

A series of letters written when Dad went back to Detroit for a visit and to decide, perhaps, about going to law school. At Mom's request most of the lovey-dovey stuff has been replaced by ellipses!

to Wm. A Lucking Jr, 1603 Ford Bldg, Detroit 26, MI from Helen B. Lucking

June 24, 1946

Hi, sweetness. Bet you're having dinner with the Fergusons along about now - it being eight o'clock. Wish I were having it with you

Mother and Dad left this morning about 8:30. Pat stuck around until just after lunch, then went back to Pasadena. The ignition trouble she'd had was very minor and took only a minute to fix.

Incidentally, last night as I was about to get in the car at the station, a man standing near it said, "Going to Ojai?" And added - "Mrs. Lucking - " to my great relief it was Phil Pierpont, who had just gotten in from Los Angeles. He'd left Ojai yesterday morning for Las Vegas, and discovered when he got to L.A. that he'd forgotten some necessary papers, so turned around and came back again. He was as glad to see me as I was to see him, for the next bus to Ojai wasn't for an hour and a half.

Cynthia [Cleveland] 'phoned today and said they'd seen you off from Sta. Barb, and that they'd given you some pretty good pictures of the kids - good stoof.

When I got home last night, Ruthie was screaming her little head off - just mad, 'cause the minute anyone picked her up or paid any attention to her at all she was perfectly happy and looked interestedly about - I ignored her while I got ready for bed and she yelled so hard that she coughed and sputtered, and I was about to try to do something about it when she suddenly quieted down and there wasn't another peep out of her until 5 o'clock this morning. Rascal. Has been good as gold all day but now is pulling an encore, but with fair reason 'cause she gets fed in half an hour.

Lana was so cute a little while ago - I spoke sharply to her for something (she was in bed) and she said, "Mommy, you shouldn't speak to me like that," - and since I like to have the kids go to sleep with pleasant words I spoke more sweetly and she said, "I like you to talk this way - I like you, Mommy." Monkey.

Nothing of much note to tell you, sweets. Lula cut her other foreleg on barbed wire - rather badly - the vet came up this morning and treated it and talked to Pat about it and left instructions, which I relayed to George¹ as to what to do about it. Keep Lula in the corral, etc.

Evelyn is working out fine - very sweet with the kids and willing as can be - very nice.

...give my love to the family. Oh yes, I'll write Aunt Hattie tomorrow, and it would be nice if you would too.

Hellie

Oh, yes, Lana several times today has asked about you - "Where's my Daddy?" And when I said you'd left on the train for a few days, she said, "He shouldn't do that - I like him to be here with me. My sentiments exactly! Hah! I love you, Me.

June 25th 1946

... Forgot to tall you last night that Evelyn and I finished up the trout for dinner. I was snooping through the icebox and luckily found them, 'cause they were no longer frozen and needed to be

eated pretty soon; they were moughty good - wished you could be sharing them with me.

Emery Brandt dropped by this afternoon to collect some of his hose and George has gotten only a couple of hundred grapes² watered. So now I'm trying to think of people to call to try to borrow a hundred feet of garden hose, which George says will do the trick.

Took the kids over to give the garbage to the chickens this morning, and Pooch³ came, too, of course. Well, we went over to Lula and Ginger and Pooch was yapping at Ginger's heels and Billy got in the way and got knocked down. I don't think she kicked him - think she probably bumped him with her leg. He was most disgruntled, natcherly, but think he was just scared instead of hurt. We went right back up to the horses right afterward and he didn't mind.

Guess what - last night Ruthie didn't wet her pants between about 10:30 and 5 this AM when I fed her! Losh, she does better than Billy at that rate!

Lots of mail today - lots of Dartmouth stuff, which I won't forward to you and others which I will. Opened two to see if they were anything urgent - the one forwarded on by Mrs. Tritle and the Leon I. Rothschild Special Agent one. They I'll enclose, also the item from the Navy - that I haven't opened - will forward it on via air mail. Letter from the Eimrick's⁴ Theirs is Katherine Jane, 6 lbs 11½ oz, arrive May 29th. Their present address is 8627 Dumbarton Rd. Give 'em my best when you see or talk to them.

