

Friday, July 13, 1951
Bethesda, Md.

Dear Pop,

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Your letter from Estes Park arrived yesterday, but still no definite mailing address. Five Post offices in Yellowstone and one in a place called Rawlings where it is of which neither William nor I know, nor yet how late we could mail an air mail letter to reach you. I'm so sorry, but I'll just have to hold this letter till you say when and where. Up to this point your addresses have reached us too late except once when it arrived the very day you said was the last possible one for mailing air mail to you, in Taos I think it was. I hope you got it, because as soon as I read the deadline I dropped everything and wrote to you and then had Teddy Rouse next door rush it down to the main Bethesda post office. Dracious Doodness Ne, as Brownie would put it, how can we send you letters at this rate?

John said he had the same problem- your letters giving mailing addresses and times arrived too late. And now I'm on the subject of John, I'll go on. He and Pegs came down last weekend to visit us, leaving Peg's Joe and Jane in charge of the house and the younger children. She called home Sat. night and they said everything was going fine, and they had all four been to see Walt Disney's Mr. Todd in the afternoon. John and Peg came down Friday afternoon and left Sunday morning. I was very happy with Peg, and delighted to see how happy and enthusiastic they both were about the future. On the basis only of the two days they were here, I formed a most favorable impression of Pegs. She seems tactful, intelligent, interested in John's work, and fond of him. Not being a young girl by any means, she should know by this time what she wants and what she is getting in for. Also she must have a much better idea of what John is like than Dona had, since she has been "auditing" him and watching him in action for about a year now. In any case, she seems genuinely pleased with everything John says or does, and careful of his interests. I liked her, and we were both able to congratulate John with real sincerity- and he basked in it. She seems to me to be about the best possible thing for the girls, considering everything, including the fact that no stepmother is ever in the happiest position in the world with young children. She's sensible and will really try to do her darnedest, I'm as sure as I can be after two days. John has changed fantastically in the last year or two. Now he says he uses dianetic techniques but doesn't agree with many things Ron Hubbard says- what a change from last summer! They have been working like beavers on the house and the furniture, refinishing old pieces they "picked up", doing the floors, heaven only knows what all. John described enthusiastically his methods of taking the paint off of an old chest of drawers and then sanding, polishing, etc. until it gleamed with the original wood. What a change there! I never could have imagined John's taking so much interest in house furnishings, etc. The plans for their new house in Mountain-side are absorbing him happily, and all in all he sounds like a busy father bird collecting twigs for a new nest. All on his own he has come to the conclusion (during these "reverie" sessions) that there is an inner citadel where men can find within themselves the Perfect Good. He has discovered that what makes men miserable

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is their failure to discover their own basic instincts, which he says are all good and proper and can be found by searching within themselves in this introspection. He says he is making new discoveries along this line every day, and he is pleased and tremendously excited about it all. I think that's just fine, because he has obviously never turned his attention to philosophy before. I wish I had emphasized to him how glad I was that he had come to all these conclusions. But he kept talking about writing a book on the subject, and all I could think of was the possibility of his doing just that too soon, and particularly before reading what others have said on the subject. He says he doesn't have to, because "he has already gone far beyond anyone else" with his new techniques. I wanted to point out the danger of assuming that without bothering to look into the philosophers, and especially without reading them specifically with the thought in mind that their words may differ and their presentation and methods of arriving at conclusions may be radically different from his, but that in practically all cases they have come to approximately the same conclusions he has. I don't think that detracts from his achievement in the least, nor do I think that simply because others have said it before, he shouldn't say it again. These things aren't the kind that are discovered once for all time, and obviously each re-discovery differs greatly in its manner of presentation because of the differing thought patterns and emphases of the "discoverers". Anyone who thinks he has a new way of reaching that "inner light" should make himself heard, because some methods work more successfully for some people and some centuries and some races than equally valid methods recommended by other times and other personalities. I just had a horrid mental picture of some caustic reviewer dismissing John's heartfelt and wonderful discoveries with some remark such as, "In this book, Mr. Campbell announces to a waiting world that the Kingdom of God is within us. Had the book been published some 1900 years ago, it would have been the bombshell Mr. Campbell thinks it is." John thinks I may be incapable of believing him capable of making fundamental philosophical discoveries, sort of under the "prophet is not without glory" theory. But he's wrong, because in reality I have a sort of hypnotized faith in John's ability to tackle anything and come up with a new and startling invention. I just think in this case he is ought of what has been his lifelong element, swimming extremely rapidly to the opposite shore, but not yet ready to describe in detail the whole adventure. Also, before he describes it, it would be only showing a "decent regard for the opinions of mankind" to check up on what others have said before on the subject. And finally, I think he is still letting his scientific training get the better of his viewpoint. Like so many other people, he is convinced that his way is the one and only way, that the facts he has come upon are to be found and analysed in his way only, that any variation from his equations throw the whole thing off and are simply silly, or at best misguided. Since a valid experiment in chemistry should always have the same results each time it is tried, so everyone should come to exactly the same conclusions in exactly the same way he did, and there cannot be two ways about it. I don't know whether my feelings about his feelings are entirely correct, but William and I both felt that John's "toleration level" was too low, and especially that he was ignoring semantical mix-ups in a subject where semantics is bound to rear its ugly head as never before.

