

Far Beyond Woman Suffrage
Testing the Limits

David S. McCracken

Copyright 2025

All rights reserved

No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods, without the prior written permission of the publisher, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical reviews and certain other non-commercial uses permitted by copyright.

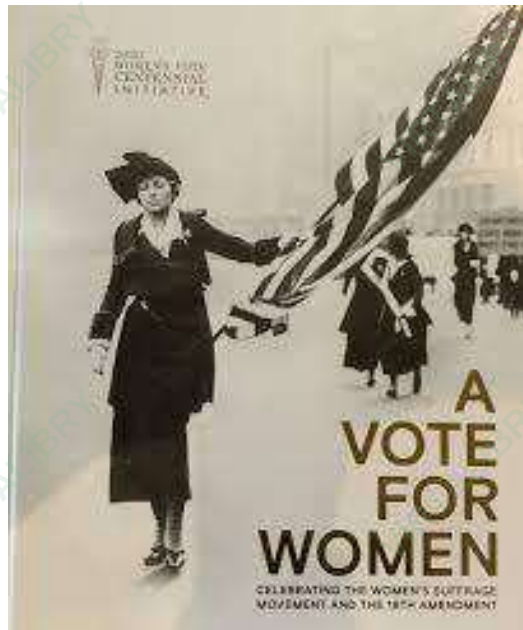
Revised 3/14/2026

For my wife and daughters

Contents

1. Next Struggles, 1920	5
2. Widening Circles, 1921	30
3. A New Phase, 1922	46
4. Building, 1923	53
5. Finally, 1924	60
6. Moving On, 1925	66
7. New Phase, 1926	73
8. Advances, 1927	78
9. Problems, 1928	87
10. Confusion, 1929	91
11. Answers, 1930	96
12. Changes, 1931	101
13. End or Beginning? 1932	107
14. New Deal Opens, 1933	114
15. Charging Ahead, 1934	137
16. Recovery Continuing, 1935	149
17. Milepost, 1936	163
Author's Afternote	168

Far Beyond Woman Suffrage: Testing the Limits



We did it, we sister suffragists! We won the vote for women in a massive battle that climaxed with the Nineteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution. We got it passed in Tennessee, the last possible state, with the last possible representative to vote “Aye,” on August 18, 1920. To my discomfort, I had realized there was no language to specifically affirm and enforce the right of our sister negro women to vote, even though the South would assuredly work to disenfranchise them as it had the men.

In a devil’s bargain, we had deliberately refrained from mentioning **them in the amendment to get it passed. We knew too well that** Jim Crow laws and outright violence had largely subverted the 15th Amendment’s giving negro men the vote in racist regions, and the same would happen to the women. We now owed our black sisters our work to gain them the vote. They helped us: we can’t abandon them. Soon, I saw that even more sisters needed help than just the negro ones.

I am Mercy Hamblen, born a Martin, on New Year’s Day, 1900, mother of Susan McCloud Hamblen, widow of Major Joseph Eric Hamblen, and granddaughter of Grace McCloud, RN. If you have already read my account of our efforts to get the vote, *Far Beyond Woman Suffrage: The Prices of the Vote*, you are familiar with the rest of my family and the numerous prices of the vote. I’ll talk about them more later, but you don’t need to have read the first book before this one.

As I said at the beginning of the first book, I tried to make this lively and deep enough, with clippings, informative summaries, pictures, and

reconstructed dialogue, to seem real and meaningful. There are even letters and a few dreams to add another dimension. Maybe it's a scrapbook memoir. I want to show what built my thoughts and actions, including what life was like at the time, though I've never seen anything like what I'm doing. It seems like the right way to continue my story. As before, I have written this on my prized typewriter from Grandma, with added penned thoughts shown here in italics in this printed version. *Remember, please, this is not a history book; it's just what impressed and moved me during these amazing years, things that I wrote about at the time and comments inserted at a later point. And it's definitely not just about the follow up to suffrage. Excitement follows me. Watch and see!*

1. Next Struggles, 1920

School, Finally! 9/20

After a long delay following high school, in which I overwhelmingly: got the "kissing disease" without ever having been kissed, was arrested at a White House demonstration I wasn't part of, impregnated in the back of a paddy wagon without my knowledge or consent (crowded with staggeringly confusing, rowdy cheering policemen), and was thrown out of my minister father's rectory for refusing to hide away in a home for unwed mothers to give birth and surrender the baby for adoption). Then things turned fairer and more rational: I met a wonderful man who married me even though I was carrying an unknown rapist's child. I got involved in the suffrage movement and eventually helped get the 19th Amendment passed. Although my husband was killed in France, his parents stuck with me far better than my own. My Grandma, who took me in when I had to leave the rectory, watched my baby while I worked for the vote that I won't even be eligible to cast until next year. Now my deferred dream of teaching is about to move forward. (It had seemed hopeless as an unwed mother-to-be, unallowed as such even to enter college.)

Now here I am, living in Knoxville with my in-laws (Louise and Reynolds), my baby (Susan), and my grandma (Grace). Grandma had come to live with me at my in-laws, to watch the baby while I sometimes left to campaign in Tennessee to squeak out that ratification. (Grandma had earlier put in her own time in the campaign for suffrage.) We five are a diverse, happy family.

Grandma generously gave me 500 dollars for my four years at this university, which started accepting women only a few years ago. It looks like that will cover all fees and books, with money left over, which I'll save for a used car I'll need for teaching. I don't know what I'd have done without all the help and support of my little family. I'd have been lost, trapped.

Tuition is free, thank Goodness, since I live in the state, though textbooks cost a lot, about \$30 for a semester. My in-laws insist that baby Susan, Grandma, and I are their guests. Grandma and Louise keep Sue and me in beautiful clothes, which I suspect is a form of competition.

And the sun has just, finally, risen for this new day.

I got back to Knoxville from DC on the train last night. My father-in-law, State Senator Reynolds Hamblen, had joined Grandma and me on the train ride to DC. He was to help pack the remaining essentials from her house. I'd also taken my belongings, so that the house could be rented out, and Reynolds would drive her and her Model T Ford back. We had loaded winter clothes and other necessities to take to his Knoxville home.

I needed to get back here to start school, but he and Grandma stayed to pack the car and ship the rest to Tennessee. I can't imagine that other man, who sired me, doing anything of the sort. I didn't bother to ask or even go see him and Momma, though I cried with guilt about Momma. Father Phineas Martin was another matter: That man who threw me out of his rectory when I came up pregnant from the police rape, since I wasn't willing to give up the baby. That man who conceived me in Momma while he was still in seminary and only reluctantly married her.

And now, this new day: Louise, my mother-in-law, fixed me a great breakfast and walked with the baby and me to the streetcar I would take to school. On the way, she told me how proud she is of me and how her son Joe would have been too. *How wonderful to hear that praise, so missing in my birth family!* We had a good hug before I stepped up to take my seat for the ride.

On the way, I reflected on all that's happened to me in the past three years. I worked with suffragists I came to idolize, Alice Paul, Anita Pollitzer, and, especially, Sue White. The mono may have made me miss the start of college at American University in '17, but it turned out to be a lucky break. It let me meet Joe, my only boyfriend and still the love of my life, though he died so soon. (I still feel the pain, sometimes every day, as when I got that awful telegram. I still expect to see him around a corner or through a doorway.)

Well, the mono also provided time for me to get deeply involved in the suffrage movement all the way to the climax here in Tennessee. Who'd have thought the ailment would be a blessing?

My first class was English composition, which I was looking forward to after having written that first journal I mentioned. Perhaps combining it with this will eventually give it some historical interest. I'll have to make sure something interesting happens. *Heh!*

Before the class, I continued to worry about Reynolds and Grandma, who were going through sparsely populated backland Tennessee with few phones or mechanics, or doctors if they were hurt. In the class, Dr. Rayburn asked us to describe to the class what we did last summer. I gave a very short version of the events I participated in. I was amazed to get applause when I finished, well, from half the class, including some of the guys. The rest sat silently, disapprovingly, I'm afraid.

My next class was American Government, the one I was most excited to be taking. I was shocked out of my worry when I answered the roll call and Mr. Bajun said, "Well, I've heard about you, Mrs. Hamblen. I trust we won't be having any suffrage tantrums. You people may have convinced the legislature to break their constitutional oath of office by voting for your silly amendment without the required one-year lapse for sober consideration. Still, we'll follow the rules in this class."

Clearly, he doesn't know the law on this. After the class I said to him, "Excuse me, sir, as I understand it, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled the Tennessee constitution couldn't trump the U.S. Constitution by delaying consideration of the amendment." He didn't answer, pointedly turning away. *I wonder if I can get into a different class. And how did he even know about me? How?*

At lunch, students from both classes came over to eat with me. I guess I'm easy to spot with my six-foot height and long blond hair. I never felt so special as warmed now by the unexpected friendship. I was glad Louise had outfitted me in very nice clothes, like she did when I was lobbying for suffrage. *My motherly mother-in-law, more loving than my birth mother was, as I mentioned at the end of the previous journal.*

After lunch, my next classes were French and algebra. I'm excited that I can now build on what I learned in high school. Then came the required Beginning Domestic Science, which I learned was originally intended to be the heart of education for women here, other classes not being considered appropriate. *Boring! Oh, but some lovely new friends do enjoy it. It fits their purposes.*

Near the end of the day, I had gym with a cute teacher who had a heavy beard like Joe's, which was starting to be visible since his morning shave. *I wondered what it would be like to stroke it like I did Joe's.*

Finally, I took the streetcar back to my baby, where I petted and kissed her smooth skin before feeding her. As long as I have to be gone, it's good that she's off the breast now, though it would be nice to come home and settle down to nurse her.

Sometimes I wonder if I'm selfishly neglecting her, being gone all day. Well, I do have to get through school to prepare to do something meaningful in the wider world. I am grateful my supportive family lets this happen.

I told Grandma, "I hope Susan will not come to resent my competing priorities!" I was warmed when she replied, "I think she'll be proud!" *I hope so. We did something important in getting the 19th Amendment passed and the work is not over yet!*

University! 9/20

At twenty, I feel like an adult among children with my fellow students. They giggle and wonder what they have to do to get by, while I wonder what all I can do to get ready for teaching. Well, they're like the students I plan to have in a few years, so I'd better get to know them!

I was almost not allowed to attend because students are required to live on campus unless they are married or living with a parent or guardian. I guess my grandmother didn't count. "Rules are there for a reason and can't be waived for individual students who don't like them," said the Dean of Women. She relented when Reynolds came in and pointed out that I would be married if my husband, Joe, had not been killed winning a Medal of Honor in France, that I have an infant and need to get home to share childcare with the three elderly grandparents, and that he is quite busy when the Tennessee legislature is in session with his duties as the chairman of the Senate education committee overseeing the university's budget. *I'm embarrassed that only the last seemed to carry enough weight.* After that, she even let me change to a different government section. *I'm afraid Dr. Bajun resented the change and may have become more of an enemy.*

Fortunately, my classes are between 9 and 4, with time for studying built in. Physical Education (PE), and domestic science (DS), meet only three days a week, thank Goodness. I'm lucky: I love the prospect of all my classes, except DS (*the girls call it BS—I guess, unlike me, you know right off what that stands for*). I especially look forward to government

and physical education, which covers general conditioning, softball, and, I think, basketball when it's colder. It's great to be getting back in shape after my summer politicking. Unfortunately, I'm terrible at throwing and catching a softball, and the teacher has to help me. He is a good-looking man of about thirty. His muscles remind me of Joe. *I try not to think about his muscles.*

Where Are They? 9/20

When I got up the next morning, Grandma and Reynolds were still not back. We had expected them last night, but Louise told me to go on to bed. They were going through a long stretch of West Virginia and Eastern Tennessee with few towns of any size and few phones. I wanted to stay home for word of their safety, but Louise assured me I should go on and that she would come to the campus with any news. I made sure she had all my class locations.

I'm afraid my worry made me short with that grumpy government teacher. Thank goodness that was my last class with him before transferring out.

At the beginning and end of each class, I looked for Louise with news of Grandma and Reynolds. *I waited by the door as long as possible, and I worried. Were they hurt in remote stretch, lying unattended?*

Finally, Louise showed up with little Sue and a big reassuring smile as I was getting ready to dress for my phys ed class. It turned out the Model T had a flat tire at the edge of a small town with no mechanic and no phone. It was too dark for Reynolds to change the tire, so they managed to get rooms in a boarding house and wait until morning. Luckily, the contents of the car were undisturbed. *Honest people, thank Heaven.* The spare tire that was mounted on the back had held air OK, and they had enough gas to drive straight in with just one refueling stop.

Sue was on her most delightful behavior for my classmates. The girls were fascinated with her and the fact that I was a mother. They were sympathetic to my mention of Joe's death, and Louise added that he was a Medal of Honor winner, solidifying my status.

I am feeling like one of these people. Over the following days, my classmates started calling me "Mom", in recognition of my size, age, and child, I guess—even some of the guys. *I am touched.*

Class Connections, 9/20

To my great satisfaction, I have accumulated a following, even an anti-suffragist. I had been afraid none of those people would talk with me,

but this one laughed and said, “Actually, you’re OK for one of those radicals ... Mom.” Someone suggested I run for class president. Interesting idea, but I’ve been told no girl has ever even run. Somebody else said, “Even a losing effort could be a win.” *Hmm.*

One of my new friends from the first government class said to me at lunch, “Did you know Professor Bajun is friends with Josephine Pearson, the leader of the statewide women’s anti-suffrage group? She’s clearly, still bitterly opposed to women suffrage. I saw them together before our first class.” *Ahh! Question answered.*

If I had more time, I’d try to get on the school newspaper staff to get around “intellectually.”

Well, here is Grandma to pick me up in her “T.” Family calls. Reynolds is working late, catching up on his law practice, which he largely left to his partners and staff for the suffrage battle.

Susan Grows, 9/20

It’s scary how much Susan understands at two years and almost two months. We’re starting to use spelling to slip by her alert ears. And then what? I’m afraid she already understands “b-e-d.” Incidentally, she likes to put her dolls to bed. *Will she start spelling it to trick them?*

She’s so patient when I leave for school. *Is she already growing up and away from me?* Well, she’s got three more parents just like me staying home. *Oh, that was a little bitter.* But, actually, I’m so grateful. Reynolds lingers with our Sue when it’s time to head back to his law office. I do sometimes have a scary memory of when he came to Grandma’s house, infected with Spanish flu. He cuddled and kissed her eagerly and passed a serious flu case to her. I think his love for his dead son, his only child, comes out in love for Sue.

I’m glad he and Louise insisted we adults all be on a first-name basis after I tried being more formal, being not even 21 yet. We’re now trying to get Sue to call them Grampy and Grammy, after she started calling them Renren and Lulu.

She loves to “write” when I’m doing schoolwork, big, long, or roundish scribbles.

We’re on the lookout for playmates when we’re out shopping. Compared to the ones we see, it looks like she’ll be tall like me, and very sociable, like me.

God, I love that girl!

My own Momma sent a warm letter right after I sent her my address. She didn't mention Father, which is just as well. I don't want to hear about him. Sad, but true. *Why does that man have so little regard for me?*

Memories of Joe, 10/20

When Reynolds got home this evening, I shared with him, "A man came up to me on the campus and said, 'I was with Joe when he was shot, as one of his lieutenants. Joe had merged my shattered unit and others from all over in with his. We were huddled in grief as he lay dying. The last thing Joe did was to look at the men and say to us, 'Keep them goin'. Tell my wife I died loving her.' With his last breath, he forced out, faintly, 'Mom. Dad.' Reynolds half sobbed. I paused for a long time for both of us.

After looking down for a moment, the man who'd brought the news continued, "It took me a while to track you down, Mrs. Hamblen. Fortunately, I knew he had met you at a suffrage event, so I figured you might have ended up here in Tennessee. I asked a local suffragist, Lizzie Crozier French, who said she knew you well, and here I am. Well, we kept 'em goin', won the battle, and now I've followed my last order from Major Joe, God bless him!"

Looking at me sadly, Reynolds said, "Mercy, I'd like to meet the man."

"I was too moved to ask his name. I didn't even clasp his hand in thanks, as I've wished. I just stood there stunned. I hope I see him again."

Joe Still Leads, 10/20

With the reminder of Joe's leadership, I filed today to run for freshman class officer. Professor Bajun, whose government class I had transferred out of, tried to get me disqualified, even thrown out of the university because I was not eligible, being single and not living on the campus.

Reynolds called on the university president, Harcourt Morgan, saying the matter had been settled previously with the Dean of Women, repeating ALL his convincing arguments. *I was grateful for the fatherly support. It seems strange now to be able to talk about "fatherly support."*

"Dr. Morgan stood beside me the next day at a rally organized by my supporters and said the university was proud to have me as a student. With that near endorsement, I won, the first female ever elected to a class office, secretary, it turned out.

After the election, President Morgan called the winners into his office to congratulate them. Standing beside him was a young man I'd seen before, who addressed him as "Father." So, I finally had the chance to properly thank John Elmore Morgan for passing the story of Joe's last words to me.

Afterward, President Morgan said to me, "Mercy, we're having a small dinner for John, his fiancée, and a few others. We'd be honored if you could come, maybe with your father-in-law and his wife." *Hmm, mixing business, family, AND politics?*

So began one of the most important relationships of my life, with a great man who became like another father to me.

I hope you're keeping in mind that these italicized comments are sometimes made at a future point. The story itself proceeds straight forward, as shown by the headings.

Finally, Women Vote, 11/20



What joy! On this second of November, 1920, the women of the household, including little Sue and me, held hands briefly, took a deep breath, and went together to celebrate suffrage by voting or watching. Of course, being just 20, I can only watch, but I wanted Sue to be there, to store it deep inside, like I did The Great Suffrage Parade of 1913 that Grandma took me to when I was just twelve, and the Silent Sentinels she took me to see when I was seventeen (and which led me eventually to Knoxville after my arrest). Now all over the country, a great sisterhood joins hands and marches to the polls! *I was born for this! We all were!*

Warren Harding won, but his campaign frustrated me by ignoring the Democratic candidate James Cox, in effect just campaigning against Wilson, who wasn't even running again. I expected a clash of ideas

between two plans, but what I got was mainly a call for a "return to normalcy" versus cutting taxes and implementing prohibition. Oh, what do I know about politics, really? I think people were tired after the war and the changes from Wilson's and Teddy Roosevelt's Progressive politics. Anyway, Harding won every state outside of the South, and even Tennessee! *Well, I helped with his campaign, spending hours handing out flyers in town. Now I confront a democracy that barely inspires me.*

The Democratic vice-presidential candidate, Franklin Roosevelt, emerged from the contest as the most impressive candidate in a field of otherwise boring old men. Ah, he is a good-looking youngish man. *What a future he might have in politics if he weren't a Democrat!*

I wonder how Harry Burn, also good-looking and even younger, is doing. It was his vote that finally gave women the franchise, after he said to me, "I will do nothing to hurt you." I had unthinkingly told him that was how my soldier-husband Joe gently reassured me on our wedding night (and then I felt mortified to have accidentally told him such an intimate detail).

Reynolds won re-election to the Tennessee Senate easily. When I had offered to campaign for him, he said to put my energy into electing Harding. Democratic Governor Albert Roberts, who helped us get the suffrage amendment ratified, lost his election, possibly due to this, so we now have a Republican governor, Alf Taylor. Our own state senator and delegate are not people who interest me, so I'm sorry to say I don't know their names. That will be different when I can vote.

I wished I didn't have to wait a week for our *New York Times* to arrive by mail. I want to immerse myself in the news of this glorious day for women, as only the Times will cover it. But, for now, *The Knoxville Sentinel* will have to do, and then the *Washington Post* by train in two days. The country should now be able to accomplish big things for the women who have contributed to it so mightily.

Today, America has changed! Well, I see it differently. Actually, in several states, we could already vote, at least for president or school board. Even now, many of us still can't even vote in several resistant states (guess where, mostly?) and DC. Of course, most negro women are still blocked from voting in those mostly Southern states. But our influence will be felt as never before. The men will have to "Remember the ladies," as Abigail Adams told her husband, John, when they were

writing the Constitution. He laughed. *The men won't now, or we ladies will remember them at the polls!*

I will follow John Morgan's trail back to Lizzie French and on to my other suff friends to see if anything is being done by us to include our negro sisters left out of our great, good fortune. We must not be so selfish as to take what's been done for us and forget the ones left behind.

The Ocoee Massacre, 11/20

A Sentinel article from the day after the election broke my heart. I really felt a pain in my chest. It reported that in Ocoee, Florida, a white mob attacked black residents attempting to vote. Two whites and four blacks were confirmed killed. *I'm afraid to see what else will come out. From my long reading about disasters, I know the news will get worse as details emerge.*

Over subsequent days, black survivors reported the toll is 30-35 of their people, with most black-owned buildings burned to the ground. One body was hung from a lamppost as a warning. An attempt at black resistance was crushed with reinforcements from nearby Orlando and Orange County. Black organizations had been working across Florida for a year to register black voters, perhaps now a wasted effort. Eventually, Ocoee became an all-white town, with all the blacks dead or driven out, many leaving behind their possessions and their few remaining homes.

Talking to Reynolds and Grandma, I was reassured that we suffragists didn't cause this in our encouraging black voting. The bigots did it all on their own, as they had been doing for fifty years since Reconstruction, all over the South. And, frankly, I've learned that back then they operated more brutally than they do now.

League of Women Voters, 11/20

The local League of Women Voters contacted Reynolds to herald their existence and their purpose. He mentioned it casually to me—but does Reynolds do anything casually?

I looked into the new organization. They had recently been founded as a nonprofit, nonpartisan political organization. They work at registering voters, providing voter information, boosting and advocating for voting rights, working with partners that share their positions, and supporting a variety of progressive public policy positions, including campaign finance reform, women's rights, health care reform, and gun control.

I knew these were positions that attracted Reynolds, as well as me. *I mentioned my interest and his response was reassuring.*

Conversation with Juno, 11/20

First, though, I need to talk with someone outside the family about the Ocoee massacre. I need to talk with Juno Frankie Pierce, my mature negro friend from our shared suffrage struggle in Nashville. She is a force for change in Tennessee. She even got toilets for blacks in downtown Nashville, for God's sake! (Can you imagine they were welcome enough to spend their money but not to use the toilets?) I called her, and then I began a long series of letters with her about race. *I must understand this better.*



Dear Juno,

Thank you for permitting me to explore the sensitive topic of race violence, as in Ocoee. I am heartsick about the barbarities there, and Reynolds tells me such have been far from rare, even here in Tennessee. *Up to now, I've been too unaware.*

As I'd mentioned in the run-up to getting the suffrage amendment, the devil's bargain of leaving the negro women out of our campaign troubled me greatly. I realize it was a necessity to get the general right to vote for all women. Otherwise, we wouldn't have won it for any, as confirmed by our one-vote margin in the House. Now we must fix the lack. I have started looking into how much violence has been committed to keeping negroes from voting and I realize that I have much yet to learn. How much of this tragic history is even written down? And how objective will it be when I find it in the white press?

I see references to violence, but without details. They are mostly called "riots," as if hostile forces had collided. I suspect that's

inaccurate, as with the facts that have emerged about the Ocoee massacre.

The word that gets around in the Black community is probably more honest. Indirectly, in today's government class, I learned there is a term for what these bigots do: "terrorism." It's called that when Communists in Europe do it now. It is not just "racism". The intent is to scare people out of acting in their own interest. If I were in a religion class, the term might reasonably come out as "mortal sin." *But, of course, neither term will be applied in classes in Tennessee in 1920. Surely someday!*

I've become interested in the "Red Summer," but I find only very sketchy details about incidents in 1919. Isn't just the name, Red Summer propaganda, Juno? I've photographed an article for you in the N.Y. Times. I wonder if you can tell me anything more about any of these to help me understand better. My experience with the anti-suffragists is that any racists consulted for the articles would likely have lied like lurking snakes.

Yours,

Mercy

Juno replied promptly:

Dear Mercy,

Let me tell you, you are right that our community is aware of many incidents that never get into the press, as when recently a mother in Jackson, Mississippi, was told her daughter wouldn't be home from a visit with her grandmother. How it hurts me to tell about such horrors. She'd been raped and murdered. With no local press or police interest, to whom could the family report the crime? But we tell each other of the loss. We mourn each one.

Why is it these racists are so engrossed in rape—of white women only!

