

Akhmim, April 23, 1961

Dear Bill and Mary,

A few days ago I had a wonderful surprise - a letter from Dolores Brien saying that she had received from you for me a gift of 68 dollars, almost a year ago! She thought she had written me about it, but the letter must have gotten lost. In any case, a belated but very enthusiastic Thank you to you and the Saturday-inters for this more than welcome contribution -

In a way, it comes as a special blessing just now. The last few weeks, with winter whirling into summer, not bothering at all about spring, we have been trying to invent ways of making the house more livable for the long hot months ahead - juggling around with figures, changing the plans again, etc. Inevitably is really the mother of invention - We have been concocting some masterpieces with a few bricks, some iron rods, the constituents of a much too elegant chicken house anyway, and some straw-mats - That will make a difference of 10 to 15 degrees in the two rooms upstairs that are our living quarters. The only thing left to make the place really ideal is mosquito net frames in the windows - and with your gift we can even go ahead with that!

We've been an elastic team this year, from an abundant 5, with two Egyptian girls (one a



nurse-midwife that we put all our hope in - but we finally lost out to a well paid job in Cairo) and a young Swiss artist, daughter of the Protestant minister of the French speaking Protestants in Cairo - petering down at one miserable moment to a symbolic remainder me - when Walburg, the German Graid girl who came with me from Holland last August, had to spend a short time in the hospital to get to the roots of some intestinal trouble. Her insides have not quite been translated into Egyptian ones yet, but she is a lot better now, thank God, and for the moment the two of us are holding down the fort.

In about a month we'll have reinforcements again. The Cairo Graid Team will spend the summer here. There'll also be a whole group of city girls toward the end of the summer, who will also give a push to the social and hygienic program. Many of them have never experienced village life before, and have no idea of the poverty and ignorance that exist in their own country. There is a tremendous gap between the classes here that needs to be bridged by a revolution of love and service, before it is too late - Otherwise we are just paving the way for another kind of revolution.

What a mess this world of ours is in. I have been deciphering the painful news about the situation in Cuba from the Arabic newspapers with my heart like lead. Here everyone is sure it is the States'



fault - At the moment there are all kinds of anti-American demonstrations in Cairo. I am putting off renewing my residence (which expires in two days) in the hopes that things will calm down - If I apply for a renewal at this moment I risk a refusal -

I read Christmas Cheer from cover to cover - it was almost like being back in the States again - And in the part of it that I love best, that is the world of spontaneous generosity and uncomplicated idealism that you are doing so much to build -

I hope you're settled by now, and at home in your new neighborhood. The children will be sure to find friends fast. They have smiles like magnets -

Please give my love and greetings to Phyllis, Al, Bernie, Mildred, Rena, and all the others that helped organize the dance - I have told the story of this very special venture, with very special people, to all of my friends here, who are as moved by it as I.

With all my best wishes, Thanks and love to you and the children,

Yours, Gail.