

Wednesday, March 13, 1940

Well, dear Montana Folks,

Surely were glad to get your letter, Emmet, and do you know the date we have set to start is May 13, that is exactly two months from this morning? Johnny Boy has the days all marked off on the calendar, already. We moved the date up so that we can attend the graduation at the school. We remember how much pleasure we got last time from the school entertainment and Mack had to be a flower girl. We expect to arrive the afternoon or evening of the fourteenth. Will try to reach Helena to stay there over night.

The fishing trip surely sounded good to John and he will bring all his fishing tackle and Johnny will see that the twenty-two special goes along for prairie dogs. We appreciate your offer to have Johnny stay with you and especially since school is out and Joe will be there for company for him, but after I thought that was all settled Big John began crawfishing around to me saying, "It would be kind of nice to have the little devil go all the way with us, though. I'd like to have him along." And of course I'd miss him, too, so we shall also see about that when the time comes, just what we'll do. It's all going to be lots of fun and we are looking forward to it. We are hiking already, getting in trim. I walked down town the other way all the way, about three and a half miles in forty-five minutes, a good steady clip. It's a little harder on pavement, too, than on country ground.

I was getting lunch the other day and standing at my sink. I looked out my window and who should I see but Rose come flying down the street, blooming and buxom, on Elsie's wheel, she was

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dressed in red turtle neck sweater, and tight blue overalls. She'd wheeled all the way in town, she had lunch here, then rode to Florence's over by Manito, visited awhile, then rode back home. She said she was having one last fling before spring planting.

I haven't got around to sending Mack his cookies, yet, but I must do it one of these days. I don't know when I've had a busier winter, I have a dreadful time trying to keep up on my reading, there are so many things to do all the time at once.

John's sister will have been married twenty-five years March 17, St. Patrick's Day. We are all going out to her mother-in-law's who lives on an adjoining ranch. Bertha's family doesn't know we are all coming. ~~an~~ They have been invited at the mother's there for dinner and so when they arrive there we shall all be there with presents, and cake, etc. Elsie is driving out Sat. ahead to play at a dance at Worley Sat. Night. Bertha's two boys and a daughter have the orchestra and they asked Elsie to play, too, this time.

Bertha's house has just recently been wired for electricity and since she has no iron we are taking her an electric one with automatic control and so forth.

Did you, Alice, have to dress your little boys till they were half-grown? Johnny can do it nicely if he has to, but every morning he weedles me into it. And since I want to get him to school on time as smoothly and calmly as possible I succumb to his coaxing. He said this morning, "Please dress me, don't you want to be kind, and besides, it's women's work to dress little boys!" ---Well, how is everyone, over there? We can hardly wait to see. See how we stagger! Love to all, *Alberta*

Wednesday morning, April 8. 1940

My dearest Montana Folks,

Put out your "Welcome Mat", we think the Millers are coming over to walk across it. WE'VE had a feeling for some time, but weren't too sure. The firemen have been able to leave town lately with special permission and they are allowing them to vacation out of town, so unless an emergency happens we can take a trip. We thought we'd go thru Yellowstone first, and then stop at Bozeman on our way out and see Mack and if he could take the week-end off and it works out that way he might drive to Big Sandy with us. Then after our visit at Sandy we'd come home by Glacier. John's vacation is from May 21st to June 7th.

We have five tires and there are four from Frank's car and they say one can get gas in Montana and Idaho and we can take some extra with us. If you should hear they are rationing gas over there you could let us know.

We were so happy to get your letter and know the chickens must keep you busy, Alice. We had the nicest letter from Mack and was happy to know he has been doing so well. I'll write him one of these days.

I'm glad you liked the pictures. We had quite a number taken, one of John in his business suit colored and one of me colored and the colored one is so much better than the black and white of me that I was sorry I had any black and white finished like the one I sent you. They projected it some way it seems and I do not like it as well. Then we had a whole panel of pictures ^{of Johnny} in different poses in the scout suit and one in a white blouse; when we come over I'll bring

them.

Frank is still in the hospital. He wrote they were treating his lung by inflation. Poor fellow has been in bed about five months now. His cousin, a middle-aged woman made the trip from Frisco to see him at Mare Island, but they wouldn't let her in and said no one but a brother, sister, or mother could visit him. The least excitement raises his temperature. But he writes cheerful letters.

The springtime is so lovely; our violets, daffodils, and crocuses are all in bloom. Every one is gardening and cleaning up their yards and bon fire smoke trails upward smelling so pungent with old dead leaves and weeds.

I laughed so at Johnny, and so did John when I told him. Johnny and 2 pals went up on the bluff and after awhile I heard a terrific bellowing and I looked out the window and here came Johnny, bawling to the skies, one rubber boot off in his hand *and him* all soaking wet. He was yelling, "I fell in the swamp, but my mama will take care of me." His two pals were coming along with him wide-eyed with wonder at how he could make so much noise, I guess. I got him on *a* kitchen chair and began undressing him and the louder he bawled, then every once in a while he'd stick his hand in his pocket and fish out a piece of candy and put that in his mouth. *It* would click against his teeth, and the syrup would run out the corner of the open, howling mouth, and he never offered his pals a piece. They kept looking at him and following the course of each piece of candy to his mouth *yet* never a piece did he offer them. He just kept crying, "I'm all wet and cold, mama, change my clothes. Put me to bed." He wasn't much of a boy scout then, just a cold wet shivering big baby, but he could still eat candy. John told all the firemen and they got quite a kick out of it.

Monday noon, May 6, 1940

My dearest Alice,

So happy to get your recent letter. I have an idea when it warms up it won't take long for the snow patches to disappear and the buds to spring out. Everything has been blossoming and blooming here for quite a while. The orchard trees across the street are all pink and white and we must have a hundred tulips in bloom beside all of John's rock garden flowers. I have a bouquet of lilacs on the table now. However, it has surely been wet this spring. I think I can count on one hand the number of sunny days we've had, just rain, rain, rain, hardly a Monday we could wash or hang things on the line for housecleaning. The weather bureau says the heaviest rain in 47 years. But rain or shine my two men must picnic and I've picniced and picniced with the rain running off the end of my nose on to my sandwich. It makes me think of Seattle. But that's why everything is so green and all in bloom, I guess, quite early this year.

We are taking a couple of our good camp beds with us and the umbrella tent. It was so much fun sleeping that way in the Southwest last year that we thought we might try in on this trip, but eat most of our meals in cafes, breakfasts and dinners, but lunch with us noons. So I hope it will be warm enough. Of course we'll have heavy clothes and blankets with us so we ought to be O.K.

But the real purpose of this letter, Alice, my dear, is to tell you not to try to do too much in readiness for our coming. You are busy with your little chickens and other things, and so we all should worry if you haven't got your housecleaning done. I remember last fall when you were here I was swamped with canning and going to the dentist and had a touch of rheumatism and was about all in. Therefore I've tried not to do more than I can this spring. I finally have my housecleaning done, though John and Frank helped with woodwork washing, waxing floors, etc. But I don't seem able to wash and iron and brew and bake and clean all on one day any more. Maybe the old grey mare aint what she used to be! Eh! What? So don't clean and bake. We can even sleep on our camp beds and drink fruit juices out of a tin can, (we're bringing some with us) if we can save you a few steps. So don't worry if we can't eat off the floor!

I can hardly believe dearest ones that we shall be on the road past Missoula this time next Monday coming over to visit you good folks. Isn't it just too swell!

John says we'll skip Minot and go thru Glendive angling over to Aberdeen and save some time and mileage. We should reach your place the afternoon or evening of the 14th. We shall try calling you up from Big Sandy when we arrive. Pearl and your daddy are probably staying at the ranch but we'll go by the town house just in case they happen to be in.

So you better get ready, Nempo, if you can. My two Johns have decided that little John goes to Aberdeen, also, so that's settled. We've got the cutest lead soldiers for Tommy and a book, must get something for Catherine and Arry Ann before we start. Love by the bushels till we see you all, then some more.

Alberta

Thursday, June 27, 1940

My dear Folks,

How's everybody. Rec'd your lovely long letter and as always was glad to have the news. Also I had the loveliest letter from Pearl, and I think she was very pleased over her birthday party. It was a very nice thing for you and Florence to do.

How is Kade? I wrote her after I'd reached home to thank her for the handles. I felt guilty about not seeing her again. She is good -hearted and means well and is always so very friendly to us that I wouldn't hurt her feelings for the world. Iritis can be quite serious, but I hope she is getting along all right. What did she do with her youngsters while away?

I thought your daddy might like to read Dorothy T.'s article in case he hasn't already in some other publication. He likes her views so much. The picture of the storm John sends along, the side about Paw sleeping under the tree. He says it reminds him of the night Emmet came to his rescue when he was holding the tent down like a water-swept mariner while the wind blew a gale and the rain fell. So a thief stole the front door to your frat house, Mack, also I saw a picture in our paper of a group of the R.O.T.C. from Bozeman who are stationed at Fort Wright for a summer session in soldiering, I believe one of the names was Lee.

Johnny told me the other day he'd been including in his prayers at night the request that God make it possible for him to go to M. E. Quinn's ranch at Big Sandy in the fire truck to see good old Joe. I asked, "Why a fire truck?" And Johnny said, "So I'd get there faster, without spending hours on the road." And he and Margaret W. have been playing they were driving over there. Margaret is always the driver while Johnny stands up in the make-believe car and shoots buffalo, Indians, and antelope.

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I heard him shout to her, "Now when you see a mail box with M. E. Quinn on it turn up the hill, and there'll be the place."

When I was reading the paper this morning I heard him yell at me, "Mama, come quick, something's after me." I ran out and he was as white as a sheet, "There, in the mint bushes, I saw it wiggle, I thre^w my Beebe gun at him. Maybe it's something escaped from the zoo." *But I didn't find a thing. Neighbor's cat, maybe.*

A new family moved into the new white house with the red roof over on the corner this spring. They have two cute little girls. The oldest, Sally Sue, Johnny thinks is very nice. He told me that she asked him if he didn't^t think she was the prettiest girl in the world. "What did you tell her?" I asked. "Well, I said, 'Sally Sue, I haven't seen all the girls in the world, so I can't truthfully say, but I think you must be one of the prettiest, and if you want to, you can be my girl.' You see, mama, if I told her she was the very prettiest, she'd quit me, and I can't have that happen." Dear me, I'm afraid he's going to be a devil with the ladies' like John's brother Frank. Mrs. Walker says Margaret pouts around and says she doesn't like Sally Sue, and she won't throw the ball for Sally to catch and she whacked Johnny across his sunburned back with the baseball bat for being 'too nice to Sally Sue.'

The movies of the rattle snake you brought in Nem are very good. Everybody just gasps when they see it coiling. And the pictures of Johnny riding the Shetland are so cute. The wild cowboys look like real western movies heroes riding their horses so ferociously down by Eagle Creek. And those that were taken the day ^{our} ~~the~~ three boys went to Big Rock show the steep climbing, and even in the pictures everyone can see Joe's good care of Johnny, helping him down the steep ledges and crevices.