I could weep for the white women, Mercy, if I knew they are even real. As you can imagine, it is still hard for negro women to get registered and vote: the usual Jim Crow restrictions. In fact, in counties south of Nashville and over toward Chattanooga, the rules that kept colored men from voting were applied so hard that colored women were frozen out, too. In one county, the registrars dressed in Ku Klux Klan robes made it perfectly clear that no negro women or men need apply.

In another county, midnight beatings and rapes were liberally used to make sure the point was made. Employers of cooks, maids, and nannies demonstrated that voting could lead to job loss, just as it did for men. Memphis and Nashville allowed some to vote, but relatively few attempted to do so.

There were a few bright spots, and it will be a bit easier next time because the ice has been broken, but it will be many years until we can vote as if we were white, Mercy. The good thing is that there wasn't as much outright violence this time.

Tell me, is anything being done to get us voting access around Tennessee? If only we could get the U.S. Department of Justice and the courts on our side!

By the way, are you familiar with Ida B. Wells? Her pamphlets, called *Southern Horrors: Lynch Law in all its Phases* and *The Red Record*, recorded the violence inflicted.

Your friend,

Juno

I couldn't read this without taking a break to just sit and grieve. I showed the letter to Grandma, who said through tears, "It is so sad that no public accounting of so many of these crimes will ever be made, as I know from your own police rape case."

Grandma put out a little lunch for us and Susan, but we adults mostly sat and stared, and thought.

Our baby girl took a place between Grandma and me and laid a comforting hand on the near leg of each. *How reassuring to see she is getting ready to take her place in the sisterhood of concern. She won't let pain go unnoticed.*

Well, now I am trying to track down copies of the two pamphlets Juno mentioned. Unfortunately, they're not in the UT library. No surprise. I have asked the librarian to order them. From the look on her face, I'll have to search elsewhere. Fortunately, I don't think I'll be in trouble if she reports it to President Morgan. I did track down info on Ida Wells in the good old NY Times:

She was freed by the Emancipation Proclamation during the American Civil War. At sixteen, she lost her parents and her infant brother to yellow fever. She got a job as a teacher and kept

the remaining children together with the help of her grandmother. Writing for a black newspaper, she started to cover race problems.

Beginning in the 1890s, Wells documented lynching in the United States, investigating frequent claims by whites that lynchings were reserved for criminals who happened to be black, guilty of raping women who happened to be white. She exposed lynching as a deliberate practice of whites in the South, used to intimidate blacks and those who would support them. She exposed the lie of the rape of white women as an excuse to oppress African Americans who had created economic and political competition to whites.

After a white mob destroyed her newspaper office, she moved to Chicago, where she married and had six children while continuing writing, speaking, and organizing for civil rights and the women's movement.

As I've said, there are such admirable women of all backgrounds in our suffragist sisterhood! It's hard to believe that so many have been denied a vote for so long, and so many still are!

Waiting for Suff Replies, 11/20

Speaking of letters, I eagerly awaited replies from my suffragist friends to my letters about working for our colored compatriots, who patiently (mostly) stood by, while we focused on getting our own vote. I hoped the slowness in my friends' replies wasn't a bad sign. I had discussed with several people the unfortunate necessity of excluding our sisters from the campaign to avoid alarming the South. They agreed we'd have to get right on that after the election. *Well?*

Since she lives here in Knoxville, I can easily contact Lizzie French. So it doesn't seem like nagging; I can meet with her to thank her for her role in getting me the news of Joe. She had told the university President Morgan's son, John, where to find me with news of Joe's final minute of life. I also want to thank her for urging me to come to UT with word that it had begun accepting women.

She was eager to see my Susan, so I arranged for her to come to Sunday dinner with the family. It turned out she's an old friend of Reynolds. They talked so enthusiastically, I felt left out until she said, "Reynolds, you be sure to get this young woman into local politics, because she has a bright future, beginning here."

He laughed, "You think I haven't been doing that since she arrived?"

“Oh,” I realize, “that first meeting he arranged for me with Juno and the introduction to the governor and leading Republicans were not isolated incidents, but part of a plan.” *How much more might there be in his plan?*

Lizzie said she’d get in touch with our suffragist friends, Abby Crawford Milton and Anne Dudley, to have us all over to her house as soon as she can get them to Knoxville. I wish Anita Pollitzer could come, too. And Juno?? Well, probably not

Fun? 11/20

Today is the second anniversary of the end of the war, another anniversary of the pain of the loss of my dear husband. I’ve been close to tears often today, and Grandma knows. Even living with my loving family, I’m lonely.

“Sweetheart,” Grandma said at breakfast, “Today might not be the day to think of it, but you need to get a social life. I should know! For you, it’s time.” I feel the caring comment inside me, turning me toward the future. (And wondering about her.)

“Thanks. I know, but I don’t know how.”

“You have friends at school. Tell them you’d like to meet guys. You’re a beautiful, smart girl. Put the word out, and you’ll meet handsome, smart boys.”

“But when they find out I have a baby”

“You think they don’t know there was a war, and husbands died?”

“I just haven’t been thinking of any guys that way ... but my phys ed teacher is, well, cute.”

“Ah, that’s a start. How old is he? Is he married?”

“He’s probably 25 or 30, and I don’t know if he’s married.”

“Talk to him. And to your girlfriends. Have some fun! That’s an assignment.”

“Yes, teacher!”

“Remember what I’m saying.”

I guess I do work too hard at school, especially when following up on our suffrage achievement. And, especially, I am nervous about guys.

Letter from Juno, 11/20

At breakfast, Louise handed me a letter that came yesterday from Juno:

My Dear Mercy,

In your last letter, you were wondering why black people didn't just leave Southern areas where they were abused. Of course, it's hard to leave family and the place you know for one you don't, and if you're barely getting by, it's hard to accumulate the resources to leave. But there is more to it.

After the war, Southern plantation owners quickly saw they had to struggle to keep their labor force, which wanted nothing so much as to be gone. The former slaves found themselves effectively enslaved again because there was no other way to earn what their families needed.

They were forced into "contracts" that put them in endless share-cropper debt to the owners and prevented them from leaving freely. The plantation owners colluded and controlled the jobs. Northern promises to give freed slaves forty acres and a mule mostly came to nothing.

The force applied to bend "free" negroes to white will is related to something else you were wondering about whether there were many more lynchings than reported in newspapers. Yes. The word circulates in our community across the South and beyond in a vast network, from Grandmas to nieces to sisters. Yes, mostly the women keep the truth flowing, but many ministers, too. We visit one another, write, and our ministers go from church to church. As with all our other concerns, the word spreads. The souls are remembered.

The world has no idea of the horrors my people are still enduring. We know, but don't publicize them as much as they deserve. The press has so little capacity to indulge in them. The atrocities would become boring to whites and ignored if repeated too much. People were killed because a white didn't like a look, a lack of subservience, a failure to give up a sharecropping field to a favored white, or a white woman caught in the act of enjoying sex but defensively crying rape. There are a thousand reasons for abuse.

At this point I had to share the letter with Grandma while I tended to the baby. Susan just needed some interaction. I could hear the letter had affected Grandma as much as me. Sue went back to play and I resumed reading.

I just heard of a family in Mississippi, near Jackson, where a trio of drunk white teenagers invaded the home of a family preparing for the wedding of their oldest daughter. They shoved all but the girl into a closet and were preparing for some sexual fun when the father returned from hunting. Outnumbered, he made a quick calculation. He quickly shot all the boys, who were known to have made a habit of other abuses of negroes, including murders, though of course, they had never felt the penalty of law.

Then, he had his family quickly pack all possessions they could into his car, along with a can of spare gas, and load as much firewood as they could into the house. As the housefire consumed the evidence of the crimes, the family was speeding straight north, as escaping slaves had before them.

Unfortunately, a latecomer to the party realized what had happened. A phone alarm to police north and west resulted in a barricade short of the Tennessee border. A fusillade resulted in the deaths of all the family, except the bride-to-be. A guilt-stricken cop told another what had happened, how she was then tossed back in the car, which was then doused with the extra gas The news trickled out to our community.

These two stories never made the press and were known only by stray tales from the police. Nobody had any reason to want the news to emerge. I could tell you scores of stories like these. Murders and lynchings never reported except within our network. And whatever we thought of the incidents, they all had a role in keeping us in our place. As intended.

Our vaunted free press isn't free if it's afraid to print what they know.

Mercy, I want you to know I treasure the opportunity to share my information with you, and I believe you will make good use of it. It's like I am finally getting it out to the world. As the hymn says, "This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine!" I believe you will help it shine. Bless you!

Your Friend,

Juno

I think Juno is going to be a valued friend and teacher. That's what I'm writing to tell her, with a question about what can be done.

Digging Up the News, 11/20

Following up on my several letters exchanged with Juno, I've been looking through the stacks of newspapers I've been storing in our basement, stripped of the trivial sections. They were shipped here from Washington with Grandma's furniture. Here's one that struck me:

FOR ACTION ON RACE RIOT PERIL

Radical Propaganda Among Negroes Growing, and Increase of Mob Violence Set Out in Senate Brief for Federal Inquiry

EVEN though recurring race riots have made the public aware that the negro problem has entered upon a new and dangerous phase, only those in touch with the inner forces that are playing on ignorance, prejudice, and passion, realize how great this menace is. Bloodshed on a scale amounting to local insurrection at least will be threatened in more than one section where large white and black populations face each other unless some program of conciliation is adopted to forestall influences that are now working to drive a wedge of bitterness and hatred between the two races.

some carefully considered policy, are made to stop the riots and race clashes and to remove their causes, that outbreaks of far greater extent than any of those that have yet occurred may take place. The one approach to a betterment of conditions is asserted to be through those negro leaders who are opposed to militant methods, but it is pointed out, while they preach co-operation, they insist also that the only solution is "full justice, manhood rights and full opportunities for the negro American."

Industrial Clashes.

New industrial contacts between white and negro workers aggravate the prob-

have won or are seeking to win a place.

On this phase of the problem, Dr. George E. Haynes, a leading negro educator, and now Director of Negro Economics of the Department of Labor, recommends:

"To be concrete, the first step in this direction seems to be for local and national officials to call into conference and counsel the liberal-minded citizens of both races and with them to map out some plan to guarantee greater protection, justice, and opportunity to negroes that will gain the support of law-abiding citizens of both races. Co-operative local committees on matters involving race relations, both under private and

County Jail, firing on officers of the law, liberating 16 white prisoners, of whom several were convicted murderers; looting the house of the Sheriff, stealing stocks of confiscated whiskey. The mob then wrecked and looted shops and invaded the colored district. At least seven persons were killed and twenty or more injured.

Longview, Texas.: Four or more men were killed outright in a riot on the night of July 10, when a mob of white men invaded the negro residence district, shooting and burning houses.

Norfolk, Va.: Receptions of the home-coming negro troops had to be suspended because of riots July 21, in which six persons were shot, necessitating the calling out of the marines and sailors to assist the police. Philadelphia, Penn.: A riot call was sent to all West Philadelphia stations July 2, which resulted in mob attacks and

Now, I wrote to my friend:

Dear Juno,

I found an article buried on page 112 of *The Times*, dated October 5, 1919. It was based on a status report on racial violence made for a Senate hearing. Here's a portion of the article I'm mailing you separately, which I enlarged in photos taken with my grandfather's Leica, now my prized inheritance. It's fun being able, with Grandma's help, to use his developing equipment like this.

It's hard to make out in this little copy, but in the larger one I sent, you can see the bias in the headings contradicted by the factual part of the text, which lays out the grim statistics of the white-on-black mayhem. The headlines and some of the text made it sound like "a negro problem." *The Times* data farther down makes it clear this was mostly whites." There is little in the article to back up that bit about "radical propaganda among negroes," just that their leaders had taken a more partisan approach.

I sadly noted in the *Washington Post* articles there is an unashamed racist tilt, referring to "negro Fiends, negro Thugs, and negro Rioters." The front page of the July 21st paper all but called for white servicemen to mobilize on a specific Pennsylvania Avenue corner for further attacks. It mentioned the negro leaders have lost a measure of gratitude for white "sacrifices." Black

soldiers returning from the battlefields of France didn't want to hear that anymore. Why would they?!

Back in DC, I was aware only of isolated incidents of that Red Summer of 1919, even ones in DC. You probably know, Juno, that they took place in more than three dozen sites across the country and that the term originated with a civil rights leader for the blood that was shed. (I was worried the "red" was about communist influence, which would make white readers discount it, and maybe it did that, anyway. I suspect they're not very careful readers, after all.)

Ah, but here comes Susan, up from her nap. A welcome hug break before playtime. I'm glad she can't read the grim news I'm working on!

There was a long summary of the wide, harmful effects of lynching. I was struck by the adverse effects on the public of just the lawlessness and terror, and the damage to the reputation of the United States. Although the killing of whites was labeled lynching, there are no examples to compare with the massive lynching of blacks.

There are, at most, just a few whites killed at a time, as far as I can see, themselves probably attackers. It mentioned effects even on kids observing it, and of people deciding it was normal enough to ignore! In light of my own rape experience, it was interesting to read the part of the report stating that the rape and torture often involved were the result of perversion.

And it was buried on Page 112! Not exactly hot news! No wonder I missed it at the time, especially since that was during our picketing of the White House and my caring for my tiny baby. It isn't easy reading a newspaper while nursing!

I'd like to post the article on a billboard for all to see, to counter the ignorance and blindness that has afflicted me and others for so much of my life!

Your friend,

Mercy

I sure can't afford to copy many articles like this, and I don't want to cut up my newspapers. If only there were an easy way to copy them!

Sweet Sue, 11/20

At Thanksgiving dinner, I reflected on the many human blessings I had around the table with me. Everybody chipped in, and Susan had her say at the end: "I love Mommy and Grandma and Grammy and Grampy, and I wish we had a PUPPY!" We all looked around, slowly smiling and nodding. I resolve we will take that puppy on long, health-building family walks to ensure Sue's body keeps pace with her heart and head. We found a splendid red spaniel of six months, which Sue named "Baby." He's perfectly house-trained, and he's trained us to keep our shoes out of tooth reach. Nobody's perfect! *Strong urges drive him, too, and love is just one of them. We need more dogs in the world, spreading their joy.*

Juno Replies, 11/20

My dear friend Juno gives me much to think about:

Dear Mercy,

Thanks for the race riot article. Grim as it is, it doesn't tell half of the story. What a shame that we must accept even that much as reality, though. What did my people ever do to deserve this? Was it in being brought here in chains to labor as slaves?

Good question, Juno! I guess it was the implicit threat of withdrawing the mostly free labor that built the South.

You know this situation got a lot worse when our young men returned from fighting in the war, in no mood to be mistreated. They expected jobs, housing, and respect. Whites wanted the jobs and houses for themselves and had no respect to offer. They certainly didn't want negroes in jobs with the same respect and pay as theirs, lowering their status to ours.

Besides, post-war times were tough, and the jobs negroes could get were often as strikebreakers, infuriating the whites. In France, associating with respectful white French citizens and killing white German soldiers had changed our guys. They weren't going to accept going back to Southern white expectations easily.

I have a question for you now. Do you suppose these monstrous racists have any doubts or regrets? I'm afraid very few do. Another question for you as a future teacher: Do you suppose there is any way to teach fairness to racists?

My soul is troubled considering this ugliness.

Sorry to be so negative. You're the only white person with whom I can be this frank.

Juno

As a future teacher, I will be pondering all she says. Maybe for years.

Grim News from the Crimea, 11/20

News from the tail-end of that God-awful Great War still dragging on:

The White imperial losers to the Red revolutionists are fleeing Russia and the widespread massacres. The last military units and civilian refugees left the Crimea, a peninsula off the Ukraine. They had met up with 126 ships, the bedraggled remnants of the Imperial Navy. Together, they headed for Turkey, Tunisia, and the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes.

There were 150,000 survivors gathered out of God-knows how many millions, and just one-fifth of them were civilians. But what happened to all the military's parents, wives, and children? *I don't think I want to know.*

Why did we ever get involved with those murderous people "over there"?

The last war? Well, I'm afraid it may as well be news from the **next** war. Oh, Joe! Thank God, I didn't have a son!

Well, our boy spaniel is a joy, though! What a personality. He keeps us in stitches, and he loves it when we hide treats, just so we don't hide them too well!

Waste No Time! 11/20

Before I left for school, Grandma said, "Remember."

"What? Oh, OK."

After PE, my teacher, Mr. Adams, mentioned that we'll be shifting from softball to basketball next week, and he thinks I'll enjoy it.

I was uneasy and said, "But I don't know anything about basketball."

He smiled and replied, "Not many girls here do. It's been considered too strenuous for girls in high schools. I'll be the girls' basketball coach in the coming season. I can see you'll do fine in this class, and then ... well, you're tall, fast, coordinated, and strong."

"I guess I am."

“Yeah, I’ve been watching you ... as a coach, of course.” He gestures with his left hand, and I see he doesn’t have a wedding ring. Oh, well, he is a teacher, even if he is cute. He has little dimples when he smiles, like Harry Burn. I wonder if I’ll ever see Harry again.

Hope from Wilson, 12/20

To my surprise, when I looked back at that *Times* article I’d copied for Juno, I saw this:

“President Woodrow Wilson publicly blamed white people for being the instigators of race-related riots in both Chicago and Washington, D.C. and introduced efforts to foster racial harmony....”

I write back to Juno briefly that maybe there is hope to reform racists like him after all!

But, anyway, why didn’t the ugliness get stopped with his warning? I don’t think the authorities wanted it stopped. It played a role in suppressing the vote and scaring the people. And in diminishing the negative social impact of the white-on-black violence: everyone’s doing it, so it’s no big deal! The politicians and the press were trying to play both sides.

Better News from Maryland, 12/20

Today I treated myself to a quick telephone conversation with a fellow suffrage volunteer from the White House campaign, Jessica McReady. She is a friend from high school who’d gone on to Maryland State College, nearby in College Park, while I was sick. She’s among the first female students enrolled there.

We could have talked for an hour, but of course, we’d have had to mortgage our souls to pay the phone bill. Instead, we promised to write more frequently. Thank goodness it only takes a two-cent stamp to mail two light “onion skin” sheets, doubled by covering them front and back with ink light enough it doesn’t bleed through too much.

Answers Trickle In, 12/20

The gist of the responses to my letters to my fellow suffragists was, “It is not safe to be publicly labeled as a ‘nigger lover,’ to use the bigots’ crude expression. The fury we encountered as suffragists is nothing compared with what would arise in a broad campaign supporting black woman voting.”

I pressed gently and got broad agreement to this much: “Although we couldn’t let them specifically into our amendment campaign, we won’t

forget them. For now, we will individually encourage our black sisters to register and vote. We'll report on our activities to the group to maintain progress and solidarity."

Well, I can project what we all suffered campaigning for woman suffrage onto what could come. I shivered with fear remembering when apparent mounted Klansmen surrounded Anita and me. Luckily, they were sham Klan, just volunteers to discourage our suffrage efforts, and Anita expertly whipped her roadster around their horses. *I do hope the one I glimpsed being thrown by his spooked horse was OK, pride aside.*

I wrote to Juno, "Progress in getting any racially inclusive suffrage amendment would have been tough without an unlikely explicit racial provision in the woman suffrage amendment. This deficiency would be especially true without judicial and congressional will to apply and enforce both it and the 15th Amendment, for both men and women. Unfortunately, the South was too politically powerful for that to be done even for black men, and it still is. But with our help, surely there can be continual small inroads of racial justice."

Baby Sue came to me now with a box she couldn't get open, and I wondered if this voting expansion is problem too big to handle ourselves. But we have no mommy to run to. We're all the mommies now.

Lizzy French depressed me when she wrote expanding the problem. She said it is bigger than just the black women: Indians and immigrants are also denied the vote in more places than just Tennessee and the South." *It may be hopeless to get justice now, but what can we do to make it less hopeless sometime reasonably soon? Education? Religion? Laws?*

We need to work on all of those fronts. It may be too dangerous to all concerned to work too fast, but we must work. As I realized after the Klan incident, "Watch out for these seriously hating people." Eventually, it may take national civil rights legislation, if that can ever be.

I discussed this further with Juno exploring whether anybody is keeping track of the resistance to negro suffrage. "I doubt it, not in detail on paper, just in old gray heads like mine," she answered.

"How can we fight it," I asked, "if we don't accumulate information? In the woman suffrage campaign, I ended up responsible for index cards keeping track of politicians' records, leanings, and contacts."

Juno considered that: "I'll bet the cards helped. Well, the information on white resistance is on a case-by-case basis, as far as I know. In the black press, there are many stories, but again, on individual local cases."

Sometimes it seems strange for a girl like me to be on a first-name basis with all these mature women, who are heroines to me. Then I think, *"Hey, I'm almost 21, with a baby, and I helped win woman suffrage!"*

I talked with Reynolds later, who said, "This American Civil Liberties Union, founded last year, would be interested, but for now, they may be busy responding to individual cases. They'll be glad if you collect information."

Well, it's a good thing I had several months post-mono and pre-suffragism to prepare for returning to school, so I won't need to spend as much time on schoolwork.

Long Range Plans, 12/20

Anita Pollitzer passed through in her splendid Willys Knight, which we used to campaign for the suffrage amendment. What a car! Before heading home to South Carolina, she tarried to work with Juno and me on our list of possible Tennessee partners for expanding black suffrage. We here were all sad to see her go. Being with her is like being at a party.

I think Reynolds has a bit of a crush on her. Why not? You might say I do too. I have never laughed so much in my life as when I've happily been with her. She'll return to New York soon, maybe for good. Sigh!

We were in a bit of a quandary about whether to meet with Juno here in Knoxville or in the more remote Huntsville. Reynolds said, "Forget our neighborhood bigots. My house here is my local law office, so it's OK for her to visit for a day." The quirk at the corner of his mouth said he could tell I was suffering over the possible slight to her in those last three words. *How we must juggle to get around the racists!*

It was so good that Juno arrived the morning after Anita did. Anita, Grandma, Juno, and I talked late into the night, planning:

Step 1 is to encourage a network of mutually supportive negro women around Knoxville. (Fortunately, it is already going on without us.) We have seen how essential support is in this dangerous business of getting registrations and votes. It will be even more dangerous to expand our local network, but that's the heart of progress.

Juno said, "Don't kid yourself. This is slow work, one woman at a time." She volunteered to visit negro churches with me to encourage their joining our network. We will try to sign up a contact in each church. Although I have a role to play for now, we must encourage negro leadership for the network as soon as possible.

Step two is to encourage the formation of other networks around us. Anita put in, "The key will be to encourage strengthening the networks, but we're talking months or years. After all, it took three hundred years to build the system of oppression, and that system is ever vigilant to threats." Grandma worriedly chipped in, "And they can call on the violence of the KKK."

Step three will be harder. Anita paused and added, "You've got to keep at the work year after year, always supporting each other."

Just then Baby appeared to say with a pleading paw, "I've really got to go out NOW! That taken care of, we return to our discussion with the hardest point."

Step four: Engage our movement with the League of Women Voters to garner wider support.

On the last point, Grandma ventured, "But shouldn't they be natural allies?"

Juno and I exchanged a look, and she said, "Remember, the league is the child of Carrie Chapman Catt, who insisted the negro women be pushed to the side in the campaign for suffrage. She transformed her National American Woman Suffrage Association into the nucleus of the League and is still deathly afraid of rousing Southern opposition to it."

Anita added, "She would see an emphasis on negro involvement as a danger to her organization and would always put the welfare of her organization first, maybe wisely."

Thinking back to the narrowness of our suffrage victory, I had to say, "Yes, maybe with good reason. Unfortunately, we'll have to walk a narrow path between doing nothing and doing too much."

"In any case," Anita said, "you need to avoid antagonizing her unnecessarily. By the way, our old suffragist ally, Anne Dallas Dudley, is at the center of getting the league going in Tennessee. So, Mercy, you ought to work to get her involved."

Grandma laughed, "She could be key for this and your larger efforts." *Now, what all does Grandma have in mind?*

“Don’t forget the Indian women,” added Anita.

Juno surprised me with, “They haven’t forgotten you or the promises made to them! Before I came here, I talked with Olivia Two Tents, a Chickamauga Cherokee living in Nashville. She heard you speak there about suffrage and how lifting up only some women was an issue of justice for all women.”

