

# Letters from Morocco, 1926-27

The two most important women in my childhood were my mother, now universally remembered within the family as Nana Mary, and her mother, Flora Goodale, whom I, for reasons long lost, chose to call Mai Goodale, Mai for short, pronounced "My". Mai was an inveterate letter writer herself, and brought up her two daughters, Mary and Helen, in that rigorous mold. I got it in the neck too--we all have lived our lives under a heavy guilt complex, such that when we do write one another we invariably start by apologizing for not having written sooner.

With the demise of the older generation I am gradually crawling out from under that guilt complex. The younger generation, except to some extent for Ellen, hardly ever writes letters any more anyway, the preferred method of communication being the comparatively lazy one of the telephone. Future generations will suffer the paradox of too much information and too little, all at once, if, as, and when some descendant tries to trace his or her origin, as I am doing here.

I am thus the beneficiary of the last great harvest of good old-fashioned letters. So be it. Here is my summary of a small but significant part of that moldering cornucopia, the Morocco letters from my mother that preceded and announced my birth. I salvaged this file from my mother's house in New Hampshire after she died. Presumably she had salvaged it when her mother died. The file is contained in an unmarked brown envelope stuffed with faded letters, one is from my father, the rest from my mother. Almost all are to my grandmother, the few exceptions being from my mother to her sister Helen.

The first of the letters is dated June 23rd, 1926 and is from the ship that brought my parents to Tangier. For a while the file is very neat, Mai having pinned each one with a small pin and inscribed a number on the front page. Toward the middle the file gets less well organized; some of it I had to reorganize. By April and May 1927, the provenance is Neuilly, outside Paris, my natal place; and the subject increasingly is me. Most of the rest of you can start skimming at that point; the main interest of the papers is and should be Morocco,

during a fascinating period, and my feckless parents' adventures there.

### **#1, Conte Biancamano, June 23, 1926.**

This letter records an uneventful sea voyage to Gibraltar, completed on the eve before arrival.

### **#2, Hotel Cecil, Tangier, Morocco, June 28, 1926.**

"Dearest Mother- Have I ever written to you once in my life that I did not excuse myself for not having written on the grounds of not having enough time?... " (Ed note, see what I mean?)...anyhow, after more apologies along these lines, Nana M records her arrival in Tangier several days earlier, with Pappy and her dog, Marduk. They had to come via Algeciras rather than Gibraltar in view of the latter's stuffiness about dogs....nice room at the Cecil whose proprietess, fortunately, likes dogs...vivid description of a snake charmer...the people dress exotically though the city is essentially European...they have been measuring Riffi, with the help of an Arab-Riffian hybrid who speaks good English whom they hired as guide...it is hard work, time consuming...the Riffians think we are crazy, though for the two pesetas CSC pays them, they'll gladly put up with it.

### **#3, Hotel Cecil, July 4th, 1926.**

More on measuring Riffi, which they are doing at an exhausting pace, they have done over 100 in a week and a half! "Tomorrow" we head for Tetuan, which should be much less Europeanized and therefore more interesting...Nana M complains she has yet to see a camel...tummy trouble from a green watermelon...CSC ok...an Englishman told them about some caves outside Tetuan, maybe when they get to T they'll take a bit of a rest from measuring and explore them...the Riffi tonsure... "they have all their head shaved except in one spot on the back of the head, where they let their hair grow long. You can always tell a Riffi by this lock behind, although it is usually caught up under a turban..."(Rough sketch)... more on local dress...high words of praise for the Riffi character...more chitchat...

## **Unnumbered, to Helen, Hotel Cecil. July 5, 1926.**

Local color. Modest crowing at having measured 108 Riffians in two weeks. Favorable description of the urbane, Francophone Riffian they have just hired as their guide and gopher. (Not named here, must be the Ayyid mentioned in subsequent letters).

#4, Majestic Hotel, Ceuta, July 9, 1926.

On the 7th they drove to Tetuan--3 1/2 hours. "Tetuan is a terrible place, a dirty Spanish settlement--and when I say dirty, I mean dirty..." The lunch was so foul they had to leave the room...On the 8th they had a glorious trip by donkey-back up into the mountains. The Spaniards wouldn't let them go where they wanted--to some caves they had heard about--so they went to a semi-abandoned hamlet, became friendly with some Arabs, and shared the Arabs' tea and dinner...The morning of the 9th they went to Ceuta, whence they intend to push on to Ajdir in the Rif..."We have to carry cash with us as there will be no banks up there. This is a disadvantage in many ways, as you can imagine, but there is nothing else we can do...Please don't worry mother dear--we are going to get along great I know. Ayyid is of great assistance and will be a protection, I think, in many ways..."

