

November 27, 1949

Dear Mamma,

The reason I can't warm up to your economizing friend John Taber is that his favorite economies are practiced on such people as don't vote much, such as people in the District of Columbia and the Foreign Service. He is also the charming old-fashioned American patriot who was quoted in the Saturday Evening Post as saying "Everybody in the State Department is a lying Bastard." He may be a good husband and father, though. He probably has a soft side, too, but I have a feeling it is displayed only to those intimate friends who have a vote in his district.

Today William is working at the office, because quite a lot of work has accumulated over the Thursday holiday. He also worked Thursday, though, but the work accumulated faster. I prepared a chicken for Thanksgiving, because turkeys were just too big and expensive for our size family. It was delicious, and with all the trimmings was quite indistinguishable from a turkey. We demolished it almost completely in one sitting, with no leftovers worthy of the name. Laurence John ate almost as much as the two of us, and called for bicarbonate of soda thereafter.

We had the news of Jane Dawson's arrival the day before Thanksgiving, and I called her up immediately. She had been met at New York and at Washington by State Department people (or should I say bastards?) and said they were very helpful and sweet to her. She has taken an apartment for the present, and with her mother and father is looking for a house where she can install herself. Her mother and father live in California, but are going to stay till Christmas. She wants to settle in Washington because all Allan's roots are here. His mother suffered the dual blow of watching her daughter die of cancer during the week following Allan's death. Jane's parents have given her a Pontiac, and staked little Billy (aged ten, and her son by a previous marriage) to an education at the Sidwell Friends' School, where we hope the children will treat him nicely, for he has suffered as much as anyone connected with the tragedy. He had gotten to love Allan as a real second father, and always went about talking about "My father this, and MY father that..." Little Teecee, Allan's son, is flourishing and happy, of course, being not quite two years old. Poor Jane has lost a lot of weight, but is as cheerful (or almost) as ever. Allan had been acting rather odd for a month or so, but not knowing the symptoms, Jane didn't know how serious it was. He was dreadfully worried about all the money they had lost on their house, and on preparations for going down to Chile. He hadn't eaten any lunches for a whole month as a result, and a post mortem showed acute anemia. Jane and her parents came to dinner on Friday night.

Winter is here. We had a light snowfall on Friday night, which simply delighted Laurence John. It is all melted now, much to his sorrow, but the cold is still with us. The leaves have finally stopped falling, so why don't I go out there and sweep them up, as I should? You've got me there. After two months of them, I'm bored. Love,