I said, “Oh, yes, I remember her plea that we not leave the Indians behind.”

Juno resumed, “Olivia took both my hands before she left and said to remind you her people are in the same position as we negroes have been. And most of their men and women were kept from voting in 1920 through all the same abuses that limited us.”

I remember her well, standing straight and saying they are mothers like me and need to vote for their children’s welfare like me. We must seek out and include them in all we’re planning. Juno, can you ask her for contacts with Indian women in East Tennessee?”

“I have her list right here, two of them in Knoxville.”

“You **are** my big sister!”

2. Widening Circles, 1921

Now, Volunteering, 1/21

Finally, I have reached 21, which means I can vote and sign contracts, **sometimes** without needing a husband to co-sign. *When will we ever really be equal??*

Communicating with my suffragist sisters around Tennessee, I found myself coordinating the effort to assure the vote to negroes, both women and men. Unfortunately, Juno and I are the only ones in my little circle with energy (or over-confidence?) to push this. We agreed to focus on getting out the negro vote in the 1922 elections, which can then be built on. She’ll work directly through the black community, I through the white. We’ll share contacts and ideas with each other.

For Juno, working across generations is apparently business as usual, but I feel strange leading women twice my age and more. *Well, in Isaiah, it does say a little child shall lead them. Heh!*

Prepare the Way, 2/21

Two older friends from the fight for the amendment in Nashville arrived on opposite trains from Nashville and Chattanooga to talk with me about the campaign for negro women voters. I think they also wanted to encourage me.

Anne Dudley Dallas founded the Nashville Equal Suffrage League in 1911. Then she worked her way up the ranks to third vice president of NAWSA. Abby Crawford Milton married Chattanooga newspaperman George Milton. After earning a law degree in Chattanooga, she immediately began working on woman suffrage and won the local vote for the women of Lookout Mountain. She soon became the first president of the Tennessee League of Women Voters.

Josephine Pearson arrived on the same train as Abby. She turned sharply toward us on the platform and demanded, "What devilment are you three up to? Haven't you done enough damage already?"

Ah, I remember she had jealously handed out fliers warning of these beautiful, educated, and wealthy "suffrage sirens." I'm sure nobody ever accused her of being a siren of anything. Am I being too catty, as I've heard people say about others?

I hope she's not here to make more trouble for me with Prof. Bajun.

While waiting to go to our house for supper, Anne touched my arm sweetly and said the nicest thing: "Mercy, you are a blessing to us. Without your pressure, we'd be doing nothing to expand suffrage to others. We were too tired and satisfied to press on." Abby nodded in agreement.

I quickly replied, "Anne, Abby, you women showed what we can do together. Thank you."

"Sweety", said Anne, "I hope you know what you have gotten us doing will not be quick. It took seventy years to get our amendment, and it may take another sixty to get the ultimate legislation for all, as deep as prejudice and self-interest are. Most of us will be gone by then, but one day a president will sign the legislation. She paused in thought and said, "I think that president may be you. You have the fire!"

Stunned, I laugh and say, "Thank you, but I never dreamed of such a thing. It would be wonderful if a woman could sign it, though."

"You have thought of politics, dear?"

“Well, my father-in-law said I should run for the state legislature, at least after I retire from teaching.”

“You’ll be a good teacher, but you’ll start looking farther out, impatient with the political pace. That’ll be the time to prepare the way, knowing 1960 is a presidential election year. You could aim for that. You’ll be only ... 60.” *We both laugh, but she laughs harder, leaking wistful tears.*

I whisper a reply, “You’re serious, aren’t you?”

“You bet! You’re smart, knowledgeable, attractive, and dedicated. And you have a commanding size and manner you’re learning to use. I’ve thought I’d wrap up my involvement in politics, believing we’d done all we could for now. But you’ve gotten me interested again. I might stick around to see you young women get started on this long road. You should get involved first with Abby’s League of Women Voters. She’s got a group languishing here in Knoxville and another in Nashville. We need to work them more together.”

Over supper that night at home, I casually mentioned getting involved with the League. To my chagrin, the family was enthusiastic, leaning forward with interest. Grandma bubbled at the idea and volunteered to help. Reynolds narrowed his eyes very thoughtfully. Louise was more reserved, smiling but looking nervous, perhaps wondering what burden it would put on her.

After dinner, Reynolds took a moment with me to say, “Of course, the League is non-partisan. Of course, the people in it don’t have to be. Work on your goals, and I guarantee you’ll become a leader in the city with a record of progressive accomplishment. There’s no need to think beyond that. Yet.”

I held back from telling him about my exchange with Anne Dudley Dallas.

Later, Anne, Abby, and I discussed the list of steps Anita, Juno, Grandma, and I put together in December. Ah, if only Juno and Anita were still here, but Anne and Abby agreed with the list and added supporting ideas and contacts. *This is starting to feel real!*

What Am I, 2/21

I excitedly walked into the living room. Reynolds looked up in surprise. “Reynolds,” I said, “I’m playing, or at least sitting on the bench, for my

first game as a Lady Vol tomorrow. What IS a Vol, anyway? I know it's a nickname for the school, but what is that about?"

"Early in Tennessee history, the people became known as volunteers for military service. It was adopted by the state as its motto and extended to the UT teams. So, you'll be a Lady Vol, eh? That's great!"

"I hope I do OK. I'm just learning the game, though I seem to do passably well against girls who played here and in high school. I'm afraid there aren't many six-foot girls here to choose from."

"Yeah, but you've got lots of qualities for basketball, starting with that long walking you did as a teen. And, you know, there are Tennessee politicians who've built a career from being a Vol player, though never a Lady Vol, yet."

Hmmm! Is he smiling slyly as he mentions it? Huh?

Lady Vols basketball began early in the 20th century. However, most "seasons" consisted of only three or four games and still followed girls' rules. Each half of the court is divided into zones of thirds, and players are assigned to each zone. They can possess the ball for just five seconds, dribbling just twice. Only the players in the net zone can shoot. I have such trouble following these dull rules, imposed by men to protect the "gentle sex", I guess, so we wouldn't sweat. *Did they ever see a woman give birth?*

Except for women's persistence, the sport might have been dropped already. It had been hard to get a coach. Greg Adams reluctantly took the position, filling in between two years of women coaches. The job was a joke, since the previous coaches, primarily men, had won just three games in eight seasons. The coach told me he was hoping to move into helping coach the men's team, so he was relying on me to get him a better record. *No pressure!*

Woman? 2/21

Out of the blue, I got an inquiry from a member of an organization I was unaware of, the Women's Student Government Association. It evolved from the Women's League, formed in 1893 following the readmission of women to the university. They're looking at taking on coordinating women's activities on campus. Impressed with my little group, they wondered if I'd like to work with them.

Wow! From little acorns, maybe trees do grow! Hmm, could I get their help to pull a League of Women Voters branch onto campus? Two birds,

one stone? Oh, oh, am I infected with Reynolds' and Anne Dudley's delusions?

Contacts Come Together, 3/21

Last November, I started attending Knoxville LWV meetings. By January, I was on the membership committee, focused on recruiting women students at UT. I'm afraid the mostly older members were miffed at bringing in more upstarts like me. I raised a few hackles when I objected to others' calling the people we're trying to recruit to the League of **Women** Voters "girls" instead of "women".

There are so many interesting things happening around here: plays, concerts, clubs, and sports, and there is such a wide variety of people, including foreigners. I could almost skip going to classes and get a good education, but there's no degree for extracurricular activities. *Darn!* Of course, all these things existed in the District of Columbia, but even if I'd gotten enrolled, I was too young and shy to take advantage of them.

Now I'm too busy. But that gave me an idea. I'll approach the student newspaper with a proposal to write various articles. Call it something like "Volunteering for Opportunities" in this school, labeled the Tennessee Volunteers. That would allow me to get around to them all and do it on my own schedule.

It took until March to finally get an OK from the school paper for my articles. I believe there was some controversy among the staff about my stepping into a special role. And maybe it roused masculine pride. I hope there's no ruffled coxcomb to smooth out.

I take the baby out for walks on the campus, and before long, I'm leading a parade, making new friends. Other young moms, along with other students and more, feel encouraged to join us, so we've often got quite a variable crew. I had no idea there were so many of us, so eager for the companionship. *Little Susan deserves much of the credit, pulling in baby lovers and lonely big sisters!*

Harcourt Morgan Friendship, 3/21

On one of my baby walks, UT president Harcourt Morgan fell in with us. Looking around at my following, he asked, "What if a few of you girls go into high schools to recruit more girls to come to UT?"

I smiled and asked, "You mean young women?"

After a pause, he laughed ruefully and said, "Yes, I mean young women like you, exactly what we need!"

Thank goodness, he could handle that cheeky reply. Working with his Dean of Students later, I learned more about him and developed a great admiration. As a genuine scholar, he had made discoveries that brought two devastating agricultural pests under control, to the salvation of cotton and tobacco farmers, even though he had only a bachelor's degree. With his solid accomplishments at his prior university, he was brought to UT as a professor. He'd quickly risen level by level to become president a couple of years ago, but he could still talk to both farmers and students warmly.

I can see why!

He had come up with "the common mooring" idea that fit right in with his humane approach, namely that human activities should align with the demands of nature. *There's an idea that will last, I'll bet!* Crops grown in rows year after year, like cotton and tobacco, stressed the soil and threw the relationship out of balance," he maintained. "Listen to nature!"

Rallying the Troops, 4/21

Brianna Livingston on the newspaper staff seems interested in my "war stories" from the suffrage campaign.

When I told her I miss the camaraderie of the campaign and want a way to regain it, "Join us," she said. With her encouragement, I plunged ahead more into the newspaper's work from my fringe, relishing being part of the team. She wants to write an article about me. *How flattering!*

Right away, though, the faculty senate got upset over slightly controversial stories against restrictions on student speech. There's talk of disbanding the paper or putting it under strict supervision. *Good grief!* Brianna warns me to be cautious, for my own career as a student and for the freedom of the paper. *Could I really get into trouble for me and the paper? Could I even have trouble graduating and getting a teaching job? I know Prof Bajun would love to create some devilry for me.*

My mentor, President Morgan, makes it plain he's not intervening. It's not his fight. Frankly, I think he sees possible trouble for himself. *I can't blame him.*

I wrote one of the controversial stories, with a bare mention of non-white women being left out of suffrage. To paraphrase an old line, "Hell hath no fury like a racist scorned." I tell Brianna about the debt I feel to the deferred black suffragists and my intention to find others who also feel the debt. "Count me in," she says.

It's time to move on with the steps we planned in December.

With a growing group of loyal followers, you'd think I (we) could accomplish something. I need to feel out the members of the group on tasks they can dedicate themselves to and put them in touch with each other—just small things for now.

Why do these people follow me? For one thing, I was told, because I'm so well-dressed (thanks to the grannies.) Clothes do count here. They give status in this Southern social setting, where many girls look up to the rich students and feel family pressure to marry well. Some are only looking to do that. Well, honestly, would I drop everything for a good husband? I hope not! But

Birddogging City Government, 4/21

When Carrie Catt organized her new League of Women Voters, she described its purpose:

"The League of Women Voters is not to dissolve any present organization but to unite all existing organizations of women who believe in its principles. It is not to lure women from partisanship but to combine them in an effort for legislation which will protect coming movements, which we cannot even foretell, from suffering the untoward conditions which have hindered for so long the coming of equal suffrage.

I could never feel warmth toward the woman, but she did give needed leadership. And still does.

It immediately became clear that the legislative goals of the League could not be focused exclusively on women's issues. It had to extend to citizen education broadly. In our chapter, we began by gathering voter information for local and state races, including who was running and their platforms. We realized one candidate lied often, so we simply published his contradictions. We were astounded he would do that, but he stopped. *Astounded at us, I guess.*

People in my group have begun going to Knoxville city council meetings. We want to be aware of what is being done in our names, so we can put our voices in as needed. Among the first topics we heard discussed were city parks and the tuberculosis scourge. Our comments and offers of support were warmly received. *A good start! When we work to recruit members, we should also voice support for council actions on these issues.*

Tulsa Race Massacre, 5/21

The racial horrors go on. Tulsa, Oklahoma, erupted in terrible violence on the last day of the month, and it is still not over. This was no Ocoee, Florida, as I described before, not another insignificant place in an insignificant state, made infamous by the race riot that surely will forever be linked to its name. Tulsa is a significant city in a significant state, where there was a terrible two-day-long attack on its vibrant negro community. It had been called “the black Wall Street” before it became a burnt-out ruin.

Tulsa had already earned notoriety with the Tulsa Outrage, which began as union-busting. There was an explosion at the home of an oil executive. Influential community members had joined in the babble, as a prominent newspaper stoked the flames with bloody-minded editorials suggesting concentration camps and hanging, and urging “kill ’em just as you would kill any other kind of snake. This is no time to waste money on trials and continuances and things like that.”

This from self-proclaimed “law and order” citizens.

After testimony by private investigators hired by the oil company, the best the law could do was a trial for vagrancy and for failure to own war bonds (*certainly never a crime*). After the trial, the victims were loaded in police cars, turned over to vigilantes, to be beaten and forced out of town naked except for a coating of tar and feathers.

What in God’s Name is being coated hot tar and a layer feathers like? I guess eventually it peels off. Painfully. Shamefully.

Now, in the latest incident, it gets worse, presumably. A negro teenager was arrested on a complaint from a white woman (not his alleged victim). *The Tulsa Tribune* published inflammatory material about the incident. Aware of the failure of Tulsa police to defend a white man against a lynch mob the previous year, a large armed group of negro men marched to the courthouse in the night, offering to help the sheriff’s deputies defend the boy, but the sheriff said no help was needed.

Hours later, an armed confrontation took place outside the courthouse, and the massacre broke out. A white mob attacked the black community in pursuit of black militants. It soon resulted in the injuring and killing of hundreds of blacks, interning as many as 6,000 black residents, many of them for several days, and burning thirty blocks to the ground, in the most destructive race massacre in American history.

Maybe Tulsa is big enough to escape being known for the rioting which made its own burnt-out ruin, but I hope the horrors will never be forgotten.

Summer Project, 6/21

The horror of Tulsa haunted me and led me to ask, “Reynolds has Knoxville ever had race violence?”

He shook his head sadly. “We have had a good record, but in 1919, just before you arrived, a lynch mob stormed the county jail in search of a biracial man accused of killing a white woman. Unable to find him, the rioters looted the jail (including the prohibition-confiscated liquor) and fought a pitched gun battle with the residents of a predominantly black neighborhood. The Tennessee National Guard eventually dispersed the rioters, but scores of people were reported dead.”

Out of dreadful sadness, I whispered, “Right downtown, here!”

“To that time”, he continued, “Knoxville had been considered one of the few racially tolerant cities in the South, where negro citizens could vote, hold public office, and even serve as police officers.”

“That was really something, but then in this case ...?” I replied.

Reynolds shrugged and took it up again, “The Knoxville police moved their prisoner to Chattanooga, but a crowd of onlookers had gathered at the Knox County jail, thinking the prisoner was still being held there, and growing to about 5,000. Many black residents, aware of the race riots around the country, had armed themselves and barricaded the intersection of Vine and Central, the entrance to their community. The guardsmen were ordered toward Vine, and the mob followed. Some rioters broke into stores and stole weapons. Gunfire erupted, and the National Guard set up two machine guns on Vine, opening fire.”

“I’m glad,” I said. “I’m glad I just missed arriving in town for it.”

“Well,” he replied, “the black defenders gradually trickled away, and the guardsmen gained control of Vine and Central in the early morning. The National Guard searched all black residences inside a barricaded zone, with a citywide curfew imposed. Two hundred temporarily deputized white citizens fanned out, and reports of violence continued during the day.”

“Oh, my God,” I responded. “In our Knoxville!”

“Reportedly, the dead were so many that some were dumped into the Tennessee River or buried in mass graves.”

Aghast, I could only reply with a grimace.

Reynolds took it up again: “Many of the city's African American leaders later argued that the rioters were not typical of Knoxville's whites, though hundreds of blacks left the city for good.”

He reminded me that although Tennessee was a slave state, *only* its western and middle parts supported the Confederacy. The eastern part had strong pro-Union sentiment. It was the last state to secede and the first readmitted to the Union after the war.

Being out of school for the summer, I decided to spend time looking into the broad implications of local racism, talking with Reynolds and Lizzie French. I knew Juno should be able to give me perspective from her contacts in the negro community here, and Lizzie put me in touch with the leaders of the brand-new Knoxville American Civil Liberties Union. *Some of these would be friends for many years.*

I plan to be a part of it as a citizen and as a social studies teacher—and maybe more. I am convinced people will need to understand human rights and the Constitution better. I still hope to hear from NAWSA and NWP about their plans to continue the work of extending suffrage, though their silence is disturbing.

As I mentioned in my first book, it strikes me that denying suffrage is like rape, violating women's will, as surely as my own rape violated mine. Our Nineteenth Amendment started the country on the right course to overcome this travesty.

A teacher's interest, 7/21

Between classes, my friend Susie Sheridan and I bumped into Greg Adams, who had been our PE teacher in the fall. He's a nice guy who looks straight at you while conversing. On a hot Friday afternoon after our morning classes, we had come prepared to swim in the campus pool. Bob Matthews, his graduate assistant, was with Phil and suggested we all go to the lake in Fort Dickerson Park, across the river.

“We can take my truck,” said Phil. “It's right here in the stadium parking lot.”

Susie and I exchanged a look, shrug, and then agreed to go.

“One of you will have to ride in the back,” says Phil. “There's room in the cab for only one passenger.”

When we reached the truck, I ended up in the front with Phil, and the Susie climbed in the back. I was interested to see the truck starts the same as Anita's Willys Knight with its electric starter.

We headed toward the Gay Street Bridge over the Tennessee River. I am relieved Susie's along, since we're going to a kind of remote place. *You know.*

At a light before we crossed the bridge, a car pulled up beside us, honking. Susie banged on the roof, says she's got to go home with her sister, and jumped out. *Oh, well, these two were nice guys.*

After a few miles, we pulled into the park. It is beautiful, the most expansive and natural park I've ever seen, with cliffs above the lake. The lake is enormous, a former quarry, dug downward, Phil says. "Over in that grassy area across the lake is where we get in, from the ground level." *I don't see any other people there.*

"Stay away from the edge. Actually, some do jump from the cliff. You can be killed just by hitting the water from the top. Two weeks ago, a guy died when he jumped too close to the edge and smashed into the road that spirals down under the water."

I look across and nervously say, "I don't see a bath house for me to change."

"We'll let you change in the truck while we change behind a tree," says Bob, who has come up to lean inside my open window."

Just then, three guys I've seen around U.T., football players, came up sweating from walking the three miles from the campus in the heat and they ask if they can ride down to the swim area. As they are climbing in the back, I catch a little talk: "A real looker," says one. "How'd you like to," starts another and breaks off. The others laugh.

I was getting more uneasy, remembering talk like that at the jail after a policeman had raped me in that "special" paddy wagon with others looking on and cheering. *Five to one isn't good odds.*

After we stopped, the five guys headed to the woods to change, leaving me to change in the front seat. *I was having trouble breathing smoothly.* The keys were dangling in the ignition, and I eased into the driver's seat after hesitating for a long moment. *My heart was beating hard, but I started the truck and slowly drove off, picking up speed, guilty tears leaking down my cheeks, hearing angry yells behind me. What am I doing? I should go back. Maybe say I was just joking. But my jaw was*

locked in fear and anger. I'd never get the apology out. I'm sorry, guys, if I'm wronging you.

I left the truck back at the stadium parking lot with the key under the seat, hoping for the best, for the car and me.

I'm going to look into strength training and self-defense.

Surprise Call, 7/21

"Mercy, you have a call," said Reynolds, coming through the door from the living room.

Oh, no! It must be Greg Adams. What can I say? Am I going to be in trouble? I'd better jump right in!

"Hello, I'm sorry about your truck. I got scared with the five of you, all of a sudden."

"What do you mean?"

"It's OK, isn't it? You found the truck, alright?"

"Mercy, how do you know I have a truck?"

"Um, is this Phil?"

"No, this is Harry Burn."

"Harry! What a relief to hear it's you!"

"What's this about a truck?"

"Oh, it's a long story, and too embarrassing to talk about over the phone. I hope to tell you in person. How are you?"

"I'm good, Mercy, and I'd like to get together for dinner when I pass through Knoxville in a few days. It would be great to, ah, talk over the amendment battle. I was sorry I didn't get to see you right away afterward. As you can imagine, I thought I'd better get right out, ahead of the anti's ... rocks."

"Yeah, given the ferocity of their opposition and their anger at losing, that was wise."

Dinner with Harry, 8/21



It was hard waiting the two weeks until I'd see Harry. We had a wonderful dinner downtown. He is quite a conversationalist. It will be sad if he has ruined his political career with Republicans by casting the deciding vote on the suffrage bill. I'm afraid too many have sold their souls to the anti-suffragists, who still haven't given up their cause. To them, conservatism means resisting all change, and revenge is their approach to block any attempt forward. *I hope that's just here in Tennessee.*

Of course, when we got back, he couldn't venture a kiss so soon, but I was wanting one. I didn't know if there would be another chance, given where we live, far apart, and where he works, at the capitol. *Oh, well!*

Harry was very interested in my campus political activities and my ventures off campus in Knoxville, especially in trying to get the ACLU going here. He sees civil liberties as a very Republican cause, as the party of Lincoln, regardless of what Tennessee Republicans may think about women's rights.

I mentioned I was just reading about the Wilmington massacre which ousted the elected bi-racial government. "Mercy," he responded angrily, "I remember how the mob's leader read from the so-called White Declaration of Independence the day before the assault, saying 'We will no longer be ruled, and will never again be ruled by men of African origin'. As many as 60 people were killed."

In the silence that followed, I whispered, "Could it happen again?"

Harry resumed, "I hope not. There was a small-scale version not far from where I grew up. I gained a determination that would never happen again there."

I was thrilled to see his passion and how sweet he was with Susan when he picked me up.

Indian Rights, 9/21

Olivia Two Tents, the Cherokee activist, came to see me from Nashville. She'd heard from Juno about my continuing efforts for negro women voters and she wanted to make sure I didn't forget the Indian women.

It was a fine summer day, so while we talked, I proudly showed her the campus. Naturally, she got strange looks from some lily-white passers-by, but not the hostility Juno would have gotten.

She reminded me that in 1817, her Cherokee people became the first Indians recognized as U.S. citizens under a Cherokee treaty, with words embedded in her memory; "Upwards of 300 Cherokees (Heads of Families) in the honest simplicity of their souls, made an election to become American citizens." She went on, "Quaint, isn't it, and condescending, but even those native people did not have the right to vote though they were now 'citizens'. The Indians' relationship to the U.S. government was that of people in an occupied country."

"What a sad reflection on our 'democracy,'" I had to say.

She nodded sadly and took it up again, "Well, The Civil Rights Act of 1866 once again declared us to be citizens of the United States." Because of our substantial numbers, though, native Americans would be able to overwhelm the power of the white vote in several states, so we still weren't allowed to vote."

"Wasn't there any progress then to correct this?" I asked.

"Well, later, there were special considerations that granted citizenship to some individuals or groups, which also gave them the right to vote. There was a big step forward 1868 Treaty of Fort Laramie which allowed the possibility for the Lakota people to access the right to vote, when it stated that Natives could be entitled to "all the privileges and immunities of such citizens, and shall, at the same time, retain all [their] rights to benefits accruing to Indians under this treaty. The important advantage of this was that the natives could become citizens yet still maintain their status and rights as natives."

“That still seems so pitiful, after all those promises over all those years,” I replied.

Olivia paused, nodding sadly, before continuing, “More acts did add Indians to the citizenship rolls. When the Native Territory was abolished and merged into the new state of Oklahoma in 1907, all Natives who lived in that territory were made citizens. Then, after the Great War, any Indian who had fought with an honorable discharge was also considered a citizen.”

Olivia continued, “All that came finally, but only long after most of the Cherokee had been driven to Oklahoma there eighty years before, from Georgia, North Carolina, and Tennessee along the ‘Trail of Tears.’

I had to say quietly, “I heard up to one-half of the Cherokee population died during the removal, along the trail and in their first year in Oklahoma.”

So much grief filled the room that we just sat in silence for a while.

Finally, I asked, “But your people didn’t leave, did they?”

