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1955 - Oct. 10

Carolyn Brown Dodge

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Letter #5 (Blue ink, with note attached)

Attached note

1st year Kittitas
FFA nat'l chorus

On to the Letter

October 10, 1955

Dear Carol + all: Don't feel a bit gossipy but we'll have at this and probably before I get there you'll be darned glad I'm not.

Fall is here it seems, yesterday first day of pheasant and deer hunting so it rained most of the day- overcast + drippy but probably 1/10 of an inch of precipitation will be the repeat of the downfall Quincy tho. Everyone locally has held off on the potato digging because of prices but looks like all hell will break loose this week with everyone deciding its time to get the spuds out before they freeze in. one warehouse ran part of the time last week but auto expects to open this week if it doesn't rain too continuously. Most of local spuds will go in storage but they'll have to get a sorting crew for those who want to sell-prices or no. and at Winchester the crew has been way below last year because of prices but now Boynton says they too will really bear down on digging and they have almost no storage over there. Weather permitting, he expects at least five more weeks over there. Last year they ran eight to ten cars per day and have had mostly half that this year. Expect to have to run nights too to keep up with needs of the farmers. The company bot (bought) a spud cambine and it is working most of the time now. A fellow who works for them over there as field man has a cambine too and the two outfits can keep the warehouse going steadily and with much better flow of spuds on the tables. Cambines require four to five men to pick vines off the chains, also rocks + clods – and for the tractor. But mostly they can keep going when damp weather would stop a regular digger because pickers would rebel – anyway, it was an experiment – costly – but mostly has worked out well – means one more crew to keep track of – but at least they have more control before any the spuds brot (brought) in.

Boynton's living set up has been too much like last year. He didn't get a tractor because telephone company said they would have main line service for Dodge at the warehouse so his idea of mobile phone didn't seem necessary to apply for. Perhaps I told you – all his calls have been long distance because no local line to warehouse. I f he could get a main line from Quincy his service should be improved enouf (enough) so satisfactory calls could be made – then we'd have had an apartment at Winchester. Mobile phones have to be in a movable unit – thus the trailer plans – but application for that had to be made early + of course we didn't make them when this other deal appeared to be progressing – besides not having the planned phone service – at times he's had none because the crews have been screening the cable lines + that work has been interfered so with their line that calls could not be made. Its better now since the cable has gone past the warehouse. That county has just grown so fast that the utilities haven't been able – or haven't - kept up with the growth and its been quite a problem. Boynton has his room at Ephrata again. He thot (thought) of a motel there but he is gone so much he said if I had to be a widow I might as well be one among friends, and surely I had plenty to do here to keep from being bored by my widowhood too much.

I feel I have accomplished quite a lot here - the yard needed lots of work + still does but we have worked out quack grass from flower beds, trimmed trees, fertilized, trimmed + bordered, pulled out + planted so it is more to our liking. Since Jack got home – Sept. 24 – he has built a stand and moved our fuel oil barrel from the farm in and so we have a 550 gallon

barrel for the stove oil with a little work + very little cost. The barrel had been painted silver + we touched it up for a bit so it even looks pretty good. We had quite a bit of time cleaning to the copper tubing already laid cleared out before stove – already in the house – would work too well but once done its really working good. We think we can be comfortable now. One other job we gotten done was accomplished in two spurts - that the painting of walls + ceiling in front room + dining room. Elsed Spred – like Kemstone - + its does go on easy + by doing it while Boynton + Bob were at Winchester I didn't feel the need to clean up all the painting mess after each day of work. Did hallway too and probably will do the kitchen walls + also utility walls – but they are only little dabs here + there + can be done fast. Would like to tho (though) while Boynton still gone. Less traffic helps. I even managed most of the painting while mother gone to town or elsewhere. She frets about me doing such things but likes the results ok –

Its been wonderful to have Jack home again. We had a week almost before school started for him but is purely enjoying being a school boy + civilian again. He could be very choosy about his subjects and is getting a lot of what he wants. He needs only one quarter but plans to go three quarters to brush up and get stuff he wants to have. He has his own car but he + Bob will ride together much of the time to leave a car for me. Bob has our old car for his – and now of course I have it to use for two weeks! Everyone sure teases me about my cars – they say they never know whether I'll be in the pickup or the old ford or that foreign car – Jacks has a New Mexico license but they are usually quite sure it won't be the new Ford – Boynton has it - + I think he should. He travels so much. It has 18000 miles on it already!

