

Bethesda, Tuesday, May 3, 1949

Dear Pop,

I'm afraid you must be working very hard and long these days, for I seldom get any letters. I hope this doesn't mean that you will have to stay on there any longer than you want or had planned to stay. However, now that spring is here I daresay it's a good deal pleasanter than it was during the winter. Walter Hager should be leaving any day now, and you will probably be seeing him. They came over to our house for dinner with the Mills one evening, and last Sunday we went to call on them to say goodbye to him, but they were out. Gertrude isn't leaving till later.

As planned, we went to Colonel Homer Heller's out in Virginia a week or two ago. He asked how and where you were, and said he admired you very much. I said I did too. Mr. Shantx was there also, but the Lynches didn't show up. Homer has a lovely house, fine for a large party, as this was. He is the same over-grown boy as always, though more grizzled (from fatherhood) than when I saw him last. Last Saturday we went to the Dawsons to see Charley and Jesse Knox. Charley had just returned from Tel Aviv and was, naturally, very interesting on the subject. His health is bad, and by a coincidence, Ilan is also suffering from a hernia, so the two of them were planning to enter the Bethesda Naval Hospital this week. Too bad old Gordell finally left! It would have been so cosy!

I've been enjoying the spring very much. It had been quite some time since I'd seen a real, full complete northern spring. Not since Paris, really, for I don't remember the one I saw in 1944. It was beautiful here. So many flowering trees! Cherry, apple, dogwood, and then also forsythia, azalea, plum, etc. Now the tulips and iris are out in our garden (courtesy of the previous owners)- not to mention the plantain weed, dandelions, and wild garlic that scatter the lawn. I'm proud to say they are going under rapidly beneath the blows I deal them daily. The wild garlic has disappeared from the lawn, the plantain we merely mow away, but the dandelions are still coming up daily to plague me. Each afternoon I breathe a sigh of relief as I throw away the last bleeding corpse into the woods, and each morning as I look out I discover three or four new bright yellow dandelions blooming out there somewhere, as if I hadn't just finished digging out by the roots what I thought was the very last dandelion in our garden! The insolence of them! We are having such nice warm weather that I have been thinking about getting one of those garden pools for L.J. to paddle about in. Mr. Woodward and Mr. Lthrop sell them for about fifteen dollars. How he and Betsey Meleney would enjoy that!

No great remarks from the boy lately, though a long series of minor quotes most of which I forget right away. The other day Laura Rowse's mamma gave her a home permanent, and she came over in the curlers to ask a question. "Don't you think I look beautiful, Laurence John?" asked Laura, jokingly. "Yes," he answered truthfully but untactfully, "But you do look sort of peculiar!" He has been playing & writing on the typewriter lately, and now seems to know all the letters of the alphabet by sight, although he balks when asked to say them off most of the time. He now knows a few of the small letters as well as the capitals, but not many. Recognizing words from the letters in them is still apparently beyond ~~know~~, though it's hard to say because he's so stubborn about saying what he knows. The other week he decided he'd have to start saying "Ho hum. lack-a-night" after dark. I agreed. Love,