With a distant look, she replied, “No, more than 300 of the tribe hid in the mountains. Over a period of years, we remained and expanded. Eventually, the U.S. government recognized us as the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Indians, in 1868. Those gone to Oklahoma became the Cherokee Nation.”

I asked, “Are Indians all over ready to come out and demand equality?”

“Well, I am!”

Maternal Health, 11/21

Ah, there’s such a thing as getting too much respect. Veronica, a classmate, came running up to me, saying her sister was outside in the car, very scared, maybe in labor. She had seen the age of my Susan and knew my husband had died before her birth. She figured I would know about the problems of having a baby without a husband. Her sister’s water had broken suddenly while she was driving Veronica to class. She had barely stopped the car.

“Can you take her to a hospital?” I asked.

“I can’t drive, and I doubt I could get her across to the other side of the front seat anyway.”

“OK,” I said, “let’s lay her across the whole seat.”

When we did, I saw it was too late. The baby's head was already coming out, looking blood red.

"Can you get to a phone and call for an ambulance?" I asked Veronica.

"What number would I call?"

"When the operator comes on, just ask her." *It shouldn't be this hard to get medical help, I thought.*

Her sister was now screaming in agony and flailing in a way that would make anything I might do difficult, if I knew anything to do.

I felt so helpless and ignorant.

A passerby broke in, "I'm a midwife. Let me help."

I stepped aside and waited for the welcome sound of a baby crying. But what finally came was the midwife crying softly, and then the sister who'd gotten me, wailing.

As the midwife dried her tears and was leaving, she said to us, "If I'd only come by sooner, I could have saved at least one of them"

When I patted her shoulder in consolation, she said sadly, "A new law just went into effect to deal with this, the Sheppard-Towner Act. The doctors are already screaming it will hurt their business by getting us midwives involved, though they don't put it that way! "Oh, yes," they say, "and it would endanger the women (who already had no access to medical care anyway). Could we talk more on another day? I have a feeling you're a white who would be good to talk to. My name is Rebecca Freeman. I'll give you my phone number in case you want to."

This was the start of a great friendship, despite her being several years older. I started going on a few midwifery calls with her to see it first-hand. Back home, without finding details of the law, I looked back through my stack of New York Times, a tedious process. Was news of it squelched? Doctors are so influential!

I then resolved to do something to bring the danger of absent maternal care to light!

Thanksgiving, 11/21

I went almost straight from the childbirth tragedy to the joy of Thanksgiving in Huntsville while fighting to hold off my grief. Reynolds saw my wooden face and helped alleviate my sorrow by delighting with me in his grandchild, our Susan. I wished again I could give him another, but of course, that's impossible with his only son dead. He went on to

glow, while talking about his plans for generosity to his domestic employees who have done so much for us, once he could build up more cash with the booming times. Reynolds is such a generous, warmhearted man. His goodwill alleviated my gloom over the grief I'd run into.

League Work, 12/21

I am quickly getting involved with the Knoxville LWV. They are still excited about their first major national legislative success, the passage of the Sheppard-Towner Act, which they knew all about.

Later, I learned it led to the temporary creation of 3,000 child and maternal health care centers, many of these in rural areas. While it was in effect, it lowered the infant death rate to be closer to that of European countries. When it had started, eighty percent of all expectant mothers received no professional advice or trained care. The government's Children's Bureau, which worked with the midwives, was also tasked with investigating high rates of infant and maternal mortality.

3. A New Phase, 1922

World Court, 1/22

We have a functioning world court! Maybe now countries won't go to war to get justice, or at least what they'll accept as justice. It meets in the Netherlands. *If only we'd had it eight years ago, before the Great War broke out! But as I write that, I realize that without the war, I'd never have met my Joe or had my Susan. Life is too complicated!*

The Ball Keeps Bouncing! 2/22

I'm back for a new basketball season as a starter. The self-defense workouts I'd begun after that scare with the guys at the lake have made me a stronger center, though I must be careful not to be too aggressive. I watch the guys and wish I could play their game. Oh, well! Today, Reynolds brought little Susan to see Mommy play, so I couldn't set a bad example with over-aggressiveness. I do try to subtly intimidate the smaller girls, um, women, I play with. *As I said of the dog chewing shoes, "Nobody's perfect!"*



Extra hours I've spent practicing have made me a pretty good shot, and the team gets the ball to me often. The school paper has even started writing up the women's basketball games, which they'd previously ignored. I'm embarrassed to say I read the report of the first game more than once, small as it was. I scored most of our team's ten points. *It's not like I'm on the real Tennessee team that could win the conference championship, though. Darn!*

Reynolds has been bragging about me among his senate buddies. He even had me come to a dinner where he proudly showed me off and mentioned my political activism. *What am I missing in all this?*

Growing Admiration, 3/22

President Morgan sometimes stops to exchange words when we pass on campus. I think he likes me, and I certainly like and admire him. What a warm and intelligent man! *I could almost forget he's the president of UT and I'm a new freshman!*

As director of the school's agricultural experimental station and then as dean of the College of Agriculture, Morgan built support with his view that the university's extension services were as important as the school's teaching mission. The trust he earned with farmers gained him influence among the state's politicians, ultimately making him an easy choice for president of the leading agricultural university in the state.

He suggested I focus my studies on the agricultural side of Tennessee politics, saying I could do that in almost any course. *With his interest, I will.*

Spring Break Trip, 3/22

Reynolds took our family of five to New Orleans to celebrate spring break. *Oh, boy! I never had a real vacation.*

Why New Orleans? It turned out to be music, dance, and my plans to teach. He had been wanting to go to New Orleans for the music and then heard the school board there had decided to rid the schools of “jazz music and jazz dancing,” trying to distance the students down there from anything with African American origins. My subversive Republican father-in-law was preparing me to teach. *To resist.*

We all had so much fun, remembering dancing to his pianola jazz rolls in his Nashville apartment back during the suffrage climax. Little Sue even remembered the rumba hip motions she’d learned then. Reynolds wore us all out dancing with us. *Jazz Me Blues* was again the favorite. *Our lawyer can move!*

Girls’ Night Out, 5/22

The two Grandmas and I treated ourselves! We went downtown to Gay Street for dinner and to see the new movie *Beyond the Rocks*, starring Gloria Swanson and Rudolph Valentino. Wow! A great movie. She is so beautiful, and he is so sexy. *There, I said it!*

I think one day we’ll be able to hear what they say instead of just seeing the words on the screen, in the “intertitles,” and then maybe we’ll even hear music in the movie not just sometimes played in the pit up front! There is a whole new world coming, and I’m so grateful I’ll be here to witness it!

Susan stayed home with Grandpa, none too happy about being left out, but looking forward to the stack of new library books Reynolds had checked out. I’m delighted the Lawson McGhee Library is near us. And so sad there is no public library where negroes are admitted. *That sounds like something I’d like to bring up in the ACLU as soon as I can get involved in it. Can you imagine keeping a book-loving little girl like my Sue out of a library because she’s white? What is the message for negro children?*

I was glad to learn there is a Carnegie library recently established for negro readers, with the influence of the ACLU, but it has been a smaller stepchild of the system.

Grandma Ails, 6/22

Grandma didn’t get up until late, starting a few days ago. My early bird, energetic Grandma! Just a few days ago she was out working in the yard all day, clearing out some brush from her garden, as she had for a couple of weeks. Then when she woke, she thought she was coming down with the flu, coughing and headachy. Now she’s groggy, in near constant pain,

listless, and intermittently very irritable (quite understandably). She'd say to add into the list fever, chills, muscle and joint aches, and swollen lymph nodes. Miserable! We were growing more worried.

Louise knocked at the doorsill. "Um, the company you mentioned the other day is here, a Doctor Russell. What should I do? Send him up?"

"Oh, no," said Grandma, "I haven't even had a bath or combed my hair!"

"Grandma," I said, "he's a doctor and this is an excellent time for him to be here. I'll tidy you up a bit."

Louise quickly said, "I'll get a pitcher of warm water."

I know the doctor is just what Grandma needs, in more ways than one, so I quickly gave her a bed bath before she could summon objections. I had her sitting up in her nicest nightgown when the doctor arrived.

"Oh, Howard, I'm sorry to see you like this!"

He grinned and said, "It happens to me all the time. I'm delighted to see you, however you may be!"

"I was so sad to hear about your wife's death."

"Frankly, it was a blessing for her to leave her endless pain behind, though I'm still adapting to the loneliness. Now, what's going on with you?"

"Just aches and pains, and a bit of fever...."

"How are you sleeping?"

"Not so well."

"Open your mouth, please, and stick out your tongue."

He had just finished a quick exam when Grandma said, "I do have a pain in my armpit."

He takes a look and asks, "How long have you had this rash here?"

"Just a week or so. Funny looking, isn't it? Round, like that, and it seems to be slowly getting bigger. Strange how there's nothing in the middle of it."

"Except that tiny dot. Did you have a tick there?"

"Why, yes," turning to face me and Louise, she added, "Didn't I tell you he's a great doctor?"

“I don’t know what to call the disease you may have, but I think it’s carried by ticks. I saw a couple of cases like this when I visited a doctor friend in Connecticut. It’s aggravating but not long-lasting, as far as I know.”

It was getting better by the time his week’s visit was up, after complicating the visit and scaring us with some of the side effects.

I later learned this came to be called Lyme Disease and could have been very much worse.

Reality Slams Me, 9/22

As I start a new school year, I’m struck by a fear. Will my work for suffrage make it hard to get a teaching job? Might all my studies be wasted by bigots? Thank Goodness, my plight is not as bad as one Reynolds told me about:

“Our office custodian had proudly been keeping us up with his grandson Marty’s progress at Rust College in Holly Springs, Mississippi, and then with his teaching job in the local system. He mentioned matter-of-factly that Marty’s classes get textbooks cast off from the nearby white school as being too old and damaged.” Those books are ‘equal’, says the school board, citing that 1896 Plessy v. Ferguson Supreme Court decision.’ “Obviously, a book is a book, no matter its age or condition, if it’s going to a Black school. And the Black school may be poorly heated and maintained, but a school is a school—as long as it’s a Black school.

“Separate is never equal and really won’t ever be. I’ll bet the Supreme Court will come to its senses someday and reverse that foolish decision, finally saying separate is necessarily unequal because it implies inferiority, second-class citizenship.”

“I hope I live to see that day!” I said.

“I doubt that I will,” Reynolds continued, “Well, Marty had earned a bachelor’s degree, paid his poll tax for two years, as required, then attempted to register to vote.”

“A brave thing to do, I bet,” I commented.

“Oh, yes,” he replied to me. “I’m glad I didn’t know about it at the time.”

“What happened?” Grandma asked.

“First, he failed the literacy test, even though he had graduated at the top of his college class. After Marty read and explained the passage in the

state constitution as requested by the county clerk, the clerk just said, 'Wrong,' without explanation, and wrote 'FAILED' on his application."

"So that was the end of it?" asked Grandma.

"Of course not, word of Marty's registration attempt got back to the superintendent of schools. He called Marty in and reminded him that teachers must set a good example of 'civic harmony.'"

Grandma's face wrinkled and she said, "That's so sad. I hope that was the end of it."

"Apparently it was, since he didn't follow up with anything 'inharmonious.' He was lucky and wise."

"But now," he continued resolutely, "on your recent question about woman negro suffrage in Tennessee: The racist fear is that if the suffrage amendment had explicitly mandated votes for **all** women, enforcement could be for black women, too. This possibility carried the potential loss of representation in Congress under the 14th Amendment. Furthermore, enforcement of voting rights would not depend on politicians implausibly imposing unpopular penalties but instead on courts of law. Washington could then demand that black men also be allowed to vote, and that combination would be totally unacceptable to the racists."

"Reynolds, as we women get the right to vote, will something like what was done to the blacks happen to us? Will we be kept from voting or be beaten for it?"

"There will be brutish husbands, but overall, I think not. There are too many white women, too well-connected to powerful enough white men."

"I guess that's a fortunate reality," I said, thinking sadly, *maybe I'll escape the bias and be able to teach after all.*

But if my suffrage work comes up, will I be all alone, on my own except for my family?

King Tut, 11/22

I thought the suffrage battle was almost ancient history, but it continues to cause strife. Is there really any such thing as history too ancient to be contentious? Another pharaoh's tomb has been discovered in Egypt, and unlike so many others, this one is largely unrobbed. It was for King Tutankhamun, from over 3000 years ago. Apparently, earlier robbers left such a mess that later ones overlooked the real treasure: the body and over 5000 items, many lavish. It is the most intact tomb unearthed from ancient Egypt. How I wish I could be doing archaeology like this,

though I'd really rather be working with living children. There's so much fascinating stuff to do in this world! Thank goodness we have books to share in it all.

I don't feel OK about our robbing the grave now, actually, but what use does a moldering mummy have for all the valuable and fascinating stuff? It is sad how much the people sacrificed to build the pyramid and bury the treasure for no real-world purpose, just magic religious stuff.

When I'm gone, along with all my family, let the future take what it wants of my forgotten possessions.

My First Votes, 11/22

Finally, I got to vote myself! Regrettably, in the first year of woman suffrage, I'd had to just walk the women over 21 down to vote, and in my first year of eligibility, 1921, there was no election.

This year, Alf Taylor lost to Austin Peay in the governor's race, and though I worked for Taylor, I was just as glad to see Peay win, because of his strong interest in education. Once again, Reynolds won easily, without my help, after telling me Taylor needed my help more. *I had expected my vote to make a difference. I guess we're all going to have to demand that our votes make a difference.*

Frankly, Taylor seemed like a clown to me, but when I want political wisdom, I ask Reynolds. He laughed and said, "Alf actually campaigned for governor both with and against his brother in 1886. They traveled together, joked, and played their fiddles on stage. A welcome relief from debates in other years that had come close to bloodshed." My disdain over the brothers' boisterous shenanigans turned to delight. *We need more politicians like that!* "Be careful," he said, "not to take politics too seriously. It's rarely life and death, though we have to claim that too often.

I ask Reynolds why he had to run again just two years after winning before, and two years after winning before that, and ten straight times. "Well," he replied, "Tennesseans have a healthy distrust of politicians, but they might reflect on the fact we're always either running or getting ready to run again, piling up political debts all the time, and we have hardly any time for governing. Someday, they'll have to give senators, at least, longer terms. We're supposed to be wiser, after all."

I'm sure glad we don't elect presidents every two years, or we'd have non-stop campaigning!

Radio! 11/22

Are we in a new era of information? Nice to think that clowns and lies might be exposed instantaneously. *Would the people even care?*

We have radio here in Knoxville now, WNAV, the eighth in the nation! *It became WNOX in five years.* It had been broadcasting experimentally for a year, but now it's real, for several hours a day. *Tennessee's first station was in Nashville, created at Ward-Belmont College by a sixteen-year-old student in a high school! It has been broadcasting irregularly, whenever it accumulated enough music performers, lecturers, or other programming.*

The number of stations is exploding around the country. This feels like a whole new era, with broadcast news set to spread like wildfire. Maybe even stories and music, I hear. Imagine being entertained or listening to current events, from miles away!

Now, Votes for All, 12/22

How disappointing it was that there was no election involving me last year, right after I turned twenty-one, but now there is one, and so I can proudly vote. But I must admit there is no race that interests me.

But it also seems likely that I can get involved in the new American Civil Liberties Union, even here in Knoxville. I went to a meeting the other day. The members are pretty old, forty or fifty and up, but they are delighted to see a young student involved. I feel such warmth for these veterans of the voting campaigns, each old enough to be my parent.

4. Building, 1923

Connections, 2/23

I have met a few times with negro and Indian groups in homes and churches about registering and voting. I always mention my interest in maternal care. It is a good ice breaker and close to my heart. They often are separated from professional medical care. Working for maternal care and negro and Indian voting are mutually reinforcing, since these are important to them, as well as to Juno and Olivia Two Tents. I'm going on occasional calls with Rebecca, making it clear I'm her student, lest my whiteness imply the opposite.

The school paper accepted a little article of mine on the women's basketball team. Next, I'll do one on the Knoxville ACLU's openness to

students. I hope they'll consider the off-campus organization accepting students as fair game.

Dates! 3/23

Harry Burn often stops when he travels between the Capitol in Nashville and home in McMinn County, in East Tennessee. He takes me out to dinner and a movie, my first real dates. Sometimes the movies are dull, and I think he's wanting to kiss me. I try to encourage him by moving closer, "casually" touching his arm, and looking into his eyes more, but I don't know what else I can do. He's so upright and moral, I could scream! Does his mother keep whispering in his inner ear for him to be a good boy?

I'm longing for a little physical affection! Just like patting and hugging! Touch me!

After he leaves, I'm afflicted with general painful loneliness. But we do have good conversations. He has a sweet sense of humor. When I asked how his reelection campaign is going, he said he's shifted to running as a reform candidate.

"But you're the incumbent," I replied, puzzled.

"Well, in the last election I campaigned to require dogs to be kept on leash or in fenced yards. Caught hell on that from dog owners, so now I'm running to remove the law I got passed."

"Such battles can be ferocious, I'll bet, especially if there's no saving sense of humor. Do you know about the War of the Roses?" I ask.

I was impressed when he responded, "You mean between the Lancaster and York families in the 1400s?"

"Actually, no, our own Tennessee version, when our Republican governor, Alf Taylor, ran against his brother, a Democrat, in 1886. *I was glad I had heard about it from Reynolds.* You probably know their contest was humorously called The War of the Roses, after the one which had wiped out the male lines of the competing English royal houses in the late 1400s.

I like our version better!

Seasons Over, 4/23

Basketball is over for the season. *We were 2-2, but we improved significantly in the second part, frankly, after I got better. I seem to be a pretty good ball player now, to my surprise. I get the feeling I can*

accomplish what I decide to. Now what can I do with that besides play a game?

Justice and Kissing? 5/23

I'm glad to see Harry's been interested in gender and racial justice for some time: Near the start of his first term, he co-sponsored a bill to allow women to serve as deputy clerks and vote in presidential and municipal elections.

He introduced a bill enabling the kin of deceased negroes to inherit their property, removing an unfairness from racism and sexism, when they were considered less than persons, slavery's sad aftermath. *Though it didn't pass, it showed his commitment to racial justice.*

And he shares another interest of mine: he introduced a bill consolidating schools and school boards. He argues that tiny schools can't offer the same opportunities as larger ones, and similarly, that tiny school board members can't provide the same level of support. He didn't mean it in terms of physical size, though you have to wonder about them. *Oh, that was BAD of me!*

This is a man I could vote for, if he asked, but he still hasn't even tried to kiss me! Does he understand how I long for a kiss? I'm afraid he might not even want to know!

More Justice, No Kissing, 5/23

Well, Harry told me he's working for road improvement. I know he has to: his constituents long for it, but is that even something I care about? OK, if it helps him get reelected, and I'll be glad when I start driving to teach. The roads need to improve from what I see, with lots of unpaved sections, even around Knoxville. He is also working to improve the state constitution. Ah, that's better. It should make voting more secure.

"You know, if I'm reelected to the House, I might try for more," he told me. "Mama wants me to run for governor in a few years."

I started to mention the crazy plans Reynolds and others are apparently making for me, but I backed off to avoid an appearance of competition.

When he left without kissing me, I went to my room and gave myself some needed satisfaction.

Horror of Childbirth Awry, 6/23

Rebecca Freeman and I were chatting in her kitchen. I said, “I can’t shake my memory of the dead young mother across her car seat with her dead baby laid on her breast. I keep thinking I’ve got to do something to protect other moms.”

“Mercy, you are learning to be a useful assistant. Although birthing is a normal human activity, it is surprisingly risky. Too often, joyous anticipation turns to horror, as with the girl and her infant we lost due to hemorrhaging before the baby could be extracted.”

“How much training would I need to midwife? I wouldn’t want it to detract from getting ready for teaching, but I want to know what I would need to do if such an event came upon me again.”

“I understand.”

“I found a book on midwifery and was nonplused at the steps that should be taken in even a normal birth. This is not something to be dropped in on casually. I’m afraid I was arrogant to think I could make a difference without going all in, and I’m not willing to do that.”

Rebecca nodded, “I appreciate your awareness. Go with me on a few more deliveries and you’ll be more comfortable in an emergency where there’s no one else available.”

It has been very satisfying making visits with Rebecca and doing reading in the library. I came across the influential Flexner Report of 1910. It was widely respected yet devastating to the medical profession. It revealed that, at that point, 90 percent of doctors lacked a college education and that most of the rest had attended substandard medical schools. But as more doctors became educated, they began to see midwives as uneducated (and as competitors).

How could I contribute to the improvement that the report suggests? Push the politicians to do more? Well, I’m involved in two organizations that might take the lead.

The report singled out obstetrics as educationally making “the very worst showing”. In 1918, the United States stood 17th out of 20 nations in maternal mortality rates.

In 1912, the Federal Children’s Bureau had been founded to investigate mortality in birth (and to provide accurate information on the health of children). Maternal mortality plateaued at above 600 to 700 deaths per 100,000 births per year between 1900 and 1930, through the attention it drew. *Now that was a good use of political will!*

I had no idea of the danger of childbirth, having been delivered of my baby by my personal “nurse midwife” Grandma. Thank you, Grandma!

Advice from Grandma, 7/23

I’m afraid I may be too wrapped up in politics. Maybe I shouldn’t be so willing to talk about that with Harry. When he left after a visit to go back to Nashville, Grandma met me inside the door and hesitantly asked, “Mercy, I don’t mean to pry, but you don’t seem quite content in your relationship with Harry.”

“Oh, Grandma, I just don’t know what to do. It was so natural with Joe. We don’t get to a place where I know what relationship I want with Harry.”

“He’s charming but not very romantic, is he?”

“Maybe he’s just not that attracted to me. Or maybe I talk too much to give him a chance in the conversation.”

“I guess you know there are men who are not attracted to women.”

“I’ve been wearing clothes that emphasize my ... breasts, and I do catch him looking with apparent interest.”

“Maybe he’s afraid of making a move and being rejected. Well, Sweetheart, I wouldn’t want you to go on and on in this state. I know you have desire and want a full relationship.”

“Yeah, I’m going to have to break out of my own shyness and be more active. Give him every opportunity to step forward, aren’t I?”

“I think you’ve got it.”

Working On Harry, 8/23

“Harry,” I said softly when he arrived in two weeks, “the campus is scenic and uncrowded on this summer break afternoon. How about a Sunday walk around it? I’ve packed us a bit to eat. OK?”

“Sounds good, Mercy. It’s a nice, cool day.”

Step one.

“I had no idea this is such a good walking place, Mercy.”

“I’ve never been so far around it,” I replied.

Harry answered “Nice we’ve got it all to ourselves! Good exercise, eh?”

“There’s a fine view and a secluded spot from this hill,” I said. “Shall we eat here?”

Step two.

I spread a blanket and the food: tuna salad with lettuce, ham and swiss sandwiches, sliced melon, deviled eggs, and coleslaw, with a small jug of cider. For dessert, cherry pie.

“What a feast!” Harry exclaimed.

Step three.

After we ate, I suggested, “Let’s lie back and look at that beautiful sky, Feel that summer breeze!”

“This is cozy and so mellow.”

Step four.

I rolled on my side to look at him. “Am I crowding you?”

“What could be better?”

Five.

“You have such a nice face, Harry. Do you mind if I touch it?”

“Your hands are so gentle. I like it.”

Six.

“You have such soft lips!” After tracing them lightly, I brush my lips gently on his. He cradles my head and pulls my mouth tighter.

Seven, and I stopped counting.

He’s learning. He’s not Joe, but I’m enjoying finally being kissed again. I’m feeling the enveloping warmth I did with Joe. Eventually, I’m daring to use my tongue tentatively, to his surprise and eager participation.

We walked back to the car holding hands, me thinking, “Well, I don’t know where this is going, but it’s good to be starting to find out!” When he helps me into his car, I feel the caring I’ve missed since Joe gave it so freely.

On my front porch, after coffee, he kissed me sweetly as I briefly caressed his face.

I went in and cried with relief. God, I hope there’s more of this!