## **#5, Majestic Hotel, Ceuta, July 9, 1926.**

"These damn Spanish are the worst people to deal with I ever saw and have utterly ruined all our plans. We are both so discouraged and tired we could die..." One infers that the Spanish authorities did not want these people whooping around what was still a barely pacified combat zone, and gave them a royal runaround, sending them here and there, including back to Tetuan at one point for another passport check. So, "...this afternoon we are going to Mellila...there are several good tribes there...they will do, provided the damn Spaniards let us go outside the city...the Spanish are an awful people, dirty, unintelligent, with not much else to think about but fornication. I hate them like poison..." Note: this is strong stuff for my sainted mother. 'Twould be interesting to have Pappy's thoughts from this moment...

## **#6, Hotel Cecil, Tangier, July 14, 1926**

They took a boat to Mellila but had to go steerage as the cabins were reserved for Spanish officers. The overnight trip was quite an ordeal, the hatch they were on being highly uncomfortable, and the Spaniards around them unsavory. "...everyone was seasick except Ayyid and myself-even Carleton fed the fishes. The Spanish being inherently dirty, did not even have the decency to go to the rail, but merely politely spilled their offering wherever they happened to be...". Things only got worse, much worse, when they reached Mellila. A small and scrofulous Spanish official gave Pappy a hard time and when he tried to take over Pappy's passport, an explosion ensued which led to their being escorted unceremoniously to the local police station. After lengthy interrogation they were released and consulted the local American Consul. He smoothed matters over. By now it was clear that their plan to measure Riffians in the Mellila area was a non-starter, and they returned to Tangier. (This part of the letter is laced with descriptions of Spanish character, morals, habits, etc. that would be lurid even by Pappy's standards and well exceed Nana M's previous efforts along these lines...). The letter concludes: "...Tomorrow we are going to buy a Ford and hit for the French Zone, hoping that from there we may worm our way from the south up into the Riff country. We have been spending far too much money of late so we are obliged to go to places where living is cheap. And of course, living in the French zone is only about one third of what it is in the Spanish..."

## **#7, Hotel "Transatlantique", Fez, July 29, 1926.**

The Ford made it to Rabat in a long day, arriving "late at night", and they found the "nicest" hotel room so far for 35 francs, equivalent to \$0.70. Then on to Fedhala, where Pappy evidently spent most of his time cultivating important people and getting letters of introduction. Ayyid got the sack: he "wasn't what he appeared to be". Also, friends pointed out that Ayyid was in the habit of looking at Nana M. in a way inappropriate for an Arab, and suggested that at some future point Ayyid might cut Pappy's throat and rape Nana M... Nana M. reported all this to her mother in a ho-ho, it could never happen to me tone, pointing out that she was strong as a man herself

and had her Colt revolver. (Elsewhere in the letter she mentioned that the local American consul had given both of them written authority to pack revolvers throughout Morocco.) Then there was a side trip to Marrakesh, hot as blazes but fascinating. Marrakesh, it was said, was the most oriental city west of Kashgar. (Note: I always heard a slightly different version from Pappy: Fez is the most oriental city west of Herat. Can both versions be true?) Only brief mention is made at the end of the fact they are now in Fez. "...we are going to try to hit for the Riff from here. We see the Count de Chambrun tomorrow to try to get his assistance. If we can't get into the Riff now we shall have to wait until next spring."

### **#8, Fez, July 31, 1926.**

The Count de Chambrun had them to lunch, is charming, and looks just like Uncle Walter (whoever he was). He lives in a Moorish palace, and we digress to a description of that architectural form; then on to Fez leather work, and a bout of bargaining. The hotel isn't much, but they may stay on a while yet, measuring locally available Riffis as they did in Tangier.

### **#9, Hotel "Transatlantique", Fez, August 6, 1926.**

Excursions in and around Fez...a visit to a Hedawi village... a meal with Arabs in another village...a banquet at which Nana M almost burst, hosted by one Tuezzi, one of the richest of the Fassi merchants, under American protection as I remember. (I think Pappy worked with a rich Fassi Istiqlal leader named Tuezzi during the war, and the latter hosted a huge meal for us in 1947. Maybe the same man as in 1926, perhaps his son.)

