

341 Westgate

St. Louis, 63130

Mayday

Dear Pa,

I wish I'd been with you in Costa Rica. I hear it's the Switzerland of Mesoamerica, but that its tranquility is somewhat imperiled by its disorderly neighbors. I've always wondered why U.S. foreign policy doesn't comprise substantial and unstinting support for peaceful, ~~independent~~, democratic, independent nations. I don't mean military assistance, but support of the non-eleemosynary kind, like trade concessions, access to markets, scholarships at graduate schools and the like. I've always felt that one of our most important allies in Europe was Yugoslavia (not that it is an entirely democratic country) because it is so ~~xxx~~ stubbornly independent. It has no territorial ambitions that I know of, it allows a considerable measure of civil liberty and free enterprise but most important it has stood as a bastion against anyone else's ambitions for nearly 40 years without resorting once to armed conflict. Yet it is a very poor country and could use some help.

The pictures of Anne were gratefully received by everyone. I had them framed and sent one each to Barbara (Norton) Cherington and to Caroline (Norton) Hurwitch as well as to Jane, Jane's mother and to the boys. The larger, more cheerful ones were a little more popular, I think. If you ever print any more, I think the boys would like to have one of those, too. I know I would.

I'm very sorry Aline is not up to going to Arles. Will they permit a surrogate -- Marcie, Zoe, Jane or one of your grandsons? I wish I could suggest Anne; she would have loved France.

It was a little disingenuous of Cowan to ask if we were related. We had lunch one day during a convention of the American Chemical Society here at which he delivered a paper. I'd met him, quite by accident, at a cocktail party being given by Houghton Mifflin to promote the sales of a new chemistry text it is publishing. He was there, not because he was in the market for a textbook but simply because the invitation was freely given. I was there ~~xxxxxxx~~ as an invitee of Kent who is an editor at H-M and was out here to help promote the book. She was sort of acting as a hostess at the cocktail party and trying to introduce everybody and keep the party going and she happened to introduce herself to Cowan who asked her if she were by any chance related to you. Cowan told me about the work being done on a principle called nuclear magnetic resonance and its promise as a diagnostic device, as well as some of the economic problems it will create. It is terribly expensive, yet every hospital will want one and then try to get the patients, of the government, to pay for it.

pa - two

It's a rather interesting story, so I pursued it further with him a day or two later.

Cowan told me, by the way, that among the pioneers in discovering the principles upon which NMR operates are Nick Metropolis (Metropoulos?) and Berndt (Bernt?) Matthias. I was sorry to learn that James Tuck and Matthias had died. He said Joan Matthias was living in Santa Fe and drinking herself to death. I hope that's not true. She seemed like such a cheerful person on that Escalante expedition we went on about a decade ago.

I'm afraid I have no scientific bent at all and if Cowan suggested that I seemed to I must have misled him. I'm a little inquisitive -- most newspaper people are -- but I have neither the imagination nor the industrious dedication that it must take to be a scientist. I'm afraid.

I'm writing to Mrs. Allen, the lady whose letter to you you sent me, but I haven't much help to offer. I'll forward her letter on to Nancy, though. Nancy once drew me up a sort of geneological tree whose limbs reached back to the early 19th century but which I seem to have misplaced. It may be in your desk at GSHI, come to think of it. I probably should ask her to do it again since the boys might be interested in it someday. I believe in keeping records, no matter how frivolous they may seem at the time. Comes from writing history, even if only the first draft, I guess.

I can't remember: did I ever mention Anne's bike? I think it is in Santa Fe. If Pat could assemble it and sell it it would be a great convenience to us all. Also, I think there may be a sewing machine there someplace. That Jane would like to have, I think.

On second thought, if Anne's bike is any use to anyone there, why not keep it?

Jane's address, for your files, is 101 Crescent Way, Portsmouth, N.H. 03801. Did I tell you the house was designed by Aline's father?

Love,

B.

postscript --

Of course we'd love to come to the Island. The very tentative summer plans right now are to go to Maine sometime in August. This is because Boxie is going to summer school and wants to get a job before summer school and take a brief vacation afterwards. We are planning sometime to gather briefly in Machiasport where Jane and the boys want to bury Anne's ashes. I imagine it will be around that time -- that is, toward the end of August -- that we'll be able to get to the Island. Is that alright?

B



porter

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