A letter just came from Florence Maxwell. I do wish that Frank felt he could stay a few days longer so that they could run down and see us. I'd love to squeeze all three of those loveable kiddies again. We could take them to Nat and all have the best time. Sometimes a person can really do more things than he thinks he can, stay away a little longer, I mean. I was looking at our map of our trip and saw that we couldn't have been much more than a hundred miles from Butte Neb. when we were at one point in S. Dak. and I thought we should have driven down and looked up your birth place, Nem, while we were that close. I'll bet you'd have liked that, too.

Last night we had the Gormley's over for a steak dinner and fresh cherry pie for dessert. He's on the Dept. and they just got back from Violet's sister's big ranch over in the Bitter roots. Their vacation started just before our's ended. She had the prettiest pictures of places there. Also they have a ranch of their own there that she inherited from her parents, and a set of cute cabins with fireplaces in them built for fishermen and hunters by the Skalkaho Falls. They have it all rented out and when they retire in about four or five years they will spend their summers there, anyway. They say it gets forty and fifty below there in the winter. But it surely is a beautiful looking country. They are a lovely couple and we are very fond of them, Violet and Vern. They have a daughter going to B. College and three years ago their little son aged eight, then, died. She watched Johnny all the time so longingly and I could see how she misses her boy, but she is very brave about it. When we go to their home she lets Johnny draw on his blackboard and then she leaves the pictures there until some other child comes and erases them. It comforts her to have childish pictures on the board.

Her sister had four boys and one by one had died, all healthy, too. Also she lost her first husband and is married again. So when Violet lost her boy, too, the sister felt it was adjusted herself, finally.

draw more.

4.

Irene and Howard are leaving for New York and other points east July 1st, so we are having them over for dinner to-morrow night. We eat most of our evening meals in the back yard, and it's so cosy with a bright fireplace burning in the rock fireplace out there, it's always a little cool evenings, flowers all around us and the table and bench there that John made for the backyard, our gay lawn chairs set out, and the table laid with a gay cloth and the colored pottery. I love the summertime. That's what I like about the California coast. It's always beautiful summer time in the south there.

John picked our red currants and I have been making jelly, also I ground up pie cherries and made a lot of the best jam, all jelly-like. It's John's favorite.

The Hagens ate with us last Sat. nite. Clara tells me Grace is happy in Minneapolis and is thinking of taking a course in designing and dressmaking at the University there. I don't know whether I told you or not but she is a regular artist when it comes to that and has made quite a bit of money sewing for people. She has already taken different courses in it and her instructors always told her she was a genius at it and if she wanted to open a speciality shop of any kind they'd give her all the support they could. Jay is apparently doing quite well again, working in the Table Supply in Colfax. He likes it and Clara felt that if he did well again and leaves drink alone they might get together again some time. Too bad everybody can't be happy. Clara's younger brother Ralph is to be married, Sunday His little ^{smutheart I mean,} girl is so cute, very tiny. John thinks Ralph will have to keep her in his vest pocket or he'll lose her. Weigh's about ninety pounds, brown eyes, black hair. Well, love galore to Alice, Nem, Mack and Joe from the two Jay's and the A.
Regards to Alfred.

Newman Lake

On a blanket on the
Beach in with the pine trees,
July 22, 1940

Dear folksies,

How is everybody? John's threading up his fishing pole and Johnny and his pal Dennis are reluctantly putting on their clothes after their swim so we can eat lunch. We stopped by the ranch and Rose gave us some strawberries. The second crop's coming on, she poured cream in a jar but we came away leaving it sitting on the kitchen table, so John'll have to be content with only sugar on the berries. It's a beautiful still summer day with the lake like glass. We are going roaming in the boat around all the cones and bays after lunch. Wish you were all here, I'd share my blanket and lunch with you.

A few weeks ago I thought I had a few weeks and so would have my glasses changed. But it turned out to be the busiest week of all. We had a chance to get 3 apple boxes of apricots and 2 crates of young berries quite reasonably then Bob Mc Gregor, fruit buyer for Burgans. So a couple nights John and I worked until midnight on them. John had to split & seed the apricots as I'd had my pupils dilated and couldn't see well enough. Went to a very fine eye specialist and he surely did fit me well. Lately glasses and wonderful visions. Then Lisle was here and at end of week when eyes were normal again I had 3 big dinner parties.

John bought me the grandest vacuum sweeper \$90. McAllister. The army and navy use them exclusively. They have a $\frac{2}{3}$ Horse Power motor and when I clean the

Davenport cushions etc. not a speck of dust is left in them. The ^{sales} man scrubbed all my chairs and upholstery and hall rug. Applied soapy suds, scrubbed & then sucked the dirty water up, then rinsed and sucked the rinsing water up and all was then practically dry. Looked like new. It conditions the air in the house too. Has a filter machine in it that takes all the dust from the air. The dust goes into a drawer instead of a bag and can be emptied without any mess. I can put ice cubes in the drawer, turn the thing on and the room temperature is lowered at once. You can paint, calcimine, dry your hair, wax floors, mop floors, clean upholstery, de-moth and other things. It's quite a magical affair. Tremendous improvement over

my old one. July 24. Westbrooks were here. They are in their early

sixties, very friendly and entertaining. You remember them don't you, Emmet? They were on our old place from 1906 to 1908. I stayed out there with them for awhile and certainly did enjoy them when I was little. Mrs. W. was always playing the piano for me. She still plays. A few nights after they were here we drove out home and they were visiting out there, so she played the piño and Elsie, her squeeze-box as she calls it. Papa and W. sat on the steps and talked of old times. Mrs. W. said she'd played in an orchestra of eight pieces at country dances for years around Calgary. He farmed at Foremost, retired in 1937, moved into Calgary and he says his home is one of the show places of that city now. He owns seven houses in Calgary and a garage in an adjoining town and made a small fortune investing in oil in the fields in Alberta. He has an income of two hundred a month clear. They take a big ten-thousand-mile trip every few years, and have been all over the U.S., Mexico, and Canada. They invited us up to visit them some time. It was a lot of fun seeing them again. They stopped at Ed Fitch's on their way down. I think they said he is postmaster at Simpson, Montana. Tom Westbrook told Papa that Fitch had invested one hundred thousand dollars in oil, mortgaged everything he had and lost it all. So that's why he has nothing in spite of his years of conniving and scheming. He's quite a pathetic old figure now.

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Elsie and Frank, Florence and Ollie, and John's cousins Nina and Clarence; all spent their vacations in Banff this summer, all went separately, but they were all loud in their praise of the place and all said the C.P.R. Hotel there was the grandest any of them had ever seen anywhere, a regular palace of about seven hundred rooms away up in those mountains and the grandeur of it and beauty of furnishings surprised them all.

The folks including Ernie, Tom and Ella were at Boswell for several days and the boys surely did catch the most wonderful fish and loved it there. They haven't said anything to me about going to Montana. I guess they are like Frank Maxwell, find it impossible to stay away from their place for more than a few days at a time. I can't understand why Papa thinks he has to dig like he does. He could get along very nicely without working. But it must be because he's always gone at such a pace that he can't let up. The strawberries are beginning again now, and pretty soon it will be tomatoes.

John has been very busy fire-fighting this summer, had more fires than usual. I was amused at his telling about the neighborhood kids by the station all playing around the engines. They even got under the trucks and lay on their bellies, playing Indian. They'd come whooping and sliding out from under and John said if there's been a call and they'd had to dash to a fire in a hurry they'd have run over a dozen kids, so John was in charge and had to make them all get out much to their sorrow.

Johnny is still heavy on the pop. John made him a big batch of Root Beer, and it seemed to me my ice box door was being continually opened, Johnny putting bottle in to cool and taking those out already cold. The supply lasted no time, and Johnny's allowance lasts no time, it's spent for pop at once, so John says if he doesn't quit he will fizz off one of these days and there'll be a few bubbles lying on the floor, the end of Johnny.

I'm forwarding Aunt Minnie's letter so you can read the nice things she says about you, Nem. We were surely glad you came with us and it pleased John to have you like gathering rocks so well and going snail and fossil-hunting up the river with him.

I'll bet Fred was glad to have Walter visit him. He must be a very successful dentist and their trip certainly sounded interesting to me.

Note the stamp on the envelope. Joe will probably like it for his collection. John's been reading a lot of books on collecting and there is certainly a great deal to it. His collections ~~had~~ been growing to beat the band.

have
We are having an International Convention here the first week in August. It is a Chief's Convention and all of the Spokane firemen and their wives are hosts and hostesses. There is to be a ball at Davenport's also two banquets there, and a bridge luncheon for the women. The committee women for the latter bought the gifts for the bridge party the other day and paid sixty-five dollars for them, so the prizes are lovely and they have a lot of them. Love to all of you and write when you can. Johnny still worships Joe from afar. Alberta.

August 26, 1940

Dear Montana Folks,

Well, how are you all and are you still all on deck? I haven't heard for about six weeks or more. Had a very nice letter from little Florence which I enjoyed very much and which made me long to see those three dear kiddies. Every time we see them eating those bananas in our movies we are overcome afresh with their charms.

Inclosed find clippings, a snap taken on the edge of our rock-edged pool and pansy bed, a handkerchief I think must be yours and which I found in my laundry bag upon my arrival home.

Do you recall having met Mr. Goudge? Well, at least you know Mrs. Goudge---her husband died suddenly this weekend of a blood clot on his brain. Also came a letter from Jenny Fitch saying Mr. Fitch had died August 14, and was buried August 17, aged 78---another old Timer gone. We get pushed closer to the front all the time, with the old guard disappearing one by one. Papa was quite affected by Fitch's passing, stirred a lot of early day memories in his mind, I'm sure.

How is everything with all of you folks, the harvesting, your very good health, Mack's plans for returning to college, Joe's high aims and hopes and so forth and so on? Is Alfred with you? We see him mounting the tractor and riding away in our movies. The Montana and spring vacation pictures are all very good and we re-live the trip. We are hoping at least some of you will be over this fall at fruit time and can view them and see how well you all look. Especially Joe on the trombone, John wishes for sound effect every time he sees Joe playing, it's very fine and natural of him. The radio band concert played one of his practice piece the other day and made me quite lonesome to see him.

Saturday evening we drove to Irene and Howard's, put our car in their garage. They returned from their cleaning plant, hooked on to their motor boat on the trailer and off the four of us started for Copeland about 7 p.m. We had left Johnny to spend the weekend with a little friend of his as he didn't care to go with us. We reached Wilfred's ranch about eleven. He has had the Andrew home made into a very lovely completely modern home, five beautiful bedrooms. Three of them upstairs and we slept so well with the cold mountain air coming in thru the casement windows up there. He has a very nice housekeeper an older woman, Mrs. Ellenson, who is such a good cook and very loving and kind to his two beautiful curly-haired children. John was delighted after going to bed to hear coyotes howling and I think he slept with his head out the window by the bedside all night.