### **#10, Grand Hotel de la Tour Hassan, Rabat, Aug 17, 1926.**

A very sad letter, the saddest of the lot by far, at least until now. The first page is a generalized lament: "...If you have ever seen me discouraged and downhearted please consider that nothing to the state in which I now find myself. God knows I was born to misfortune and this misfortune has certainly reached its maximum degree." Well,

as you read on, the breast-beating is understandable. Pappy and Nana M had hired two Riffians and four mules and set out for Taza, in the Ford, Riffis and mules following. They had been given reason to believe that at Taza they would finally receive formal permits to visit the French-controlled portion of the Rif. Meanwhile the beloved Marduk, Nana M's first very own dog, had sickened--and just before they left for Taza he bit Nana M "very severely" in the arm. In Taza the next morning he appeared with a broken leg. They took him to the vet, who said he couldn't travel for 15 days. Then the permission to visit the Rif came through. They found a Frenchman who agreed to board Marduk. Nana M reports the thrill of the prospect of finally getting to the Rif tempered by having to leave her dog behind. But worse, much worse! The night before they were to head north they visited Marduk--he was frothing, rabid. He was of course despatched on the spot. And he had bitten not only Nana M but Pappy and an Englishman. The three of them perforce jumped in the Ford and drove straight through to Rabat, the Pasteur Institute, where at the time of writing they were each receiving rabies shots in the abdomen, two a day for fifteen days, all very painful. (Note: the embryo me must have been about a month old at the time...ouch!)...In this letter Nana M not only rails and wails at the foregoing but confesses that the financial problems of the expedition have become sufficiently severe that Pappy has thrown in the towel, no longer carries a sou himself, leaves all the money matters to her. "I have found a place where we can eat for about \$0.30 a day apiece. Not bad, eh? Believe me I wasn't born poor for nothing!"

**# 11, Grand Hotel de la Tour Hassan, Rabat Aug 18, 1926  
(to Helen).**

Sisterly chitchat, wish you were here, nice beach, these rabies shots are the pits, etc.

**#12, Rabat, August 21, 1926.**

A long dissertation about dogs. Nana M misses Marduk horribly. A Frenchman told them they'd be foolish to go off to the bled without at least two dogs. Nana M describes him as "...a very interesting intelligent fellow...". Nana Mary is buying another dog, a

"police" dog, very well trained. She cannot afford two.

### **Unnumbered, Fez, Aug 31st, 1926.**

They finished their last shots in Rabat that morning and came right to Fez. A little more packing that eve, off to Taza at 4am, and hopefully they'll finally get started towards the Rif from Taza later that morning...the French will want them to stay close to their posts, which sort of spoils things, but maybe it is all for the best...

### **#13, Hotel Transatlantique, Fez, Sept 24th, 1926.**

Nana M has been back four days and is feeling rotten--a decent report on their first penetration into the Rif will have to wait.

Meanwhile, here are some highlights:

...The day after they reached Taza they visited a cave at Kaf el Gar. Drove part way and a walk in. Huge long narrow cave, two hours to walk its length and back.

...Next was a three-day trip by mule from Taza north to Aknoul. The French lieutenant there said they could go on north one more day to Suk el Khemisse, but should stop there until they had further instructions. He said they would almost certainly not be allowed to go farther, as the tribes beyond that point were "very dangerous".

...They stayed at Suk el K. for four days as guests of the Sheikh. The fourth day was market day, and the Kaid of the district told them the French Lieutenant had given them permission to go further north. "We thought it strange but took the Kaid's word and left."

...We spent two weeks among these 'dangerous' tribes until we were discovered by the French and informed that the Kaid had lied. Let me tell you we have never been treated so royally by anyone as we were by those people. As soon as they found we were neither French nor Spanish, but were Americans and felt the same way about their enemies as they did, they couldn't do enough for us..."

...When the French got them back (to Taza?) they were "severely reprimanded".

...In order to do the kind of ethnographic work CSC had in mind they needed to settle in one place for quite a while; this wasn't

possible. Also, during the heavy autumn rains the area was more isolated than ever and there was a lot of banditry.

...As to next steps, "...We are leaving Monday for the Atlas and the Sous to be gone two months. This will be easier I think as there is little rebellion in these regions. Thence we will go to Marrakech where we shall probably live for a couple of months."

#### **#14, Hotel Transatlantique, Fez, Sept 25th, 1926.**

Nana M and CSC are both exhausted, and tired of a diet of nothing but goat meat. Much smacking and drooling over the thought of Mom's home cooking. Then another note of canine tragedy--Nana M's dog Duke died high in the Rif from eating the wrong bone. Must it always be thus in her beloved canine relationships?

#### **Unnumbered, Hotel Transatlantique, Fez, Sept 28th, 1926.**

To Helen: sisterly chitchat, plus a statement that "...We are leaving day after tomorrow for Marrakech, by mule, a journey which will take some twenty days or more. Then we are going on to the Sous almost immediately."

