

Mayflower Apartments, #306
Virginia Beach, Virginia

December 24, 1958

Dear Ginger and Hub:

I wish that time would allow for me to write to each of you individually. But such is the pace of life that we must fall back on this annual letter. This is the eve of the anniversary of the birth of the Prince of Peace. I would that we might take into our lives His life and message and gain wisdom to halt this folly of pouring millions into weapons of destruction which we agree that we can never use. May we learn to put our faith in other than the deterrent for the important war is not the cold one but one against disease, hunger, and want.

If we were to turn the clock back 12 months, I would be found on St. Paul Island, in the midst of the Bering Sea, physician to 400 people. Here midst a people in transition I tried to bring standards of medical care which would apply at New York Hospital. I left with some sense of real satisfaction concerning several points which I had outlined prior to leaving Anchorage. Nearly all the islanders had chest x-rays (only one case of active tuberculosis was found, a tribute to the doctors who had gone before me); about 55 sets of glasses had been refracted, (several young children corrected, who might later have become blind in one eye due to lack of fusion of vision); a large ambulatory blood bank had been set up so that no one need die of hemorrhage; the children were largely brought up to date on immunizations, and all male adults had serologies with the location of only one case of undiagnosed and untreated syphilis, many hypertensive adults were started on medical management following diagnostic studies, and numerous radiological procedures were performed locating surgically remediable lesions, varying from ruptured stomachs (hiatus herniae) through gall stones to partially blocked kidneys. This was truly general practice with its many rewards. The physical community is not divorced from the psychological community and here my therapy did not fare so well although I'm sure that the diagnosis was sound. People are like billiard balls - when they meet head-on the momentum can be expended with a resultant standstill, if they approach each other with obliquity the motion may be redirected, but ultimately it is not in either initial path. Problems of excessively low pay for nursing care, discrimination in the sale of food supplies through a government commissary came to light and heat. I hope that subsequently they may move to solution.

People are the stuff of life and such were Father Baronoff, the Russian Orthodox priest, and Mother Baronoff, who took me into their home and hearts, almost as a "second adopted son;" Doc Hillebrand, our dentist, who assisted me in the gamut from Caesarean section, to photography; the Williams's who mothered me with infectious mono (I had a month's vacation with pay - that was in bed. It was humbling to gain a patient's point of view); Dora Kochutin who loyally tried to live by the light of her Christian heritage and was always there when needed at the hospital, as an attendant; and many more.

Arctic murrees packed on the nesting cliff-tops in Penguin-like formal dress, hair seal and seal lion, Arctic foxes and great

snowy owls, stalking reindeer, and shooting King Eiders over Sea Lion Reef, photographing the first flower of spring; these are all memories. Weather strip whistling winds of 50 mph or better, partaking of the post-Christmas Masking or of Mother Baronoff's borsch, all merge in a past to which I hope that someday I shall be able to return.

Then Mid-May and the smell of salt and a plunging "Penguin" trip to Seattle merge in my memory with water-planing black-footed albatrosses, rafts of murrees too plump to rise from the water, stream-laced tree-covered slopes down British Columbia's Inside Passage merge with temperate rain forests on the Olympic Peninsula, rain-bows and browns rising to flies tied on St. Paul in anticipation; the head waters of the Colorado, and fellowship with Rusty, Dave and Carol Chandler. Then Sheffield and amidst family and friends after 9 months of separation, tennis, horseback riding, and quarry swimming; and an exploration as to the possibility of starting rural general practice encouraged by a sense of probable future need in the area.

Then the Chevie Station Wagon was pointed south with sagging springs and has since run up to 13,000 miles commuting between here and Norfolk, Tanglewood Concert and the ski slopes of Whiteface. I have an unfurnished apartment within 75 yards of the Atlantic surf in the summer (I haven't checked the distance since September). A stained birch door, stereophonic tape recorder, and Gran's generous gift of a double bed (his standard wedding present to his grandchildren) have helped to furnish my quarters.

I'm in the first of two years of a general practice residency and am realizing how much I didn't know about internal medicine. We care for Merchant Marine, American and foreign, the Coast Guard and military dependents. There is a rich spectrum of problems. For you doctors, last week I had a case of scleroderma, hemochromatosis, Reiter's disease, Acute leukemia with chloroma, SBE, on through the usual problems which are the sum and substance of a medical practice. On my ward Hospital relations are excellent with a most jovial chief of service, Dr. Jack Shuttleworth, with whom it is a pleasure to work, and very capable interns. This year will end with 4 months on the pediatric service and OPD and next year will be surgery, and Ob-gyn.

The Friends Meeting has been a real boon to me and my letter was presented last week. I hope soon to be a Quaker. A good concert series, Audubon lectures, the Princess Anne Bowmen, which I have joined, also help to fill out the week. I brought down an adult male fox on St. Paul with my 50 lb bow and had the thrill of missing 6 shorts from a stand while bow hunting for deer recently.

The future probably holds rural general practice, although, if I could justify Gran's gift, I think it might be most satisfying to utilize many of the skills that I have been developing at Kotzebue or Kanakanak in Alaska for a couple of years. I have no intention of returning to the wilds alone.

I hope that in the near future we may be together again. I wish peace in our hearts and the world at large in the year to come.

(OVER)