

341 Westgate

St. Louis 68120

8-18-84

Dear Alice -

I'm very sorry to learn that Pa's arthritis is impairing his mobility. It must be a terrible frustration. He ought to consider having a bear - like the Americans and Englishmen hunting in E. Africa. One of his grandsons would do nicely, I should think.

I guess it was hot all over the Eastern Seaboard this summer. I met Jack in N.Y. about the middle of June and spent a very unpleasant day there. It was far hotter than it has been in St. Louis. ~~the~~

I've just gotten back from Bucks Harbor (Machiasport) where Jane and the boys and Jane's mother and I gathered to bury Anne's ashes. It was warm (but foggy) there, too, as warm as I've ever known.

Bury isn't the accurate word. We just gathered on a stony beach in the fog one morning. A neighbor - a contemporary, roughly, of Jane and me whose father killed himself a few years ago and who was quite fond of Anne - said a few words, ~~and~~ ~~so~~ and the boys waded out and poured the ashes into the bay and then broke the pitcher.

It ~~was~~^{is} a lovely place called Howard's Cove ~~that~~ where Anne liked to collect rocks, shells and other treasures where she was little. It was the best place, and her favorite.

I think the boys wanted to say something but they were all too fearful. They miss Anne terribly and I guess they always will. We all do. There ~~is~~ still isn't a day that goes by that I don't think of her, at first happily, recalling some experience or something I'd like to do or say, immediately followed, of course, by the cold realization that I cannot.

We concluded the little ceremony with a fragment from the Bridge of San Luis Rey that I've always liked:

"But soon we shall all die and all memory will have left the earth, and we ourselves shall be loved for a while and forgotten.

"But the love will have been enough; all those impulses of love return to the love that made them.

"Even memory is not necessary for love. There is a land of the living and a land of the dead and the bridge is love, the only survival, the only meaning."

Brief and informal though it was, I think it was sort of a relief for Jane and the boys. There's nothing, now, left to ~~do~~ be done.

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The boys seem otherwise to be doing reasonably well. B.F. is still living in Providence and playing the bass in several orchestras and giving lessons.

Jack is still in New Haven but thinking of moving, perhaps to Boston or New York. He punts a lot though, I gather, sporadically.

Boxie is in his last year at Matherford.

Alex has gone east to stay, for a while, with Jane in Portsmouth and perhaps attend the University of New Hampshire.

I'm still living in St. Louis, of course — me, the dog and the cat. I'll stay, I guess until I'm old enough to sell the house without paying taxes on the gain — it's only two more years. Then perhaps I'll see if I can move back to New England.

Please keep in close touch Alice, and thanks for writing. Best to Pa, and to all at the Island. I'm sorry I can't make it this summer.

Love B.

P.S. —

I'll pass on your offer of the house to the boys, if I may.

Boxie, especially, expressed an interest in going to the Island at least for a few days.

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