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1954 - Aug. 23 - 2

Carolyn Brown Dodge

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Envelope

Mrs. E. H. Robinson

Route 1 Box 22

Sidney, Montana

Letter #5 (blue ink, yellow clip)

Aug 23, 1954 –

Dear Carol: 5:30 — & I'm still in my bathrobe — Ain't it terrible??? But Boyntons off to his spuds, Bills out irrigating, a crew of two is milking & only Bob is in bed – but bless him, he's stayed in bed few mornings this summer. A week from today he starts school. What a summer it's been! And we thought we were lined up for the summer. Now we can only hope & plan for another year. But the way it looks we will have to get someone to run the farm even if we have to move off of it to get that done — or else the spud business will have to be given up – & that won't happen. Boynton just can't hack the farm work. The spud business is hard work in some ways but not the physical hard labor of farm work. And Boynton's inability to hack farm work is the reason he went into spuds.

I have agreed to even sell the farm if that seems best. They could surely use the money for operating expenses in the business — but if we sell — we'd have to buy a place to live too. Well it's not to be decided before the crops are out. Surely don't want to get involved in another year though or we'll pick Dodge up from under a spud vine some day.

I have been concerned about Mother getting involved at Hardys & told her so — but you know how she wants to help always. We admit Aunt Grace has been tied up there for too long but if Mother were to go there for long – there's be another patient on someone's hands soon. And you know that would cause concern too. Mother's last letter sounded restless & like she was

anxious to settle down again. We encourage her getting a room or apartment in town if she'd like. She heard of a woman who needs day time care & companionship & that that might be a niche for her — but there again. I hate to have her get tied up. I'm sure she could get many nice baby sitting jobs if she wanted & then could say no when they came too fast or were undesirable. But you know, her no's would be hard for her to say — & she'd take the jobs — good or bad.

I assume this is a letter to be read by you & yours — & such comments that are not “fitten” for other peoples ears need not be repeated to them that shouldn't hear. Mother did enjoy Mr. Kelly's stories — wild & wooly, tho they were. But she said his language was good and also mild. Even wished Lucy's would have been as mild. Well you know Lucy. A heart of gold — but made it plain to me that she was no church goer — her religion was doing what she could for those that need help. She apparently does a lot. I see so much of her mothers kindness in her & then her father's bluntness pushes mother aside — & that roughness takes over. Les flashed me such a look of gratification & amusement when I call him “Precious” one morning at breakfast — from an incident of last summer. Lucy assured me that when she called him “Precious” last summer or any time it was from aggravation & not endearment. I knew that — but got a bang out of it anyway — last summer as well as this summer.

Mother wrote about Laverne & all of the worry & concern over that “old” “Catholic” Englishwomen. Why worry — It does no good — Didn't help your mother or mine to fret about us — & look — we are all still living with our men — more or less and eating three squares per day. Besides I assume that 50% of the entanglements are just entanglements & unwind eventually. Who knows — Laverne may have seen enuf yaking at home to make a real effort to have a good home. And believe me — those English gals have had it tough enuf to buckle down and make the most of American advantages. And did I tell you that the ring Jack passed came

back? It does happen. He'd been upset for awhile but had said little about the deal – & then came the letter from him saying it was over — & he was relieved and was glad it was settled so had apparently been some tough times for him — & probably her. I wrote her a note — no condemnations and she wrote back saying she was grateful for the letter & the show of understanding, would surely look us up if she came over, came to see them etc. And said she was glad we could understand the situation, she was sure in her own folks dog house – they liked Jack so well. Why gripe — it only makes everyone unhappy.

Didn't hear about Vera & the dress deal. Mother mentioned Lena is to teach. She cuts quite a slice for herself but Laurence is the ever loving husband. Some people just seem to need outside activities but it's a toughy on the kids. I felt that much of Bobby's trouble was too much going, hastily cooked meals etc etc — Did Vera get her feelings hurt sometime about Mother not coming to their place. Mother says Lena has invited her there but Vera hasn't gotten in touch for some time. What a grievous way to live. Its worse than an illness I had to laugh at your Mother objecting to TV. because of beer & cigarette ads. Dodge has an aunt in town here who used to jump up & turn off rodes when beer ads came on. She don't jump so fast now so just lets them go I guess.

Well – The spud deal started in Columbia Basin on Aug. 9. They start digging at 3 AM. & quit before noon because of sun burn. The sorters usually start at 6 or 7 AM. & sort until 2 usually. The potatoes have been nice. The first lot Dodge had to sort was 13 acres which averaged a carload of Number 1's per acre – and that is a 18 ton car. Dodge said less than 10% no 1's & about the same culls. Very nice. So far they have been able to sort for just one grown heavier now so suppose the rat race will be on in earnest — So far I've stayed home. Dodge has borrowed a small trailer for a place to land but we still think we will get one soon. I don't know

how much I can be over there but he does need a place that is comfortable near by. The warehouse is six miles from Quincy towards Ephrata – called Winchester — just a wider spot in the road. We bot a storage shed at Trinidad — towards Wenatchee from Quincy & have already had an offer of \$1500 rent for half of it for onion storage for this year. Expect to get near \$2000 for storage for half tho. It's a good set up & cost only \$8000 to purchase. If storage brings even 1/3 that's a good investment I think.

Well – I must quit. Its 6:30 and I am to help dress chickens this week. Dodges sister asked if we wouldn't like her to raise *frigers* for *les* with hers. This week we kill all of them — over 200. We do 50 or 60 a day and are usually done by noon — and they are for four familys. We hope four days will do it. The brother from Pullman wanted to help her as best he could so said he'd be here this week to help — bless him. Emily taking a week from her job & wants to do some painting & papering too while John here to help. What a vacation — what?

Monday evening & I'm tired. I got to the chicken job at 7:30. Four women, a 13 yr old boy & 14 yr old girl did 50 chickens – catch, kill, pick & dress & wrap & we finished at 12:10 noon — all ready & loaded to go to locker. The brother & his wife & maybe daughter age 14 may help narrow but didn't get there to help today. We have quite a system worked out. I'm going to bed – tired.

Love Carolyn