The next morning the boys put their launch on the river and we had the grandest ride up and down the Kootenay, although it made me very sad to ride by your old place and see it in such utter ruin. Farther up the river along by the place where we took the lunch to the boys that day long ago, near where Miss Carrol was, we saw a bear come down and get a drink, swim in the river and then began to frisk on a log. Suddenly he saw us bearing down on him in our motor boat, John photographing him all the while, and my! how he jumped and ran up the bank into the bushes. Also we saw pheasants, ducks, and cranes. We then went back to dinner, passed the old weather-beaten Delbohn place, and Donohoe's. But first when we got out of the boat at the Ferry after our morning boatride we got into Howard's car and drove to the McAnelly place. The first floor is all that's left standing with only one wall up and the divisions of the rooms marked by two bars, also the

staircase. The floor is all covered with shattered plaster. Irene and I walked from one room to another, saying, "here's the study, here's the front room, here sat Alice's piano." I wished I could have turned the years back for a little while and found you all there and the house all lovely and homey as it once was, as I stood there and looked around. All that was left off the bathroom was the toilet and John seeing I felt bad tried to make me laugh by saying to Howard, "Here's a good toilet I'll sell you cheap for your motor boat." The yard was all clay and dried tumble weed, with a dike running near where the front porch used to be across the front yard. In fact, the whole Valley is much dryer and very dusty since they've drained it and all the trees along the river bank near your place have been cut down, but the river is still pretty farther along. However, they all say they are getting fifty-five to seventy bushels of wheat to the acre there this summer. I thought it too bad how short-lived so big a house was. After all it was not occupied many years before it was destroyed and all the buildings are gone, too, but one barn and the roof has fallen in there. I'm glad I can remember it in every detail anyway, and though it's changed forever it still lives on in my memory. It did have an atmosphere though I know some of the glory with which I view it was due to the romantic outlook of my sixteen-year-old mind.

We drove to the Andrew Hill place where Jimmy, his wife and two little girls live and they like it there so much. They lived in Spokane for quite a while. The old Chisholm home is vacant. You knew I suppose that old Dan had married again and has a thirteen-year old boy. The old man had a stroke not long ago and is in a bad way.

After we had dinner, Jimmy and his family came over, and part of us went by boat and the other half crossed the ferry in the car and all of us met at the Ralph Kerr place. They say the Kerr's inherited some money and they have built a beautiful house down nearer the river but in the most beautiful setting with a nice cedar grove behind it in which they have a hammock, fountains, flowers, benches and everything very beautiful. They have their own electric plant and their house is even heated by electricity. It was so lovely and cool and clean therewith a beautiful big sleeping porch opening on the cedar grove. A big flat lawn surrounds the house and they'd had their dinner outside. The Bonner's High School principal, wife and child were there for the week-end. Mrs. Kerr was so glad to have word for you all, and said, "Isn't it a shame the McAnelly place has fallen into ruin, and Mrs. McAnelly had planned that house and was so proud of it?" She asked how Pearly-Girlie was, said your mother always called Pearl that. She said she'd never forget how sweet and kind Alice was and how she liked to have you visit her. It was twenty-three or twenty-four years since I was there with you Alice, but everything began to come back, the picture of her as a nurse, all her crocheting, and quaint old-fashioned things. She has a silver coffee service from Norway, spoons and all, over a hundred years old, vases, and that wonderful floor clock Mr. Kerr made. I told her about your nice sons, and she was happy to hear about them. She showed me a picture of her nice-looking boy and said he had a year and a half of University and is hoping to go back. She told how badly she'd wanted a big family and had ruined her health for years trying to raise more than one child. Said she wants desperately now to adopt two little girls, but they live too far from a school. She looked very nice and is quite well, now. We walked up the Canyon and looked at the ruins of the old log house where they used to live. But oh, the new house is just beautiful, all frame and has a red roof, nice porches, beautiful windows.

I told her I'd give you her greetings and tell you what a lovely place she had. However, Irene and I thought how lonely she must be there in the winter.

I walked down to the river by way of an old slough and rode back in the motor boat with John and Howard and the others drove back by car and crossed the Ferry. Then we went to Andrew's for supper. Irene put the children to bed and tucked them in. My! how they do love her. I admired her all day the way she handled them. She gives them all the mothering she can whenever she's with them. She let the little girl fuss with Irene's hair for an hour. Peggy was having such a good time combing out her pretty aunt's curls. Peggy is five now and George four and even though they have lost their mother every one is grand to them and they are certainly sweet little kiddies. Wilfred just lives for them and is so gentle and good to them. Peggy just knows where everything is and helps so much. She asked Wilfred if we couldn't have dinner out of the pretty glass dishes because it was Sunday and there was company so he climbed up and got the dishes from the high built-ins. He washed them, and I wiped them and Peggy and I set the table with them. There is so much peace and harmony there, but I felt all day how sad Bernice couldn't be living, enjoying those exquisite children, Wilfred, and that lovely new home. I could feel her absence all the time I was there. All those dishes and glassware I remember her so proudly showing me before she was married at a shower we all gave her. Then there was her cedar chest of beautiful linens, most of them having been embroidered by her. They are saving it all for Peggy so she will have her mother's handwork when she's grown up. Everyone seems to depend on Irene and she goes around so sweet, smiling, and efficient in her dear little way helping them all out, advising, and all of them worshiping, her needing her, depending on her.

We left the Valley about twenty minutes of nine and got back to Spokane at twenty minutes before midnight. Irene and I slept in the back seat while John and Howard took turns driving. I really feel quite tired to-day. I should take Johnny Boy down town and buy him some school shoes and longies but I'll have to do that another day.

We had an International Fire Chiefs' Convention here the first week in August. Spokane is the smallest city that has ever been privileged to have it, but the Chief worked tooth and nail for it. It brought over ten thousand dollars to Spokane. All the Spokane firemen and their wives were the hosts and hostesses and our parties were all at the Davenport Hotel. It was on for four days. Johnny spent that week at Grandpa Quinn's and all I did was to go to parties, come home take baths, sleep, dress and go again. Monday was a dance, Tuesday was a beautiful luncheon, organ concert, and bridge party for all the ladies. We were all handed a corsage of roses as we entered, and given a lovely chicken luncheon. The prizes cost one hundred twenty-five dollars, and were lace table cloths, pocket books, traveling cases and such things. Then Wednesday twenty-three enormous buses took the the seven hundred visiting chiefs and their wives to Coulee Dam. We left the Davenport at eight-thirty a.m. John and I were host and hostess on one of the buses. At the Dam everyone had a lovely turkey dinner. The trip cost 1739 dollars. Then we got back to town at seven p.m. and had to rush home, rest, bathe, and dress and go to the formal ball at the Marie Antoinette Room. The next night was the formal banquet and we ate from seven until ten, seven courses, the loveliest food, two dollars a plate, and the loveliest music played for all the different states, the appropriate songs, and "Sidewalks of New York" for the New Yorkers. There were Indian Chiefs present

4.

in all their regalia for the benefit of the Easterners, Indian girls handed out cigarettes, chiclets, candy, gum; cigarette lighters and eversharp pencils were at every plate as favors, and little Indian tepee incense burners. The ice cream was molded in the shapes of roses, lilies, and all sorts of things. The little cakes were frosted with a fire chief's head on them, all in all I never saw such grand entertaining in my life. And of course there were cocktails all the time in the cocktail room, but I don't indulge so that part didn't impress me. However, there were lovely people here, and of a very high class, and I didn't see anything but what was entirely proper. John and I just followed the southerners around to listen to their accent. They are such smooth, soft-spoken people and so very charming. We met some people by the name of Millers from Florida and were with them a great deal. They have invited us to park our trailer in their back yard when we retire. Also we made friends with people from Louisiana and California. I don't believe I ever had such a busy summer. So many people have visited from out of town and I've had them for dinner. I also had a neighborhood supper in my back yard one evening last week. Everyone brought something, but I furnished the main hot dish for seventeen people and made seven ^{green} apple pies on which we served ice cream.

Well, you probably won't be able to read all this letter in one setting, but I thought you might like to hear of the Bonner trip. Also, I meant to say that Chief Miller from Florida is a fine singer and his people were all theatrical people. He, himself, was trained to sing by Al Jolson. Two school teacher, pretty young girls, both fine pianists were traveling with the Millers and I enjoyed comparing teaching notes, education, and methods with those in their part of the country. I must take a nap. Write one of these days. Bless you all and good luck to every one of you.

Lovingly, Alberta.

P.S. Irene told me that about a year ago Mr. Thaxton took her, Pearl Guthrie, Ann Holden (I believe that was the name) and Rosie Donohu out to dinner one evening. She said they had a lovely time. His wife was out of town and he was lonely.

Alice, what was the name of the woman who had the two little boys who lived up in the hills now, you remember the cold pancake episode at her house?

When Mrs. Kerr asked how you all were in Montana I told her that I was sure you'd all been very happy over there, in fact that you really liked it better and were all more content and had better health than when you lived at Copeland. I told her you'd all made friends and had been quite satisfied with the country there, and she was glad that all was well with you all.

Emmet, I've been wanting to ask you this question for some time, and really meant to when I talked with you, but it always slipped my mind. John and I are making out wills for the first time since we've had Johnny and the question of his guardianship has come up just in case anything should happen to us both. John and I both are thoroughly agreed that we'd like to have you first of all in such an exigency for his guardian. We know you and Alice would be kind to him and we could trust him to you. There would be, I feel confident, enough money from the sale of our property, insurance, etc. to take care of him and see him thru college. So if you are willing we shall name you as guardian when we fill out the forms.

Alberta

Gloria McGregor III

Another case of infantile paralysis, Gloria McGregor, 8, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Robert McGregor, W3218 Alice, was reported yesterday. The little girl was taken ill early this week.

Sunday, Oct. 13, 1940
Alice's birthday.

Dearest Alice,

Well, I expect you Montana folks are all together in one house or another to-day celebrating your birthday. Write me about it, won't you? We were happy to have your letter and to know the big brother arrived home safely, sorry you couldn't come, but terribly happy I got to see him, anyhow. It was nice having direct word of you all, including Mack and Joe. How are both boys now?

You see the above clipping. However, it was a light case and the doctors are confident she will be entirely well. They thought she had flu, then suddenly she couldn't move her right leg; they took tests and decided it was paralysis. They have the leg in a cast now to rest the muscles and she is doing fine, can move the ankle and toes of the affected foot already. We were over there for dinner the night she had a fever and was coming down with it. Edna thought she had a cold and so Johnny didn't go near her, however he was in the same room and played with her toys so the doctors said he had a direct exposure anyway and to isolate him for fourteen days. I never realized how much he liked school. He cried so hard because he has to stay home. But I do all I can to amuse him and it's hard for him to be away from all his buddies. However, I'm not afraid for him, he's fine, and we have only four days to go now, and I never saw him so peppy in his life. It's a wonder the roof doesn't fly off, he saws away on his mouth organ, sings at the top of his voice, (not too harmoniously), jigs, and just now, I found the wet dish rag hanging on my nice white kitchen indirect lighting bowl dripping down from the ceiling where he had given it a heave in his great hurry as he dashed thru the kitchen, so I had to stand on a chair take the dish cloth off and hang it out to dry. I take

P.S. I'm crazy about night school. I think I enjoy the public speaking most of all. We give a speech every night we go. We often draw our subject out of a hat which is good practice in thinking.

him for walks on the bluff and with his B.B. gun along we play we are hunting lions in Africa. I wade thru swamps, climb rocky cliffs, and follow pine needle-strewn paths with him for miles. And only now and then I am aware that I haven't this week's washing or mending done. He returns to school Friday the 18, Glory, Halleljulah!