#### **Unnumbered, Hotel Transatlantique, Fez, Sept 29, 1926.**

Nana Mary blowing off steam to her mother--the scirocco is in the air and it's hot as stink; she is covered with flea bites from her trip to the Rif; all she wants is a glass of cold milk and some of grandmother's apple pie; et cetera. "...We shall probably start early tomorrow morning either by mule or in the Ford."

#### **#15, Marrakesh, October 9th, 1926.**

They had hoped to come from Fez by mule, measuring as they came, but the French would not let them so they took the Ford. They are installed in the "very beautiful" house of an Englishman named Solomon, and following a heavy schedule of measuring people (Berbers, I infer). They have already measured 100 people and want to do 100 more before their mules arrive from Fez, at which point they

want to leave for the Souss. Nana M's appetite is enormous.

## **#16, Marrakesh, October 12th, 1926.**

Measuring continues apace. Winter weather has come, cool and clear. Everyone has or is recovering from a cold. "The other day the Sultan arrived to spend several months in Marrakesh...the day he arrived there was a big parade...the streets were lined with great crowds of people, Arabs, Schleuh, blacks from the Congo, and some French.

After a while the parade began. First came the great Kaid on their Arab horses, making a very impressive scene in their pure white robes and red Tarbushes. The Glawi who is the Kaid of the Glawa tribe, the richest in Morocco, and who is also the Pasha of Marrakech headed the parade. Unlike most rich Arabs (and they say the Glawi is richer than Rockefeller, a fact which I well believe) he is very thin with a long, narrow cruel face, very dark in pigment. His mother was a negress, I think, although he has inherited no negroid features that I could see, just the pigment.

As he passed he spoke to the Frenchman with us, although the Duke which is the name we give this Frenchman, said he was looking at me. It seems that whenever the Glawi hears of a new woman in town a dinner invitation is eventually sent forth. I sure hope ours will come before we go. You would think the old rake would be busy enough with his own six hundred women, but apparently, he is not...to continue with the parade, next came the old Sultan himself, looking as though he had indigestion, the curse, and a hangover. ...the sowerest looking individual I have ever seen, and they say he never looks any different... Then came all the French officials...after them came guards and high Arab officials on horseback. And in the rear any Arab who was of fairly high family and who was rich enough to own a mule.

After the parade had passed us we tore by a back way down to the Sultan's gardens where the parade was to end. The Sultan's guards were already forming within the garden walls when we arrived, although as yet we could not see them. This part of the celebrations is always closed to Europeans, and not even the Duke's

pass could get him by the black guard at the gateway.

The blackguards are all great huge fellows from the Congo, as strong as Dempsey and much more fearless. They kill anyone they please knowing they have the Sultan's protection. So even the French are careful with them. This day if any of the natives got too near the gateway the blackguard (that word ought to be spaced or you will misinterpret me) would take his nice sharp, shiny bayonet and slash it among the crowd, and believe me people moved. The thing just missed us once.

How it all happened I shall never know. All I do know is that in a few minutes I found myself in then gardens with Carleton and Solomon following close behind. The Duke had told me to follow him so I had obeyed. It seems that in some way, as the guard was slashing at the crowd, we had sneaked in.

After we were once in there was nothing to worry about as everyone was too busy watching the Black Guards as they drilled, to pay any attention to us... Their costumes were the most absolutely brilliant I have ever seen in my life...they wore scarlet pantaloons and jackets, white turbans, and some kind of leather boots with white leggings... They carried some kind of trumpets with which they played some really comprehensible Arab tune. Then the festivities were over and we left."

### **#17, Marrakesh, October 20, 1926.**

This is about the most amiable and relaxed letter so far. The measuring of Berbers continues; they are up to three hundred now. CSC has gotten himself a darkroom and is processing his own photos, with considerable savings. There is a certain General in the offing, whom they are trying to see in order to get permission to visit the Souss. (Someone, probably CSC, wrote "Petain" in over the word "General".)

Nana M. has two dogs belonging to house residents to interact with and write about. But the most quotable paragraph in the letter is as follows: "Carleton has just come back from town with a bottle of cleaning fluid with which I must remove some spots from his grey

trousers. It is a good thing we go to see generals once in a while for it is the only way I can get the man clean. I scored ten points yesterday when I succeeded in washing his hair. Dear, dear, I do wish dirt did not annoy me so but it does and I guess it always will...".