Bob of course is in Kansas City now. He left the 4th after a week of freshman orientation, tests etc + a couple of days of college classroom work. He got started in classes tho (though) and cleared with teachers about his trip – the tickets were bot (bought) there the state FFA office so there should have been three other music boys on his train when he got on here. One was chorus and other two band. They went to Milwaukee + it was to take two nights + two days to get to Kansas City. Rehearsals were to start Friday AM - I suppose they had quite a delegation by the time they got there for surely mace would join them as they traveled. The chorus was to have 125 in it. Band about the same. How I'd like to hear them – their last appearance is to be at the Royal Livestock show on the 14th. The uniform was sent to him here. The standard corduroy FFA jacket of blue with Bob Dodge, Washington – on the front and right side and the big emblem on the back with National Chorus above it – white shirt with blue tie with FFA on tie + emblem on shirt pocket + white duck pants – the uniform was paid for by the state FFA group + is Bobs to keep. The local group paid for his ticket + he pays board + room + incidentals – anyway it will cost him \$150.00 or more but we felt the experience will be fine for him and will gladly share his expenses to help him have that experience. He'll really have to bear down to catch up on school work but I think the trip still worth while. Boys from every state I believe and the choir director from New York – Oh yes, Dodge has a spud dealer in Kansas City who Bob is to look up + who will let Bob talk to Boynton or give us messages from Bob every time Boynton talks to him almost daily but hadn't heard from Bob of course as yet. Bobs music teacher + wife + the FFA instructor + wife + mother + I all saw Bob off on the train. He sure got a lot of advice!

We like the city live ok. It surely is convenient here – Our warehouse about eight blocks away but they have main line phone and we are one line with the warehouse so I can answer their phone here if no one there. Have reach, taken, + given lots of messages for them this fall. Will have to watch my calls when they get to running but can do that – Kittitas have a couple of grocery stores + restaurants, a drug store + hardware store of a sort - , a dairy store + lockers - - so our needs can be pretty well cared for here. Groceries some higher but the fact that we can

buy little else here means we don't spend so much really – I forgot to mention that we also have a couple of bars + poolrooms – but I forgot them because I don't frequent them – but do patronize the service stations keeping their gas sales in a higher bracket. Mother + I both like to walk to town – a half a dozen blocks each way - + I do it often. We have few sidewalks so the walking is not too easy on the feet – That stops mothers walks very often. Kittitas is a pretty rough town right now with transient labor hanging around the beer joints. We always have a high percentage of low income people here and yet Kittitas has its better groups too. Boynton used to say he wouldn't live in Kittitas but the boys now are old enouf (enough) not to be influenced too much and we find it a very convenient place to be. I mentioned the bars – I wouldn't think of going in them here now without Boynton yet there are several in Ellensburg I wouldn't hesitate to patronizing on my own or with other women. The ones here really get rough + sometimes I'm embarrassed even when Dodge along. So this time of year especially – we just stay away.

Mother is getting along fine. She did enjoy the yard when the weather was nice but the rainy gray weather gets her down. She has a south west room so its as cheerful as any + she has her dishes in cupboards in there + plates in windows. She gets in a car to go to town then wears out before I'm half threw my shopping but on the way home she wishes we could go to Spokane or Wenatchee or Seattle or just go. She has wanted to go + see Mrs. Marrell in Seattle but haven't gotten over and aren't liable to until the Winchester deal is over. I've noticed that mother will talk of doing something + then doesn't have the energy to do it – She talked canning. We were going to use up stuff + not can much but got stuff for her to have to fuss with then would can it to save it. But of course she'd can six pints and be ready to quit but we'd still have stuff for another dozen quarts. So she'd help + get too tired - but our fruit room is full! I gave away + sold a lot of jars and so now we'll quit canning because the jars are gone. Mother bot (bought) some pints – We were short of them – so she could have some stuff to take with her. She talks California for winter but I encourage her to go to Sidney or Montevideo if she has a chance she'd like a month or so each place + I think she should have it if it works out that way.

And what about you? Are you living it up? I imagine your routine has changed some but I'll bet you are doing more even yet than most people do. Hope you've taken it easier tho (though).

The big news seems to be the grandniece in England x Hope the girl will like USA and Montana when she gets here. She'll need some help + moral support + and I hope her in-laws will be kind + understanding + helpful - as well as her husband.

I didn't mention Bill – he is not sold on Alaska and assures me he will not bring an eskimo hide home – but sent for his suit, top coat, white shirt, ties, dres shoes etc so there must be females besides the “kloaches” as he calls them - Looks like August 1956 before can leave there – He's near Anchorage –

Did I say I didn't feel gossipy – Excuse it –

Well – the wayward child bids you adieu –

Write when you can – Love

Carolyn

PS. Percipitation 38/100 of inch!!! Fooled me.