With your help in promoting this project, FLUSH FOR FREEDOM will be a success.

Sincerely,

Frank Malbranche

National Chairman, SVNA

In Nigeria

derive from a small plate of meat and vegetables, so many older Nigerians are quite fat, and perhaps they wear long flowing robes to hide the flab. Already I have gained five pounds. At Mayflower School the diet consists mainly of rice, beans, yams, and cassava. The cooks serve pepper sauces with all these foods, and occasionally there is cocoa or "squash" [juice made from oranges, pineapples, grapefruit, sugar, and water] to drink. Sometimes the cooks fry plantain [a fruit like a banana] with the beans or rice, and there is always a small piece of meat or fish for extra protein, or perhaps a hard-boiled egg, if the hens are laying well.

I should tell you of my duties outside the classroom. I am the faculty advisor of the library society, a society of eight students who assist the librarian, Mr. Rowaiye, in staffing the library during the hours it is open and in cleaning the books, shelves, and floors of the library itself. Since the student librarians must work every day of the week to keep the library open, they are excused from the daily physical work, which comes between 4 and 5 p.m., and instead, they meet at the library to clean it. When I first assumed my position with the library society, very few of the books were classified. Now the task is to divide the books into proper categories, paint labels of green, red, blue, yellow, and orange enamel on the spines of the books, and

FROM MONTEITH LIBRARY . . .

Classical and popular titles in paperback are now available for circulation in Monteith Library. Some are titles not available in hard covers; others are titles not in the permanent collection. The new service is designed to provide the library's users with additional reading matter in convenient form. The collection can be expanded to include multiple copies of currently popular titles.

The paperbacks are uncatalogued in random arrangement on a revolving stand in the lobby of Monteith Library. The circulation period is two weeks, the same as for the main circulating collection. The paperbacks may be checked out at the charging desk.

THE FOLLOWING SCHOOLS and
BUSINESS WILL BE ON CAMPUS
FOR INTERVIEWS -

January 17	Kenosha School District Kenosha, Wisconsin
January 20	Woolworth Company
January 22	Yeo & Yeo
January 23	Cook Paint & Varnish
January 24	AEtna Life & Casualty
January 29	James R. Rugg & Co.
January 30	Goodyear Tire & Rubber

then write the call numbers in black on the labels. Each day I pull about a hundred books from the shelves and determine how they should be classified, and then my students and I paint the labels on the backs of the books. The five teachers who preceded me from Alma College were all headmasters of the piggery society, which raises and slaughters pigs for the school, and I am the first to break this venerable tradition. After working for two years in the library at Alma, I rebelled vehemently when I learned that another faculty member had requested permission to take over the piggery and that therefore I would inherit the library society; I rebelled because I did not wish to maintain

Reflections on Sophomore Keys and Rush

Upon reflecting about many things I have come to some very interesting conclusions. 1) Do we need a sophomore per? for freshmen I think we do, but for sophomores, who have been exposed to the atmosphere around here I don't think we do. I think that provided that a young lady has her parents written permission she should be allowed to have a key while still a sophomore. 2) Concerning fall rush, a very interesting occurrence of the four sororities only one that I know of took anyone that rushed from Gelston. Besides that, they only took those that rushed from the second floor of Gelston, I find this quite amusing and wonder if something underhanded wasn't going on up on second floor? By Margo Siegfried

the unnecessary and intolerable rules that govern people in libraries. Nonetheless, I had little choice in the matter, so I consoled myself in the realization that the library needs more attention than any other society on the compound, and already we have progressed considerably in one month's time.

[to be cont'd next Friday . . .]

Reference Books Shifted

Until recently reference books in Monteith Library were located in two different sections of the building. In the period between the fall and winter terms, all reference books have been brought together. The new arrangement is designed to make it easier to locate reference materials.

The reference collection has been shifted and reshelfed in one area on the first floor of Monteith Library. In the new arrangement all of the books marked reference are shelved together near the reference desk, except for the periodical indexes and abstracts which are shelved near the card catalog.

The consolidation of the reference collection necessitated shifting the circulating collection and the college catalog collection on the first floor. The college catalogs are immediately to the south of the reference collection and are followed by the circulating collection which continues into the stacks.

The catalog department, in order to improve service to readers, has completed the cataloging of all materials on microfilm in Monteith Library. Entries for each title on microfilm may be found in the main card catalog.



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JOHN MILLER, PAUL
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Sig, Teke V-Ball Game.
Delt Sig's won.

Holiday Basketball

Games in California

While most of us went home for a well-earned Christmas vacation, the Scot basketball team played a very full schedule.

Flying to Southern California for the third annual Christmas trip, the Scots ran into some tough competition. In the first game the Scotsmen found themselves facing