### **#18, "Little old New York", October 31, 1926.**

Nana M begins with a description of an incredibly rundown mud hut where she is jammed in with CSC, a Jew, and their two Riffians. Evidently, they left Marrakesh six days earlier for a trip in the High Atlas, reached their first stop in good shape (a friendly kaid), and from then on were in trouble, due mainly to torrential rain.

"Little old New York" is what she calls the Jewish quarter of a mountain town, and their hut is on the edge of that. They have been holed up in the hut two days and are going stir crazy. The senior Riffian is identified, I believe for the first time in this series of letters, as Mohammed Limnibi (Nana M calls him Mohammed Min Libbi the first time). CSC is improving the shining hour by interrogating the local Jews for ethnographic information on the local Berbers.

### **#19, Marrakesh, November 9, 1926.**

Evidently the destination of the trip described in #18, which was mailed in the same packet as #19, was Telwet, the high Atlas redoubt of El Glawi, the Pasha of Marrakesh. Aside from much personal chitchat, the bulk of this letter is devoted to a description of the trip onward from Little Old New York to Telwet, which was quite awful, ranking in sheer poignancy and detail of human suffering with the death march of the Armenians to Deir es Zor some years earlier.

Nobody died, but one gathers it was rather a near thing, especially when, several hours after dark, local villagers barred their doors to these intruders. Limnibhi replied by breaking down one such door, which fortunately appears to have had no one behind it, and thus providing shelter of sorts for the rest of the night. To be continued, says Nana Mary airily, leaving poor Mai on tenterhooks.

### **Unnumbered, Marrakesh, November 10, 1926.**

It is a grey, rainy day, and Nana Mary is thinking of home and food. " I don't feel like going on with my narrative of our trip now; but will continue it later. Now I just want to say nothing in particular..." And she does.

Note: At this point Mai G. discontinued the practice of numbering her daughters' letters.

### **Marrakesh, November 16, 1926.**

It looks like we never will get that description of Telwet, mores the pity. Nana M and CSC are off on a new track, pounding hard. The authorities told them they couldn't go to the Sous after all. They hightailed it to Casablanca and Rabat to appeal to authorities they knew there. (Oh bliss, lots of hot baths and good food. Nana M even got CSC to take a bath!). Then... "in the meantime we have received a letter from the American Embassy in Madrid saying that the Spanish authorities TAKE PLEASURE in granting us permission to go through the Spanish Zone and to stop on the way to collect sociological data...we have decided to do the rest of the Riff immediately now that we have the chance and get it over with before Carleton's family come in January. The Sous can wait until spring." The rest of the letter is all about logistic planning. Sic transit Telwet.

### **Marrakesh, November 26, 1926: Thanksgiving Day.**

Nana M expresses now familiar dudgeon at her miserable diet. They sold their four mules and are anxiously awaiting final word from the Spanish. Meanwhile they continue to measure.... Fez, Hotel Transatlantique, Dec. 3, 1926: "Here we are back again at Fez, but only until after lunch when we shall leave for Taza and thence on foot through the Riff...provided these plans meet with the approval of the French General whom we must see in half an hour...". CSC is getting a pass for Limnibi. It has been the wettest fall for many years, many roads are impassable. Nana M and CSC both bought new winter underwear and new raincoats in Casa, to equip themselves for the Rif in December...for months we have been going around in rags, now we actually look like tourists! "It will be a great

experience, won't it, to walk through the Riff. You see we have permission to go from the French border through the Spanish Zone. The Spanish authorities gave us this. But the 'ell of it is we can't get to the French border except along the coast, which of course is no use to us. We are going to "sneak it" if no other means is provided."

[A space intervenes here, with a couple of lines across the page] "And now for the secret I have been keeping from you so long and which I don't think I should any longer. The only reason I didn't tell you before was for fear you would worry. I am going to have a little Carleton Jr. I hope it's a boy, hang it all!" The floodgates open, Nana M. goes on and on, mostly about please don't tell anyone but Helen for a while, and why she waited so long to tell them, and would Mai please take on the production of baby clothes as Nana M is really too busy taking down measurements for CSC.

Things are working out well, she is not yet visibly large. This Rif trip will be the last and thereafter they will be back in Marrakesh with CSC's family for a while. The baby isn't due till May and they will return via France or England where there will be many good places for the baby to be born. What was announced at the beginning as a short letter turns out to be the longest in the series thus far, by a solid margin.

### **Iherrushen, December 9, 1926.**

Three days earlier they left Taza, which none of them liked despite its spectacular setting. They drove to Akhnoul and went north from there on horseback.