John and I went to a wedding at the Catholic Church at six o'clock yesterday morning. John got up, down at the station at twenty minutes of five and I, thinking he'd be hungry before the wedding breakfast was served was sympathizing with him and to my surprise he said, "You don't catch me going to even a wedding mass without my morning coffee, I made me two cups before I came home. I woke up and dressed as soon as he got here and it seemed funny to be dressing up so fine at half-past five in the morning. I staggered down the steps with him to the car half asleep and then when we got to the church the bride and groom were ^{already} kneeling at the altar. There was so much form and routine and John said they surely should stay married after so long and involved a ceremony! When the wedding was over at about seven we went to the apartment where the pair will live, for the wedding breakfast. She is a graduate nurse and will continue with her position at Sacred Heart, therefore she chose an apartment quite near to the hospital. The mother and bride's cousins served us the loveliest breakfast, fruit cup, chicken a la king, hot rolls, marmalade, ice cream in wedding bell shape, and beautiful three-tiered wedding cake which completely covered a round table, it was so huge. There were about thirty there for breakfast. The couple left amid a shower of rice for their trip and we stayed and looked at presents and visited a little. There were the loveliest roses on all the tables and every ^{thing} was so bright and new and handsome. It was still only a quarter of nine when we got home. Johnny Boy had just got himself dressed and was bringing in the milk from the front porch in sort of a lost, lonesome way when we drove up. I got him a nice hot breakfast, packed a lunch, changed clothes and we three went to the lake for the day.

Did I tell you John got a good buy on some lake property and bought four lots this fall? The next day he sold one of the lots and a part of one we had retained from our other property, so now we have three on the same bay where our cottage was. We have a fine spot near the beach selected for another cottage and we measured and stepped it off, yesterday. We built a big beach fire, had our lunch and spent the afternoon riding around the lake. It was an ideal fall day.

A week ago to-day ^{Sunday} I had thirty people here. Bertha and her family came in from the ranch and were here for dinner, making fourteen. Then in the afternoon all the town relatives came over and all had supper here, tho for the evening meal several brought cakes, butter, rolls, cheese, etc. Bertha's daughter Katherine had just been married and so I was having a dinner for the family and a shower for her with other relatives later the same day. I had the tables fixed so nice and roses on the bride's table, cute little bride and groom favors, nut cups and place cards for everyone. She got some lovely things and everybody was quite gay. The Mc Gregors couldn't come as Gloria was sick and all of us thought it was just flu until the doctors decided differently on Monday. Monday morning I was picking things up around here and Johnny asked, "Mommy, may I have a piece of cake?" to which I answered, "Yes." In great surprise Johnny said, "WHy, Mommy, you must

be out of your mind this morning, I've already had three pieces." Which of course, was a great surprise to me as I hadn't noticed what was going on. He'd been eating left-overs. Well, write us. Love to all, *Bertha*.

Thursday, Nov. 28, 1940

My dear Alice,

Many thanks to you all for the nice little Mt. Rushmore towel and the birthday letter. How are you all, and are you celebrating Thanksgiving to-day or did you celebrate it the 21st? It was good to hear from you again as it seemed ages since we did, but we know how busy you always are, how much you have to do and also that I've scarcely found a minute to write letters myself this fall.

Going to nite school in addition to other activities has certainly kept me on the jump, twenty-four sessions since Emmet was here, but it will be over Dec. 12, and I shall be a little freerer. One week I've had a neighborhood boy stay with Johnny for two hours two evenings a week at twenty-five cents an evening and the alternate week John stays with him, and there have been several nights when John sat by the cosy warm fire place popping corn, papers and magazines scattered around his easy chair when I'd have liked to stay home too, but anything once begun must be finished and so I keep on. I'm sure I have got a lot of good out of it. Especially have I enjoyed the public speaking class in which we must give a speech every time and that's been good practice. The class has so many interesting members and the talks have been splendid. It was strange the evening that I was going to tell about Mt. Rushmore that very afternoon came your little towel, so I took it along with my pamphlets, pictures, and a piece of granite to show the class as I talked. Everyone seemed to enjoy hearing about it very much and the exhibits made it more interesting. Some evenings we draw our topic out of a hat after we get up to the front of the room and without even a moment to plan our speech we start in and talk and it's surprising how well every one does, just as well as if they had prepared. However, it is an advanced class in speech. We have a number of salesmen, a dramatic teacher or two, ^{in the class} and so on, so we are never bored.

The Book Review course has been wonderful, too, and we've had so many grand books reviewed and I have read a great number of fine books this fall as a consequence, many of them, non-fiction, on the war, "Inside Europe" and so forth. The trouble is I get all gooseflesh and so impressed and wide awake that I have a hard time sleeping when I come home, but I have been crazy about it.

Then, I think I've told you I've been program chairman for the school P.T.A. and have had to plan all the programs, secure speakers and entertainers, and introduce them all to the audience before they begin. Also I'm membership and program chairman for the Scribes' Club, belong to the Firemen's Auxiliary, and our Friendship Club which has been sewing for the Red Cross this fall.

I had a very nice birthday this year. All the Miller ladies came over and brought me gifts, they also brought cakes, coffee, cream, and everything needed for the party. When they were here I sent for little Mrs. Walker to come over also, you know how well she loves parties.

Thanksgiving, the 21st, there were twelve here for dinner, all the family and Archie, also Ethel, a friend of Elsie's.

I roasted a delicious, tender, seventeen-lb. turkey, and made all the trimmings; since it was Elsie's birthday, too, Ella brought in two lovely cakes, a white one, and a chocolate one, each a mile high and decorated so beautifully, she's getting better and better with her cooking and is quite professional, now. She goes to cooking school every week and with her beautiful electric mixer and new electric range she is just going to town! I bought ice cream and Rose brought a big jar of corn and a big jar ~~of corn and one~~ of string beans. I had an enormous glass dish of bananas, apples, oranges and grapes, green and purple for the table centerpiece, imitation turkeys made from pine cones walking up and down the center of the table, yellow candles, and at each place a small chocolate turkey standing up on the place card.

The folks probably told you that Papa had an operation and though we were all pretty worried for several days he came thru it in fine shape but the folks are having an awful time keeping him still. I was talking to Rose just now and she said he fell yesterday and hurt himself a little. He came in and said he was trying to catch the horse in the corral; trying to head him off he fell down. He said, "I couldn't catch him, the bugger had four legs and I only two so he won out and I fell down!" And here, he should be staying around the house taking it easy! When I saw Papa in bed in the hospital it came to me with a shock that was the first time in all his long life I'd ever seen him laid up in bed. That's a pretty good health record. He surely hated to go but it was a case of living or dying so he couldn't get out of it. However, he took it very well and the nurses made quite a fuss over him, told him what pretty hair and complexion he had and what a nice patient he was and how much they thought of their own daddies, and really, he began to like them all so well he said he didn't want to go home! Which shows what a woman's sweet smile and tender care will do for a man whether he's seventeen or seventy!

When the family were here Thanksgiving we decided to draw names for Christmas, so that we each would have to buy just one gift. We are cutting out Xmas-gift buying more and more, not giving to anyone anymore except the few gift exchanges in clubs and the family here. John's sister's family and we stopped long ago, so what do you think of you folks and us and the folks at the ranch not exchanging either? I just talked to Rose and she felt as I did that Christmas giving has become quite a commercial racket. They take away all the freshness and real meaning of Christmas with their ceaseless advertising and when Christmas comes we are all so tired of it that we scarcely enjoy it. I think it's better to ^{remember} people at other times of the year if one feels like it and one can still think the world of a person without gift-giving, so what do you say we stop it, too? It will save so much time and stress and save getting the wrong thing for a person, besides, which usually happens in the end. So Rose says for you not to send the Quinns nor the Millers packages and we shall also refrain.

Glorea McGregor is up and around but drags her right leg, yet, she is very nervous and her parents have to be so calm and patient with her, but they feel she will be all right in time. It's too bad. Johnny Boy is fine and as full of soup and peanuts as ever. How is Joe? We haven't had a letter from you this year, Joey, what's the matter, my boy, my boy? Johnny still talks of you. Well, so long everybody. We got such a kick out of your finding the way out for the guide, Emmet. Love,
Alberta (over)

P. S. Am just finishing up a cute little red plaid princess dress for Margaret Walker. I can't resist sewing for her, she's so cute and the dress is going to be sweet on her. It's piped with blue and has blue buttons all down the front. Also, I'm making a soldier blue crepe dress for myself the exact shade of a soldier blue hat I bought the other day with a saucy feather in it. I'll wear the outfit to appear before my P.T.A. I also bought a beautiful new formal dress for our Christmas banquet and party, we, the Friendship Club, give every year at a down town hotel for our husbands. It is the prettiest dress I ever had in my life and John thinks so too. It is turquoise blue taffeta, very heavy. The neck is low and square with tiny velvet flowers in wine and blue and gold encircling it. The bodice is tight and is shirred all across the front with a pointed waistline and the skirt is very full and touches the floor all around. The sleeves are very puffed, short and have a tight band around the upper arm. Well, so long.

A.

P.S. Did you folks can the elk meat? What mts. did you hunt in, Emmet?

P.S. I know you must be counting the days until Mack comes home. Ernie brought in a recent letter from him for me to read.

E. 1618 Seventeenth Ave.
Spokane, Washington

December 17, 1940

My dear Montana Folks,

Well, now that Mack is home your family circle is complete. I happened to look at the calendar the 14th and thought, "This is the day Alice has been looking for Mack to come home." And I know he's glad to be with the home folks and to have some of mother's good cooking.

We bought a nice red fir Christmas tree last night from a farmer boy who had a truckload, selling them from house to house. He came from Springdale, and his sister, a high school girl works for one of our neighbors. It stands in our front hall and when Johnny comes home from school and daddy from down town it will be decorated. Then we shall have an early supper and go up to the school auditorium for the Program the school kiddies are putting on to-night instead of our usual P.T.A. meeting. We will serve punch and Xmas cookies to the school children and coffee to the elders.

To-morrow I am going to bake Christmas cookies and I told Johnny Boy when he came home from school and scrubbed his hands he could help me decorate them and he is looking forward to it. The snow flakes are fluttering down this afternoon and it's beginning to look real Christmassy.

The salvation army has been singing carols all thru the residential sections this winter. The other night they sang carols on our corner under the arc light and they sounded like an angel choir; they sang and played their band instruments so beautifully. Soon there was a knock at the door and there stood a pretty little lassie, about sixteen, with her tambourine. I asked her in while I got her some change and she was very pleasant.

They were singing over in Edna's neighborhood last week. Glorea heard them and wished they could come nearer. So Bob went out down the street and asked them if they'd come and sing for his little sick girl. They gladly came and played and sang in front of the McGregor house, right on the lawn. Edna had a big fire in the fireplace and went out and asked them in. She had just baked cookies and she hurried and made them hot chocolate and they put on a real concert before the fireplace while waiting. They asked if the McGregors would like to have them pray for Glorea and so they pray- and Edna couldn't keep the tears back. Glorea can't walk yet very well, and when she is in a hurry she either crawls or scoots along the floor on her hips, but of course, it's rather soon yet since her illness. Bob gave them a dollar for being so kind to Glorea, and it pleased Glorea so to have them there. She plays the piano very nicely herself.