Palestine Protectorates, 9/23

As my personal life is becoming more peaceful, there's hope the world's is too. I noticed in my *Times* from a week ago that the Middle East muddle appears to be settled. The League of Nations Mandate for Palestine has been officially created, under British administration, labeled the protectorate of Palestine, to provide a homeland for the Jewish people. Also created was the separate Emirate of Transjordan under a local ruler. A French-administered Mandate for Syria and Lebanon was also created. *Now we can have peace in that troubled region.*

Stability in Germany, 11/23

Thank goodness, the *Post's* international coverage, which is usually good enough, is not as tardy as the *Times's*, so I don't usually have to wait a week for the *Times* to see what has been happening. Some guy in Germany named Adolph Hitler led an attempted coup in the German state of Bavaria. It was crushed the next day by heavy government action, and Hitler was arrested. I hate to think what would have happened if the mob had been able to seize control. I can see that governments must be resolute to prevent chaos. Unfortunately, Germans face significant challenges due to runaway inflation, where it can take trillions of marks to buy food. *A recipe for disaster!*

Radio Proves Its Worth, 12/23

Of course we had our own crisis. Warren Harding died in office. Calvin Coolidge became the first president to give a radio address to Congress, soon after succeeding Harding. *The country needed to hear from its new president, and it did.*

A bit over a year later, having been re-elected, he became the first president to have his inauguration broadcast! OK!

Slavery Still, 12/23

I do hope President Coolidge wastes no time in turning his attention to a problem that has plagued the world for millennia and may finally be open to solution. This would never have appeared in our basically Southern local press, but the *Times* told me that in the last two years, the League of Nations conducted an informal investigation into the existence of slavery and slave trade. It gathered information from both governments and private organizations such as the Anti-Slavery Society, resulting in a demand for the establishment of a permanent anti-slavery

office. Its report demonstrated widespread slavery in the Arabian Peninsula, Africa, and South America.

Slave trade was officially abolished in all territories under European control except for the Sahara, where Muslim sects still operate the Trans-Saharan slave trade. The Empire of Ethiopia still exports slaves, and slave trade may still exist in China and Liberia. And it is acknowledged that concubinage in Islam is sexual slavery. That's probably millions of enslaved people and their babies! *Babies!*

If I went to one of those countries, might they try to enslave me, blond hair and all? Especially? This is 1923, for God's sake!

5. Finally, 1924

Winter Olympics! 1/24

We've gotten into going to the Bijou theatre off Gay Street every week in part to see the newsreels: immediate history! Lately, they've been showing the first Winter Olympics, which opened in the French Alps. I've never skied, but watching the Pathé News reels, I've been longing to. Oh, those long swooping glides down mountains and airborne moments. Glorious! I mentioned it to Reynolds, but his reaction was, "Do you see those crashes, over and over down mountainsides?" *Not his kind of adventure! Well, he's a lawyer, and I'm a teacher. And a romantic!*

I don't know when or whether I'll ever be able to ski here in East Tennessee, but that longing is inside my heart now. I guess I'd have to go to New York, and I'm afraid the trip and the equipment would make it too expensive. I'll dream. *Oh, to fly down a mountain!*

More in New York, 2/24

The world keeps spinning! I see where the Computing-Tabulating-Recording Company (CTR), based in New York, has been renamed the International Business Machines (IBM) company. We may be closer to a company making real computers, though I'm not sure what we'd do with them. *There's so much new stuff now that it makes my head spin!*

Getting Organized, 2/24

In this new year, my last as a student, I am determined to get better organized with my many activities. I'm satisfied with my writing for the school paper, which just extends to a few articles, and I'm particularly proud of my campus activities, such as helping build the League of

Women Voters and working with the ACLU to expand voting rights for minorities.

I continue to help and learn at births with my midwife friend and find opportunities to talk up respect for the practice. President Harcourt Morgan comes to dinner with us every few weeks with his wife, and I cherish that time with him, which I realize I probably owe in large part to Reynolds' Senate activities. He seems genuinely interested, though, in what I'm doing. *I'm so lucky to have him in my life!*

The local Republicans aren't doing anything that interests me, being interested only in electing their boring candidates. Those candidates must show me something worthwhile, like finding women to run.

Some Progress, Some Loss, 4/24

That guy Hitler, who was arrested for the attempted coup in Germany, has been sentenced to five years in prison. That ought to take care of him! But in Italy, the Fascists, led by Benito Mussolini, won a two-thirds majority. They had set this up with their march on Rome. Along with voter intimidation, the march increased the power of their alliance of Catholic, liberal, and conservative parties. *I guess those people just don't want democracy. Where will this end? Fascism seems to be on the advance.*

A few days later, socialist leader Giacomo Matteotti spoke out against fascism. Soon, he was kidnapped and murdered in Rome. *What a way of life!*

Snuffing Liberty's Lamp, 5/24

After sacrificing so much and so many young men to "Make the world safe for democracy," have we decided we didn't really mean it? We originally claimed on our Statue of Liberty that we welcomed the world's unfortunates, as the inscription by Emma Lazarus said:

Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed, to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!

Well, we just got a new law on immigration: the *Immigration Act of 1924* prevents immigration from Asia and sets tight quotas on immigrants from Eastern and Southern Europe. White Anglo-Saxon Protestant seems to be the intended direction.

Shortly after the dedication of the Statue of Liberty, there was a domestic objection: *The Cleveland Gazette*, a negro newspaper, said the torch should not be lit until the United States becomes a free nation "in reality":

Liberty enlightening the world, indeed! The expression makes us sick. This government is a howling farce. It cannot, or rather *does not*, protect its citizens within its *own* borders. Shove the Bartholdi statue, torch and all, into the ocean until the 'liberty' of this country is such as to make it possible for an inoffensive and industrious colored man to earn a respectable living for himself and family, without being ku-kluxed, perhaps murdered, his daughter and wife outraged, and his property destroyed. The idea of the 'liberty' of this country 'enlightening the world' ... is ridiculous in the extreme.

I'm afraid a large portion of our people don't care at all about freedom, justice, or democracy, caring only about themselves and their kind.

Wow, I have so much bitterness, too much to sleep! Maybe I should take up Reynolds' offer of a bit of his brandy to calm me down.

The brandy burned and tasted bad but gave me a glow that helped put the pain aside.

Graduation, 6/24

I made it, I really made it! From shunned applicant to graduate!

And, oh, wow, Grandma saw me studying a map and applying for teaching jobs and said I could choose a brand-new Ford or Chevrolet for driving to school! Those are about \$600! I had thought I'd use \$150-200 from my remaining school fund for a used car. *She is so good to me!*

Reynolds toasted me at supper with champagne. Milder than the brandy I'd used before when I was hurting over injustice toward immigrants, but I got a little tipsy. All in all, what a way to wrap up my college career!

Momma came for my graduation. She was so proud, and I was very moved. Susan was amazed that this person she'd hardly seen was my mother, and we were all wrapped in love. Momma brought a gift from Father, a new book of poetry by Pablo Neruda, *Twenty Love Poems and a Song of Despair*, with the poems in Spanish and the English translation on facing pages. Father added a beautiful note of apology and an allusion to the title of the amazing last poem. Tears welled in

Momma's eyes as she said, "He means it. He really means it!" I looked at Momma, and my icy reserve toward him melted a bit, at least temporarily. Momma and I held each other and cried, the baby joining the hug.

Problems, 6/24

When Harry came here from his mom's house this weekend, he seemed strange, not as easy. I mentioned I'd like to meet her and got an evasive answer. A hint of coldness. *If I've lost his mother, I've lost Harry.* I got the feeling she suspected I wouldn't be an asset in his intended campaign for governor, perhaps not being from Tennessee, perhaps from being too "city", too "forward", particularly with him. *What all did he tell her?*

Well, I don't REALLY know how serious I could get about Harry anyway, but it hurts because he's good company and my only prospect now for a serious relationship. I don't know where to find another suitable man, if this is over, as I think. I've actually been looking around, comparing. *No one matched Harry, in so many ways.*

After Harry left, Reynolds turned on the radio, and the first song to come on was "I Ain't Got Nobody". I know my dismay was evident before I left the room. It hurt more than it should have, but the pain stayed with me. After a long time of trying to sleep, I slipped downstairs and had a small glass of brandy, remembering how that had helped before. I'm grateful for how quickly its magic worked to ease my spirits.

Memories, 6/24

Harry didn't call to set up a visit, and I wasn't surprised. But I was surprised when I absent-mindedly slipped downstairs later for a brandy, though I wasn't feeling especially down. It felt so good that I had another, and I slept like a baby. Reynolds might suspect what's happening to his brandy. I wonder if I could get a bottle of my own. I wouldn't know how, with Prohibition on, even if I weren't a woman. I'll just have to keep my consumption way down. *Maybe I should just stop. It would be terrible if I got addicted or caught.*

Complications, 6/24

I was excited about telling Indian women they can vote now, but Olivia Two Tents was strangely distant. She explained, "Voting was always complicated among us. Native Americans of both sexes have long generally been able to vote in our own nations, and many women were chosen as leaders. Despite this, few of us even gained the theoretical

right to vote in the United States until the Snyder Act of this year, which declared Native Americans born within the United States are US citizens.

In many states, various barriers were erected, and some Indians feared they would have to abandon the limited advantages of membership in their own Indian nations within the United States. These had been gained under their peace treaties, often after bloody fighting, so there was resistance to voting. And white America feared the political power of large numbers of organized Indians, so it also resisted. Jim Crow had supplied the tools. *This is so much more complicated than I realized!*

Juno made sure I realized they knew full well that white southerners would resist every step they might take for non-whites, and voting equality would fully arrive only with federal legislation that would override the states' Jim Crow laws." *I'm afraid she thinks I'm a simpleton. I'm afraid she's right.*

And that necessary federal legislation couldn't conclusively come until national civil rights legislation might arrive, in how many years?

Teaching, 9/24

I am now a degreed, certificated, secondary social studies teacher, with little experience and limited knowledge. When my friend at UT, Jenny Packer, heard I want to teach in a school where I could make an impact, she suggested I should try a poor rural county like the one where she teaches. That turned out to be Scott County, Reynolds' county in the poor Tennessee River valley. Perhaps aided by his name as a reference, I got the job. I can easily commute in my new car, watching out for the potholes, which are often so deep I suspect I should learn Chinese.

As I get to know their stories, I see that these children and their families in this backward area have suffered from the tyranny of selfish majorities. I love being with these dear young people and being partly responsible for their welfare. Somehow, I need to communicate to students what other horrible things have happened in this land that has become a powerful country. This can't continue to be just accepted as normal. They have a right to better! There's much that is wonderful in our history, but what terrible things have been done in our name — and by us. We all have a responsibility to reverse them.

We're flawed human beings, but we are responsible for our flaws. I've got to be careful because the myth of American perfection is what people want taught. I can't teach whatever I want, because I'm being paid to teach America the Beautiful. Never mind all the evils: woman oppression, Indian dispossession, black enslavement, wildlife destruction, ruin of the

land, abuse of immigrants, cruel colonialism, and stacking the political and economic decks against the poor and non-white.

But I can't in good conscience just teach the "perfection" of our very flawed country. *We can't fix what we won't recognize. I'll have to slip in truth as I can.*

Once I've gotten started teaching, after one lying lesson, I grab a trash can, involuntarily vomit, and ask, "Enough said?" Somehow, I didn't get told on by the students and get fired. *I think they understood and sympathized, more mature than I might have thought.*

Thank God we can live with Reynolds and Louise in Scott County. (They wouldn't hear of our not doing so.) My salary is barely enough to cover my commuting costs. The theory is that women teachers are paid less because husbands partly support them. Even dead husbands, I'm afraid. (I do get a tiny pension for Joe but would lose it if I married.) I insist on chipping in for food for Susan and me. I cook for all on the weekends beyond the one meal the servants do. And of course, I clean up after weekday meals.

Complexities, 11/24

Republican Calvin Coolidge defeated Democrat John W. Davis and Progressive Robert M. La Follette, in the 1924 election. I liked La Follette, but he didn't stand a chance against two major parties.

Many of the Indian women we talked with did vote in this election, but many others did not.

Those who did vote considered it a way to secure their political identity. Those who rejected it were concerned about potential loss of tribal sovereignty and citizenship. Many were reluctant to trust the government that had wronged them so much, for so long.

I read last week in the *Times* that the chiefs of the Onondaga Nation believe acceptance of this act is "treason" because the United States Senate was forcing citizenship on all Indians without their consent. And, according to the Iroquois, the bill disregarded previous treaties between the Indian Tribes and the United States.

There were so many different situations, depending on tribes, treaties, doubts, and fears. *So complex! So sad!*

Hitler's Out, So Soon! 12/24

Well, the outside world rolls on, unfortunately sometimes. Now, what the hell? In Germany, Adolf Hitler was released from prison after

serving just nine months for his role in the Beer Hall Putsch of 1923. He had tried to overthrow the government, and he's already out? *Sounds like incredible stupidity, or a setup, to me! Where is it going? Haven't we seen this movie before?*

But, Wow, 12/24

Edwin Hubble announced that Andromeda, previously believed to be a nebula within our galaxy, is actually another galaxy, and that the Milky Way is only one of many such galaxies in the universe. *Just when we think our world is out of control, we see maybe it's just one of many such worlds in many such galaxies. Insignificant---except to us!*

Continued and Expanded, 12/24

I thought I'd be done with UT when I graduated, but UT isn't done with me.

Brianna Livingston, on the newspaper staff, has continued to be interested in my activities. She enjoyed and wrote up my tales of the suffrage battle and my civil rights struggles. In fact, she joined some and continued to after I graduated. We've become good friends as our paths merge now and again.

Walking the Wall, 12/24

At the country house for Christmas, I glanced out the front window and was horrified to see six-year-old Susan walking the low stone wall at the back border of the yard. She teetered, and I started to run out. At the door, I saw her fall, stand, brush off her knees, and climb back up. Fascinated, I watched her again walk, fall, grimace, and get back up. Next time, she didn't fall, walking to the end. *Through tears, I whisper, "Thank you for the lesson, Sweet Sue! How many more lessons do you have for me?"*

6. Moving On, 1925

Women Advance, 1/25

Two women have been elected governors already, in Wyoming and Texas! I wonder what it would be like to be a governor. It is good to know that equality is becoming a possibility. Might it happen in Tennessee? Are any women in Tennessee moving toward it? I would ask Reynolds or Anne Dudley, but they would think I was making plans.

Hah!

Earthquake, 2/25



The Charlevoix–Kamouraska earthquake struck northeastern North America on February 28, reaching 6.2 on the scale. It was felt in Quebec City and Montreal in Canada, and as far south in the U.S. as Virginia. Even as far west as the Mississippi River. *And Tennessee, in between, I can tell you! I was looking for something to grab onto when it ended. Glasses were threatening to jump off their shelves, and I didn't know whether to go closer to catch them or a way off to dodge them.*

Bigger One in China, 3/25

A 7.0 earthquake shook the Chinese Yunnan province, killing 5,000 people. What is going on? These things seem to be getting worse. Could it be something we're doing? No, to paraphrase the Bible, "calamities we have always had with us." I'll bet those recently discovered cuneiform tablets from so long ago mention such.

What would I need to do to protect Susan if we had one? What could I do? We don't seem to be able to do anything about tornados and earthquakes except build better ahead of them and clean up the mess after them.

And Tornado, 3/25

The Tri-State Tornado, the deadliest in U.S. history, roared through Missouri, Illinois, and Indiana, killing nearly 600 people and injuring over 2000. It hit towns in Illinois, Indiana, and Missouri. Ministers are using it as a call to repent. *Does that mean their loving God is deliberately doing this to innocent people, including children like our Susan, as a recruiting tool?*

Great Gatsby! 3/25

F. Scott Fitzgerald has published his acclaimed novel *The Great Gatsby*. If Reynolds gets it, I'll check to see if it's another depressing book about self-centered, depressing people. *I'm getting the feeling money sure can't buy happiness!*

Votes in Japan! 5/25

Now, on a much more pleasant tone: Japan has extended suffrage to all males aged 25 and over. But, don't forget the ladies, as Abigail Adams told her husband. This democracy thing is spreading, even over there! ... Even, puzzlingly, as the fascism thing spreads. *Why both?*

Tom Lee Rescues 32, 5/25

My *Times* continues to tell me the story of my times. The *Norman*, a sternwheel steamboat, sank after capsizing in the Mississippi River. Tom Lee, a negro river worker, saved the lives of 32 passengers. He had been returning to shore in a motorboat when he became the only witness to the sinking. Lee, who could not swim, acted with little regard for his own safety in rescuing many passengers from the river. He made several trips, continuing the search throughout the night. Twenty other survivors were able to swim to safety on their own.

We whites don't deserve such heroics. How many of us would have done it for negroes? Now it's time to let freedom ring for ALL!

The Monkey Trial, 6/25

When I started with the local ACLU, I got a crash course in the ACLU's origin: In its first year, the ACLU had championed the targets of vindictive Attorney General Palmer. It continued into defending politically radical immigrants. It had also supported the right of trade unionists to hold meetings and organize; it had secured the release of hundreds of people imprisoned for their anti-war activities; and it had stayed on the lookout for other important cases to support. *I remembered reading about those actions as they had been going on, and I am excited now to be involved.*

Tennessee had passed a law banning the teaching of evolution, whereupon the ACLU had recruited biology teacher John Scopes in Dayton to challenge the law by teaching evolution in his class. When Scopes was prosecuted, the ACLU partnered with famous attorney Clarence Darrow to defend him in what was labeled "the monkey trial".

The prosecution, led by the prominent fundamentalist politician William Jennings Bryan, contended that the Bible must be interpreted literally, thus requiring the teaching of creationism in school. With my own school out for the summer, I was excited to drive the ninety miles down with Reynolds on two days to stand in the crowd and support Scopes.

Although the ACLU lost the case, and Scopes was fined \$100, the Tennessee Supreme Court later overturned the conviction on a technicality. Out of this, the ACLU became well known across America, continuing to fight for the separation of church and state in schools.

Later, I was gratified to be applauded in the Knoxville chapter for having attended.

The trial crowd was split about evenly for the two sides and no doubt stayed about that way. Education will have to lead us out, but how and when can teachers teach the truth?

German Lunatic Publishes, 7/25

Long out of jail, Adolf Hitler published Volume 1 of his personal manifesto. The book outlines many of Hitler's wild political beliefs, his political ideology, and plans for Germany and the world.

A political screed of national self-pity. Hopefully, no more volumes will come or be read. *Surely a country ravaged by one war would have no taste for another, and surely not led by a lunatic!*

Klan, 8/25

Oh, my God! The madness is not confined to Germany!

The Ku Klux Klan proved its continuing popularity with a parade in the nation's capital, drawing over 30,000 marchers. Their slogan should be something like "Make America Hate Again", the basis of their "reconstruction". I thought we were recovering from the damned Civil War. These people think they are great Christian patriots, but it's not the cross and the Stars and Stripes they treasure, but hateful racism and the racist rebel Stars and Bars. *Will the Civil War never end? Will these people ever become half as Christian and patriotic as they claim? Verses from I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day ring in my ears, as they did when I was a child.*

And in despair I bowed my head;
"There is no peace on earth," I said;
"For hate is strong,

And mocks the song
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!"

I wish I could be confident the uplifting closing will come to hold:

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:
"God is not dead, nor doth He sleep;
The Wrong shall fail,
The Right prevail,
With peace on earth, good-will to men."

Sigh!"

Air plight, 8/25

The U.S. Navy dirigible Shenandoah broke up in a squall line near Caldwell, Ohio, killing 14 crewmen. This is like the uncertainty of men going down to the sea in ships for many centuries. Brave determined people do still challenge the old reality and eventually may win. But my daughter? Please, not my adventurous Susan!

The State of Scott, 11/25

Unlike other parts of Tennessee, Scott County has little Klan interest. In 1861, this county officially seceded from the state of Tennessee, and thus from the Confederacy, forming the "Free and Independent State of Scott." The county remained pro-Union throughout the war. Ulysses S. Grant then received over 90% of the vote in Scott County in the 1868 United States presidential election. I have to wonder if that fierce independence cost Scott County support for its financial welfare from the Southern-inclined bulk of the state.

We're not so different from much of Tennessee: friendly people in breathtaking natural beauty. We have miles of rolling hills, scenic gorges, and sandstone bluffs.

Thanks to my car from Grandma, I've spent weekend days exploring with Susan and wishing I could see even more of the countryside and the countless small towns and settlements. *The rivers make me long to get into boating, and in the far west corner of the state there is Reelfoot Lake, our inviting big lake, surprisingly formed at the beginning of the last century when an earthquake temporarily backed up the Mississippi River.*

On land, Reynolds is a fantastic tour guide, filling me in on details; maybe we could boat together.

I try not to dwell on how good it would be to see all this with my poor Joe. Everything would be so much better if Susan and I could see it with him. *And with Reynolds. Such joy in both of my Hamblen men. I hope I pass it down to Susan!*

Dance Radio, 11/25

On that lighter note, Nashville's new radio station, WSM, has a radio program called the WSM Barn Dance. We gathered around our radio, and Reynolds showed us all how to dance to the music. We had trouble dancing because we were laughing so happily at Susan, who remembered the swing dancing we did during the suffrage campaign and put it right into country. "Yee haw!" as Sue said, spinning.

Soon, the show was called Grand Ole Opry.

Oh, God, Gershwin 12/25

For Christmas, Reynolds brought out a new piano roll of George Gershwin playing in a two-piano version of his *Rhapsody in Blue*, and I'm almost in love again. Stunning, like nothing I've heard! *How long must I wait to hear a full live orchestral version? For now, I can only dream what it will be like and look for local performances.*

Jazz, all grown up!

Joy of Teaching, 12/25

A good day of teaching is a joy like none other. I share my love of knowledge, and so many faces and voices show they understand and share my excitement. Some linger at my desk to talk about the lesson — and the thoughts.

Poverty, 12/25

I knew there were poor people in our county, from my drives around, and I was especially made aware in a surprisingly frank exchange with parents one day after school, of their childhoods. A county mother had just been found starved to death to feed her children. Oh, the memories that brought back to the group.

"One Christmas morning, when I came down excitedly to an empty room, my mom just held me and cried and cried. Then she gave me a bowl of oatmeal and said very quietly that there was nothing for dinner either besides more oatmeal."

“When I was too small to understand about money and medicine, I wondered aloud why we didn’t take better care of Momma. How I wish I hadn’t asked Daddy about it.”

“I couldn’t bear to tell my mom I couldn’t wear my shoes she’d just gotten second-hand from a woman she cleaned for. They hurt my feet too much. I just took them off the whole time I was gone to school.”

“I dreamed of going to college to become a teacher, until Mom said she couldn’t pay the rent and buy food for the others on her own.”

“I wondered aloud to Momma, damn me, why we were so poor, and that I thought maybe we were just too stupid to make more money.”

“The last time we were evicted, I looked sharply at Daddy and crushed him with that glance. I’ve never forgiven myself.”

“Once I stole a baseball glove so I could play with the guys. Catching a hard baseball hurt my thin hands too much, and I lacked the skill, or courage, to catch barehanded like many did. For the first time, I understood what Dad meant when he told me it hurt him more than me to spank me. I heard him sob with the last blow. I was so ashamed.”

After they left, I sat in my classroom crying and wondered, “How can America brag about how rich it is and be so stingy?” How could this beautiful area with its wonderful people be so left behind in America’s roaring prosperity? What can be done? Maybe songs at Grand Ole Opry could share the pain, relieve the greed. *Seriously, music talks!*

Grandma’s Surprise, 12/25

Grandma has surprised us, saying she’s leaving the day after our family Christmas to visit Doc Russell and meet his family for the New Year’s holiday. I knew they’d been writing, but this is a bigger step than I’d anticipated. Louise is quietly scandalized and wonders if one of us should go along as a chaperone. I laughed gently at that and said, “I don’t think we need to worry about an unplanned pregnancy.” And I thought, “I wish I had a possibility of sex, even. It is Christmas, after all, and if Mary could do it all on her own”

I did drive Grandma up and stayed with my college chum, Jessica McReady. Coming back, Grandma was, I’m delighted to say, giddy. I’ve never seen her so happy, giggly, even.

That did my heart good. She’s been so much of a mother to me, and I’ve been able to do so little for her. *My joy in her marriage may be the best I can do. Until the unexpected comes to me and then flows back to her.*

7. New Phase, 1926

Change, Like It or Not! 1/26

After the positive change of the wedding, it is a jolt to see less positive changes all of a sudden, out of thin air. News can travel with such frightening speed and effect! A British Broadcasting Company radio play about a workers' revolution in London caused a panic among those who did not hear the preliminary announcement that it was a satire on broadcasting. Radio makes it real! Now there is progress to get pictures broadcast too, as a Scottish inventor demonstrated a television system at his London laboratory.

