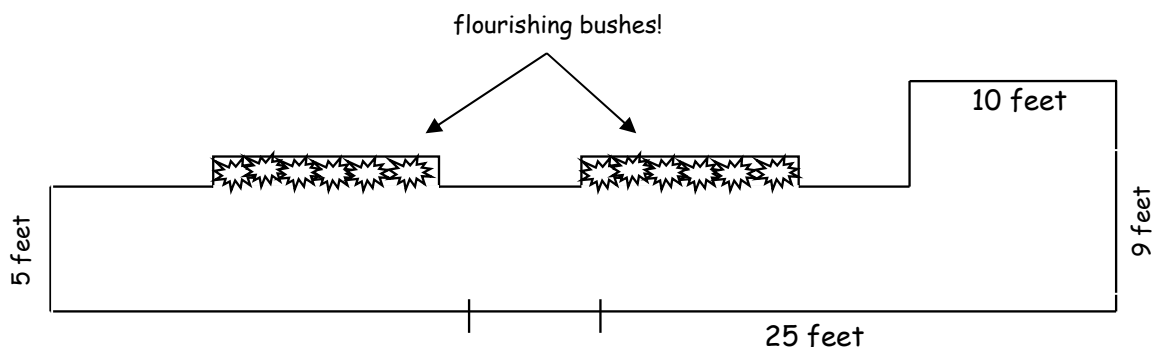


Dear People,

Old factor “S” still cutting up¹ – or more so. St. Quentin² is pretty darned near, and everyone is worried as anything. No news whatsoever³, except that Gamelin is out, Weygand in. Gamelin out after a week of war! Weygand was very popular, we were expecting him back from Syria as soon as things began in earnest. Daladier⁴ didn’t like him. Lovely sunny weather for the enemy advance. Latest cut in newspaper size brings them down to two pages from four, which allows just enough space for the want ads and communiqué.

Getting so that I hate the sound of airplanes. There haven’t been as many air-raids as we anticipated, but they haven’t stopped, by a long shot.

Yesterday being Sunday Jimmie & I decided to do some gardening. We worked all morning, digging, putting in phosphates, digging, watering, digging, & planting. Fun! Our terrace now looks neat & clean, because we scrubbed & swept as well as amused ourselves with the boxes. Our terrace is large & well supplied with earth to plant in. Our neighbor gave us some seeds – Carnation, sweet pea, vetch, and various mysterious seeds that may turn out to be man-eating plants, but which had no labels. I’m going to add a radish or two.



As you can see from the above beautiful map, we have a large space in which to work. We had a lovely time. Disappointed, however, that no flowers had appeared this morning.

¹ In her previous letter of 1940-05-13, Philinda explained that she would refer to the war as “factor S”.

² St. Quentin: about 160 km = 100 miles north of Paris. “May 18 [1940]. General Kleist's German armour captures St Quentin, half-way between the English Channel and Sedan. Antwerp surrenders.” World War 2 Timeline – 1940, in Historic UK. (<http://www.historic-uk.com/HistoryUK/HistoryofBritain/World-War-2-Timeline-1940/> accessed 2016-10-27).

³ Since writing her letter of May 13, here’s what happened:

- May 13: Churchill’s “blood, toil, tears, and sweat” speech in the British House of Commons
- May 15: The Netherlands surrenders to Germany
- May 16: Churchill visits Paris; Belgian government evacuates to southern France
- May 17: Germany takes Antwerp, Belgium
- May 18: Maxime Weygand, World War I General, replaces Maurice Gamelin as commander of French armed forces.
- May 19: German forces besiege the French cities of Amiens, Arras, and Noyelles
- May 20: German forces take the French city of Abbeville.

([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timeline_of_World_War_II_\(1940\)#May_1940](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timeline_of_World_War_II_(1940)#May_1940), accessed 2016-10-27)

⁴ Édouard Daladier, three-time Prime Minister of France (1933, 1934, and 1938 – March 1940). He was succeeded by Paul Reynaud.

Jones says that the man who said no body works when he works for the Gov't., is a DIRTY LIAR! The immigration Dep't. is rushed to death, & practically always works from an hour to three hours overtime. Which is hard on the dinner hour.

I read *Arrowsmith*⁵ & *Ann Vickers*⁶. Much preferred the former, which is by Paul de Kruif, to the latter, which is by Dorothy Thompson. I'm now starting *Dodsworth*⁷.