Elsie, Frank, Joann, and Mother M. were here for Sunday dinner, and we had such a nice day. Frank was fascinated at the big rattler in our movies that Nem brought in from the field. Elsie thought the little Maxwell girls were the dearest things and said, "I'll bet they don't have to be coaxed to eat, look how plump they are." I'll wager they are pretty thrilled about Christmas coming, along with Tommy.

Well, my night school is over and it's surely nice to have more nights at home. Though I must say I surely enjoyed the classes. One night I was hurrying up supper so as to get to school on time and I burned my finger on the stove. I was dancing around the room holding it when Johnny came in. I said, "Oh, Johnny, I just cooked my finger." He looked at me with a twinkle in his eye and said, "Well, mama, why didn't you take it off the stove before it was done?"

Johnny was in an Indian play at school a few weeks ago. John asked him about it and said, "How did your play come out to-day, was it good?" Johnny answered, "I couldn't see it. I was in it." Then when John asked if the audience enjoyed it and could he tell by the expressions on their faces if they were pleased or not, he said, "I don't know, I was afraid I'd laugh so I looked at the floor all the time." He must have been some brilliant actor. He came home last Friday saying the teacher had moved him four times that day to different desks so he couldn't have fun. He said, "And do you know, mama, she couldn't find a place in the room to move me where I didn't have friends? I just had the best time wherever I went."

Johnny made the nicest doll house for Margaret Walker for Christmas. It was all his idea and John just helped him the littlest bit. He even painted it himself and did a fine job. So then I spent two days making furniture for it and it surely is lovely. I made a cute little overstuffed davenport covered with cretonne, a dressing table with silk flounces and organdy frills from my scrap bag, and I bought a tiny lamp and some other things, including a cute little bathroom set, bath, toilet, and pedestal wash stand. With the bath set came a pink, naked baby doll. And now what do you think, I don't know whether the bathroom idea was so good after all or not? Every time I pass that doll house that little naked baby is sitting on the toilet as real as life with the toilet seat up behind it. When my men folks have gone, one to school, and the other to the station there dolly sits, left that way either to shock or amuse me I don't know which and I have to laugh. Now Margaret being a nice sweet innocent little girl will probably have dolly looking out the window, or in the bed, or on the davenport or chair, but these two boys of mine never, it must be dolly on the potty or nothing with them!

Did I tell you about the card party and dance we had at our school? I had to secure the music so I hired the orchestra with whom Elsie plays and they surely did furnish peppy music and we had an awfully good time. Also we gave door prizes and I was prize chairman and got eighteen prizes, bought some and wa

solicited others from stores. I made a presentation speech with each prize I gave, when the numbers were drawn. And do you know when John and I were shopping for the prizes, I never saw so many cute things in all my life and I was so sorry I wasn't sending you a Christmas box. I came home and told Rose by phone that I didn't think it was a good idea not to send a Christmas box to Montana and she said, that you folks would probably be much relieved because it's always a worry what to get and hard to shop where you don't have a lot of stores to select from. She said she still thought it a good idea, and I hope she's right. Of course the cost of postage is the worst and one can't very well mail awkward things. Well, anyway, we will send you a lot of love and best wishes.

Now that the big store is closed, is the building used at all for anything? What about the bank? are McNanara's still running it? And do the families live there in Big Sandy yet?

How is Kade now? Better, I hope. What about Alfred Ophus? I thought he had such a nice pleasant personality. Nice person to have around.

Papa is fine, seems to be getting stronger all the time. We are all going out there Christmas Day. Elsie won an eight pound turkey and the folks will pay the difference and get a large one for the holiday dinner. Twilight is settling down upon us now. Johnny came in and raided the cookie jar and took an orange and apple too, how he does eat! I swear I don't know where he puts it all, but I guess that extreme activity of his consumes it all, and he is growing to beat the band. John says he hopes he doesn't get too tall, because men who are too tall are no good, and he's going to put a boulder on Johnny's head pretty soon if he doesn't slow up a little, so he won't shoot up too high.

Well, Joey-woey, what's the matter? Never a line do we hear from you. How is everything any way and don't you like us any more? Do you know what the big toe said to the little toe?---"Look out, there's a big heel behind you!"

"Junior, what are you doing? Sawing off the piano legs. Well, that's all right, darling, I thought you might be into some mischief."

The fire laddies had a third alarm fire Saturday night at a beer parlor, apartment house, and store building. Five of the firemen were hurt and taken to the hospital. But none seriously, thank goodness. They just got back to the station at six in the morning after fighting that fire all night and were called to a fire at the White Pine Lumber Co. And they were there until ten. So John came home and slept from ten-thirty until one when the Millers came for dinner and I had to waken him, but a couple of hours of sleep does a lot for him.

Well, Emmet, Alice, Mack and Joe, have a good time all this Christmas season. Be glad you are all together and well and happy and maybe fat and sassy! All of us wish you the Happiest New Year and a very Merry Christmas. Please write to us and tell us all of your doings. We get hungry for a good letter and news of you. Very lovingly us three, John, Johnny, and Me.

Scriber's Club.

*P.D. I'm the new President of the
My term begins in January.*

Alberta

Jan 6, 1941

My dear folks,

Received your Xmas card,
mem, and your after-Xmas
card, Alice, and were
happy to have word
from you. I hope you
folks have escaped
the flu and continue
to. Johnny Boy and I
both had it very
severely for a week
before Christmas and
both of us were just
barely well-enough to
go out home to ^{help} dispose
of the 20½-lb. turkey
Xmas Day. We all were
very merry there and
had much fun. But
the flu did take the
pep out of the holiday
season as I didn't
feel strong enough
to do much else. Johnny
had lots of presents as
usual. John & Johnny are out
skating just now. Love to all,
(Write us a letter.) Alberta

Sunday night, Feb. 16, 1941

My dearest Alice and Emmet,

Well, I holler to Joe about not getting any letters one day and the next day comes a fine letter from you,

Alice. It was good getting the news and hearing about everybody. Too bad about Mack not getting the medal for his boxing, however, perhaps now he won't be interested in it further which I think a very good thing. To my mind, two human being battling away at each other is a terrible waste of power. And I think prize-fighting the most despicable of sports. Fine physical specimens of men getting their noses broken, blinded for life, their teeth knocked out and so on and so forth, all to entertain a barbaric audience, which practice makes me think of the gladiator fights in ancient Rome. Shades of Sister Bilkus, Carrie Nation, and Carrie Chapman Catt! Rah! Rah! Rah! There are many who might call me that after expressing the above opinion, as there are plenty who like to see such sports, but not for mine.

I'm sending Joe's snaps back, they are very good, especially the one of Mack on the tractor which shows the flatness of the country and is a typical Montana scene. It's fine Joe for you to go to Helena to play. I was certainly interested in the Italian Musician and his wife.

I meant you to keep the group of the three of us at the table, Alice, I think Johnny has such an angelic expression and John looks sweet in it, too.

Also I send the picture of Leedice's daughter, Esther, and Jimmy the dark boy, and James, the fair one, aren't they bright looking? Esther is a fine musician, composes music and plays in the adult class of composers. She has won many honors, already. Then there is Arnold Cummings with two of the Kootenay Lake fish he caught. I inclose a big envelope so you can return them at your leisure, the two pictures, Christmas cards, I mean.

Last night Irene and Howard took John and me on the loveliest party for Janice, Milton's wife who is visiting her parents here from Minnesota. She's returning soon to Milton, so Irene and Howard are showing her a good time. Also, Irene's aunt went with us. She is small and resembles Irene, the aunt, I mean. They took us to the Plantation which is on the outskirts of Coeur d'Alene for a dinner dance. The six of us had the loveliest dinner served so beautifully while an orchestra of men in white satin blouses, sashes and trousers played beautiful music. There was a

2.

roaring fire in the fireplace and we danced and ate until twelve o'clock midnight, then drove back to Spokane. It was a very nice respectable crowd that danced there. So many road houses get rowdy, but this is a very high class place.

I inclose the invitations to our tea which we ran off on a mimeograph. I didn't have anything to do with the design on its cover, but I made up the verses, and secured the musician and the head librarian to give the book review.

That advertisement was most unusual to say the least. It certainly would attract attention but do you suppose it helps sales any? I took it along last night to show Howard and Irene and they laughed about it.

Edna McGregor entertained the Audabon Story League at her home for a dessert luncheon and program and she asked John and me to bring our travel movies, especially the cliff dwellings, Navajo, and Canyon pictures, and we did. John showed them and I told them all about them and they seemed to think the program interesting. Little Gloria started back to school two weeks ago, the Spring term, and every one is so good and kind to her at school and she is so happy to be back. She can walk fairly well, and the children always take her hand and help her. One of her knees is stiff, but they have hope for its complete recovery to normalcy, tho it takes time. We are all so glad.

I'm sure Pearl's candlelight tea was very lovely. And the food sounded so good. Women love teas. I think they are delightful. But John doesn't. Juanita Miller invited me to a tea she gave where she presented her son Jack's new wife. It was a very lovely affair and seventy ladies came and went all afternoon. There was a background of lovely music, beautiful flowers, and dainty food. John called for me and since Juanita knows him so well she asked him in to have refreshments, also. So in he came and I was proud of him, he was so dignified and charming, and met the ladies. But when we were coming home he looked at me and laughed and said, "If you ask me, a tea is a hell of a dead party. What women enjoy in walking down a receiving line shaking hands so daintily, then sitting in circles and sipping tea and coffee and eating sandwiches and cakes the size of postage stamps is a mystery to me!" But then, he's just a mere man, and it's ladies business to keep their doings a mystery to the male sex.

Well, dear brother, Nem, I hope you are feeling better, and be careful. The flu was bad this year, I felt quite weak for a long time, myself, and John had to help me a lot with the housework. My poor heart flut-tered all over the place, and I could hardly breathe for a while. I will write Flo soon the letter I owe her.

Love to all of you from all of us. P. S. Roberta. Papa is fine.

June 17, 1941

Dear Alice and Emmet,

Thanks for the good letter and all the news. Still it rains. We never experienced such a rainy year in our lives. Johnny is beside himself, even woke up at three the other morning and I heard him pattering around the house in his bare feet crying because he heard rain on the roof again when he'd hoped at bedtime it was clearing up. Also he looked out the window and couldn't see his bicycle. A boy had borrowed it the nite before and since Johnny couldn't see it he thought the boy had returned it and some one had stolen it, because it wasn't in its accustomed place. He couldn't go back to sleep so I threw a coat over my head and went out in the pouring rain and darkness of three a. m. to look for it. And it was lying down on the sidewalk where the boy left it instead of where it should have been, safe by the back door. So I guided it around and when I came in my pajama legs were soaked and also my bedroom slippers so I had to change, and got into bed shivering and the next morning had a sore throat and lumbago, was in bed all day yesterday. But little Johnny's, "Mana, you're wonderful to do that for me," was sweet praise just the same. I'm better to-day so all three of us and Johnny's pal, Merlin are going to the Orpeum to see "Beyond Bengal" an animal and travel picture and the photographer is also ~~is~~ here in person to talk. I have two gooseberry pies and a Devil food cake to my credit on the kitchen table and Johnny Boy and his pal are beaming.

