

Bethesda, May 3, 1950

Dear Mamma,

It seems to me that I haven't heard from you for quite some time, and each morning I expect that the letters dropping on the floor have one from you among them- so far they have been only bills. I hope your silence means that you have been busy only, and not ill.

Well, let's see. I haven't heard from John on whether or not he can bring Leslyn down here one weekend, for us to drive back the next weekend with her. I'm afraid perhaps I hurt his feelings on the subject of Peedee, but I hope not. I now think I was a little abrupt about what he should do and what he shouldn't do- especially since he's so busy making a living, etc. Nonetheless I still think he should devote more time to being a father- although I should have said it more tactfully.

We've been having a moderately active social life recently, and been to the Dvises and some Peruvians for cocktails. Yesterday I had to go to the Foreign Service Wives' luncheon, which was the usual expensive bore. Father kindly sat for me, as well as calling for and delivering me, along with Laurence and Coit and Betsey. It certainly makes it a lot cheaper and easier for me when he can sit for me- and of course I feel that Laurence is perfectly safe. I'll be lost when they go at the end of this month, because I've really felt freer these last two months than ever before in Washington- as if I could at any time march off downtown. Not that I've done it so very much, on account of the expense, but it's a nice feeling even if you don't carry it into action.

Well, Shelley went off to Rio on Monday, and Francesca is busy packing up and buying things for their complete departure after Shiela graduates in June. Shelly will come back to the U.S. then, and then is when we are going to have our cocktail party for them. Even their old grandfather is going down to Rio- he must be about eighty, and nearly as deaf as a post, but he still enjoys gardening enthusiastically, and is looking forward to having new floral worlds to conquer. About half an hour before Shelley left for the airport Shiela got a letter from Swarthmore accepting her as a student for the coming year, which left the whole family speechless with delight. I had written Swarthmore a letter of recommendation about her, so I too felt a proprietary interest in the matter.

All this rainy weather has been good for the front lawn, but hasn't seem to have done quite as much for the back lawn. You should see our wonderful azaleas right now! and the woods are dotted with scores of dogwood trees in bloom. I got so enthusiastic I even cleaned the porch woodwork and floor, but it hasn't been warm enough to encourage me to bring up the porch furniture yet.

I certainly hope to hear from you tomorrow morning saying all is well on the Lemington Front.

Love to you both,