I fear my joy for radio may be corrupted by the lying pictures that I've seen being spread around, soon to be televised, I guess. Is there no wonderful invention that can't be turned to a darker purpose?

Meanwhile, investors are enthusiastic about this exciting new world: The Times reports that land on Broadway and Wall Street has sold for \$7 per **square inch**! Will prices and profits go up indefinitely? *I'm afraid Reynolds is getting investment fever, talking about it often. Well, I guess he can afford it.*

Education, 2/26

Susan will be eight in just six months and will be moving up in school in September. *I hope she enjoys school as much as I did! Part of my pleasure in school, though, was as a refuge from my uncaring father and a hope of winning his approval. My daughter will never have to deal with that!*

I'm writing Juno for suggestions for Sue's education..

Flying into a New Age, 3/26

The first commercial air route from the United Kingdom all the way to South Africa has been established. Surely with stops along the way, but the world is getting so much better connected. I guess—I hope--that is a good thing.

Meanwhile, I heard on the radio that a man named Goddard has launched the first liquid-fueled rocket in Massachusetts. This should make rocket travel easier, maybe even into space or to another planet! Meanwhile, according to a Times article, explorer Roald Amundsen and

his crew are working on flying over the North Pole in an airship, a big balloon.

So many exciting things are happening. I wish I could be part of them all! Maybe as a teacher I can be, in my way. Maybe!

Teacher, Healer, or Fake, 5/26

Evangelist Aimee Semple McPherson disappeared while visiting a beach. Some suspected a miracle. I suspected a shark—or a lark.

A fantastic character. She founded an enormous home church and a radio network, becoming the first remote evangelist—a compelling communicator. Oh, and it is said she has healed hundreds, maybe thousands, through faith healing, using radio to draw in both audience and revenue. I don't know what to think of the miracles, but her accomplishments, utilizing organizational skills, stagecraft, and radio, are undeniable, and she has done great works of charity, including feeding multitudes.

She has also founded a sect of hundreds of churches and trained many more ministers, for her International Church of the Foursquare Gospel.

A group of doctors from the American Medical Association in San Francisco secretly investigated some of McPherson's local revival meetings. The subsequent AMA report stated McPherson's healing was "genuine, beneficial, and wonderful". *Although there are things I dislike about the AMA, I must put some faith in their report. She could even be taking business away from doctors, something the AMA ordinarily resists mightily.*

I don't want to believe in miracles, but I'd be glad for their benefits without the magic. I don't know what to make of magic in a world I'm trying to understand.

McPherson crusaded against Darwinian evolution and became a supporter of William Jennings Bryan during the 1925 Scopes trial about our laws prohibiting the teaching of human evolution. As I mentioned, I attended the trial (even if I was on the courthouse lawn). Afterward, Bryan and McPherson worked together in her temple, resisting Darwinism. They believed that [it](#) undermined morality, "poisoning the minds of the children of the nation. *Like they themselves do, perhaps!*

I'd love to go see her if she's still alive, preaching, and healing. I don't know if what she does is true or if it reflects at least an underlying truth or human ability.

Return of Aimee, 6/26

Aimee returned home, exhausted, five weeks after disappearing, saying she'd been abducted and held for \$500,000 ransom until she cut herself free and sneaked away through the desert. Half the country worried. The other half wondered. She did show signs of wandering in a wilderness.

After recovering, she was back in her temple, her congregation rapturous. Eventually, prosecutors pursuing charges of fraud for her allegedly false story of abduction gave up on convicting her. *I don't know.*

Her ministry has been open to a wide variety of races and backgrounds, and her charities have been the same. Her huge congregations show people of all kinds. *OK, maybe we should elect her to Congress. We could use a miracle worker there!*

Slavery Convention, 9/26

Who could support slavery? Who could oppose its abolition? Well, only a few countries have signed on to support the prospective anti-slavery treaty, with other countries just trickling in. The laggards have both their legalistic and real reasons. Some religions find it approved in their faiths. May their God damn them all! *Oh, that's too extreme.*

Well, the report on the group's global investigation of slavery and the slave trade was finally filed, preparing the ground for the introduction of the 1926 Slavery Convention. We'll see:" When the roll is called up yonder," will they be there? *Is it finally time?*

Germany Joins League, 9/26

"Reynolds," I asked, "With Germany finally joining the League of Nations, have we finally wrapped up the Great War? The world seems united for peace, with the League of Nations encompassing almost all parts."

"Ah, Mercy, if only this had been the case eight years ago, eh!" He stared out the window, thinking, feeling back. He paused, then continued quietly, "I lost a son, but I gained a daughter. How I wish I could have had both!"

After I nodded in sympathy and agreement, I said, "Yeah, now we must strengthen the league for the sake of the future."

He looked at me almost in apology: "I'm sorry the Republicans in the Senate are keeping the U.S. out."

I smiled and replied. "It seems at least a step forward that the League of Nations Slavery Convention has defined and abolished all types of slavery.

Maybe justice will finally appear at long last!"

But is there Progress? 10/26

He shook his head sadly. "But here in the United States, prohibition has broken into violence as rival gangs strive to dominate the market. On Valentine's Day(!), a criminal mob tried to assassinate the leader of a rival mob. They sprayed Al Capone's headquarters in Cicero, Illinois, with over a thousand rounds of machine gun fire in broad daylight, as he was eating there. Is it good or bad that Capone escaped unharmed?"

'Yeah, prohibition seemed such a good idea," I said, "but it created irresistible profit opportunities.

Not So Fast, Girlie, 10/26

A decree in Italy now banned women from holding public office. Period. Here is a clue as to how long women everywhere must await stability of their full rights! "You want it? Beg me! For years!"

Some historical context: Excavations in Jemdet Nasr, which was lost and forgotten in ancient Sumer, have found "proto-cuneiform" clay tablets (from 5000 years ago) referring to women's equality to occur sometime in the future. You may not remember Sumer, which had been forgotten by civilizations we forgot. This was in my latest National Geographic.

OK, I lied about the women's equality cuneiform part. *Don't be bitter, Mercy.*

Dream Trip, 11/26

And now, having a car, I've been thinking about TRAVELING! Now that I can work and vote, what's left but this? A car does that to ya!

The restoration of Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia, has begun. This will include several hundred buildings from the 18th century and their streets, from when the city was the capital of the Colony of Virginia. Costumed employees will work and dress as people did in the era. *Living history!*

Animals, gardens, kitchens, smokehouses, and even outhouses (non-functioning, I hope) will add to the environment. Plans are for four taverns for use as restaurants and inns. There are to be artisans' workshops for period trades, including a printer's shop, a shoemaker, a

blacksmith, a cooperage, a cabinetmaker, a gunsmith, a wigmaker, and a silversmith.

What a wonder it will be! I hope I will be able to take students and Susan there eventually. Wow, all the way from beyond Knoxville, Tennessee! I've never traveled farther than DC and Nashville! *And to no time but the present!*

The Open Roads, 11/26

Hitting the road? Reality could interfere, but logic and adventure may now start to be more important in this new era!

I said to our assembled women, all of whom had gone on day trips in the area, driving or helping navigate, (yes, even Susan), "When I've longed to travel, I've been stymied by the crazy road numbers across the country. No consistency or sequence."

Louise added, "It's been a trial to stop and ask directions. And get the male condescension, even when they don't know!"

Grandma put in, "Auto trail associations have identified auto trails, but these are private organizations, and the system of road marking has been haphazard."

I summarized, "As a result, there has been only an informal network of marked routes in the United States and Canada. Often indicated with colored bands on utility poles, still, these trails give the best help to travelers in these early days of the automobile."

Susan asked, "Well, who marks the trails?"

We all reply separately, "Governments, organizations, private individuals."

I am happy to conclude, "But now, most north-to-south highways will be odd-numbered, with the lowest numbers in the east and the highest in the west, while east-to-west highways will typically be even-numbered, with the lowest numbers in the north and the highest in the south. *Usually.*"

We're freed, but travelling with blinders.

Balfour Report, 12/26

In the wake of the Great War and with subject nations demanding equality, the British have seen they must make fundamental changes. The *New York Times* reported that, at the 1926 Imperial Conference of British Empire leaders in London, a report was issued

declaring the United Kingdom and the dominions to be autonomous communities within the British Empire.

They will be equal in status, in no way subordinate one to another in any aspect of their domestic or external affairs. They will be united by a common allegiance to the Crown and will freely associate as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations. *WOW!*

The imperial prime ministers unanimously approved this Balfour Declaration on November 15th. Jeez, if we'd just waited 150 years, there'd have been no need for our revolution! *(Not to be flip!)*

It will be known as the British Commonwealth instead of the British Empire. *Finally, a step forward!*

Grandma Weds 12/26

Grandma and Doc Russell have gotten married! They tied the knot in Washington just before Christmas. We all drove up in Reynolds' new red Chevrolet touring car, "laughing all the way". Thank goodness the threatening snow held off.

Doc had a catered feast for the big crowd. I had been afraid Grandma would have to do it all and was ready to help. There were so many people in the crowd I hadn't seen in years, and never as an adult. I enjoyed getting to know them as for the first time.

They used the same Unitarian minister who married Joe and me eight years before. That repetition was so sweet, I cried, off to myself. He had also done the memorial service for Joe. Recalling, he gave me a wonderful hug. *It was like a hug coming from Joe. And it was good hearing so much the same words as he had used in my wedding before.*

It was a happy pain to leave Grandma there with her new husband as we drove back to our diminished home in Tennessee. We didn't laugh all the way home as we had driving up. A very quiet ride. *I could tell Susan was hurting, wondering what life would be like without Grandma. Like me.*

When, oh, when, will it be my turn again?

8. Advances, 1927

The Globe Shrinks, 1/27

The first transatlantic telephone call has been made *via radio* from New York City to London. When the original transatlantic telegraph cable was laid in 1858, I learned that it operated for only three weeks before failing. However, in 1866, the cable-laying ship *Great Eastern* sailed from

Ireland to Newfoundland, completing the first lasting connection across the Atlantic. Calls could be made, but they were costly. Transatlantic telephone service has become *easier, but still not for the poor!*

I think of all the families split by emigration and rejoice for them. How cold, before, was the broad Atlantic! No longer must families be so likely to largely lose touch with those who have moved across an ocean.

First Private Pilot License, 4/27

The government is licensing pilots now. I guess the wild days of barnstorming by self-selected pilots are ending. *Good, but sad. These have been entrepreneurial adventurers across America. dropping in from the sky, offering the magic of flight.*

I heard William MacCracken is a high Department of Commerce official involved in aviation, graciously offered his Number 1 license to Orville Wright, who declined, having retired from flying.

River Gone Wild! 5/27

"Reynolds," I asked with heavy rain spreading around our yard, "are we likely to have flooding here?"

"Nothing devastating," he replied, "not like the flood that nearly destroyed Chattanooga in 1867. After several days of rain, the Tennessee River surged over its banks and water rushed into the town. The flood was the worst in the river's history.

"Anyway," he reassured me, "we're upstream of where the problems would be,".

"That's a relief," I said.

Later, I was reading in the *Times* about what they'd just called "The Great Mississippi Flood of 1927. It was the greatest natural disaster in American history.

This time, the flooding began with widespread heavy rainfall in the summer of 1926 across the river's central basin. By September, the Mississippi's tributaries in Kansas and Iowa were swollen to capacity. Over our way, on Christmas Day of 1926, the Cumberland River at Nashville reached its second-highest recorded level.

In the Lower Mississippi River, flooding broke levees in at least 145 places. *What must it be like to nervously watch the straining levees, the air thick with oncoming rain.* The water this time covered more than

27,000 square miles and left more than 700,000 people homeless, with about 500 dying. Damages reached approximately \$1 billion, which is **one-third** of the total federal budget. The Mississippi River below Memphis reached a width of eighty miles. *Eighty miles. The unaided eye can see just three miles, Reynolds tells me, so it might as well have been an ocean!*

Prior engineering efforts to forestall the disaster had come to naught. Too little, too late.

Lindbergh! 5/27

Charles Lindbergh landed on May 21 in Paris after a flight of 33 hours from New York. *Lord, the courage to cross the great Atlantic Ocean with nothing but his mind and his heart to guide him.* I remember lines from a poem I learned in eighth grade, Columbus, by Joaquin Miller:

Before him not the ghost of shores,
Before him only shoreless seas.

Three thousand six hundred miles alone, starting with so much fuel he had to be boosted by men pushing on his wing struts down the muddy grass field. He barely cleared the telephone lines at the end of the fence! Many hours later, he was fighting and fighting to stay awake and to fly his way into history!

What an adventure! Might I have some great task to accomplish? Will being a good teacher, as I am becoming, be enough?

Racial Struggle, 8/27

At lunch in Nashville with Juno, I was taken aback when she asked, "Have you heard of The Association for the Study of African American Life and History?"

She took my blank look as a negative. She smiled sadly and showed me her latest edition of their journal, with these words on the second page, "ASALH's official mission is 'to promote, research, preserve, interpret, and disseminate information about Black life, history, and culture to the global community.'"

I responded, "You won't be surprised to know that as far as I know, my university never mentions it. It deserves to be a big event, ALL things considered!!"

“That might change once word gets out as a result of Negro History Week, which they’ve just declared on their own. *On their own*, so don’t hold your breath waiting for word of it to get around in Tennessee.

“Ah, no,” is the strongest response I can make, unfortunately.

Juno continues, “Well, although we negroes, have been resisting Jim Crow since it began, now that we increasingly have the vote, we will punish those who ignore our interests....”

Midwifery, 8/27

I have been going about once a week with my midwife friend, Rebecca Freeman, as she delivers babies. What a beautiful experience, to be present at a successful birth! She moves so confidently; it is clear she does know the craft. *Despite our sad introduction, I would entrust myself and a baby of mine to her care. A baby of my own, sigh! Ever again? Sigh!*

She has a connection with a doctor she can call on if necessary for advice, help, or hospital admission. Dr. James Robinson is a negro man who clearly respects her and was visiting when I saw her recently. He sang praises of the Sheppard–Towner Act for turning out midwives like her. He gave it credit for dramatically cutting infant mortality, though the Act was struggling for renewal this year.

Rebecca flipped up a reminder card she has saved “to keep the fire burning.” Utah Senator William King, filibustering the act, claimed the bill was a product of “neurotic women, . . . social workers who obtained pathological satisfaction in interfering with the affairs of other people . . . and Bolsheviks who did not care for the family and its perpetuity.” Talk about ‘pathological satisfaction in interfering with the affairs of other people’”!

The attached list of supporters was a who’s who of the anti-suffrage movement. God, the same old enemies! I’m sorry to say the list included prominent Republicans.

Dr. Robinson resumed, “Mercy, you may know the act was the first attempt of the federal government to improve the social welfare of the populace directly and had come to exist only after women won the vote.” *No accident!*

Rebecca poured another round of coffee and said, “You know, women’s influence had already been expressed through the creation of the government’s Children’s Bureau in 1912 and then the independent

Women's Joint Congressional Committee formed in year woman suffrage came.”

I put in, “I only recently learned of these organizations through my local League of Women Voters. The LWV, they say, was instrumental in getting both going. Wondering how I had missed the formation of the newer Committee, using *The Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature* I just discovered at school, I had found one article in my stacks of New York Times, way back in November of 1925. Well, it is a 'women's issue'

Rebecca added, “As a national organization with members including other national organizations and local chapters, the Committee formed several sub-committees around issues including infancy and maternity protection.”

“Yeah, I'm trying to get involved in those,” I said.

“As you and I discussed before,” Rebecca resumed, “the Children's Bureau found that many infant deaths were preventable and attributed them to the lack of income and of infant care knowledge. They reported that 80% of all expectant mothers did not receive any advice or trained care.” *What monsters could not be angry about this?*

“Yes,” Dr. Robinson took it up again, “I'm embarrassed that even after cases brought to the Supreme Court claiming the act was unconstitutional were dismissed, the American Medical Association saw the act as a socialist threat to its professional autonomy and increased its lobbying efforts. The Pediatric Section of the AMA House of Delegates endorsed the act's renewal and broke off into its own organization.” *Yes!*

The doctor turned to look at me and said, “Other opponents included the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution and the anti-suffragist Woman Patriot Publishing Company, which accused the Sheppard-Towner bill of being a communist plot. *How they love to throw around that “communist” smear It's even more fun than “socialist!”*.”

“Their worst nightmares, I guess,” Then I add. “Couldn't they get something better to get upset about?”

LWV, 9/27

It turned out that the Knoxville League of Women Voters chapter, with which I've maintained contact, was unaware of the new subcommittees, so I asked to be involved in the ones for infancy and maternity

protection. So, of course, I was put in charge of establishing them.
There's a lesson there, maybe more than one!

I reached out to women pediatricians and obstetricians and got a warm reception. I'm afraid I've become a squeaky wheel. I am getting a reputation as a doer in LWV, and in the process, I'm making influential contacts.

Reynolds heard about all this, shook his head approvingly, and said, "You amaze even me!"

A Partial Talkie, 10/27

The Jazz Singer is getting lots of attention, with its alternating recordings of sound and a bit of speech, and with subtitles for the rest. I take this film mainly as a down payment on the future of movies. The acting is awkward, but Al Jolson is sometimes electric, singing. I think the studios are rushing to make a mark with technology they can then build on.

I've seen a few other attempts at talkies: pathetic. They take their acting styles straight from the exaggerated silent films, where acting is often overblown to compensate for the lack of spoken dialogue. At least, the movies show they can handle the singing.

If Al Jolson can move us with subtitles, wait until we get the real thing!

Henry Horton Reception, 10/27e

I never told Reynolds, but in the last election I voted for Gov. Peay, a Democrat, and now he's dead. Harry invited me to a reception for Henry Horton, Austin Peay's successor: the biggest party—gathering—I've ever attended.

As I was getting ready for the event, Reynolds talked to me quietly, "I loved that man and admired him. I led the Republican support for his program. Some wanted to throw me out of the party for that, but I'm so proud of what we did for Tennessee together."

"He almost got out of politics prematurely," he continued. "In 1908, Peay had managed Governor Malcolm Patterson's successful reelection campaign, but in October of that year, Peay's campaign associate, Duncan Cooper, and his son, Robin Cooper, were involved in a shootout in Nashville that killed Patterson's political foe, Ed Carmack. Following the shooting, Peay returned to practice law in Clarksville. I was afraid he'd never re-emerge."

Back preparing for the suffrage campaign, Louise had bought two fabulous frocks for me, one which flowed endlessly from my shoulders to the floor and one shockingly short, almost up to my knees! Oh, my, I'd never seen such a dress, though they're getting more common now, at least in terms of shortness! A pattern with colors and shapes so subtle, Reynolds said he was tempted to stare scandalously long just to make out its design. I had never imagined such a dress existed or that I could own and wear it in public!

Which did I choose? Well, this would be a formal, though almost funereal event, so reluctantly I chose the long one. *Damn! I wanted to wow Harry.*

The Grandmas collaborated to make my hair as elegant as possible, with long cascading Mary Pickford ringlets to go with their finest makeup job. I asked, "Aren't you overdoing it?" "That's what it's about, Sweetie!" "But why? All for Harry?" got a sly smile from both. "Sweetheart, it's not about Harry."

As the grandmas put on their final touches, Reynolds continued to fill me in.

"In 1922, Peay had defeated Republican incumbent Alfred A. Taylor in the General election. Tennessee was \$3 million in debt and relied heavily on regressive property taxes. The state had just 244 miles of paved roads and few bridges, and its education system was ranked last in several categories.

"We got the Administrative Reorganization Act to consolidate the state's 64 departments into eight centralized departments, each headed by a commissioner who answered to the governor, and that gave the governor control over the state budget. Rationality, at last! I was very proud to have a role in that.

"We implemented a 2 percent tax on gasoline and automobile registration fees to finance road construction. Our highways expanded to more than 4,000."

I could see Reynolds was just getting warmed up: "In his second term, Peay enacted the Education Act of 1925, expanding the school year to eight months, establishing licensing requirements and salary schedules for teachers. It even increased funding for the University of Tennessee with what became two additional colleges."

I have to add in: "Gosh, I see I'm benefiting a lot from his work."

Reynolds pressed on: "He created the Tennessee State Parks and Forestry Commission, with Reelfoot Lake over to the west as a hunting and fishing reserve in 1925. In the east, he created Tennessee's first state park and helped lay the groundwork for the eventual establishment of an incredible national park."

As I learned later, that would be the Great Smoky Mountains National Park!

Lest I get too smug, he had to admit, "In March 1925, I'm sorry to say, he did sign the Butler Act, banning the teaching of the Theory of Evolution in the state's schools." *We know how that went.*

"But by his third term, the state's \$3 million debt had become a \$1.2 million surplus."

"Shortly after beginning his third term, as you must know, Peay's health began to decline, and he died from a cerebral hemorrhage on October 2. He was only 51. Can you believe it, with all he did?"

I am sorry I never met Peay.

Well, when Harry picked me up at Reynolds', I could see he appreciated my dress and then my impact when we entered. Harry is cute, I must admit, and I enjoyed the people flocking to us, so many of them influential men, and then I wondered, "Does his mommy know he's here with me?"

Harry says he's planning to run for governor in the next election. I'm enjoying being something of a queen bee tonight, frankly, and the thought crossed my mind that if I were the governor's wife, I really would have little influence. *I'd be a decoration.*

Such a great party, er, event, but now it is time to let that be the climax of our relationship. *It could only get worse from here. Whatever happened.*

My Car is History! 12/27

The news is out: after 19 years, the Ford Model T will be discontinued in favor of the Model A, starting the alphabet over, with cars longer, wider, and heavier, but lower, and in many colors! The "T" swept the country and revolutionized the auto industry. RIP, "T". *I'll love you always, but I've started lusting after an "A"! Red!! No more "any color as long as it's black." But how will I ever afford one? I'd better start saving!*

Show Boat! 12/27

Reynolds rushed back from New York on the train, more excited than I've ever known: "I just saw the most amazing musical, *Showboat*, at the Ziegfeld Theatre; I'm here to tell the family, 'Pack your bags.' I have tickets and rooms. Didn't want to lose to a long-term sellout. This is finally what musical theater should be!"

The next day the line at the ticket office was three blocks long!

I replied, "Sounds wonderful. Let's get home to get everybody moving."

He resumed, excitedly, "You know how I've always complained that the musicals are just worthless scenes to give an excuse for the songs and dances? Showboat does it right: drama, dance, and glorious music, all integrated! And social relevance!"

He was so right. Susan was thrilled. Afterward, she kept singing bits of the songs — and crying about the sad parts (like me)!

I'm glad the stock market is doing so well that Reynolds can afford such an outing! I know he loves being able to be so generous!

The show was all Reynolds said, and I'm grateful we didn't have to wait listening to others' raves, longing to see it!

The song, Make Believe, tore me up.

Only make believe I love you,
Only make believe that you love me.
Others find peace of mind in pretending -
Couldn't you?
Couldn't I?
Couldn't we?

Make believe our lips are blending
In a phantom kiss or two or three?
Might as well make believe I love you
For to tell the truth, I do!

Must I make believe forever? I long for the deeply romantic relationship the song suggests. I keep singing the song and other wonderful songs from the musical. Sue has no idea why I cry. Oh, but maybe she does.

Sometimes I feel frozen and doubt the reality of romantic love, and then I listen to Reynolds' collection of musical piano rolls, supplying the

words with sheet music I've bought. Sometimes Grandma, visiting, plays along as she did in Nashville during the suffrage campaign and we all sing. Love is there in the music, even if I haven't found it since those few magical weeks and days with Joe. Perhaps I shouldn't be greedy. But I am so greedy I ache!

9. Problems, 1928

City Rediscovered, 3/28

Just as I rediscovered love through musicals, the earth continues to offer it from its own distant past. Excavation has begun at the old Canaanite city of Ugarit, accidentally rediscovered below ruins above it. These people lived and loved like us. Well, my romantic mind insists they did. "Might as well make believe?"

Ugarit was an essential part of its world. Communications between the rulers of Egypt and Ugarit are being found on broken clay tablets from the time of its destruction three thousand years ago. How fascinating it is to find these glimpses of long-past lives.

Will the same happen in our dim future? Is that what my journal and our lives will become? Shards?