Everyone has been rushing down to see the Belgian refugees leave Paris at the Gare Montparnasse. An *extremely* tragic sight, I'm told. They have so much voluntary aid that everything's at sixes & sevens.

Am reconciling myself to the possibility of leaving Paris & Jones for purposes of safety. Hate the idea, may be forced to do it. Leaving Jones is my idea of worst possible fate.

Everyone is so scared that they talk of murdering all Germans, turning Germany into New Sahara. Uplifting War!

I love you, me

⁵ This appears to be only partly true. "*Arrowsmith* is a novel by American author Sinclair Lewis, first published in 1925. It won the 1926 Pulitzer Prize (which Lewis declined). Lewis was greatly assisted in its preparation by science writer Paul de Kruif, who received 25% of the royalties on sales, although Lewis was listed as the sole author. *Arrowsmith* is arguably the earliest major novel to deal with the culture of science." ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arrowsmith_\(novel\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arrowsmith_(novel)), accessed 2016-10-27)

⁶ There seems to be another mix-up here. Although a Web search turns up individuals named Ann Vickers, it does not turn up any books with that spelling. *Ann Vickers* is a 1933 novel by Sinclair Lewis about a tomboy who grew up to become a suffragette. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ann_Vickers accessed 2016-10-27) On the other hand, Dorothy Thompson was a journalist active when this letter was written, who had published eight books of political reportage and opinion by 1940, and likely would have been familiar to Philinda. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dorothy_Thompson, accessed 2016-10-27)

⁷ "*Dodsworth* is a satirical novel by American writer Sinclair Lewis first published by Harcourt Brace & Company in March 1929. Its subject [is] the differences between US and European intellect, manners, and morals..." ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dodsworth_\(novel\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dodsworth_(novel)), accessed 2016-10-27)

May 20, 1940

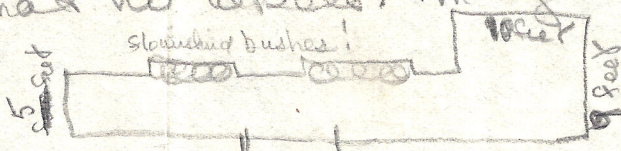
Dear People,

Old factor "S" still cutting up - or more so. St. Quentin is pretty darned near, and everyone is worried as anything. No news whatsoever, except that Gamelin is out, Weygand in. Gamelin out after a week of war! Weygand was very popular, we were expecting him back from Syria as soon as things began in earnest. Daladier didn't like him, so we got sunny weather for the enemy advance. Latest cut in newspaper size brings them down to two pages from four, which allows just enough space for the war ads and the communiqués.

Getting so that I hate the sound of airplanes. There haven't been as many air-raids as we anticipated, but they haven't stopped, by a long shot.

Yesterday being Sunday Jimmie & I decided to do some gardening. We worked all morning, digging, putting in phosphates, digging, watering, digging & planting. Fun! Our terrace now looks neat & clean, because we scrubbed & swept as well as amused ourselves with the boxes. Our terrace is large & well supplied with earth to plant in. Our neighbor gave us some seeds -

Carnation, sweet pea, detch, and various miscellaneous seeds that may turn out to be man-eating plants, but which had no labels. I'm going to add a radish or two.



As you can see from the above beautiful map, we have a large space in which to work. We had a lovely time. Disappointed, however, that no flowers had appeared this morning.

Jones says that the man who said no body works when he works for the Govt., is a DIRTY LIAR! the immigration Dept. is rushed to bath, & practically always works from an hour to three hours overtime. Which is hard on the dinner hour.

I read Arrowsmith & Ann Vickers. Much preferred the former, which is by Paul de Kruis, to the latter, which is by Dorothy Thompson. Am now starting Podewitz.

Everyone has been rushing down to see the Belgian refugees leave Paris at the Gare Montparnasse. An extremely tragic sight, I'm told. They have so much voluntary aid that everything's at six pence.

Am reconsidering myself to the possibility of leaving Paris & Jones for purposes of safety. Hate the idea, may be forced to do it. Leaving Jones is my idea of worst possible fate.

Everyone is so scared that they talk of murdering all Germans, turning Germany into New Sahara. Uplifting War!
I love you, me