Am trying hard to keep ze back straight, sweets, and I've been good about taking a rest in the afternoons - slept only half an hour this afternoon but was flopped on the bed about 2½ hours.

Cynthia phoned yesterday and again just now to see how everything was and sent you their best - Said also that Ray saw the big old Lincoln or whatever it is when he was here Sunday and said he'd like to buy it if your Dad would sell - you might inquire. Also said they'd looked up your time of departure from Oakland tonight - 8 PM. You're 40 minutes on the way by now, I guess.

Helen

June 26 1946

... It's just past eight o'clock and dinner's all over, the dishes washed, and Evelyn has gone back to her room and I'm listening, off and on, to the *Adventures of Mr. and Mrs. North* ...

Ruthie has been good as can be since her 5 o'clock meal - has been awake the whole time, too, just looking big-eyed about the room and not saying a word - but just now she decided to tune up. Hope she'll sleep well tonight - the last three nights she has, has skipped the 1 AM feeding. Good stoof, may she continue to do so.

Got a hundred feet of 1-inch hose from Bob Davis for 3 days and George put it to use first thing this afternoon. Was glad I was able to locate some.

There's a new stamp out, which I got a block of for ze collection - will try to remember to get a couple of 'em and use them on tomorrow's envelope, since I've already stamped today's one. 3¢ purple - You'll probably see it before I send it to you anyway.

Nutz that Mr. Hills is on vacation - wouldn't you know it? Ratz. Maybe you should come home via San Francisco and try again?

Hah! Those Clevelands! Just as well you forgot to put any likker in your bag before you left, yes? Cynthia didn't mention the *Old Taylor*, just the pictures - glad they're good.

Have you finished *The Egg* yet? Am most interested in your reactions to it. Most entertaining in any case, isn't it? ...

Gave the garden a good watering this morning - about a 5-hour watering. Got the trenches

regulated so that I could go away and leave the water running and it just kept the trenches nicely running and not overflowing - the garden shouldn't need another watering again 2 or three days now - ...

Hellie

June 27th 1946

... Will take the car down tomorrow to have the various things done to it that you mentioned. May be a coupla hour job so will take it down about eight and have them drive me home.

Speaking of going down at eight reminds me that when I went down at eight Monday AM to pick up the cleaning girl she didn't show - which pleased me just as well. I did the laundry, Evelyn ironed it beautifully and it was no strain. Skipped any house cleaning until today, when Evelyn did most of it while I took the kids shopping and I did a little of it after I got home - no trouble. And slept for a couple of hours this afternoon and spent another two hours just lying down.

Am going to the Gest's for dinner tomorrow night which will be a bit of a change.

There's an article in the July *Reader's Digest* which you may have already read, entitled "Ten Faults of Wives and Husbands." The last paragraph I found the most interesting - hmmm. Also ... I would be among the 4 percent of the wives who think their husbands perfect....

When I put Billy's didies on this evening, he kept saying "Daddy." I thought at first he was saying "didies," and I said, "yes, Billy's didies." He then said, "Daddy train." Lana keeps asking when Daddy's coming home ...

Got a charge out of Lana this morning; she said something about getting ice cream when we went downtown, and I said, "Oh, no - we do that just once in a great while." She said, I think it's once in a great while *now!*" Hah! Billy reached into the bathroom cabinet while on the seat this morning and was having great fun with the Dr. Lyon's tooth powder a few minutes later when I discovered him. Hah!

June 28 1946

... Went to the Gest's for dinner this evening. T'was fun, sorta not much fun either, going without you. Had a most delectable turkey dinner, and Hellie seemed to have a most prodigious appetite - I ate enough for you and me both!

