

6 enero 1959

Dearest Rob,

I was certainly glad to get your letter and will be happy to tell you something of Spain. We are all well here and had a nice Christmas. I can hardly wait for you to meet Bill and the girls. They both like dogs so that you can show them yours when we come visit you. Also if you have any friends with chickens, ducks or cows, Diana would really like to see some farm animals.

Today is a very special day in Spain. It is the day of The Three Kings. On Christmas Day the Spanish celebrate the birth of Christ and have mostly family dinners and go to Mass since most Spaniards are Catholics. Then on the sixth of January they celebrate the day that the Three Kings brought gifts to the Baby Jesus. The children go to the stores to the Three Kings--two white and one dark Moor--to ask for presents. Last night the Three Kings brought gifts to the children who were good. There is no Santa Claus in Spain. Today there was a parade for the children to see the Three Kings after they arrived. They ~~xxx~~ dress beautifully with crowns of gold. Also there are flocks of sheep with shepherd boys representing the shepherds who watched their flocks the night that Jesus was born.

I have enclosed cards which are presented at the doors at Christmas when the people who give you service for the year come for their Christmas tip. On the back of the cards is the English translation telling who they are.

Another interesting thing about Spain is the way they collect garbage. Every morning about six we hear donkeys braying heehaw and little bells tinkling as the garbage carts make their rounds. Because they are very poor young boys and girls about your age help their parents load the carts. They go through the garbage and if there is anything they can sell it is theirs. However, something of value which may have been lost must be guarded for a month. I must confess that once I threw out a silver ashtray and another time a silver spoon of Diana. Both times two days after our janitor told the garbage people, they returned the item.

In Spain all little girls practically at birth have their ears pierced for tiny gold earrings. Since Diana and Anne did not have much hair as babies, all the Spanish think we had baby boys since they don't have hair or gold earrings.

Spanish children go to school five and a half days a week nine o'clock to one and four to seven. They come home for three hours for lunch. In most of the schools the children wear uniforms, either dark blue or black. Also a lot of the children even boys wear smocks over their uniforms or clothes.

The two most popular sports in Spain are the bullfights during the summer and futbol during the winter. You, of course, know what the bullfights are. Futbol is like our soccer. Instead of seeing boys playing softball or touch football, in Spain you see them playing soccer. The workmen on their lunchhour get a ball and play in the street or a vacant lot.

Most people in Spain live in apartment buildings. These buildings have main gates of ironwork. The tenants have keys to the gate. However, there is a sereno or nightwatchman to each block. He carries a stick, has a key to all the gates and is the authority for his area. He looks after the cars to see that they are not robbed since most people park on the streets. When we arrive home after eleven at night the gate is locked. We clap our hands and soon hear the sereno tapping his stick against the walls to let us know he is coming. He lets us in, turns on the building lights and opens the elevator door. We pay him about fifty cents a month for this service and give him a peseta or two cents when we come in late.

I hope you like the ~~red~~ pamphlets I have enclosed. They will tell you about the people, their costumes and history. I hope you enjoy studying Spain because it is a colorful country and very different from ours.

May will soon be here and we will be flying home to the States. We are all looking forward to our visit with you. Thank you for the dollar to pay for the map. We hope you had a really nice Christmas too.

Much love,

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