The French insisted on sending along. They spent the night with the Sheikh at Suk es Sebt and left early the next morning for Iherrushen, with a guard of three native soldiers, much to their discontent. It was raining and the path was slippery. They had trouble with their baggage mule. But they finally arrived and slept at Limnibi's house.

The next day (Dec 8) they had to spend with the young local Sheikh, who was evidently sore at them for staying with Limnibi. Never mind, "you would have thought we were the long-lost brother

and sister of everyone in the tribe... Our hands were shaken off almost and my tongue wearied from the many "La Besse's Bisef" we were obligated to say to everyone...

Carleton was so happy he neatly popped, he loves this country so and of course the people are "the" people to him. And you can hardly blame him... It is beautiful with the mountains, so green now from the rain, all terraced and planted the new crop of grain.

There is no expanse here as in the Atlas or in our mountainous country at home. The hills rise directly from the ground, not very high but very very steep with only a narrow space between, 25 ft to 100 yards wide through which run the wed's, now very much swollen from the recent rains... I have eaten so much today I could pop... nothing but meat, mutton, goat and chicken... the only vegetables are potatoes, and these are very few, turnips, and onions. They put the vegetables in small quantities in the meat stew. The only thing that keeps everyone from scurvy is the abundance of fruit at all times. Last time we were here it was grapes, this time oranges.

### **Suk et Tenine, Beni Amart, December 12, 1926.**

"We are now in the true heart of the Riff and in the long sought for Spanish Zone, truly the most beautiful country imaginable... The bled here is mountainous too but not with mountains which rise straight from the ground as I described them down in the Iherrushen.

These mountains although practically as high are flat in places on the top, and although you are very high up you can go for some miles on a fairly flat plateau. The ground is not rocky the way it is farther south and fairly thickly covered with cork and cedar trees.

Right now, I am sitting in the sun in front of the Spanish Captain's door, trying to get thawed out. It is still very cold in the mountains with lots of snow on the tops of the highest ones... A Riffian is shining my boots... I am quite comfortable, what with two cups of tea and one of hot coffee inside me.

Yesterday we left the Iherrushen on two Arab horses from Bu Red, accompanied by three Goumis. After the first hour we met a

French officer with three Goumis who had come from Bu Red to get us. We were supposed to have left the Iherrushen the day before but could not because of lack of a good mule to carry our baggage...

In the Iherrushen the Kaid has all the mules in the place working for him so consequently we could get nothing, except two half dead ones which we thought might be able to make Bu Red... In this we were mistaken. The horses, being fast ones, we arrived at Bu Red in four hours, an eight-hour mule trip. Later news came that one mule had died on the way and that the other had fallen in the wed and broken a leg.

We were forced to go on here to Suk et Tenine as we did not have permission to remain longer in the French Zone. We are now awaiting the arrival of our Riffian and our baggage, though how and when they will ever arrive I do not know...

The Suk here is held tomorrow that being the day of Tenine or Monday and we shall either have to buy a good mule or two donkeys. The other two mules which croaked on the way were loaned to us by the Sheikh of the Iherrushen. Heaven knows if we shall be obliged to pay for them or not, as this added expense would probably break us. It certainly was hard luck to befall just at the beginning; but we haven't taken a trip yet in which things ran smoothly. We weren't born smooth running people, that's all.

"Last night I got the thrill of my life. We started from Bu Red at about half past five, just as it begins to get dark in the mountains, four Arab Goumis and Carleton and me.

We all had wonderful Arab horses and saddles, the best bunch of animals, in fact, that I have ever seen. I wish you had ever seen an Arab fantasia and you would realize what I mean when I say a wonderful Arab horse.

They are big powerful beasts, and although not slender like an English riding horse are well shaped. I'm sure they can go as fast as the fastest Western horse seems to go in the movies. And, they are trained to stop the minute you pull up on the reins. If they are going their fastest and you pull the reins, they just rise up on their hind legs

and stop themselves that way.

Well, as I said it was almost dark when we left and we had a three-hour trip in the mountains ahead of us. We came to a half mile of open space before ascending the mountains. Before I knew it the four Goumis gave a wild Arab yell and away we went thundering down the road. I'm sure I must have turned green I was so scared. Going seventy in a car has some of the thrills of that ride. I didn't seem to move. All I felt was the pressure of the wind on my lungs and a great writhing mass of mighty muscle beneath me. And when we finally ended up in the air, I felt like a Barnum and Bailey circus girl...