Moving On, 5/28

I've maintained a comfortable relationship with Harry Burn, but we no longer get together often. Now it's just for special events where we need a date. The occasional kissing is still good. I taught him well. But I want and need a more robust romantic relationship, not just kissing. There's a new teacher at my high school, Ray Phillips, the basketball coach. He played at UT before I entered, so we've had good conversations around that and hiking. He's looking for good backpacking trails around. I have done no more than day-hikes, but backpacking sounds good.

With school ending, I've invited him to drive with me and Susan to see the countryside up near Big South Bend, where I understand there are some lovely views. We could hike a bit and have a picnic lunch while looking for more trails.

After miles mostly uphill on a hot day, he never broke a sweat. His body is much more athletic than Harry's. Should I admit here that I can picture stroking it with pleasure? I've confined that to friendly pats and hugs so far.

TV Scheduled, Airship Lost, 5/28

The first regular schedule of television programming has begun in Schenectady, New York, with General Electric's station W2XB. And Scottish inventor John Logie Baird demonstrated the world's first color television transmission in Glasgow. This broadcasting is becoming real! First radio, now television: we're hurtling into the future! But there are costs to this progress.

On 15 April 1928, the semi-rigid airship *Italia* took off from the base at Milan and headed for the Arctic to explore the pole. News of its disaster unfolded in the news over many days, with 20 endangered personnel on board. The initial journey to Stolp in Germany took 30 hours through a variety of harsh weather conditions. Near Trieste, a wind gust damaged one of the tail fins. The airship faced severe hailstorms and narrowly escaped lightning strikes.

On arrival at Stolp, inspection revealed hail damage to the propellers and envelope (balloon), besides the tail fin damage. All the ballast and most of the fuel had been used up fighting the wind. Repairs took ten days.

The commander, Nobile had planned three polar flights, each exploring a different area of the Arctic, operating out of Kings Bay on the island of Spitsbergen in Norway. The first flight departed from Kings Bay. *Italia* was forced to turn back eight hours into the flight because of thick ice forming on the envelope, as well as fraying of the control cables due to the extreme conditions. After repairs, it eventually crashed, however, with a loss of many of the crew, some never found, entangled in the envelope and swept away.

So much danger, though! Bless these brave pioneers.

British Equality at Last 5/28

The Representation of the People Act in the United Kingdom lowered the voting age for women to 21, equality with men, like in the United States, but not with all the racial exceptions as here. *Learn from our Mommy, for God's sake!!*

Catholic Nominated, 6/28

The governor of New York, Al Smith became the first Catholic nominated by a major political party for President of the United States. It was long considered impossible, but it happened. Lord, if a Catholic, why not a woman?! When? The world moves so damned slowly to do what it must.

What if I ...?

Hiking and Backpacking! 7/28

Ray and I have spent hours and miles backpacking or just hiking. I love it, but it isn't easy! Such a sense of power to take all I need and just GO! Unfortunately, there are few long stretches available. We're developing a circle of friends interested in what's available and doing it.

We do what we can, and I can see I'm getting stronger in more miles walked and less tiredness. I'm glad I started a habit of fitness and self-defense after the scare at the lake in Fort Dickerson Park several years back!

We are working on finding more trails and linking up with other hikers and searchers. It's not that easy around here. Ray pulls out his worn *Guide to the Paths and Camps in the White Mountains* to show what it should be like around here. For us it's mostly rumors, hearsay and linking up with other hikers. As we hike remote roads and railway paths, we talk and we SING!

I have learned he also loves musicals, and we have boldly sung out while tramping along and sitting by a cozy fire. I love cuddling on our sleeping bags after hiking for hours. I have to fight my impulse to make love completely. Not going to do that yet!

Who'd have thought a ball player would be a romantic? But then I'm a ball player too.

Aggressive War Outlawed, 8/28

The Kellogg-Briand Pact became the first treaty to outlaw aggressive war. And that settles that, um, except for enforcing it Well, maybe the lesson of the Great War will stimulate joint resistance to aggression. Can nations behave rationally, now? *As they did in the run-up to the Great War Ugh!*

Horrible Hurricane! 9/28

The third-worst hurricane in our history was the Okeechobee hurricane. It hit Guadeloupe, killing 1200 people, and then roared across to Florida, killing 1200 and then 2500 more. *I guess nothing can be done to protect us against hurricanes, though floods seem to be another case. They might be easier to solve than hurricanes.*

Iron Lung, 10/28

Is polio coming under control? After polio's killing and paralyzing so many, especially children, an iron lung respirator was used for the first time at the Children's Hospital in Boston. Afflicted children have been suffocating, unable to breathe. *Suffocating!*

The device helps some, but cures none.

Politics, 11/28

Ah, we saw how much good it was to nominate a Catholic, much less would it have been to nominate a woman. Republican Herbert Hoover crushed Democratic New York Governor Al Smith.

God knows when the public will be ready for either!

Mickey Mouse, 11/28

My brave ten-year-old would-be pilot, Susan, was also excited to see Mickey Mouse in *Steamboat Willie*, the third Mickey Mouse cartoon released, but the first to be a sound film. Her joyous laughter filled my heart, but it may have been the end of her childhood. She is moving headlong into adult concerns, like piloting, reading all she can about airplanes and flying.

I am scared. She wants to fly and has bold women models. She's too damned brave! For my own good.

The Book Man Returns, 12/28

Reynolds returned on the late train from New York with gifts, as usual: new books, prize winners, all—*The Sun Also Rises*, by Ernest Hemingway, for me, and *Winnie-the-Pooh*, by A. A. Milne, for Susan ... and it was also for the adults it turned out. It warmed my heart to see Susan snuggled down by Reynolds as he read to her of Pooh, Piglet, Kanga, and Christopher Robin. As Reynolds laughed, reading, I tuned in to the droll humor, and Louise snuggled in beside me. This family knows how to cuddle! *(No wonder I fell so deeply in love with Joe!)*

I'm dreading telling Reynolds what I thought of *The Sun Also Rises*. It was so boring that I had to force myself to even get through a few chapters. I felt no warmth for the self-centered and shallow characters, and the action consisted of walking around nondescript Paris streets and drinking large amounts in countless bars. There was little real emotion or larger social observation. I couldn't hang in for the coming bull stuff, which would have provided at least some action. *How could it not?*

This was the author's first novel, and I suspect it will be his last. A prize winner? That must have been for his painfully accurate portrayal of snobbish bores.

10. Confusion, 1929

Free Money, Almost, 1/29

Reynolds is feeling generous and offered to buy me one of the new Model A Fords to replace my T. He had known he could greatly increase his stock market investments by buying on the margin, and with stock prices soaring, his broker said it makes sense to borrow the broker's money to buy stock faster, buying more than you are immediately putting up money for. He can use stocks he owns or is buying as collateral for loans.

His wealth is soaring, and he is giddy with his exploding riches. He talks happily about how much he wants to do for the family and servants.

I hadn't realized he was poor as a child, scrounging for the money he needed. He saw money as protection and resolved to never be without it again. That explains a lot, but not his generosity.

I am pleased for him, now, but it seems too easy.

Wings, 5/29

Speaking of soaring wealth, *Wings* has finally arrived, and it is phenomenal. We were able to watch it as soon as it was released here, Reynolds, Susan, and I. Incredible large-scale combat and flying scenes, and emotion! Good acting and amazing technical tricks, like getting live photography during aerial combat, adding color to highlight the black and white film with red gunfire and flame, and realistic (if silent) conversation effected with quick shifts of position and excellent subtitles! Oh, and an integrated soundtrack with wonderful background music and war's sound effects. This film is going to set the standard for films to come.

Wings won the first-ever Academy Award for Best Picture! I suspect they invented the award for the film.

Maybe it was too good: Susan loved it, intensely wants flying lessons, and to be a pilot. I cried often at the young men being killed, remembering my own young man. And feeling anxious for my fearless daughter.

Susan walked out of Wings with stars in her eyes. *I walked out with dread in my heart. I've read too much about the accidents fueling the adventures. We both dream about her flying. My dreams are nightmares.*

Have I infected her with ambition I'm barely aware of? She sees women flying into fame, achieving greatness. I don't see myself ever achieving anything extraordinary.

Reynolds is glad to provide the first step, a flight from Sutherland Avenue Airfield with a young stunt pilot named Patrick Beavers. He flew us over Knoxville and **under** the Gay Street bridge, to impress me and Susan. *He did that, dammit!* I'm afraid I screamed at him while my daughter yipped, "Wow, oh, wow!"

So, she wants lessons. There's a new intensity to her voice about them. Well, she's mature, determined, and very large for her age (10), but I understand, thankfully, you must be 16 to be a pilot under the brand-new federal regulations. Reynolds wants to encourage her interest and says he'll pay for her to take a few flights to satisfy her interest in flying, though not lessons. *Those flights won't be with Patrick Beavers, by God! And they won't satisfy her desire for lessons.*

End, Before Beginning! 5/29

Ray just told me he's taking a job on the other side of the state, near Memphis. Just like that. He'll be head coach at a large high school, a significant step up professionally toward the college coaching job he longs for. We'd had some good hiking, several dates into Knoxville, and petting sessions that were very good for me, at least. It was obvious he'd have liked more, and I would have too, but I've been determined to wait for marriage to go all the way.

I am damned sure I don't want another baby conceived out of wedlock, lucky though I was with Susan. I was afraid that if I went any further, one of us wouldn't be able to stop. Neither of us liked the idea of rubbers. *Well, I don't want to feel like a tramp.*

Before he moved to Memphis, Ray and I seemed to be moving deeper, but I didn't want to push for a faster pace. Maybe I seemed too distant. Maybe he didn't feel there was anything worth sticking around for. Well, he never said he loved me, so I didn't either. I wasn't sure and thought there was time to let it grow.

He said he didn't want to lose touch with me, and maybe we could get together in Nashville sometimes. Maybe. I don't want to live for

“maybe,” or “sometimes”. When he said he was moving to Memphis, my stone face dropped in place and I just looked at him, silent, holding my heart in a tight grip, feeling it freeze.

Pardon me while I go cry now.

Polio Scare, 6/29

A whirlwind polio scare is racing across Knoxville. In fear for Susan, we called Grandma, who checked with her doctor husband, who said these things are usually more hysteria than reality. The disease is frightening and does seem more prevalent in summer and cities. Sue is safer where she is, out in the country, playing long sunny hours, now, in small groups.

We'll keep close eyes on her for any signs of sickness, though there's little effective treatment besides these new, rare iron lungs. Although thousands have been put into lifesaving use in the country, and that only if independent breathing has been lost. But the legs! Have you seen pictures of wasted legs, useless for walking!

My mono passed long ago. This may never! We parents have agreed to keep anybody with a sickness at home until it passes. If it is still going on in the fall, we'll ask teachers to have classes outdoors as much as possible.

If I thought praying would do any good, I'd burn up the airwaves, or whatever medium might be involved.

Infant mortality, 6/29

The Sheppard-Towner Act: what an investment in life it was, but just over too soon! Rebecca Freeman and I were sitting mourning the loss of the act, recently forced to lapse. She said, “For too many, no more midwife, child-life exam, health and sanitation, home nurse visits, health centers, and 'prenatal letters' that sent information on prenatal and well-childcare.”

I could only reply with silence and a shaking head.

She continued, “the United States had moved into parity with other Western countries from sadly far behind. The gain had been especially pronounced for non-white babies, perhaps a mortal weakness for it in the South, with few doctors available for negro mothers.”

I sadly noted, “Another weakness was that the American Medical Association saw it as a socialist threat to its professional autonomy and income.”

Rebecca responded, "Call anything "socialist," and it is supposed to die. How sad! It should take more than name-calling to damn a good idea."

Slavery Done? 9/29

The Sixth Commission of the League Assembly urged evaluation of the enforcement of the 1926 Slavery Convention. The Committee of Experts on Slavery was then created, which in turn founded the first permanent slavery committee, the Advisory Committee of Experts on Slavery.

And that takes care of the problem. Right? I hope. How many millennia have passed, and how many agreements and committees have been established?

School, Now, 9/29

School is lonely without Ray to chat with, to flirt with. He did write to ask how school is going. I lied and said, "Fine." He sounds happy in his new job. I miss him. I hope he suggests getting together in Nashville. *I won't beg.*

Blip, 10/29

Reynolds was snappish this morning. He apologized soon, saying that in the morning, it looked like the stock market was in big trouble. "Thank Goodness," he continued, "I talked to my broker who said these big variations aren't unusual, and he read a column to me by a noted economist in the morning *Times* saying it would blow over, and that the market fundamentals are sound. It was just a blip caused by "Nervous Nellies". There was a reassuring partial market recovery for a while that afternoon.

Depression, 10/29

According to the *Times*, the soaring economic boom of the "Roaring Twenties" seemed definitely to end on "Black Tuesday," October 29, 1929. The market had dropped substantially, previously, on "Black Thursday," October 24, then rallied a bit, but the fall continued until the massive crash on "Black Tuesday".

Much of the profit of the boom had been invested in speculation, such as real estate and stocks. *Oh, yeah!* Banks had been subject to minimal regulation under Herbert Hoover's *laissez-faire* economic policies, resulting in loose lending and widespread debt. By this year, declining spending had cut manufacturing output and brought rising unemployment. People had already begun living in tent cities, bundling

up or keeping the cold out of their crumbling homes with pasted-up newspapers. They waited in long job lines, and thought dark thoughts:



The U.S. economy was already showing signs of trouble. The agricultural sector was depressed due to overproduction and falling prices, forcing many farmers deeper and deeper into debt. Workers' wages had been cut. Beyond that, consumer goods manufacturers also had unsellable output due to low wages and consequent low purchasing power. Factory owners cut production and fired staff, reducing demand even further. Eventually, the pressure became too much. *Reynolds hadn't seen it coming. Who had?*

He's shut himself in his study and seems to be making many phone calls. His tone is not happy.

Free Money, Payback, 11/29

I came upon Reynolds sitting on a bench in the yard, his face in his hands, crying. "My broker called again. The stocks I used as collateral for my broker's loans have fallen in value and are insufficient again, so I must cover the margin gap or risk losing the stocks. I gave up on the stocks. I am working to sell all the assets I can to avoid losing everything else. A bad time to be selling, when everybody else is doing the same. I thought I was becoming rich. No, just foolish."

His wife came out and he looked up bleakly until she went back in uncertainty.

My heart is breaking for him. He wanted to do so much good for us all.

Dreams Done, 12/29

Scrawled on a note I saw on his desk this morning: "I have disgraced myself for a fantasy, and I didn't even need the money. Margin calls for falling stock values took what I was going to use to pay back what I so wrongly borrowed from a client's account. I couldn't bear losing so much, and now I've lost it all. I know what I must do now that I'm awake and have managed to move the client's money back. *Was this a note for himself or us?*

I found out later that Reynolds had been playing the stock market partly to accumulate funds for my expected political career, partly seeing Joe's replacement in me for his wishes. He is deeply ashamed of "borrowing" from a comatose client, though he did always expect to pay it back right away. Through his swelling profits. I am deeply ashamed if he ruined himself for me. Did I encourage it?

What is he talking about doing? I want to hold him and ease his pain, but that's for his wife to do. Does she even know? How could he tell her?!

11. Answers, 1930

A "Borrowed" Gun, 1/30

I saw Reynolds sitting with his pistol, loading it deliberately. I feigned excited interest and picked it up, asking, "May I use this for quick practice? A huge parent at school has been following me. I'm scared." *Oh, God, I almost simpered to convince him!*

Speeding outside, I fired two shots and ran to the big pond.

When I returned, Reynolds was still sitting at his desk, toying with his remaining bullets. I touched his face gently and said, "I'm sorry, but I lost your gun. In the middle of the pond. Do you know how much I love you? I couldn't bear to lose another Hamblen man."

His sobs as I hugged him were heartbreaking confirmation of my terrible fear. He is more my father than my father is.

Bad News, Louise, 2/30

"Louise, I've had to sell our farm here."

"What? Why?"

"I hate to admit it, but I made some bad investments in the stock market."

“But that shouldn’t cost you money, only fail to make you money, right?”

“Unfortunately, I borrowed money from the stockbroker to do it, using my stocks as security, a common approach to be able to invest more.”

“How could you do that without telling me?”

“It seemed like the quick, profitable way to make more. Stock prices kept going up and up. It worked for a while, and I got richer and richer. Apparently. When the stock prices fell, I had to make good the losses on the stocks I’d borrowed against. I’m so sorry!”

“But couldn’t you just surrender the stocks and walk away?”

He buried his face in his hands: “Here’s the most embarrassing part I’m ashamed to tell you. I borrowed money from a client’s account I controlled, thinking it would be just temporary. I lost that, too. I had to sell the farm to make it up before it was discovered or risk losing my law license, too.”

“I love this farm. But I know pain you’ve gone through!” She looked him full in the face for a laden moment and suddenly spat: “You bastard!” After a long pause, she added, “I’m sorry, I had to say that.”

“I know you’re hurting, and I deserve it.”

“This is a gambling sickness, isn’t it?”

“... Um. Maybe. Or ... self-deceit like thieves I’ve defended who said to themselves, “I’ll just make one more big score and then get out.” I’m like that. A thief.”

“But it was temporary, and you’ve escaped, haven’t you?”

“Yes, but you’ve paid the price. I’m so sorry!”

Nine Planets! 2/30

I’m glad to be able to leave finance behind for now in this journal. While studying photographs, astronomer Clyde Tombaugh confirmed the existence of Pluto, a ninth planet, by the gravity-induced movement of an object in the area. The presence of that big, hard rock out there somehow makes me feel stronger. *Hardness can do that, can’t it! Ooo, I shouldn’t have said that, should I? Shows where my mind is!*

Quiet Western Front, 4/30

I went with Grandma to see *All Quiet on the Western Front* and spent much of the show with my face buried in her shoulder. I couldn’t see all

those young men, lives ahead of them, dying like my Joe. Grandma tried to console me once with, "He's a German!" I replied, "He's a man!"

I dreamed that my child asked me, "Mommy, what was war?" Oh, may it be, someday, with her child or grandchild!

Naval Treaty, 4/30

The United Kingdom, Japan, and the United States signed the London Naval Treaty to regulate submarine warfare and limit naval shipbuilding. It sounds great, but this will last only until one of them sees an advantage in breaking it. *There is no honor among nations. Haven't I become cynical? Some of those ships are already splashing mightily into the water.*

Amy Johnson Flies Solo, 5/30

Amy Johnson landed in Darwin, Australia, becoming the first woman to fly solo from England. She had left 25 days earlier for the 11,000-mile flight. I hardly dared mention it to Susan, but I did. *She will be who she will be.*

Trade War Declared, 6/30

President Hoover signed the Smoot–Hawley Tariff Act into law. The highly protectionist trade policies in the United States, of course, are expected to prompt retaliatory tariffs by many other countries. How stupid could we be? People will lose their jobs and factories will close. I don't have to be an economist or diplomat to know what will happen. *A race into chaos. Where's the gain? It is just for the ego of the policy maker. See how powerful I am!*

Birth Control, 7/30

I look at the pictures of women with more children than they can feed and read about the contortions of religious people to forbid contraception. They are condemning young women to the hell they decry. To have children you can't feed: What could be worse? Thank God it's not an issue for me. Even if I had a baby, even if I couldn't feed it, I have a family who would, unlike that local mother I heard about who starved herself to feed her children. *Could I eat if my child were crying for food? Of course not!*

And maybe rubbers wouldn't be as bad as I said before to Ray. Maybe I should sound Ray out on that in my next letter. Oh, how could I? Would that be too cold-blooded, forward?

Sex, 7/30

I remember sex, oh, yes.... So long ago, but so present in its lack ever since. Not just the ecstasy, but also the contentment afterward. I want to lose myself in wild, crazy sex, reach the contentment, and forget this damned depression, but I have only myself, which is better than nothing. I need a mate. God, I need a mate to lend me his energy and confidence! How long has it been? Over 12 years!

I wrote Ray a nice letter today, telling of movies we could see in Nashville, and that newish Grand Ole Opry that I've never been to except on the radio. Now I wait

I was not meant to live alone, but single and lonely I live. With no change foreseeable!

Date with Ray, 8/30

I finally mailed the letter I'd written to Ray, mentioning I realized I might need to be less rigid. I left it that vague, but I think he knew I was talking about sex and birth control. He knows well that I have a strong sex drive from our playing around. In any case, he wrote right back, suggesting we see the Opry before school starts. He even suggested a hotel nearby with adjoining rooms, so there was no pressure. I checked and wrote back that there's a restaurant there so that we could meet for dinner before the show. *I'm scared.*

Everything went wonderfully well. The show was great and my emotions are unlocking. *The doors between us stayed open and only one bed was used. Somehow my resolve stood firm enough. But I still don't like rubbers. They don't feel natural.*

I want to be in love again! I hope he wants that. If only I didn't feel so scared about getting pregnant.

Hitler Gains, 9/30

In the 1930 German federal election, Adolph Hitler's National Socialists won 107 seats in the German Parliament (over 18% of all the votes), making them the second largest party. What's next? A government of evil? How could people do this to their country? Don't they see who this man is? He wrote it in his book! Can't they see what lies ahead? Can war seem trivial until they bring your husband home in a box or leave his parts scattered on a distant battlefield?

Harry Loses, 11/30

In 1930, Harry Burn failed in his effort to replace incumbent Democratic Governor Henry Hollis Horton, who had assumed the role after succeeding Governor Austin Peay. *Was Harry the final victim of the anti-suffragists, never forgiven? Do they ever forgive?*

Focusing on the ACLU, 12/30

With Christmas vacation, I've gotten more into the American Civil Liberties Union's work. Talking with the local group's leader, Bill Baer, I said, "I'm bothered by the automatic backing of Christianity by my school system, assuming everybody is, or should be, Christian."

"How so?" he asked.

"You know, Christian hymns, stories, and prayers."

Bill responded, a bit condescendingly, I think, "Yeah, there was a good reason the founders wrote in the Constitution prohibiting making any law 'respecting an establishment of religion', in other words, prohibiting establishing a state religion". I just nod and hold back asking, "Why do you think I'm here?"

I already knew, as he told me, "When a Massachusetts woman named Dennett was fined \$300 in 1928 for distributing a pamphlet containing sex education material, the ACLU appealed her conviction." *Doesn't my anger show, Jackass?*

Bill continued, of course, "In his reversal, Judge Learned Hand had ruled that the pamphlet's primary purpose was to 'promote understanding,' nothing prurient. The conviction and the Comstock laws were thereby overturned."

"That should have also curbed promotion of the conservative Christian views on sex and creation," I replied.

Unfazed, Bill resumed, "Well, the success prompted the ACLU to broaden their freedom of speech efforts beyond labor and political speech to encompass movies, press, radio, and literature."

"Yeah," I say, "part of that broadening is the new National Committee on Freedom from Censorship, with which I'm working." *When is he going to stop condescending to me? Would he do this to a man?*

I've been gathering information on censorship of movies in Knoxville. The downtown theaters go along with the standard view, taking no chances, but I've been working with a couple of small, independent

theaters that sometimes show films celebrating sensuality or a different religious view—nothing extreme. *Maybe that's what cinema was born for, freedom of expression. I've been threatened with arrest only once, an event that could be bad for my teaching career. Well, I would be embarrassed—and enraged--but I refuse to be a prisoner of that! Luckily, with my supportive family, I can afford freedom of expression! Luckily!*

As I was leaving, Bill surprised me with a compliment on my movie work and added that he's heard about the arrest threat and they'll be behind me if it happens.

Expanding Civil Liberties, 12/30

In 1929, after the Scopes and Dennett “victories,” the ACLU saw a vast, untapped support for civil liberties in the United States, and started an expansion focusing on police brutality, along with Native American rights, African American rights, and censorship in the arts. *I enrolled friends at UT to look into censorship in the arts and gained strong members for the group. I did lose one friend. I didn't imagine her limits. Actively resisting the government was too much for her.*

12. Changes, 1931

Anita, 1/31



I was delighted to hear from Anita Pollitzer! Her career in the National Women's Party (NWP) has extended into being a member of the NWP executive committee and serving in various national offices. She's done such good for the cause, and done it with a smile and a laugh.