Got the car tended to this morning; they took as much of the play out of the wheel as they could - said there were parts that were worn, and new ones are not available at present - but as far as I could see, the wheel is virtually "playless" now - also said that the wheel was about to come off - said the nut holding it on was so loose they unscrewed it with their fingers! The wheel alignment was good, they said.

Just glanced at the letter from Mich. Law School before sending it on to you this AM. It said something about having accepted your application in a letter dated June 17th, if I recall the letter correctly. No other letter besides today's one has come from them, sweetie, so maybe you'd better check on same.

The Clevelands drapped over this afternoon for a little while - sent you their best - I invited them to have dinner with me next Tuesday at Wheelers, but if I can figure up a good meatless meal (none obtainable in Ojai since you left except cold meat) will fix dinner here instead. They got a charge out of your letter. Told me about the be-jewelled, be-chinned dowagers who tried to pick you up and Cynthia told me to tell you, "Whatta man!" ... They also said that Jack Guthrie,

the Commander who escorted Freda McNair to one of the Cleveland's parties, was looking into the details of an 85 acre, \$22,500 ranch for sale hyarabouts for you - not in Ojai. ...

June 30, 1946

... How's everything progressing? And have you checked on Ann Arbor, etc.? Under the circumstances, now seems like a good time for the law course, what with the G.I. Bill of Rights provisos, etc., doesn't it? Enclosed is a letter from Amer. Pres. Lines - which I opened so that there wouldn't be as many stamps necessary on the envelope.

And speaking of American reminds me that we've never received anything from Amer. Airl. regarding the 5-way split of stock - mayhap we'd better check on same, yes? We still have the original ten shares, unless you've done something about it, have you?

Catherine is up this weekend - staying with Hester Kempe - took the kids there yesterday AM and they went swimming - back again in the afternoon with Lana and took my suit and dunked a bit myself. Lana adored it, as did Billy. Took the kids again this morning - wonderful fun for them. If they had a pool of water of some sort handy all the time I don't think it'd be long before they would be actually swimming, particularly Lana. Catherine and I had dinner last night at Wheeler's - 'twas fun.

Jack Dron Jr dropped over for a while early this evening - just got back from his trip hither and yon in the East, some 15,000 miles he said. Was very sorry not to see you and asked us to drop up to their house as soon as we could; suggested some fishing or gun-comparing with you when you get home, etc.

Gave the vegetable garden a good 4-hour watering this afternoon - looks pretty good. Pulled several turnips that were sweet and delicious once the outer bark was peeled off. Also picked and ate 5 strawberries and thought of you with each bite 'n' wished you could have a bite of each. The string beans are stringing and the corn is all blossoming, or just about to.

Thank you for your wire yesterday, sweetie. Are you still feeling soggy? Guess it *must* be pretty hot there by now - been doing any swimming or sailing? The "swimming" I did yesterday and today consisted mostly in just getting myself wet and idling around in the water - did just a tiny amount of swimming, about half way across the pool, before I remembered I'm not supposed to yet. 'Twas fun just the same! If you should happen to see a good bathing cap - with a chin strap preferably - in any drug or department store while you're there wouldst grab same for me, sweets? I have *nothing* in that line any more.

Did you hear the atom bomb test this afternoon, honey? We heard it but the reception wasn't so good.

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Me

¹ George Abel, the fairly useless farmhand. He loved gardening, and was very nice.

² Dad planted a bunch of grapes on the other side of the hill, on Granddad's property. Whether they succumbed to neglect, or the big fire of 1948, or a combination, I don't know, but I remember the stakes as being there for a long time.

³ Pooch, or "Poochie," was our little dog; while we were in Michigan he was bitten by a rattlesnake and died.

⁴ Emerick was the doctor on the Pritchett, and his wife Ruth still stays in touch with Mom (Aug 1993). The Emericks have been divorced for many years, and the daughter Kay whose birth is spoken of here is a psychologist in Ventura.