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We have been having some pleasant parties of a farewell nature. The Davis es had us over for dinner with our old and treasured friends the Kemptons from Caracas. You know, he was and still is Agricultural Attache there. A wonderful man to talk to, and especially to hear talk. By the way, Virginia Davis is helping Cannon Brown at Washington Cathedral with some of the psychological problems that are presented to him. Interesting, since she's a friend. I suppose many of the problems the cannon is ask to help solve are just too much for the single judgment of one man, and he is grateful for any more or less technical assistance kind souls offer. Virginia is a wonderful woman, has studied up on psychology for some time, and is a helpful soul, and that's all Cannon Brown could ask for.

While John was here, unfortunately, we had a call from Nancy Mann. She asked us to come over Sat. afternoon to help entertain Count Secco Suardo, our old friend the Italian Ambassador in Caracas, and his wife. They were in Washington en route to New York and Italy for home leave. He is now Minister to Guatemala! It will be very nice indeed to see them down there. we were always fond of Secco Suardo, who was kind and polite to us when William wasn't of the rank to merit mere official attentions, if you catch my meaning. So we went over and had a drink with them at the Manns, then took them and their little eight-year-old son on a short tour of Washington. We were both amused to see that the famous old Fine Italian Hand isn't born in them, but must be developed little by little just as manners are among our American children. We were amused, but the Secco Suardos were anything but amused, in fact downright petrified with horror, by the typically eight-year-old comments of the little Giovanni. Much nationalistic boasting, loud remarks about the comparative beauty of Rome and Washington, frightful comments on politics picked up from the air. His mother and father, who are both extremely tactful, beautifully mannered, really kind and thoughtful, were going into gymnastic contortions of silent shushing and agonies of whispered commands to silence on the little boy's part, all to no avail.

We anticipated no difficulties in renting the place, but we hadn't expected that the first people who looked it over would take it. we were rather bowled over, as a matter of fact, and had we waited a bit longer we might have gotten better terms. But they aren't bad. The principle is established with the rent control people that the rent is \$160 a month, and that's important for the future. We'll be away a long time, and rents might go up. Once a rent has been registered, it's next to impossible to raise it. But Mr. Belknap, our tenant, is going to pay \$140 a month the first year, making it \$20 a month for twelve months to pay for the repainting of woodwork and walls that has to be done. If he wants to do more, he must pay for it himself. He seemed a very nice young man, has a wife and a nine-week-old baby. He is advertizing manager for a pharmaceutical firm, and went to the U. of P., then to Swarthmore for a year during the war in connection with the Navy's educational program there. He will pay \$160 a month for the second year and the same from then on, so that we both think our deal wasn't too terribly bad, but we assume

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and hope at this point that he will continue to live here for several years. It is something of an advantage not to have to put in a service clause in the contract, as we would have to with a fellow foreign service officer, a naval officer, or even a public health officer. Nonetheless, it is still a pleasure to drive around and see the progress made on the new National Health Center. The place is huge, and getting huger week by week. It dwarfs the Naval Medical Hospital by now. In a year it will be occupied, probably. It looks almost as good as money in the bank to us, a fairly sure guarantee of the continuing value of our investment. We are so very glad we can keep the place instead of having to sell it now. If we had sold it, it would have meant temporary riches that would have melted little by little. We can still sell it when and if we want to, and in case of necessity we could raise another loan on it. All in all we feel much happier about the whole thing than we ever thought we would when we reluctantly bought it. With the new loan, the monthly payments have risen to \$116 I believe, so even the first year we won't be too badly off in the renting deal. It's nice to have the business of renting it off our minds. If William receives enough money from the will of his elderly cousin he will be able to pay you back either partially or (hopefully) almost in full, and that would relieve his mind no end. Needless to say we are counting no chicken whatsoever. By the way, I don't know if I told you that still another elderly cousin of William recently died, and her will said she would like to leave William and ten or a dozen other people five hundred dollars. William hadn't seen her since the twenties, and was amazed. I was amazed at the number of people to whom she had left five hundred dollars, and sceptical. William said she was Welsh, saving, lived extremely modestly, and would probably not have mentioned so many people in her will unless she was pretty sure her estate could yield that much or almost that much when she made the will. A matter of pride, said he. I think it is a tribute to William that two elderly and very distant cousins should think so highly of him over the years, but it doesn't surprise me in the least. One more chicken we are not counting, but in the meantime I can enjoy the satisfaction of knowing that I'm not the only one who thinks William is the salt of the earth.

Happily, it turned out that Miss Roddy has an aunt in New York whom she was planning to visit this summer. So now she will be with us from our arrival at the hotel in New York until we get on the ship, August third. We will probably leave here for Flemington the day the packers come, which will probably be the 30th of July, a Monday. In July, it is best to travel on a Monday. Also it's best to stay right here by the Laundermat and the diaper-service as long as we possibly can. From then on we use paper diapers, but even so the other laundry mounts up incredibly.

We went to help the Venezuelans celebrate independence on the 5th of July, and saw our old friend the Italian Ambassador to Venezuela, Count Secco Suardo, yesterday at the mans. He is now minister to Guatemala! It will be nice to see him down there... The girls are doing splendidly, getting chubbier and more cheerful daily. Miss Roddy gets the same avid pleasure out of hweeling them around the block in their best dresses amid the admiring crowds that I do. People go crazy, women faint, Miss Roddy and I try to control our conceit. I bought just the right little black fur bolero of an evening wrap for \$28 at a second hand store! Couldn't be pleaseder. Love,

Three lines apparently crossed out with pencil