

Dear -

We are basking in warm sun lying topside without shirts. The water is as blue as copper sulfate (CuSO_4 and aren't you sorry you ever married a doctor?) and I never can quite get the trick of painting it. An endless procession of top heavy very white monstrosities of clouds are driving slowly past like floats in the Labor day parade. The sunsets are just as fantastic as they ought to be at sea, you know the kind. It rains occasionally, but only enough to settle the dust. A tough life tho, no deck chairs, no glass of orange juice in hand, no shuffleboard — don't you just weep at the intolerable situations your husband has to bear doing his bit for his country? Stop! Don't say that out loud! What will Theodora think? I admit I am missing it in a bit, but it is lovely. And when the children say "What-did-you-do-in-the-war, Daddy?"

I will say with great pride — "I took a vacation, but your mother was a hero. She starved in Washington like Valley Forge. Singlehanded, she fed the despondent armies despite Congress, which fumbled around abolishing things while Rome burned. She conducted lightning swift campaigns all the way from Boston to Yorktown, until she practically had no nipples on her bleeding feet (she even left a trail in the snow). She crossed the Delaware & other icy rivers even if she had to swim. She directed two successful campaigns in the West. Finally, she endured life without adequate reserves of bourbon, butter and bobly pins. Ask your mother about the war!"

With something under a hundred years of happy married life behind me, I Block that punt!
 I'm glad it's you and I. I've always had trouble getting appreciation for something big and wonderful off my chest, and I'm having it now. In a letter. I wouldn't have any trouble if you were here. No trouble at all.

Marriage brings on some funny moods and new ways of looking at things — backwards & forward. No matter how much you've thought or planned ahead, it revolutionizes the forward view. The beginning

H. H. O. O. O. O. O. O. O. O. O. O. O.

It's more like Keats' idea of life as a series of large or small rooms you progress to & live in. Some are drab & dark and lead nowhere. Others are lined with pearl and promise. As you grow from one to another, there are different people and different experiences in each which rarely carry over to the next. But this present chamber is large and light and seemingly endless in its possibilities for a rich and happy life.

We can never really hope to explore all the rooms we have both lived in for two or three good reasons - once you move out

picnic tables underneath the sycamore tree. That ⁵⁾ little trail underneath the ledge was a wonderful place to hide. I chived on the island. The little cave in the bluff across the river. Familiar farm smells, carrying water & wood. Barn dances. All the sounds when you go to sleep in a swinging bed on the porch above the river. You can see why ^{the} way the place looked was painful to me, but that it wasn't realistic to me in a run-down shape. My grandmother's house is much the same way. I think I go out of my way to keep from going by. But in the same way, there are a great many beautiful & special things I ~~remember~~

remember about the old house. I guess the first requirement of a home, (I mean for us, anyway) is that it's comfortable & livable, no matter what it looks like and what style or period it has, if any. Most towns are just a composite picture of one generation giving way to another, with the new one never wanting what the old one had to offer. If you have comfort plus style that's wonderful tho, it seems to me. I mean The Castine house. Not Mary's house, tho there were certain things about that are really nice - the porch and the rocking chairs, for example. Pure Victorian but with a great deal of comfort & livability.

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of one it's never the same again. To revisit some
places you have known well is actually
painful. And with some, you don't even
see them as they are now — your past
impressions are so crystal clear, vivid,
and important to you that you can't see
or won't let yourself see the changes. The
cabin on the farm was like that. I
know you couldn't possibly see a great
deal in that empty little place, but then
you wouldn't have my mental images from
growing up there — 20 couples there for
dancing, with autumn leaves & Halloween
decorations, night trot lines and frogging
with froggers in a large Hack skillet
popping grease over the open fireplace,
a family reunion, complete with groaning

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Ms. A. 1. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100.

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You know how I feel about old New England houses anyway - there's no need of saying more. The Little Locksmith does a good job of it too. There is a horrible danger of getting one of those pseudo - old colonial houses that are "just too cute for words" - the "you'd never know, but it was just an old barn before we remodeled it" type of house - but I don't think that will happen to us. Furthermore, I don't think I will be the kind of host who mixes the salad dressing on the buffet during dinner.

You can see the way my thoughts are weaving back and forth between the future and the past. We have had amazingly similar reactions to some situations and we both know an awful lot about each

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These backgrounds, but there will always be
the outside of those two interlocking
circles  in Mrs. Miniver. Because
much of the past is buried someplace in
your memory & doesn't come up very often,
and because it will never make the same
impression on two different people. I don't
really mean that the grass was greener,
and the candy sweeter when I was a
kid. Things happen now which I will
remember just as vividly throughout life
as any of those things which I remember
especially from years ago. Just the other night
on the bridge there were as many stars out
as I have ever seen. There was practically no
wind. I borrowed the lookout's binoculars
to look around by starlight & just happened
to look up at a particularly bright twinkling

star near Orion's belt. Whereas it had looked
only white, now it was flashing red, green, yellow
and blue, the pure idea of a Christmas tree
ornament. The chief quartermaster, the most
experienced sailor on the ship, and the man who knows
all about such things, looked over my shoulder and
told me it was Betelgeuse, not a solid star, but a
whirling mass of incandescent gasses. "A major first
magnitude star." And with a sudden reversal from the
scientific, "Ain't she beautiful?" Yes, indeed she
was. I had not felt the Christmas season after Fack
Road until then, but now I have a Christmas star.

On censoring all the mail, the boys are spending
at least half of their letters on their Christmas dinner, so I
may at least mention it. All the officers had bad colds
from exposure on watch to this "Arctic weather" I have
described above, so the medical department furnished some
eggnog. You probably know what the menu was so I shan't
discuss it except that it was the kind of meal after which
you are carried groaning from the room. Remind me to
tell you my idea for an artificial liquor, sometime.
After drawing names, we presented gifts to each other
to the boys - then

mustache, Patent hair grower to Jack Page,
a shoe lace to somebody. Someone gave
me a Frank Medico pipe. The prize
present was to Jack which consisted of
several large Varga reprints together
with a book on hypnotism. One of the
pulpy, refer-to-page 64 of my book on the
subject sort of pamphlets.

The medical world here has been interesting,
several small things to do, and lots of
interesting problems. We carried the flu
bug along with us, but seem to have lost it
now. I have been writing up these various
reports, and am planning something new to
try to decrease the complications of our
common colds. And I've read quite a few
journals.

I have done a lot more non-medical reading than before. Two very good Fortunes for Sept. & Oct., a funny little thing called Love at first Flight, A Tree grows in Brooklyn which is very worth while. Along with a conventional story of a family poor in cash but not in mind, there are some splendid essays from a child's point of view which would do justice to Lamb. And as for the descriptive work — you see Brooklyn, smell it, feel it, even taste it, but you don't hear it. The book has no Brooklyn accent. The only people who can really get the full kick are therefore the Brooklynese, who would read it that way — Greenpernt, Canairie and the other fabulous places. Yes, even Sands St. gets in it, with a sailor getting' tatted near Brooklyn Bridge. I have made a good start on Black Lamb. It is just the right

I've read Behot's letter & your letter
from the air field, which was very nice. Behot
seems to be having the same kind of life I am.
Sounds very familiar in many respects.

Before I write you next, I shall open
the letter on the special stationery. It will
be just like letters crossing in the mails. I hope
you like this type of letter better than those
daily grinds that some of the boys put out
here on board. No possibility of sending them
for quite a while, but still they crank out a
diary. Many writing demands a special talent,
I think, and we have no Pepys or Boswells
on board. So I just save up ideas & spill
'em when I feel in the right mood, as I
do now darling thanks to you

Goodnight