

Pat Wilson's Letters

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didn't sleep at all until after the roosters began to crow.

Billy and David were awake as soon as the sun came up. We lit our grill, put on coffee, had sausage, eggs, French bread, cereal for David, who has yet in his whole life to eat an egg. We cleaned up camp, put on our swim attire and went down to the beach. The tide was way out. The boys had a wonderful time walking over the reefs, trying to catch the little fish, poking for mussels, trying to open clams and watching out for little crabs. Then we went around the reefs and walked out into a sort of cove. The water was nowhere higher than my hips. The boys had their life saver inner tubes, though they were not needed for safety. We had a huge beach ball along and had a lot of fun. Of course we stayed too long. Then

back to camp to get the grill going again for lunch, — pork and beans, hot dogs, hamburgers, buns, sliced tomatoes, Coke from the ice chest.

After lunch, David and Billy lay down to rest, but Patrick and his Dad pitched horse shoes for awhile.

Again we went down to the Beach.

David is a "water-bug" and would stay in indefinitely. Billy is in and out. Patrick likes best to hunt for the "critters in the reefs".

By evening we realized that we had not been very wise. We were all quite red. Bill bought French sun tan oil at the grocery at the camp. Either it was no good or it was too late for as soon as we got in the sun, the next day we could feel the heat. I suppose the salt water caused some of the burning. We made it for the beach before the sun got high and came back in about an hour. We realized then that we had simply stayed out too

long the day before, and that we would have to go home or take the chance of ending up in the hospital. In the Air Force a sun-burn is called "dereliction of duty" and a man can be Court-Martialed. We ate lunch from cans — anything that we could eat sitting on a blanket under the trees. The boys love things like that. We sat around under the trees, playing horse shoes in the shade, and Chinese Checkers.

About 4:00 o'clock we packed up and started back to the Base.

It got dark before we got home. We needed tub baths in the worst way, we were tired, sun-burned but very happy. We checked the time only twice the whole time we were gone. We relaxed, played with the boys, did things that people in the States simply don't do anymore, — missed T.V., Night Spots, roller coasters, etc. — not at all!

I forgot to say, the boys tried to catch a sea gull among the rocks. We watched the ocean liners, smoke

trailing, pull away from Casablanca; There were French, German, Spanish, Swedes and Moroccans at the Camp. We were the only Americans. The boys played with the other children, understanding very little, using sign language. We heard the horns at sundown, the Priest in the minarets calling the Mohammedans to prayer.

The other night an eagle brought her young one down in the ditch near our house and they spent the night in the drain pipe. These boys of ours sure get some fine lessons in wild-life over here.

Guess what? We awoke to find the sky clouded over this morning! Looks like it might rain any minute. We did have 2 or 3 drops right before last around suppertime. The boys went crazy! They dashed outside and ran around like Indians!

The other day Bill loaded the car with scraps of lumber and metal (the boys' swing fell apart), a box

of old magazines, an old mattress, old clothes, a box of old shoes, soles coming off, some didn't have mates and he took the stuff down to Sidi Bou (?) where our Yard Boy, Omar lives. Four mud walls (about the size of our kitchen at home), a dirt floor. This is home to Omar, his wife, 3 children and his mother. Yet Omar, because he works on the Base three days a week for a dollar a day and owns a cow, a camel and a donkey is considered wealthy by the other Mohammedans in the village. Omar was so tickled with the "junk" we gave him, he brought me 10 eggs the other day and today he brought two cantaloupes. David and Billy went along and had a ride on the donkey. David told me (his eyes big with wonder) that Omar's boys didn't have any shoes and all they had on was a cloth wrapped around their waists. — And you should hear the people on this Base complain about the housing and the food — I do it, too! — But not this week when I think about Omar and his family.

I wish I always thought about how they lived so I'd be happy with what I have.

Patrick went to the "suk" (Market) at Ben Guerir Tuesday morning. He bought a rubber ball for Billy, a salt rock for David and himself, a ring and bracelet for me (I'm sure I'll keep them always). He went with his class. He reported that they went to see the slaughter house this time. Camel heads stacked in a row, sheep being skinned and Mohammedans sticking knives into a cow to kill her while she stood and bawled! This is real life education, is it not!! By the way, Patrick felt pretty bad that his 500 francs (\$1.00) ran out before he could get a razor for his Dad. He said, "You know, the kind scrape the shishers off your face with."

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