

December 12, 1950
Bethesda, Maryland

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Dear Family,

The other day I dropped this typewriter and it suffered a great many internal injuries. Before it goes to be repaired I thought I'd better write you about Laurence's birthday (as best I can). In any case, I get very few opportunities to write letters now, so I thought I'd better grab a few spare moments and at least start a letter. From now till Christmas I don't anticipate many spare moments during my few waking hours.

The birthday celebration was splendid. Laurence requested and received a birthday cake with dogies on it. Bets and Coit were confined to their beds with colds and fever, but Jimmie, Suzie, and Herbie Thomas came, about two o'clock. They consumed their cake and ice cream merrily and then announced they were all ready to go to the movies. It was Hopalong Cassidy! Also a serial of Superman, a Walt Disney, a documentary on fighting forest fires, and five chances out of what William estimated must have been five hundred yelling children to win prizes. All for 25 cents per child. It was L.J.'s first movie, and a great many things passed merrily over his head (all according to William, since I retired to bed as soon as they had left.) The funniest thing was said after the event: William asked him if he had recognized the long-necked animal in the Walt Disney cartoon. Laurence said he hadn't. "It was a dinosaur!" replied William. Very seriously, Laurence then remarked, "No! that must have been a very, very old cartoon, if the animal was a dinosaur."

After they returned and I arose, William treated us both to a dinner at the Peking restaurant. A thrill for me, since it was the first time I'd been out at night since the beginning of September. And on Sunday night we went to call on the Hoovers in the late afternoon. We had a good talk in spite of the three boys. The baby, Virginia Lynn, is four months old or so and simply adorable. Dimpled, quick to smile and coo, big brown eyes, altogether satisfactory. By the time we started home it was snowing quite hard, much to L.J. and my delight.

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The snow is still on the ground, so he can use that little-used sled of his at last.

I am looking forward to going to my first party on Thursday the 21st. Mrs. Wiggins will sit for us. It is a farewell party for Spence King, the Bolivian desk officer who is going to some University to study economics, I think. William likes and has a very high regard for him. I also admired his sagacious long ago, on the famous occasion of Lawrence's remark that Mr. King didn't have much hair. Although a bachelor himself, Spence coolly replied that it was because he hadn't heeded his mother's warning to eat all his green vegetables. I was struck dumb with admiration. A young man who can reply so quickly and so well to a difficult remark is bound to go far.

This typewriter is going from bad to worse. I really ruined it.

William is now officially in charge of North and West Coast affairs. He hopes to get an assistant chief some day, because now that Rolly Atwood is gone he has a lot more work. He also hopes to get an assistant who can be learning the ropes around NWC so as to be able to take over when William leaves.

If I am going to feed my family, I'd better stop and cook something.

Love,

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