I was very proud of my big John. He passed third high, the first man is only two points above John, and the second man a tenth of a point, so it was very close. A captain will be chosen

from the first three, and even if John doesn't happen to get the first appointment it won't be long until he gets one. Then with the raise the first of the year and the sixteen ^{dollars} more for the captain's wage, he'll get one hundred, ninety. Did I tell you that before? Also it seemed to me as I wrote the last time that I was telling about Johnny and his fish twice, so forgive me if I repeat. I write his doings to John's sister, also, and I can't always remember just what I wrote and to whom.

About the Canada trip---Some time ago I wrote to Mrs. Cummings reserving two of her cabins. Irene and Howard are going and are taking Irene's aunt, then they will stop at Bonner's Ferry and pick up Wilfred and his three children. They will start the morning of the Fourth and return Sunday, while we three will start the morning of the third and return the afternoon of the seventh. John didn't enjoy his week on the coast as much as usual since he had his exam on his mind and felt that he should get home to study. That is why he is taking off two days the first week in July, making him five days to vacation. We are taking our tent, too, and thought one of the men and some of the children could sleep in that since there will be quite a few to bed down.

I asked Papa if he thought I should write to Mrs. Cummings to reserve another cabin, they have three there, for you folks but he said, "No, if the Montana boys come they can sleep most anywhere, and besides I think she's renting that to some folks from Creston." Rose says she is going, also, and taking Papa, Elsie, and Ernie. But Elsie says, "no," she has to play somewhere Saturday nite and doesn't want to go. Papa says he can't get away and that's the way it goes, so I can't tell about them. So they said they'd take a chance on getting bedded somewhere

3. if they go. They don't want to make reservations unless they are sure.

We'd just be ever so happy to have you come and I feel quite sure Cummings can fix up some extra beds, they have a lot of bedrooms in their big log house, and then you three men can eat in my cabin with us three for at least two meals a day and then the third meal we shall probably all picnic together. I can take enough dishes and food along and we won't get any bologna, either, Nem, we'll have swell big salmon and char to eat, anyway, and I'll take flour and fat to fry them. Howard is taking the big motor of his boat to use on Ray's big boat.

This is a suggestion. I thought you may not want to stay up there with us five days and in that case on your way over you could just go thru Port Hill to Creston, you'd know wether to turn at Bonner's or before you get that far and we could be looking for you up there, I think it's only about fifty miles from Bonner's. Then if the folks don't go to Kootenay Lake you'd probably feel you had to leave before we did and you'd have your own car to come down here with whenever you got ready. But if you feel you can spare more time and could be here by the second we can tie our tent and bedding on probably and all go in our car and it would be fun. We leave early the third. Papa was so glad to hear you might come and said it would be fine if we could all be together at Kootenay Lake again. So think it over and work out your plan and we'll make arrangements accordingly.

The folks are still selling berries. Whenver it dries out a little they have ⁱⁿ thirty pickers and pick like fury. Well, lunch is about ready and here is hoping we will see you. I'm afraid you won't have much of a rest, as you say you will, Alice.

*Cummings, at Boat Creek are 10 miles from Creston.
Johnny says it's thirty. But if you come I'll
draw a map for you to Cummings, if you probably
would not meet it there.*

I'd like so much to see you, but, Alice.

*Johnny wants so much to see you.
With love
Alberta.*

July 16, Mack's Birthday.
1941

Dear Alice and Emmet and boys,

So glad to receive your nice long letter, Monday. Your new truck must be very nice. You didn't say what make or color.

Well, Mack I should have wished you many returns of the day, sooner, so that you would have received them by to-day. But many happy returns, anyway, for you.

Hope the rain has stopped and that conditions will be just right for your crop.

It has been quite hot here lately. But now that John has weeded, trimmed up the back lawn around the kitchen door, and cultivated all his flowers, it looks orderly and cool here, and we've been sitting in our lawn chairs evenings with the sprinklers going and ice cubes clinking in our glasses of water.

I inclose the lace wafer recipe Ruth used. However, they run all over the pan made with the old-fashioned rolled oats which is the kind I have on hand, but I am going to get some of the quick cooking kind so mine will be like Ruth's. I made these just like this the other day with my slow oats but I added one half cup of flour so they were all right but quite lacy as I guess they are supposed to be with little open places in them, but as I said before I like them thicker like Ruth McGregor's.

Sunday we took Mother Miller and Uncle Justice out to Bertha's, some others of the relatives were there and we all picnicked down on ^h their beach at C 'D 'Alene Lake. She had lovely young browned chicken and all the other things and a big freezer of ice cream.

2.

The day after we got home from Canada Ralph came home from the hospital and stayed with us for a week. He was in bed most of the time and I kept hot packs on his leg a great deal of the time, but he is up and around now and staying with his cousin down near Mother M's. for a few days having fun. They go driving a little and visit around. His bill at the hospital for four months was a thousand dollars but ^(and ten cents!) he thought that wasn't too bad as it included doctors, too, and he went to the surgery nine times.

Monday I went to the doctor as the pain in my shoulder blade has been worse, and as usual they tell you nothing, ^{he} gave me pills, had them sent up, they are as big as quarters and bright red. I've a notion to send them back and tell him ~~red~~ doesn't suit my color scheme. However, he said there was some infection because there was a little pus in the kidneys, also much phosphates which show an alkaline condition of my system. (What was Emmet's alkaline or acid?) But he told me, too, oranges, lemons and grape fruit weren't too good for me either as they become alkaline in the body and I already have enough. I looked up phosphates in the doctor book and it said they came from gout or too high-living. Tch! Tch! Why Alberta!! And me who goes to bed nightly at nine, never smoke nor drink, and afraid too eat sweets and pastries and gravies! Something's wrong somewhere! He said if the pills do not cure me he will put me on an acid diet.—I have the house nice and cool and I'm not doing too much this hot weather. I've made some jam, (yesterday,) and ironed this morning, but am not going to can hardly anything this year. John thinks we can buy it from Johnson's by the case just as cheap and really it's very good, too. I sent Mrs. Lawson Hepher, "The Star-Spangled Banner".

Long. Well, take good care of yourself, Mem. And you, too, sister Alice! Much love, Alberta.

Saturday Afternoon, August 16.

My dearest Montana Folks,

Well, how goes it with the harvest and harvesters? We are all so happy that you have such a fine crop this year. More wealth, health, and power to each and all of you! If I had a glass of pop I'd make that a toast!

John just went dashing by the window with a wheelbarrow full of rocks, he's building nice rock walls on each side of that gash of a driveway in front getting it fixed up pretty nice at long last. He's surely been busy with grass fires this summer, missed so much sleep at nite on duty that he has had to have his little siesta daily.

We were all on the bum all of July. First John had a sort of summer flu that had with it very sore throat and neck glands, so I nursed him thru that, and then down Johnny came with it, so I was up a lot nights with him and an ear ache with it. The little gathering in his ear broke and while he was still sick he grabbed for a pillow that was resting on the end table one evening and in the dark the end table fell on his toe where he stood beside the little table. A sharp corner must have struck it just right because it swelled up as big as a red plum, the third toe of his left foot. That was worse than the sickness, but we kept thinking it would get well. Then after taking care of Johnny so closely my resistance was weakened and before he was quite well I had to take to bed and then with no mama over Johnny keeping him in bed he got up and went to playing. Two or three days later when I recovered enough to pay any attention to my son I decided he didn't look right and when I took his temperature I found he was playing around with a fever of 102, so back to bed he had to go, myself in the front room and he in the back bedroom. Then when we were both able to be up again his toe still looked terrible so I took him to Dr. Welty who felt it was broken, and advised an X-Ray which I had taken and sure enough there was a break. So we keep a stiff shoe on it and give it the hot applications and just try the best we can to keep the son quiet. It had been broken about three or four weeks before we took him down and by then it had begun to knit, luckily the position was good and the swelling had been protecting it. His being in bed with the flu helped too as he had to be off of it when it was the worst. So wasn't that a swell way to spend most of July and the first few days of August? Hence, no letters got off to you folks to tell you how much I've been thinking of you just every day.

I thought so much of the summers I used to spend with you and the times we had laughing over nonsense. I spoke of it to John and he said, "Why, I believe you are actually homesick for a trip over there to see those folks, well, never mind one of these summers I'll send you and John over on the train to spend the whole summer." And then I thought of

P.S.

Hope you're much better, Nem. Had to make a couple of trips to the doctor myself. Kidney infection seems to have cleared up and I'm much better. We all lost a lot of weight. John's tummy is as flat as a washboard, and Johnny's lost his extra little chin.

what you said one time, Alice, about how one could take a summer off like that when you were free, but after one was married it was different. This way while I'd be enjoying you folks I'd be missing John so one is always torn between two places. So I'm afraid the entire summer would ^{not} work out, though a shorter separation might. But Johnny was thrilled pink, said he'd take his gun and shoot prairie dogs all day long, and I thought maybe he'd try taking a potshot at a bohunk on the side, just to sort of make things complete, you know.

Since Johnny's ear bothered him again we've had to keep him out of the water and it's a shame because he certainly is a fine little swimmer and diver, improved a lot the few times he was at the lakes here after we got back from Canada.

John is on duty to-morrow so I think I'll spend the day out home, Elsie will probably take the son and myself out.

I think I enjoyed most that summer in the Russel place. There was just something about it there that time. And the evenings when I walked alone across the prairie behind the barn and found the silky little cactus flowers growing so close to the earth flat and rose-colored reflecting the sky at sunset, the air so balmy and the sky higher and bluer as it seems to be over there. Then I used to like the walk up from Pearl's across that little meadow and the dip in the road where we had to cross the creek.

It won't be long now until Mack will be going back to school. Mother Alice will be ironing shirts, pressing clothes and baking cookies to go along. Then Joe, you will be going to High School. What dates do you both start? Here's some pieces I saw about the stars, thought you might like to see. The Pinecroft clipping I've saved since you were here.

John's brother ran over to see us last week end from Whidby Island. He has received an appointment in the Navy on a flagship as a lineotypist and printer at \$239.50, room, Board, and clothes, per month. He was so thrilled. He was only waiting for his birth certificate from New York before beginning, so I hope by this time he has received it and all is in order.

What about the McNamara's? Are they still living at their ranch and do you see them about town? How are the Maxwell's. Tell Florence I'm going to write her, though it may turn out to be a Christmas letter, yet.

Florence's husband ^(Ollie Sheridan) is in a Missoula Hospital, had his appendix removed, emergency case while on the road. Florence called me wondering if she should go over and I said Hell and High water wouldn't keep me from going to John if he were in the hospital some where. So she may leave to-nite.

You are probably going to have a fair again, tell me about it if you do. Goodness there's Johnny sawing down a small tree in that pine grove of ours east of the house!! John says "he's like a ---- in a skillet!" Love to all. Alberta.

We have the lowliest yellow-bantam corn in our yard. Pick about a dozen ears every day, so sweet and good!

