

January 17, 1949  
Bethesda

Dear, dear Pop and Helen,

Gracious, how time flies. Let's see, what have we been doing? Well, we have sort of worn down our colds by attrition, rather than actually getting rid of them. They weren't bad colds in the first place, so at last I know what people having been meaning all these years when they remarked "I have a slight cold". I don't think I've ever had just a slight cold before- they have always been horrid, beastly, nasty, virulent colds. It was a pleasure, a positive pleasure, to have a "slight cold".

The Chilenos had a cocktail party last Wednesday in honor of six newspaper men who received medals in a short ceremony before any drinks were passed. I have at last seen the great Drew Pearson, as well as the great Mr. Brown, Time's Latin American Editor. The ceremony though short, was something of a trial of strength for William, because before we knew what was happening we were wedged in among sixty people in a small reception room, and William had no place to put out his cigarette, which grew smaller and hotter as the words flowed on. The floor was covered with an exquisite French antique rug, but it eventually became something of a choice between the rug or William's sensitive flesh. But before either of these were permanently damaged, William thought of a plan, leaned on me heavily, and doused it on the bottom of his shoe; and then triumphantly put the stub in his pocket! We enjoyed the press party, because it was interesting to talk to all those people whom one doesn't ordinarily see. We talked to Mr. Brown, but not to Drew Pearson. William is against Drew anyway, because he got the Venezuelan Revolution all twisted up with an odd collection of "facts" which no one can imagine how he came by, since they are not straight. As William put it, "why didn't he ask me?" "Time" did, and igitur got the straight dope. As usual, the Chilean ladies pressed cake and petite fours on us just as we were having our whiskey sodas, but we dodged as politely as possible.

We had our friends the Cowles over on Friday night, along with Boise Hart and his mamma. The Cowles were in William's class at the Foreign Service School, and went to Spain with him on the same boat on which he went to Milan. He was a Mormon and she a Catholic, so at present they aren't anything much, and I was able to serve beef paprika even though it was a Friday. Tillie has no children and spends her time giving large and happy parties, so that it's quite a struggle keeping up with them in our social obligations. As for Boise Hart and his mamma, well, they were both in Stuttgart when William was, and he is now "on the fifth floor" next to His Majesty, in the Secretary's office, so he sees Everything that Goes On- it must be a most interesting job. They have that beautiful old house in Alexandria which I think I described to you, or if not I should have, because it's a genuine, 20 caret old Alexandria house. They were lucky indeed to be able to rent it. Boise is likewise a martini fancier, and is considered an expert on the subject of making them. But, bravely, I served martinis nonetheless. Mrs. Hart is a fine lady whom I like very much, and who is always worrying about how she shouldn't really cramp her son's style by living with him. We had a pleasant party, with everyone talking at once.

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Tonight we are off to a different party, given by an acquaintance of William in the Canadian Embassy. He deals with Latin American affairs, and he and William often talk on the telephone. The day is soon coming when we will have to give a cocktail party, and I'm scared to death of the thought. We will have to ship L.J. out for the occasion, that's sure, because he is no longer used to noisy parties. Well, anyway after the cocktail party we are going to meet our old friends the Seversons, from Caracas. Mr. S. is the second-in-command of the Texas Company here, under Bill Woodson, and although they once lived next door to us, and I always have liked and admired Mrs. Severson a great deal, I NEVER COULD REMEMBER THEIR NAME! It got to be a complex or whatever the technical term is. Mr. Severson called the night before last and invited us to dinner kindly, and so here we go.

Last Thursday I went haywire, stopped cleaning the refrigerator in midstream as it were, and accepted Virginia Davis's invitation to accompany her on a window shopping expedition down Connecticut Avenue. Since Leola was there, I was able to go, and we had a lovely, lovely time of it. First time I've done such a thing since I got here. I have either gone to the dentist, had a permanent, or stayed at home and cleaned house on Thursdays. So although I felt wicked, I also felt happy. It was a lovely spring day, strangely enough.

Laurence John has been having a great many adventures, mostly with his teddy bear, Brownie- "My dear little Bwownie!" He took him to Sears Roebuck on Saturday, and left him there in a cupboard somewhere, so we had to go all the way back and rescue the bear. Then that night the bear got up to go to the bathroom with L.J., and fell in the john. Fortunately he was immediately wrapped in a bath towel and escaped without injury or influenza. Then the other day he went out to play with Laurence John, was put down on the terrace wall, and carried off by a puppy named Peachie, amid the very genuine howls of anguish of L.J. I dashed out to find out if Laurence John was bleeding or dying, only to be told in the midst of heart-fending sobs that "the naughty dog had run away with poor little Bwownie in his MOUTH!" So we ran down the street shouting "Stop thief", while the puppy gamboled delightedly, thinking it all a game. Brownie was finally surrendered, a chewed teddy bear, but still intact. Brownie sleeps with Laurence John, and we all have to be quiet in order not to wake him. He also sits in a chair next to L.J. when the boy eats, and no one may sit on that chair save the bear, who is six inches or so tall. We have it on good authority that Brownie is L.J.'s friend, and that God dearly loves Brownie. By the way, we were discussing the old kitty ball which you brought down to Caracas in 1946 (and which is still with us, minus its two ears and its whiskers) and L.J. said "Abuelito Campbell also brought me a red doggie with eyes, and if you pushed his tail the eyes lit up, as a matter of fact." As a matter of fact is one of his current favorites, but I was astonished that he remembered the Electric Eye dog, which has not been with us for at least a year. I asked him what to tell Abuelito Campbell, and he said "Tell him that I love him; tell him my poor little Bwownie almost drowned." So there, I have done it.

Love,