

Thursday Feb. 16 1950
Bethesda

Dear Mama,

I'll try to write a little against heavy odds. The boy is so much better that he is in my hair constantly, chipper and full of information. Leola is here though, and he and she seem to be discussing life right now, over the noise of the vacuum cleaner, at that.

He has been at home sick for nearly two weeks now. He was remarkably good, and father's coming in almost every afternoon has been a big help as far as entertaining him goes. He was never very sick: a touch of bronchitis, a head cold, and the main difficulty was in his ears. Dr. Norton was surprised that he didn't complain about their hurting him more, because they were very red and inflamed, on the inside. They did make him quite deaf, however, and apparently at least part of his fever was due to them. But his fever never went above 102 at it's worse, which isn't high for a child. It was just that it persisted for such a long time at 99 in the morning and about a hundred to a hundred and one in the PM. When we gave him a big shot of penicillin last Friday morning it went down promptly to normal, but at the end of the third day it was back again, to 99 and a half. By that time I was determined to get rid of that fever completely, as well as the ears. So we gave him some ear drops which we hoped would do some good, and put him on aureomycin. He hasn't had a temperature since Monday night when it was only 99. But his temperature has been subnormal, so I kept him in and quiet all this time - quite a task! His appetite has been improving slowly but steadily, and yesterday afternoon we took him out for the first time in ten days or so, for a short walk. His hearing appears to be perfectly normal again, also. I'm going to take him over to Dr. Norton this afternoon if I have time, so he can look in his ears with that little instrument he has, to see if the combination of aureomycin and ear drops has finally done the trick. He has very little cough, if any, and the nose cold seems to have cleared up. So has mine, mostly, though a remnant lingers on in the form of catarh or however you spell it.

Since I've begun this I've had three telephone calls - one from Frances O'Niell, who was in Caracas. She and her husband have been transferred back with their little boy (and of course the little one who is on his or her way, also!) Since they arrived her husband and small boy have had one cold or bout of flu right after another, and she had to move into her new house with Burch Sr. and Burch Jr. both technically in bed. Burch Jr. is still down with a low fever and is on aureomycin too, just like L.J. What a start!

Tonight we are going out to a cocktail party and father is going to sit for us. It will be the first time I've been out for two weeks. The day before yesterday father sat for me in the PM while I went down to the five and ten and the library. I was beginning to get stir-crazy. I hope the coming of spring will end all this cold business for another six months or so.

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Father still hasn't gotten his car, so that he has to trek all the way in from Georgetown every day that he comes- it takes him a full hour both ways, and he refuses to stay until William comes to take him home. He expects to get the car next week and drive it down here from New Jersey.

Something horrible has gone wrong with our financial situation this month, due to income tax, mortgage payments, and William's trip expenses, with the result that I felt it necessary to cash the bond that Uncle James gave me for my Beard School graduation, in order to pay that Garfinckel bill for my suit and hat, etc. At least we haven't had to pay out to sitters, however! If President Gonzales Videla of Chile comes next month I'll probably have to buy a dinner dress, sad to say. Not that I object to getting dresses, of course, but I use that kind so very seldom that I do object to having to pay out for something which I probably won't put on more than once or twice a year. I'd much rather get a mirror for the hall or a lamp for the table beside the chaise longue in my bedroom, or a coat for Laurence, or a topcoat for William. The one he has now was bought in 1938 and has a large mothhole in the back.

Have to stop and make lunch now. Pork chops, of course, on account of Leola.

Love,