P.S. Went to a luncheon and bridge party. Saw the Dooby prize - nice tho a pkg of Honey-suckle Bubble Bath Sallet.

Monday Morning, Sept. 22,
1941

My dearest Alice & Emmet - 1:40 p.m.

This is going to be one of those letters written a line at a time. I have this paper on the dining-room table and everytime I think of something to tell you, down on paper the thought goes.

It's such a beautiful sunny fall day, golden is the word for it. The rooms are full of sunshine, and the flowers flaunt their colors in the garden that shows so gayly thru the sun room windows. John and I heard a meadow lark chant its rapturous song in a vacant lot and we both said the air and the bird song reminded one of a spring day.

We have just finished lunch, John's back at school, I've done the dishes and bottled some ketchup I had simmering while we ate. John is working on the cement wall of his driveway.

This morning we went to the Valley

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and John picked five boxes of green tomatoes
off Bug's place (Rurey's land he is using)
while I visited with Papa at the
house. We have already canned
85 qts. of tomatoes. These others we
shall use or can as they ripen.
Papa & Emie have 4 Tons of beans
threshed in spite of the rain which
impeded their progress a great
deal. But now they hope the
weather's turned and they can thresh
4 more Ton. which if they do should
net them \$800 on beans, 100 a Ton x
their 8 Ton.

Edna Mc Gregor's birthday is Tues.
We are having a luncheon for her
Wed. at Annie Miller's, so now I must
cut out and sew up an apron for her
birthday gift. 1:55 p.m. signing off.

Tuesday Morning 9:20. Another sunny
morning. Changing to ink, pencil
too faint - put your eyes out.
My men have gone to work and
school. Edna's apron is finished,
all but basting pulled out,
pressing, and wrapping. Big
vessel of grapes for juice heating
on kitchen stove, water heating

-3-
for washing. I've been gathering
up old jars for Salvation Army, have
two boxes on front porch! They
come around every Tuesday for
things. Also I've wrapped up
some crabapple jelly for them.
I must fly to my work. Hurray
how much there always is to
be done! Never do I have an idle
moment. - Signing off 9:25 a.m.

Evening 7:35. Am I ever tired!! I'll
have to go to bed & read the paper.
Dishes washed, Johnny Boy will
be bringing up box of blackwood
for breakfast - I hear him
throwing the blocks in the box
and singing lustily, "You are my
sunshine, my only Sunshine", a good
old song. Awfully lonesome
here when John's on duty. Miss you
folks, too to-nite. Wish I
could see Jim's blue eyes light
up when he smiles! "Nite-Nite!"

Saturday Morning 11:00

Well, my old sweethearts how's everything this fine morning?
I feel like a million dollars to-day, wish I could always
feel such physical well-being and upliftedness as I do to-day.
Good health is certainly a wonderful thing. It makes all the
difference in the world in one's outlook and state of happiness.

Your card came this morning, Alice, my darling. I am so
very thrilled about your daddy's new henna Buick with its radio.
Won't it be wonderful for him and Pearl to have that nice trip.

And I'm so glad they are coming west and will stop and see
us. Tell them we are surely looking forward to their visit.

4.

We were so pleased to hear of your winning prizes at the fair, also that you have a Buick. Bet your new silver is nice.

I had Irene, Howard, and the Aunt Annie with the beautiful dimples here for dinner last nite. We enjoy them so much and we looked over old Copeland pictures, and she told me there was a relationship between the Chisholm's and her self, the Aunt did, and I meant to ask what it was but the subject changed before I had time. Irene and Howard flew to Seattle and back recently for a week end and liked it so much.

We received the loveliest picture of John's brother, Frank, thru the mail this morning in his officer's naval uniform and it's so becoming. He wants me to take one of the pictures to his little daughter Jewel. My, how he loves her!

He is at San Pedro, but leaving for southern islands soon.

A retired couple from Montana, who tried California and didn't like it, came here and bought our two lots. They are going to build a nice brick house like ours for a home and landscape the grounds, so it will really improve the looks of things here as well as giving us some nice cash, they are paying all cash. It is several hundred dollars clear profit for us and we really feel quite fortunate. The nice thing is that they are going to build on the farthest lot, so we shall still have a nice space between our house and theirs. My roll sticks here, hence the double line above!

Too terrible for words about Bill Collins. How did his wife feel about the whole thing, or where they separated?

I'm planning on getting a couple of new rugs for my living and dining rooms, new flowered draw curtains for the windows, a couple of foot stools, a mirror for my hall, and a new arm chair, also some slip covers for my furniture. So we shall have things looking nice. John is all thrilled about building a cabin at the lake again, a small cute one.

Florence just phoned she is coming to spend the rest of the day with me and is walking over so I must go as far as Rockwood Boulevard to meet her.

Well, I hope Mack has a grand year and everything most pleasant and here's to you as class president, Joe, more power to you.

We are buying a second hand wood clarinet for Johnny Boy and he is going to take lessons at school and be in the band. John doesn't have much faith in his musical ability but I think we should let him have a try if he wants it, and he does have nice long fingers and is plenty bright so he may surprise his daddy at that. John takes the clarinet and walks so crazy, and blows and blows, saying, 'Now here is a freight train putting on the brakes,' and he makes the most unearthly squeaks on the instrument. It is a clarinet the

man used to play in the firemen's band. John used to play one, too, but has forgotten everything he knew about it now.

We went to a church wedding and lovely wedding breakfast, a few weeks ago. I had a beautiful new dress and hat to wear, and felt so stylish, and swellish. The food was divine. And the bride and groom so happy and radiant it was most touching.

John has been serving as captain at his station for the last few weeks. The first of the year he will probably have an opening.

As usual am very busy. Besides being Scribes' Club President, I am study club chairman for the P.T.A., and have to go three Fridays a month mornings for the leadership training that the school board has hired a woman doctor from Columbia University to give here. The Study Club Chairmen from all over the city are priveleged to attend. Then I have my Friendship Luncheon Club, and the Firemen Auxiliary, and now I have been made Cub Scout Mother for the Pack Johnny is to be in. The boys will meet with me here Saturday mornings for a little program and instruction, and then sometimes we shall have hikes, and weiner roasts in our back yard fireplace. I have a lot of sewing on hand, so there is never an idle moment.

Margaret Walker is with me again to-day, she's a sweet kiddie. Her mother has gone to the horse races, again, has been winning a little money she says. I must hurry down and mail this before the post man picks up the mail at five.

Love to you nice folks,

Alberta

P.S. Your card came to day! Oh, I said that before!

March 5, 1942.

My dearest Emmet, Alice, and Joe,

It's a real March day out with the winds racing clouds across a slate sky and the pine trees writhing in the wind, and how I do love the sound of the rush of wind thru them. I'm waiting for my son to come home to lunch, it's ten of twelve now and all is ready. And so am I dressed to go to Scribes Club and read a story to-day as I'm on the program. There's a little brown bird nibbling away on the flat lawn thru the sun room windows where I write. I'm so glad Spring is here.

Here are some clippings that might interest you. You know I've been wondering about Foster Brunton and several times had a notion to call his mother and then here came this little notice in the paper.

To-morrow night I am having a pupil that I used to have in the fifth grade at Opportunity, here. She is now one of the four best noted women acrobatic flyers in the U. S. Isn't that wonderful? She is at the airport here and under her direction are quite a number of South American flyers who are here to learn about aviation. She is bringing ^{to our house} five of them with her to-morrow night and also their interpreter a young American singer, ^{Mrs. Catherine Green Warren} who sang over Major Bowes a few years ago. She studied singing in Italy and married quite a well-known Italian there and later he died. So she is back in her native Spokane now and has the job of teaching these young flyers English. So what with hearing about South America and Italy, first hand John and I shall be in our glory.

2.

How have all of you been and what is the news? We haven't heard for quite a while.

March 9, 1942

I washed to-day, taking it slow and easy and did not get wet, as I don't care for a return of the severe rheumatism I suffered from getting so wet last time I did a big washing. The wind blew and it rained but my clothes got quite dry in spite of the rain.

Friday night the flyers were here with Jean Smith and Catherine Greene Haren and we had a truly wonderful evening. I had Elsie in, too, with her accordian and they kept asking her to play pieces and they sang with her. The men had wonderful voices and how they do love music, they just swayed and vibrated their joy. There was a lawyer, Carlos, from Mexico City with a little mustache and he was very charming and gallant. Then there was a very dark young man who had spent most of his life in Spain and is now also from Mexico City, his name was Manuel. Then there was a flyer from Argentine. I understand their governments are paying them five hundred a month for their time while they are here learning to be flying instructors. This Catherine Haren was married to an Italian General who was a flyer and he was killed flying several years ago so I think it was thru him that she learned to fly and it almost seems a shame because she is a marvelous opera singer and such a beautiful charming woman. She is not only teaching the boys English, but is their flying instructor as well. I just can't imagine a woman brave enough and clever enough to do all that she can do. They sang Spanish, Italian, and Mexican songs, and good old American ones like Daisy Bell

3.

and Side Walks of New York. And were the men ever charming? They moved chairs around for me and they bow over your hand and such lovely compliments as they pay you, I was really quite overcome with their charm and gayety and I don't know when we had such a merry evening. They said they'd be so happy to come again. They have been entertained by a number of wealthy people in Spokane, but Jean said they liked to visit in the middle class homes too, so that they could see and know more of America. They said they liked our informality. John was just as charming and gay as they were. He always seems to fit in with any kind of company and have a good time. They are from well-to-do families themselves and appear to be very well-bred.

Our little puppy is fine and we love him so. He's just so sweet and playful and cuddly.

I'm sending ^{you} one of Johnny's composition and since it is about Montana I thought you'd like to see it. I think he liked your place and Joe's company more than any place he's ever been.

Bye - Bye
Alberta

Tuesday Afternoon
June 16, 1942

My dear folks,

I don't know when I've been so lonely and homesick for you four people since coming home this time, even had a lump in my throat most of the time. I told John I was sorry we didn't have the trailer house and his retirement right now so that we could have stayed longer and maybe kept on travelling and you might go with us for part of the time. Have been very busy since coming back, too, something doing everyday, and a tea to attend this afternoon, but somehow I didn't care too much about assuming the busy round again, would have preferred a charge. But it will be all right when I get into the swing of it again.

Later Evening. Well the tea was what John would have called a H. of a dead party. Everybody very nice & sweet, a little singing, a little playing, reading, and plenty of small talk that doesn't go very deep. I thought that instead of being with great numbers of people one knows slightly it is so much grander being with those you love dearly, such as close friends and rel-

-2-

atives and family that you love such as
you folks.

Our flower gardens & lawn look so
lovely in the evening sun that has
just broken brightly thru the clouds.
John has been working on it and the
results certainly do show. (On the
garden not on the sun, tho I expect
a lot of people would like to work
on the sun lately, especially at your
place.) You've had more than your
share lately, haven't you, of rain.

