

19 Sharp Hill,
Wilton, Conn.
June 10th, '52

Dearest Laurie:

What a many gifts you shower upon undeserving me, just 'cause I've again become a year older than you for a spell! So dear of you - warms me through & through. I don't wonder you and Betsey love your new place. It looks perfectly enchanting, & quite makes me blush for my unimaginative, four-square little house. But I discovered, when building, that every single relieving "in" or "out" of the ground plan rectangle cost that much more, so had to forego it. Dad is now wondering why I didn't add (or couldn't now add) an extra room & bath for him!

I'm definitely tempted, however, to add one of your appurtenances - and that is, a hammock! Incomplete, I know, without a beautiful poodle beside it - but I do have a share in a very delightful dog here. He belongs to some neighbors who never walk a step anywhere. And you know how a dog craves to go walks with someone. Result: he's snuggled against my door every morning by 7 A. M., patiently waiting & hoping. I try to go "cross country" with him through the woods at least once a day, though he'd prefer three times. I cannot divine his genealogy: His coat is similar to a collie's - but he's smaller & stockier, with a head that suggests a Huskie. One of the gentlest, most intelligent & most loving creatures ever, by the name of "Happy".

Your moan over vacationing visitors who drop

in in dumps, made me moan in sympathy! Last fall, I had a perfect deluge of 'em, and this month promises the same. Bless 'em, you're glad to see them, but if only they'd space themselves a bit better! During the winter, I saw hardly a soul, but now that they are driving by on their way to cool summer spots, "why not take Route 7, and stop off & see Brenda?"

And it is such a busy season, what with my first try at a real & practical vegetable garden - not to mention a lot of young trees I've just transplanted, etc. etc. Have a few flowers, but nothing like what your patio & terrace show. Grass is almost waist-high in my meadow, and even here by the house, though I've sown considerable grass to make it look passably civilized, the big clusters of daisies and such are just too beautiful to be cut down in their prime, and I can't & won't do it.

Your job of recording in the Museum of International Folk Art must be a most intriguing one. But what's the matter with your publishers, anyway. I can't understand why they won't advance you enough to go ahead with the Navaho book they ordered you to do. Stinking of 'em, I call it. Too bad, too, that that Grant didn't come your way. Can't help but think some other applicant pulled more wires, & was perhaps closer to the powers that decide such things.

I feel such sympathy with Betsy for that horrid bursitis, and am convinced it was the window-washing that did it. Me, I can saw wood, spade up the garden, - do all sorts of really heavy work without even remembering

my arm - but try washing windows, and before I've done two (I have 14, plus 2 glass doors) - the nerves down my "Shingled" right arm feel like red-hot wires from shoulder to finger-tips, and I just can't go on. There's something about the motions one makes, & the pressure one exerts that's all to the bad. Do tell her to lay off windows. I hope her barsa has subsided again now. She's one of the greatest people I ever knew.

Housekeeping is rather a problem when one has no car, but I don't mind it when I'm by myself. When Dad is here, I do have to concentrate on it to the exclusion of almost everything else, since eating is now one of his few pleasures, even though he eats so little, he still eats often, and food must be ready on the dot. Yes - market will deliver to the tune of 25¢ extra, but I still prefer to toddle down & do my own picking & choosing. The walking keeps me in condition - seldom less than three miles a day, sometimes more. And I wouldn't miss all the sights & sounds & smells and learning I get from walking - not for the swankiest car ever.

Here I go, rambling on, and haven't yet mentioned that big present - the new Joy of Cooking! Indeed I do know it - in fact, have had a copy of the earlier edition serving as kitchen bible. (New edition was all sold out here). But this new one has so much the earlier one lacked, not to mention the helpful little illustrations, that I'm really enchanted to have it, Laurie dear. Haven't yet tried skinning a rabbit as per the pictures where your card was tucked in, but

have no doubt I could, were the occasion to arise.

If you don't mind, I shall delightedly keep this book, and turn my old one over to Ernestine Shepard, who simply can't afford to buy this, or any other, book.

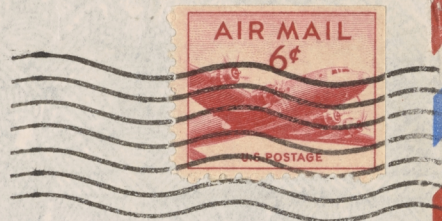
I've just turned the pages to a sweet bread recipe which I shall try on Dad, who is coming to visit me again on Friday. (He came up last month, & attended the unveiling of my bust of Susan B. Anthony). There's very little meat tender enough for his dentures to deal with, so sweetbreads ought to be just the thing - one day creamed, another sautéed perhaps, with a dash of wine.

So you see how you'll be helping me, every day, with this gorgeous big book to teach me all the things I should have learned in my youth but never did. A thousand thanks to you, dear.

I see mailman is almost due, so must hurry this down to my box before he trundles by. Oh I don't - it won't go out for another 24 hrs, & it is far too delayed anyway. (I had visitors last week).

So much love & so many thanks again
from your Brendie

B. Putnam, Sharp Hill, Wilton, Conn.



VIA AIR MAIL

Miss Laura Gilpin,
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