"We got to this camp about eight thirty and saw the Spanish Captain. Wonders of wonders, he is simply peachy. He is very intelligent, is writing a book now on the folk lore of the Riff. He is the first officer, Spanish or French, whom we have seen that the natives treated at all as a comrade. He has given us a room here. We shall probably stay three or four days with him as he seems very interested in our work and is quite willing to give us all the information we want. That's what a letter from the Government does for you. I wish those armchair anthropologists in Cambridge had realized this fact before...

### **Dec. 13, 1927.**

Just after I finished the above account, the Captain, Carleton, and I, and a troop of Mokaznis, left for a village of this tribe three hours away. We had rotten horses so the journey was long and tiresome. We finally arrived at the house of the Sherif (a descendant of Mohammed) who fed us royally on three big courses and the best barley bread I have eaten in my life.

His house was gorgeous. It was built of stone and wooden beams something like the old English houses... the ceilings were made of beautiful cedar, a few beams crosswise and then smooth one-foot planks on top. The walls were all smooth and beautifully whitewashed. The floors were cement and painted black. Everything was so clean and neat. Believe me no native bugs lived there.

"After eating I spent the rest of the visit in another part of the house drinking tea with the Sherif's three wives. They knew only a

few words of Arabic so our conversation was limited to salutations and such remarks as the house is good, the tea is good, etc. They looked at all my clothes and laughed and talked about them among themselves. The oldest wife, a terrible looking wench with only two black teeth and a hook nose kept glaring at me and saying "She's not American". I insisted that I was. So finally, they asked me if I liked the English. I said they were "muzien bizef" meaning very good. Then they asked me if I liked the Spanish and the French. I said they were "kif walu" meaning like nothing. This did the trick.

The old woman smiled an ugly one and said, "Waha, Melican" ...one of the women had an ugly-looking baby brought in to be nursed. I was asked if I had any children. I replied no and was promptly sneered at. 'Tis ever thus. A woman childless is looked down upon here... They asked me if we fed our children from the breast too. I guess they figured that a woman dressed as queerly as I was might feed a child most anywhere. They were relieved when I replied "Yes".

"5:30 pm: We started off for the suk this morning, a matter of five minutes on horseback. Well I got there in fifteen seconds and almost died doing it... There were two Spanish officers from somewhere or other with us. One had a very spirited horse and rode him like a saw horse. This one started prancing about mine (the Captain's own, incidentally) and then bolted. The Captain yelled to the officer to rein him in, knowing well what mine would do. Well, he didn't, and mine bolted too...

Have you ever been on an Arab horse with an English saddle when he went wild--and when all your muscles were loose from having a child within you for five months? 'Tis not a pleasant experience I can tell you. I admit I was scared, so much so in fact that the first thing I did was to lose my stirrups.

Try as I might I could not stop him although I pulled on the reins with all the strength in my left hand. Unfortunately, I was forced into the disgraceful position of holding onto the saddle with my right hand... How I stuck on I don't know. All I know is that after jumping over two weds, and nearly losing my insides thereupon, I dashed into the suk, hell bent on election yelling in English for some kind Riffi to

stop my horse.

Fortunately, the beast was headed for a crowd of people and was thus forced to stop when he reached them. Had I been facing the mountains, undoubtedly, I should be going yet. It's strange, what a fear I have lately of falling--but I guess it's just the instinct to preserve the future generation within me. But I was ashamed to make such a fool of myself.

"This afternoon we finished measuring, and tomorrow we leave for Targuist. I rather hate to leave as we have had such a decent time here with the Captain. But we must get on to Ajdir if we are to be back to meet Carleton's family the middle of January.

### **Ajdir, Dec. 24, 1926.**

They are "on the beach" at Ajdir on the Mediterranean coast, and as is frequently the case, Nana M. is a bit preoccupied with food. Her bag of cooking gear and food fell off whatever was carrying it down from Targuist and got lost.

She had salvaged a can of pineapple and a canned ham which she is saving for Xmas dinner. Meanwhile they are living off local Spanish supplies which are very expensive and consist mostly of sardines... but the scenery is gorgeous... a big bay, with a beautiful small island, almost entirely built over, all Spanish, rising out of the middle of it... they camped on the beach thinking they could find Riffis to measure, and have found a few, but...

"They tell us there are very few men left. So many were killed in the war... most of the houses are all smashed from aeroplane raids... All the natives here think the Americans are Number 1A and have treated us accordingly. We shall probably stay about a week more and then hit back to Marrakech in time for the family."

### **Mellila, Morocco, January 17, 1927.**

They drove from Marrakesh the previous week, were given a much better welcome by the Spaniards than the last time around.