I had a card from Pearl to-day
and she said Mack had just walked
in. You certainly made good time, Mack.
Papa told me by phone that you arrived
in St. Gall Friday nite. Did you
ride with one party all the way thru
from Kellogg? I was happy to know
you arrived safely. I certainly enjoyed
having you with us as a travelling companion and
house guest and thanks for all your courtesies.
There was a lot of wind and sun
yesterday and I washed blankets
from ten in the morning until four
in the afternoon. Just as I was finishing
the bottom of the machine began to smoke,
motor was so hot oil began to burn
and the wringing and washing at the
same time so steadily must have over-
loaded or strained it or something, (I'm
not much of a mechanic, myself!)

Anyway, John had to work all morning
to-day on it and decided he needed new
gears for it. How are your and Florenee's
machines, by now? Alice?

of thanks again for all your kindness. you did everything to make our visit pleasant. I'm glad you liked the spread.
Page 3.
Saturday - June 27, 1942

Well, Tom, are you following the Doc's orders or are you suiting yourself, yet?

I've been so busy cleaning house. We turned our old or rather new blue rug back and got a beautiful rosy tan, large rug for living room & hall. I waxed the hardwood dining room floor within an inch of its life and it all surely looks lovely. Spent all day Tuesday in bed but I am beginning to feel better again. Mother M. quite ill this week, and I have been going down there but we all got so worried we long-distanced Bertha to come in and she is taking care of her now. Uncle Justus from Calif. is there, yet. Say he can't go back to his wife until Mother M. is better. And his wife keeps writing him how homesick she is for him. So what with weeding, house-cleaning, illness, and keeping necessary engagements 11 days have elapsed before I know it.

John said he wishes he had thought to take Mack thru the Washington Water Power plant here. Alex Mc Gregor, Edna's brother-in-law is one of the engineers there and it surely would have been interesting. - John's brother still in hospital, wrote that he doesn't know yet when he will be out. But he says he is improving. Joe's tune he played so much on the piano ran thru my head all day yesterday. It still rains a great deal with a few hours sunshine now and then. The Maes are well. They say the rain hasn't bothered them, yet.

Write to all.
Love to all.
Ann sees all in bloom.

New
come, I
of your
last

July 28, 1942

My dear Montana Folk,

We were glad to hear from you and to know you are getting along so well and that Emmet's digestive faculties have improved.

You can never guess where I am writing this letter — at an evening ball game! John went to Camera Club dropping us off at the Ball Park which is on the Fair Ground premises. There are big flood lights everywhere and it is as bright as day. Everyone is munching on peanuts, popcorn, hot dogs, and flooding the atmosphere with pop. So far Johnny hasn't requested anything, but I imagine it won't be long until he succumbs to the sales talk of the boys going around there

the audience calling their wares. yep!! He's getting his money out right now. He has earned \$1.75 hauling rocks for Florence Sheridan's fireplace which is in the state of being built in her back yard. He rides over on his bike and then hauls the rocks a block or two on a little red wagon.

There goes a home run! Spokane has red and white suits. Salem Oregon, white and blue. I and the best part of this ball game is that we got in free! We were late and the manager opened the gates for us and said, "That's all right just go in!" Johnny Boy said, "Mother, shouldn't

we pay him?" But the man shook his head. Here is a cigarette and cigar girl with her tray, the couple in front of us are buying smokes.

I don't care a lick about ball games but when my little boy in all his eagerness asked me to go I thought "Some day this little fellow who is so close to me now may be far away and I shall be glad I made him happy." Because he surely does love his ball games. And tonight the band is to play and he wanted to come especially. John is going to leave Club early and meet us at the gates after the game

to take us home. It's a
 lovely fresh summer nite,
 a little shamen this after-
 noon laid the dust. The
 crowd goes wild and stamps
 its feet and roars. - I
 don't know from Adams
 why but son John
 does. His eyes are stars
 and he whoops it up
 with the best of them.

I was glad to hear
 about your nice month.
 The Gormleys and us
 went to Coeur d'Alene,
 Idaho to the lovely
 park & beach. Took a
 grand launch ride. John
 and I sat on the roof,
 and rode in the breeze
 and where we could see
 everything. For our
 picnic lunch we had
 fried chicken, green apple
 pie and a lot of other
 good things. I never

saw so many almost
 naked girls in my
 life — in the brief-
 est shorts and halters
 — bare thighs, and mid-
 riffs. Fern Garmley
 said, "John, oh to
 be young and single
 again!" And how
 the girls hung on to
 the soldiers! In
 fact, some of the
 boys looked part
 negro, but they
 had admiring girls
 hanging on their arms,
 just the same.

The Defense Industries
 here are just tremendous
 so many people. John's
 cousin is doing plumbing
 at the Naval Supply Depot

61

108 a
and averages # 108 a
week with his Sunday
and overtime. At Bay-
view the lowest wages
are \$11 a day for brush
cutting. We were at Mounds
and Bill's lake cottage
Sunday on P. D. Orville
and Sand Point was
just swarming with
workers. At Athol
\$1,300 people are crowded
into 9 sq. miles, living
in cars, trailers, tents,
dry goods boxes and
every old shack and
service station imag-
inable. The barns
around have all been
made into beer parlors.
I saw a woman lifting
the flap of a tent with
a baby on her arm and
a bottle of milk in
her hand and I won't

dered how she was
 going to keep that
 milk fresh over nite.
 Barber shops were set
 up, makeshifts by
 the side of the road.
 — A regular frontier
 town. The big
 plants in the Valley
 were all lit up go
 bright as day for
 the night shift of
 buildens. The Trent
 Hwy. was so crowded
 we had to cross over
 to Appaway coming
 home. — The crowd
 goes wild again. They
 are all right when they
 can relax by getting
 so thrilled over a
 game like this. I can
 only look at the

8-

shouting, laughing
roaring crowd and
merriment. Even if I
understood it I
know I couldn't be
so enthusiastic —
but more power to
them!

Mother Miller is some
better. She has a girl
a cousin of John's tak-
ing care of her, very
fine and capable.

Uncle Justus in Calif.
is paying her \$2 a
day & board. Says
he can never repay
Mother M. for being
so kind to his motherless
children when they were
little and she took the
four of them into her
home along with her own!

9 - (The Montana movies are fine. Cute as
can be of you, Joe, milking, and
next morning. wonderful of the Bull

The neighbor's dog
barked like fury all nite
and we didnt get much
sleep. About 4 a.m. when
I heard John saying he
was "going to sell the
damn house" and move
where he could sleep
nite, I slipped on
my robe and went next
door west and asked
the lady to ^{Mrs. Hult} ~~the west~~
what was the matter
and she said he was
stuck in their fuel
saw dust bin in the
basement and she
had been yelling at
him every hour to
stop barking so I
asked her wouldnt
she kindly go get
him out, so she did.

10 - (I thought of Mack on his 21st
birthday. A wonderful age to be.)

I'll nap this afternoon.
John will just have to
sit down and rest his
eyes at the station if
he can. John has been
working thinning apples
in the Valley days off
helping out the orchardist
and making \$4 a day
along with 3 other fire-
men from his station.
Valley people are just
begging for help. Even
children from 12 up go
out in gov't. trucks
daily to pick berries,
beans, etc. I take
care of the place, weed-
ing, watering etc.

Then evenings we
often have company
or go out. There is
far more to do than
we have time or

11
strength for. I haven't
gone to a club of mine
nor their picnics this
summer. Went to John's
Camera Club Picnic one
Sunday and spend all
my time with him when
he's not working. Then
going down to Mother's
as often as I can takes
time. We want to be
with her as much as we
can.

A Red Cross representative
came to see me and told
me Frank had quite an
advanced case of T. B.
Had been worse this
winter than we thought.
The authorities are planning
on bringing him to the
Vets Hospital at Walla
Walla. But Frank writes
he is fine and goes to
shows etc.

(Johnny just got up and says
12. all he'd like for breakfast is
a piece of cake or pie!))

Roses friend Martha
Meyers, did you meet
her? died Sunday. I can
hardly believe it. She
was a lovely person.

The practicing bombers
roar over our heads
all day - ^{4 min} - we really could
do with a little quiet
- but there is a war
on. The milkmen deliver
milk only every second
day now, and buses are
going to stop only every
second block.

Our flowers are
so lovely. I have
bowls of pink roses
and dainty buds
all over the house. My
house is so cool and
restful with the blinds
drawn these summer days.
Write soon. Love to all from all
ascerts.

Monday morning, November 23, 1942.

My dearest Alice, Emmet, and Joe,

Well, how are you folks, getting all ready for Thanksgiving I'll bet, and is the college boy coming home for a few days, let's hope he is so you can all be together? We haven't heard from you for a long time, it seems. But it's probably being very busy that keeps you from writing and not anything of bad import. How is Pearl, better, we hope? Papa is improving a little, I guess, but doesn't get around much, but he enjoys the radio. Mother M. and we three will go out there for Thanksgiving. Turkey is fifty cents a pound here this year. Rose will probably roast some of her good chickens. This will be the first time in years that we haven't had the Day here, but it would be hard for Papa to come, I think.

I suppose Joe still travels in and back on the bus. Have the folks moved to town yet for the winter?

It's damp and dark and raining outside and all the plants are brown and dead. I see that, "The melancholy days are come, the saddest of the year" again. My little golden dog just came in out of the rain and is curled up in his box under the stove, so snug and cosy, fast asleep.

I made some new blinds for my kitchen, pasted them on the rollers of the other blinds which still have a good spring. They are of bright yellow oil cloth with gay pansies sprinkled all over them. Then I made some dainty new yellow curtains so the kitchen looks quite dressed up. John is entertaining his camera club here a week from Tuesday so I shall have everything ready for the men and then go out for the evening and leave the house to the men.

(Haw's Emmet cement job coming? And is the work-shop done?) We went to a show Sat. nite and saw "The Battle Cry of China" and all in color. But 2. it was horrible with all the suffering, "Just complete Hell on Earth, Bombing & fire" etc.

My Friendship Club had a birthday luncheon for me on the Tues. after my birthday and gave me a yellow duck flower pot with a cactus in it, also some hankies. Then on Sunday night of my birthday Mrs. Sevear had us over for a nice birthday supper and evening by their nice fireside. Their lovely flowers lasted until just a few weeks ago. The pine trees shaded and protected them from the frost.

A man came up and wanted to buy Mr. Sevear's place. He said, "Well, Sevear, you've got a nice place but I'd cut down the damn pine trees if I bought the place, the very first thing." "The hell, you would," said Mr. Sevear, "Well, if that's what you're planning to do, you won't get the chance. I won't sell it to you then." So the sale was off.

John's niece Catherine, Bertha's daughter, had us over for a nice Sunday dinner, yesterday, roast pork and a lot of other good things. She's a nice little cook and housekeeper and has a cute baby girl about 18 months. The soldier Ralph, Bertha's son, was there also from the ^{field} ~~filed~~ here.

Friday I had the P.T.A. Study Club, of which I'm chairman again this year, here and served tea and cookies and little crackers with creamed cheese on them. We had a very interesting meeting, discussing the need of nursery schools for children of working mothers (defense work) there are more than two thousand children, little ones, uncared for in Spokane while their mothers work. And among the older children an increase of juvenile delinquency. The problem is quite serious. The P.T.A.'s all over town are working on it. We had for our subject, "Security for the home and family in war time." I must make myself some lunch. Johnny took his to-day. John is still a groceryman, and five-

love to all of you,
Allister