

638 Walsworth Ave.
Oakland, Cal.

My dearest Laura:

I have conceived the happy idea of combining duty and pleasure by practicing thusly on poor innocent you. You will no doubt suffer from the sight of many erasures, but have patience for very soon I shall know the key-board at least.

First of all - thank you for your comforting letter which came when I most needed it. Things looked very dark to me for a while and there seemed no possible daylight. Then our three doctors went south for a week and things began to happen. They had left orders for injections of mercury as the bone specialist did not think it was tuberculosis but some blood trouble. Meanwhile two other doctors advised us strongly against the mercury as it is a sign of condemnation and that Howard's blood test did not warrant that severe treatment. So poor Muddy lost all faith in the whole kitten crew of them and was ready for anything but doctors.

To make a long story short, he turned to Christian Science and he has steadily improved; so that it seems a miracle when I see him walking up and down stairs with hardly an effort. He went immediately to school and has not missed an hour since. I do not know whether or not you are shaking your head - but I can only say that the man who is treating him has done marvelous things. When you see a friend who four months ago was given up by the best men on the coast, including her own brother, completely cured of a horrible complication of various diseases, you cannot help but have faith.

And now what am I doing? Well - I am devoting three nights of the week to study in a school for would-be stenographers. The coming years if the war is to last, will not have much need for dancers! Therefore I amputate the artistic and graft on the practical. Only last week I might have gone to France if I had been a finished and expert stenographer, as one of four with a hospital unit. So I am keeping that in mind hoping it may come true later.

Lucy has just finished her first month as secretary to the local Red Cross. She has to keep in order a thousand details and answer as many questions daily but seems equal to the task.

Aunt Alice writes me that you have been the most brilliant pupil of the season at the school. I expected it and it is comforting not to be disappointed. I wish I could see something of your work. She also says that you would like to fly for the army and take photographs. A wonderful idea, Laura, but slightly dangerous! Do reconsider it and come work with me in a hospital. I still have visions, you see, of other days when we shall work and play awhile together.

With much love to you,

May 16/17

Your devoted Alice