They are busy measuring Riffians as fast as they can--twenty a day. In fact, the Spaniards are sending every Riffian applying for a passport to them, most convenient. They plan to stay with this regime for about a month, then boat and drive to Tangier to "await the Coons". Judging from the defensive nature of some of Nana M's remarks, she is getting a certain amount of well-placed flak from Mai on the general subject of the care and feeding of me.

### **Mellila, Morocco, January 27, 1927.**

They are working hard every day; measuring goes on apace, and they are approaching their original target of a total sample of a thousand individuals.

"Yesterday" they visited a large suk in Temseman district--Suk el Khemis--and measured 25 subjects despite the pushiness of the local Spanish authority, who made them come to a late lunch and wanted them to stay over.

"Today" it is raining hard and they are taking some time off. Nana M then asks her mother a number of fairly innocent but relevant questions about how women have babies and what they do with them, e.g., how many times a day do you nurse? I shall in deference to her presumed preference not list them here, but only say that if she didn't know this stuff already it was high time she did, for my sake, and I'm glad she had the guts to ask someone, even if it was only her mother.

### **Mellila, Morocco, January 31, 1927.**

Nana M regrets she did not get a letter from her mother on her birthday (1/29) but, she is overjoyed that one came in the next day. Evidently Mai had words about her equine adventure in the Rif, because Nana M protests: "...I did not tell you of the episode on the runaway horse to make you worry. I just thought that perhaps you would be amused..." (Ed. Note: I suspect, that insofar as my fetal condition permitted, I was not amused either.)

Nana M continues: "...You asked where Carleton was. Well, he was astride the prize plug I can tell you. If Paul Revere had ridden on

him the British would have won the Revolution. This particular horse in question was of unknown antiquity, blind in one eye and lame in four legs. Yet, despite all these impediments to satisfactory locomotion, my hero succeeded in making the poor beast run, probably for the last time in its life, and reached the suk just as I did. His intention was to seize me off the wild horse's back... and dash away with me like a real Knight and his fair lady. But you already know the true ending" ...there follows a relatively pedestrian account of more measuring, plus a hint of future plans: meet the Coons in Tangier or Gibraltar, and then drive them down to Marrakesh in the Ford, "...provided Jack has not grown too fat again".

Post-Coon visit, back to the Spanish Zone for more measuring, especially from tribes at the western end of the Rif, which will round out the series. Then back to Marrakesh for a bit, and on to Europe and home.

**Tetuan, Morocco, Feb 9, 1927. This is from CSC, not Nana M!**

"Dear Flo, Please, do not faint, or have epilepsy, because I am writing you. Mary is now reading a good book, and warming her toes to a Franklin stove, trying to get warm, despite that fishy "sunny North African winter". We see the sun about once a week for five minutes or so.

We left Mellila last Saturday on a British boat for Tangier, after having finished our 900th man. The Ford too came with us. The agent for the steamship line neglected to tell us that our boat stayed in Gibraltar from Sunday morning to Tuesday afternoon, so we had a good two-day vacation there.

There were piles of American tourists ashore, one lot took us with their movie camera on account of Limnibhy who was with us. He wanted to break the machine but I restrained him.

We had good Anglo Saxon food for three days!!! Believe me, Mary needed it. I am getting fat on beer, but there is nothing to fulfill that office for her.

I spent all morning getting our Ford out of customs, only hitting one man, and after lunch we came up here. We are getting a permit to work at Sheshawen tomorrow. The tribes we want to measure, Taghzuth, Beni Bu Shibet, et. al., have now, Praise be unto Allah, killed off all the Spics within their boundaries and are fighting. Which is not so good for us, and our work.

It is lucky that we went through Targuist to Ajdir at just the right moment. Since then the whole west of the Riff has risen. It is not known outside the military bureaus. They had to tell me to explain not letting us go there, to suks. Limnibhy had already ferreted it out...

Mary is carrying her condition very well and I can't make her stay in when I go places to work... All the Riffi say that if a woman with child sees a man with white crusts on his scalp (akshan) she will bear a child similarly afflicted. We have measured none like that for three months so I guess she's safe from that...

Limnibhy wants me to fire off at least three hundred cartridges when the day comes, I know how anxious you must be, and must say I am just as anxious myself. I am sure the Rockefeller people won't kill me if I go up to Paris with her towards the end of April. If they get sore, to Hell with them...

Listen, Flo, I want you to understand this. Next year you are to spend as much time as you can with us (underline with us), preferably starting the minute we arrive. I just got notice of my appointment as tutor for the Department, which isn't much but means \$900, that is, free rent and \$500 besides, which, with this and that, ought to just about last, you included... After this piece of scribbling I feel very silly, but you know how hard it is for me. Love, Carleton"