

Corvallis, Oregon
June 20, 1928

Dear Mother:

I suppose this will reach you about the time of your birthday. I'm sorry that I didn't get it off a day or two sooner but I am very busy trying to get my bulletin finished by the first of July. I can't let my stenographerrun down. I'm afraid that I won't get done by that time, but I'll do the best that I can.

n Sylvia thought your letter to her was lovely and of course I thought the same about my recent letters. We're very glad to get your good wishes for our marriage whenever it comes off.

As to your question about informing the relations of the possibility of a marriage in August we'd be glad to have you do whatever you think should be done. However, my idea in writing you that such a thing might occur was not with the idea that there was any special probability but rather that you wouldn't feel that there was something not quite right if we should have a sudden marriage. Whenever the sky clears we will get married but there are a number of obstacles in the way. The children are not acquainted with the idea and we do not wish to embarrass them in any way. Our acquaintances are not in the secret, in fact many do not know that Sylvia is not married at present. She has been extremely magnanimous about the children's father and is anxious for them to preserve a good opinion of him. My reason for warning you there may be a sudden marriage is because I remember that you felt a little bad that you didn't have warning long enough about Selden's marriage and that you felt that Mary Roe's and also Charles Scranton's marriages were too sudden. As far as I am concerned the very least publicity consistent with these feelings is what I prefer. Any announcement that you make please have as off-hand as possible. If the relatives think a good deal of me they won't mind my keeping my own counsel on the matter till I know what our plans are, definitely. It might stretch into years before we are married. Of course the money question is one of the problems, but as you might expect Sylvia would be willing to work.

I wish I could visit you or that we both could. There is a possibility that I may get a job somewhere nearer in which case I might get to Oberlin. I have applied at about eighty five colleges, most of them in the Middle West. If I stay here it is not so likely that we will get married for another year. Don't get too enthusiastic over the marriage or the possibility of a visit.

I hope you will write me another nice encouraging letter about my future prospects whenever you get time and Ellen isn't too overworked. I wish I could think of some encouraging thing to say for the times when you feel blue. Sometimes I am able to console myself when I get discouraged by thinking how ~~unimportant~~ unimportant a cog I really am and how little it really matters how things go with me so long as the great scheme goes on. Maybe that isn't quite as cheering a thought as to contemplate one's successes past or prospective, but it doesn't have quite such a reaction for everyone who doesn't just fool himself finds so many places that he has missed the mark. Any way the successes that really please us are the unexpected ones. It doesn't give us such great satisfaction to be better than the average, but only to be better than our estimate of our capabilities. The reason you get blue is that your mark is too high, or your criticism of yourself unjust. That is in line with the statement I read somewhere that a cynic is always an idealist. He scorns things as they are, because his ideal is so high. But I don't think you have ever had the cynical attitude about others. -I seem to be getting a little mixed I could straighten it out but this is about the bottom of the sheet. I send my love and best wishes for your birthday. Many happy returns.

Will write again soon
Willie

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