

Tuesday night, Jan. 25

Dear Mamma,

I'll just add a note about your old lady friend with the nephew in Austria, although "mamma is a sleepy boy", as L.J. put it long ago. It certainly is a sad case, and there are so many, many sad cases these days! What with Grant's being here last night when he brought home the folder, he hasn't been able to look at it till this evening, but this is approx. what he thinks is the situation merely on first glance at the lady's letter:

He says the Hungarian quota is one of the smallest in Europe to begin with- 200 or 300 a year, of which half is set off by law for the mothers and fathers of American citizens. He says on first glance the case appears pretty hopeless, and to tell the poor old lady that it is hopeless, so as not to arouse false hopes which probably can not be realized. Privately and between ourselves only, he is going to call up someone in the visa division to find out if they have any information at all on the subject of these two people. From the fact that they have had no success so far, he assumes that they didn't get to Austria until sometime after the date in 1945 when all those who were not in their proper countries were registered and classified as Displaced Persons. From that date on the Displaced Persons Authorities gave up and didn't classify any more people as displaced persons. Displaced persons have a chance to come to the United States, a great deal more chance apparently than do persons who are not so classified and who have to get quota numbers. You can imagine how many people there are who were born in Hungary and want to come to the United States. William also says you may tell the old lady that she should make sure, even though the case is probably hopeless, that her nephew has really registered in the nearest American Consulate, presented his papers there, and applied for a quota number. Many people, he says, are under the impression that if they have given their identity cards and passports to some American Army man and told him that they want to emigrate to the United States, that's enough. The only way to attempt emigration is by applying at an American Consulate and making sure you have taken all the proper steps. The fact that the lady doesn't mention writing out an affidavit of support would seem to hint that perhaps they haven't done all the necessary things, but that's just a wild guess, and even if they have taken all of them there is still very very little hope for Hungarian born people due to the quota system. William says please, please don't tell the old lady he is going to look the case up, because it would only be cruelly disillusioning later on.

L.J. got to thinking about you today, and wanted me to tell him all about his gammamma, and the farm, and the whereabouts of little Mrs. Shepherd, and the little white toilet, and about how he didn't EVEN KNOW his grandmamma till he went to the farm! He was too excited by the stranger last night to worry about his using your bed, but this morning he took a dim view of my changing "Gammamma's sheets". "What will gammamma do if you take off her sheets?" He was mollified when I put on clean ones, however.

Love,