

5208 Glenwood Rd.
Bethesda, Md.
Sat. June 18, 1949

Dear Pop,

Since I last wrote to you we have been switching back and forth between here and Flemington, and L.J. has stayed up there for a week. William took a week's leave during that time, and we occupied ourselves painting the woodwork of the porch and generally getting ready for the cocktail party we gave on the ninth. We rather enjoy the ride up to Flemington, especially now that we have definitely worked out a way of avoiding Baltimore in the pretty hinterland thereof. Laurence John is so much better to travel with than he was last year on our great trek that one would not know he is the same young man. He stays in the back seat, commenting quietly on all points of interest, will take a nap with out protest, stretching out on the floor with his sucking cloth and Brownie and settling down happily to a nap of an hour or more. He doesn't seem to get very restless, but enjoys the sights to the full. What a change! We positively missed him when we came back without him. Once we were at home we began to miss him even more, but we had so much to do that there wasn't really time to feel any pangs.

Our party was a huge success, I'm happy to say! Most cocktail parties break up on schedule here, around eight thirty or nine, but this thing went on till ten, and it wasn't till ten thirty or so that the last guests departed, and we departed right after them, with the Harts and Brom Smith and his wife to a Chinese restaurant downtown. We had the house all cleaned, and it stayed that way, too, because it was a pleasant warm evening, and our guests all went out on the porch and onto the flagstoned terrace or patio in back. All we had to do was clean up the porch, sweep and hose down the terrace the next morning. We had a hired man to serve and mix the drinks, and he washed up the plates and glasses before he left. About thirty-five people came. Although, as I say, it was a successful party, I still prefer my usual four guests to an evening. With such a large party to be attended to we ourselves hardly had a moment to talk and linger here and there. Such a party wouldn't be practical in the winter, either, for there wouldn't be enough room inside.

I had hoped to be able to learn to drive this summer, but now it looks as if it won't be practicable. All the schools insist on one's coming every day, or at least three or four times a week, and there just plain isn't any way for me to work out such a schedule. Unless William could teach me, I shant learn here. William is most unwilling to try to teach me, and in any case there again, there is hardly any time. Our weekends are taken up almost completely by the necessary gardening and shopping, as well as his work (for he almost always has to go to the office one day or the other on weekends.) But mainly he doesn't think he would be able to teach me well, and is afraid it might Break Up a Happy Home. I'm so infernally dumb about the workings of a car that I really don't blame him, and of course we would have to expose L.J. to my precarious lessons, for where else could he be but with us? It's quite a problem, and I only wish I had solved it long ago.

Janie thinks she might bring the whole family east this

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summer when Norman has to attend a conference in Pennsylvania. She admits she is crazy and adds that she has proved that fact to her own satisfaction by taking them all to Austen a little while ago, but nonetheless the poor girl is so anxious to pack up and go that she claims she's willing to take the consequences. We have beds enough to bed them all down, and I have written to tell her that the Kriegery is ready and waiting. She thinks perhaps August.

Meanwhile I'm still anxious to see YOU. I'm so glad to hear you are contemplating such a wonderful trip! But will you be going back to your same apartment when you return to New York? I sort of hope so, merely out of sentimentality. On the other hand I'd also like you to spend untold amounts of time with us, so you see I'm just a bundle of frustrated yearnings. In any case I'm hopefully taking it more or less for granted that you will plan to spend as much time as you possibly can down here. We have the room all fixed up, there can be no excuse for your not doing so, and we will accept none. I stand firm in this one point: as soon as you arrive in the United States you must make up your mind when you can come to Bethesda, and stick to it. If you want to make the first visit brief in order to attend to your business in New York, all right, but the next time it must be long. We will be horribly persistent about this. Our overnight guests have told us the big double bed we have in the guest room is quite comfortable. We have two bathrooms. We have a largish dining room. We very much want you two to come and stay with us. Voila!

Well, I've been taking advantage of the fact that L.J. is down at the Meleney children's house. It is now lunch time, however, and he should be returning soon. It has been raining steadily for three days, after a twenty-day dry spell, and the children are restive. They keep warning each other not to go outside for fear of a dread something known as Ammonia which lurks in rainy streets. "If you don't wear your shoes in the wain you'll catch Ammonia!" All of which is galling to free spirits who have been going barefoot for three weeks.

Goodbye, and enjoy yourselves,