I was afraid she'd given up on me after I'd honestly told her I'm still unhappy that NWP, with her aid, is focusing on the phantom of the

woman's equal rights amendment, which will never get through the procedural hurdles of passing an amendment. We saw how hard that was with our own amendment, with its stronger political case. In the meantime, NWP's pursuit has been neglecting our very real negro sisters. We must not offend the damned Southern racists, or they'll wreck everything! Shit!

I'm afraid I'm getting carried away with my language. Well, it expresses my passion, and the typewriter doesn't care! It might object to the F word. Good thing I never use that!

Is This a Problem? 2/31

I continue to wonder and worry about what's happening in the USSR. I wish the people well, but don't know what that would be there. Last year, I read that Russian Soviet leader Joseph Stalin gave a speech urging rapid industrialization, because only strong industrialized countries will win wars, with "weak" nations losing. What wars does he mean? Against whom? He said they are "fifty or a hundred years behind the advanced countries." *I was relieved to hear this! Absolutists worry me.*

He continued to say, "We must make good this distance in ten years. Either we do it, or they will crush us."

Now, in the *Times* I just read, the first five-year plan in the Soviet Union has been intensified, aiming to complete a plan considered vastly over ambitious until now, in just four years.

Does this mean we could recover from this damned depression faster than we thought? Hopefully, but without the harsh measures the Soviets are said to be employing. I'm afraid President Hoover doesn't have the strength to do what's necessary. His efforts have seemed feeble.

I hope people don't get the idea that we must imitate the Russians. I have heard hints that some are saying so. Well, as Tom Paine said in 1776, "These are times that try men's souls."

90,000, 3/31

That one number, 90,000, hints at what the British subjects in India are going through in seeking freedom from their colonizers. The British viceroy of India, who is so "democratically" called *Lord Irwin*, and Mohandas Gandhi, the leader of the Indian independence movement, signed a pact to end the massive Civil Disobedience Movement and release the 90,000 protest prisoners. But that still doesn't free India, a sub-continent ruled from an island 4,000 miles away by its East India Company.

It can't be good to have so much power in one expansive foreign country! When will the barbaric British Empire end? And all the other barbaric empires?

The very thought of saying, "We own you," whether to countries or individuals is appalling!!

Ray Visits Knoxville, 4/31

After warm exchanges of letters and after other dates in Nashville, Ray visited me at the townhouse in Knoxville, staying in the spare bedroom. No hanky-panky, dammit!

Sue loved the big, illustrated book on aviation history he brought her, and she asked if he would read it to her the next time he came. *My heart leapt at that favorable presumption.*

After supper, Reynolds said he remembered Ray's playing basketball at UT. He was a star! Ray said how saddened he'd been to hear of Joe's death later, which brought tears to all our eyes.

I told Susan I wouldn't be back until early morning because I'd be taking Ray to catch his evening train back to Memphis. *She winked at me, the precocious devil!*

Of course, we headed straight for a hotel after the enforced separation, before he caught his morning train. I wondered if we could regain the magic of Nashville. *Hah!* We also talked about hiking and skiing, and when I said I didn't think I could afford skiing, he said, "Don't worry, I have some extra money, and I want to be with you when you learn to fly down a mountain."

Will I finally get to ski? Can I really accept ski trip from him? Both my mommas, and my real momma, would say that would be too forward, like selling myself.

"That would be so wonderful," I said but I felt obliged to add, "It would be a lot of money," He gave a delicious small smile.

I had no idea how much extra money he has, apparently inherited, since teaching is his only job and he doesn't seem to do investing. He hauled out the biggest diamond ring I ever imagined. I'm afraid I stood there with my mouth open for a long time. Without ever intending to, I am once again marrying into a family with much money, vastly more so, it appears!

Empire State Building, 5/31

It's amazing how the economy chugs along in such terrible times. The Times is full of the completion of a gigantic building, the Empire State Building. It rises to a total of 1,454 feet, including its antenna. They say the design was changed fifteen times to make sure it would be the world's tallest building. Construction started in March 1930, and the building opened thirteen and a half months afterward in May 1931! *WOW: A bold statement in a huge depression. Maybe there's hope for us all! Is this a sign we're turning the corner?*

Unbelievable Flood, 6/31

The Yangtze and Huai Rivers in China flooded a populous region, leaving an estimated 422,000 dead. 150,000 of them drowned, with many more dying of resulting starvation and disease in the aftermath.

Could this happen to us? 150,000 drowned! How many children like my Susan? We'd damn well better protect against massive floods! Are we doing anything "massive?" I doubt it!

Hoover Moratorium, 6/31

There's news, too, of a Hoover Moratorium. It hadn't seemed President Hoover was doing anything much about the depression. It's been dragging on, maybe getting worse. Still, in an attempt to stop the banking crisis in Central Europe from causing a worldwide financial meltdown, our President Herbert Hoover issued a one-year suspension of Germany's Great War reparations and of the repayment of the war loans that the United States had extended to the Allies in 1917-1918. The moratorium was intended to ease the effects of the Great Depression and the ongoing international financial crisis and provide time for recovery. *Too little, too late? Interestingly, he thinks of saving the economy by saving the banks and governments first. And only?*

I have mixed feelings. I'd love to penalize the German government that killed my Joe, but how far will spite take us? And weren't all those European governments responsible, too?

Germany welcomed the relief, but other nations resisted. France is heavily dependent on the reparations to pay its own war debts. Many American citizens were also opposed, believing Germany started the monstrous war and should pay. *Spiteful? At least ignorant of world economic dangers and self-interested to possibly a tragic fault?*

How It Is, 7/31

The people here at the ACLU headquarters are making sure I know what's going on. The ACLU published *Black Justice*, an impressive report laying out institutional racism in the South, including a lack of voting rights, segregation, and discrimination in the justice system.

It also participated in producing the influential Margold Report, which outlined a strategy to desegregate public schools in the South. They plan to show that the "separate but equal" policies governing Southern discrimination are illegal because blacks have never, in fact, been treated equally.

It is so good that they have a plan for ending segregation. This system is bad for the country, entrenching inequality, which leads to more inequality. *I am a proud member of this organization!*

Two major victories recently cemented the ACLU's campaign to promote free speech. In *Stromberg v. California*, the Supreme Court sided with the ACLU and affirmed the right of a communist party member to salute a communist flag. *Free expression, get it?* In *Near v. Minnesota*, the Supreme Court ruled that states may not exercise prior restraint, in the expectation of illegal speech and prevent a newspaper from publishing, simply because the newspaper had a reputation for being scandalous.

We must defend speech even if it is unpopular. Legal is the point. Speech must be free!! Or there may be no speech or freedom.

Reynolds 9/31

Reynolds is still dispirited. He didn't campaign for renomination at all, afraid he hadn't covered his tracks well enough. When I asked, he mumbled, "What if somebody figures out I used funds entrusted to me and publicizes it? I'd not only lose but be disgraced."

With his farm sold, we're all living in his townhouse in Knoxville, which makes my commute to school slower, longer, and less scenic. To get to school I must now first drive almost back to our old house through Knoxville traffic before heading on to the school.

I'll miss seeing some of the people I'd wave at on my way to school.

He still got many votes, but not enough. He is angry about the opportunist who sensed his weakness, went for the kill, and will take his place.

I'm going to see if I can include him in my League of Women Voters or ACLU activities.

Susan, 10/31

At almost 13, Sue is spending all the money she can gather on books about flying. This is not passing fancy. *Dammit!* She is also spending time and money on building working model airplanes. She's gotten Reynolds to help her with the models. (*Bravo on that!*)

She passionately believes learning to get these to fly well is key to her learning to fly well in real planes. Should I hope she's right or wrong?

I once heard that every step a child takes is a step away. Sigh!

Getting Connected, 11/31

I'm the hit of the ACLU for bringing in my well-connected father-in-law. He immediately got involved in their projects, and he has the power to bring other heavy hitters into play! It's a joy to see how he's lighting up in his new role. He knows whom to talk to and how. He's happily investigating several issues — as well as continuing his law practice, though without much pleasure.

I'm glad he's been working on opening the large public library to negroes. He's holding that a much smaller library is not equal to a larger one. Size matters!

China, 11/31

Now, this is a little scary. A lot! The communists in China, that huge and populous country, have proclaimed a Chinese Soviet Republic, following the Russian Soviets' example. The country is currently divided into separated territories under Communist control, significantly distant from other parts of the country. If a communist China were to unite with the Soviet Union — that would form *a massive and potentially powerful bloc, not necessarily friendly to us. We had trouble beating Germany. I fear a larger foe. China is BIG! And it can only grow more powerful!*

Science Magic, 12/31

Lord! A team of three scientists has separated out a different form of hydrogen. They call it deuterium. What a time to be alive! Well. Aside from the global depression. That will pass, but this discovery will not! Timeless!

The deuterium molecule has a neutron besides its proton in the nucleus, making it twice as heavy as ordinary hydrogen. It is naturally occurring, but in a tiny proportion to regular hydrogen, making it very difficult to find and gather. It will aid in the study of the structure of atoms and

opens the possibility of the alchemists' dream, transmutation of elements. *I wish I understood this. Lead to gold, anyone?*

It may make it possible to utilize the vast amount of energy stored in atomic nuclei. What a revolution that would bring. *How wonderful! Um, is that like a bomb?*

13. End or Beginning? 1932

Problems, Still, 1/32

I don't recall so many nasty incidents happening before. Maybe I just wasn't paying enough attention. To name a few, the British in India have re-arrested and re-jailed Mahatma Gandhi, after he led thousands to the sea to make salt, in defiance of a British monopoly. Can you imagine declaring a monopoly on an essential like salt, freely available in the sea! He later in the year began a hunger strike, as he had done several other times in his many prison terms for non-violent "crimes".

A Korean nationalist tried to assassinate the emperor of Japan, and when a Chinese newspaper expressed regret at his failure, the Japanese used that as a pretext to attack and seize Shanghai, China, the sixth largest city in the world. *Well, that's a proportional response, eh!*

Then, a communist Indian rebellion in El Salvador, *La Matanza*, broke out. After the revolt was suppressed, it was followed by large-scale government killings in western El Salvador, resulting in the deaths of as many as 40,000 people. Most people killed during and in its aftermath were Pipil peasants and non-combatants, with a near total loss of their spoken language in El Salvador. It was called an ethnocide, a word I just started hearing about with this. *And all because rich property owners saw a threat to their wealth. Well, in Matthew, Jesus said, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God". Here we see why!*

Are we hurtling into a chasm? Again?

The RFC, 2/32

President Hoover has been trying to stimulate the economy, but the stimulus seems to be all directed to the banks and businesses. He has established the Reconstruction Finance Corporation (**RFC**) to serve as a lender of last resort to U.S. banks and businesses. The RFC aims to provide financial support to state and local governments, recapitalize banks to prevent bank failures, and stimulate lending. Additionally, it will make loans to railroads, mortgage

associations, and other large businesses. The idea seems to be “take care of the rich and they will take care of you, if they like.”

But people are hungry and in despair, people I serve in my school.

The RFC was designed to serve state-chartered banks and small banks in rural areas that were not part of the Federal Reserve System. The related Banking Act of 1932 broadened the Federal Reserve's lending power.

Again, too little, too late. He's avoiding being called a socialist, while people suffer.

Lindbergh Baby Kidnapped, 3/32

Charles Lindbergh Jr., the infant son of Anne Morrow Lindbergh and Charles Lindbergh, both famous aviators, was kidnapped from the family home near Hopewell, New Jersey. *His body was eventually found abandoned by a road. All America grieved: Breaking a nation's heart should be a major crime in itself! I dreamed he was my blond curly-headed boy, and I woke screaming inside.*

Richard Hauptmann, a carpenter, was electrocuted on April 3, 1936, for the kidnapping and murder of the baby. He maintained his innocence all along, and there were plausible questions about his prosecution. *I hope we didn't kill an innocent man and leave a guilty one on the loose! Well, he wasn't all that innocent: he had been convicted of more than one burglary. I'm afraid we tend to close the book on such people, though.*

German Turmoil, 6/32

Walking across the UT campus after I had stopped in to see President Morgan, I encountered Hannah Schwartz, a friend who had just returned from Germany. Over coffee, she gave me worrying news when I asked how her visit was. I could see she was close to tears.

“My family”, she said, “has seen a terrible upsurge in anti-Semitism.” She paused for a long time, and then the tears came. “My little nephew, blond as we both are, was set upon by a band of boys who cursed him as a Jew. They beat him badly, with a policeman standing by. Left the boy blind in one eye.”

“Oh, God,” I replied, patting her hand, tears running down my cheeks.

“Why would they do that?”

“It's that Adolph Hitler, giving license to hatred.”

“I didn’t know it was that bad. There’s not much news about day-to-day Germany in the U.S. press, even the *Times*.”

“This Hitler condemns Jews and has tough guys, called the 'Storm Troopers' and the 'Protection Squadron', which go by SA and SS, who **roughly** keep order at his events. Then they go on to organize violence, especially against Jews.”

We sat silently for a minute, my throat so tight I almost feared I’d choke.... Then Hannah continued, “Paul von Hindenburg had been re-elected as German president, defeating Hitler, but he then asked Franz von Papen to form a new government, one openly dedicated to the destruction of democracy. “

“And that’s going on now, isn’t it,” I surmised.

A tearful nod was her only response.

Let it be noted it took Hitler only one month, three weeks, and two days to bring down the Weimar Republic and its Constitution.

I’m nervous, but it really couldn’t happen here, could it? Could it?

Science, 6/32

Oh, with all the bad news of international troubles, this is really something better! Fifty years ago, there was a fantastic piece of international cooperation. It was named the International Polar Year (IPY). Eleven nations operated stations in the Arctic, the sub-Antarctic, and the east coast of Labrador.

Shortly after the Great War, unexplained behavior led engineers and scientists to the realization that the electrical geophysics of the Earth needed more study.

Even the new Soviet Union participated!

It’s good to see the world CAN cooperate for mutual good! Hope for the future!!

Fascism Spreads 7/32

We’re getting more fascist governments in the world. Is this the wave of the future? *Please, no!* António de Oliveira Salazar has become the fascist prime minister of Portugal. *How many more?*

It is thought he may remain in power for many years. *I WOULD have liked to visit the country someday or other countries falling under autocracy. They are becoming too ugly. Uglitocracy.*

Two Views, 9/32

Back to our election, a crowd of two thousand enthusiastically greeted Franklin Roosevelt's campaign train at Portland's Union Station. Police had to hold the crowd back, but the next morning's *Oregonian* would describe the clamorous welcome as merely 'cordial.' The paper had spoken out in support of President Hoover proclaiming, "As the result of Hoover's policy and leadership, confidence is restored, industry is reviving, closed banks are reopening . . . Let Hoover go on and complete his program."

Were they at a different train station, in a different state? In a totally different country? And what Hoover program? Helping the rich? *Didn't they see the hands reaching for Roosevelt, or the tear streaked faces I could see in pictures from the event?*

Roosevelt spoke about the greed and corruption of the electric power industry. Dominated by nine holding companies, they managed three-quarters of the nation's power resources. These holding companies are elaborate financial mechanisms that had provided capital to the industry, but they had also borrowed recklessly to expand their empires and had gotten into trouble in the stock market crash. They had also charged high rates and returned a vast share of their revenue to the owners of the holding companies instead of re-investing it.

Starvation in Ukraine, 9/32

Another view of another countryside: Millions, MILLIONS, have starved to death in Ukraine, the "breadbasket" of Russia, er, now the Soviet Union, as the communist government forced collectivization on the country's independent farmers, to break rural resistance to its policies. *Starvation to break resistance is criminal! The Soviet regime denies the famine and stands aside to allow the deaths. Damned inhuman ideology!*

Susan Extends, 9/32

Susan's interest in flying has led her straight into the first science fiction program on radio, *Buck Rogers in the 25th Century*. She rushes in from school to tune in as she pops corn. Then she returns to her work on flying. She's acquired a boy friend, not a boyfriend, who shares both interests. She and Archie have been exchanging favorite science fiction

books. *Oh, this is sweet! But what will I do without her eventually, as she moves on from me, as she must? She's been such a vital part of my whole adult life!*

A turn to the Left, 11/32

"Reynolds," I ask, "I've heard electric power in Canada is much cheaper than here? How can that be?"

"Well, here, private utilities dominate electric power distribution. Holding companies are the key. They combine their vast wealth to control rates and rules."

Hoping Reynolds is not too married to Republican orthodoxy, I respond, "Roosevelt said that ratemaking methods used by state commissions usually favor utilities, and that dividends alone gave the owners at the top of holding company pyramids fantastic profit rates.

"It's hard to deny, Mercy. Well, I know that in New York Roosevelt tore into pro-utility regulators and attacked Republican efforts to privatize dam sites."

I cautiously respond, "Did you hear that Roosevelt very recently said, 'The question of power, of electrical development and distribution, is primarily a national problem?' He proceeded to damn the industry's 'systematic, subtle, deliberate and unprincipled campaign of misinformation, which had flooded newspapers and even schools with unattributed columns and lesson plans justifying higher rates and associating government-owned utilities with socialism.'" *I even got some badly biased material I was supposed to use in my social studies classes.*

Reynolds replied, "Yes, and I heard him rise to a stirring climax: 'My friends, judge me by the enemies I have made.'" The crowd roared its approval... I have long distrusted the massive power interests. I think his distrust is an essential Republican value, forgotten too often by Republicans."

I cast the die and said, hoping it wasn't going too far for him; "Well, I became a Roosevelt Democrat when he asserted that the waters of the nation belong to the people, and that therefore the government, not the private sector, should harness the enormous power to be generated on the country's many large rivers." He had gone on to on to call for "four great Government power developments"—on the St. Lawrence River, the Tennessee River (*YES!*), the Colorado River, and the Columbia River.

Reynolds said, "That makes sense, and he sold me with, "Each one of these, in each of the four quarters of the United States, will be forever a

national yardstick to prevent extortion against the public.” Roosevelt went on to propose waging battle with the industry on three fronts—the unraveling of the holding companies, the construction of massive government dams, and a strong push for rural electrification.

Our Tennessee needs that! I never expected to hear such from Reynolds!

My stepfather continued quoting Roosevelt, “I state to you categorically that as a broad general rule the development of utilities should remain, with certain exceptions, a function for private initiative and private capital.”

“The man is no socialist,” I said.

It is good to see we are so much coming into agreement!”

Election, 11/32

The Democratic governor of New York, Franklin D. Roosevelt defeated Republican president Herbert Hoover in a landslide victory. I was nervous about admitting to my loyal Republican father-in-law that I actually voted for Roosevelt. He laughed and said he did too. *What a relief! Like me, he'd had enough of cautious half-measures and the continued, unrelenting depression.*

The Roosevelt administration's New Deal reforms expanded Hoover's RFC, enabling it to channel disaster relief funds more to people and provide loans for agriculture, exports, and housing. *Now that's improvement where it's needed!*

Our Grand Wedding, 11/32

On Christmas vacation, Ray and I were married in the ballroom of a hotel in Knoxville with all our relatives and scores of friends in attendance. We'd found no church that suited us, but flowers galore brightened the whole room like three-dimensional stained glass. It was followed by a lavish sit-down dinner.

Frankly, I was sad that my father gave me away instead of Reynolds, who kissed and hugged me sweetly when I told him that. *But I am glad that my relationship with my father has improved so much.*

We paid for the Unitarian minister who married Joe and me over ten years before, to take the train in from DC. I felt uneasy asking Ray if it was OK to have him officiate, and I knew I had chosen the right man when he said, “It will be like Joe is blessing our marriage.” *I loved that.*

So, now I'm Mercy Phillips. It seems disloyal to Joe to change my name, but I know he would have been glad. Like he said to me in a dream, "It's time."

Wonderful Home for Us! 12/32

Ray bought us a big townhouse a block away from Reynolds and Louise. Large windows overlook a park.

Thank goodness, school is out, and I can take time to oversee our move-in. Louise has been an invaluable helper, finding joy in doing what she couldn't do for Joe and me. Sue is happily going back and forth, picking what of hers must come over to her large new room. She's keeping a cozy assortment of toys, books, and furniture in her old room in our old house. After a bit of time settling in, she went back to be with Louise and Reynolds at the old house, while Ray and I had a ski(!) honeymoon at Hood Mountain in Oregon.

Skiing, at Last, 12/32

My uneasiness of learning to ski with Ray watching vanished in the glow of adventure and love. He found an excellent teacher he already knew, and in no time, I was, well, competent enough to be thrilled. The trip to the near-peak area, Cloud Cap, began with an exciting coach ride up the mountain roads, taking over five hours from Hood River. A real party! On arrival, guests were blessed with the comforts of the hotel, home-style meals, and lively conversation before the fireplace.

In 1927, the Hood River Ski Club had built a ski jump on the steep hill (known as "Jump Hill" which is to the left of the chairlift as you ride up. The tow motor is at the center of the hill, with the tow rope running both above and below the lift shack. *Too many skiers holding onto the rope all at once could halt the underpowered tow But, what the heck, it's a beautiful day on a beautiful mountain with my beautiful husband. Pretty fine in itself! And skiers are wonderful people to spend an afternoon chatting with!*

What made it perfect was when Ray mentioned coming back with "our" Susan!

I am so deliciously happy!

14. New Deal Opens, 1933

Nazi Unification, Rearmament, 1/33

The times are scary, and my New York paper gives me a front-row seat, though I sometimes feel like covering my eyes. The Nazis in Germany are consolidating their power. Adolph Hitler was appointed chancellor by President Paul von Hindenburg. Later, a suspicious fire in the Reichstag government building provided an excuse for a decree nullifying many German civil liberties.

Oh, God, where is this going?

Now, Nazi thugs have abused dissidents and Jews, and have vandalized Jewish property. Meanwhile, the Germans demanded to be allowed to rearm freely. *Has the world forgotten that the Germans, along with others, were disarmed because of the Great War that killed millions upon millions?*

At the same time, Japan is still attempting to increase its own agreed-upon fleet limits from the aftermath of the Great War—limits that had been an attempt to forestall another war. *What was the point of those limits? Pure politics?*

Where, oh where, on this planet is safe?

Starting Again Already? 2/33

The Imperial Japanese Army invaded Rehe province in northern China, an attempt to add it to their seized puppet state of Manchukuo. How many millions on both sides will be drawn into the fighting? "Why do the nations so furiously rage together?" comes to mind from Handel's "Messiah".

God, we are a warlike people!

Assassination Attempt/Success, 2/33

On February 15, 1933, days before his inauguration, Franklin Roosevelt was giving an impromptu speech at night from the back of an open car in Miami, Florida, where Italian army veteran Giuseppe Zangara was working. Zangara, too short to see over the crowd, stood on a wobbly bench to attempt to shoot FDR. Lillian Cross, who was already standing there, saw the pistol, quickly transferred her purse to her other hand, and pushed up and twisted Zangara's shooting arm. As he fired shots, he continually attempted to force her arm away, but she said she "wouldn't let go."

Five people were hit, and Chicago mayor Anton Cermak, who was standing on the car's running board by Roosevelt, was severely wounded. Roosevelt, unharmed, had his driver halt his rush to safety and back up to get the fallen Cermak, whom he cradled in his arms through the rush to the hospital, where the man died days later.

I am so proud of the man we elected and the woman whom fate selected, an ordinary, responsible adult!

Inauguration Climate, 2/33

FDR's inauguration took place at the depth of the Great Depression; I hope it's the depth. With unemployment soaring and banks collapsing, public fear was so great that many were ready to support sweeping emergency powers for the new President.

Dictatorship was on the rise overseas. Indeed, March 1933 would be the point when fascist leader Adolf Hitler consolidated power in Germany. While Hitler was viewed with concern by many Americans, some also expressed admiration for the Italian dictator Benito Mussolini.

It's as if Americans are choosing a flavor of dictator. This is not an ice cream parlor, you idiots! You want a cherry and whipped cream?

As the inauguration had approached, influential voices had called for granting Roosevelt unprecedented authority to ignore Congress and even the Constitution. Nationally syndicated newspaper columnist Walter Lippmann told his readers, "A mild species of dictatorship will help us over the roughest spots in the road ahead." The liberal Catholic magazine *Commonweal* asserted FDR should have "the powers of a virtual dictatorship to reorganize the government." Al Smith, the Democratic Party's 1928 presidential candidate, reflected (with some exaggeration) that during the Great War "we wrapped the Constitution in a piece of paper, put it on the shelf and left it there until the war was over." The Depression, he felt, was a similar "state of war."

How about if these leaders LEAD us?

On Inauguration Day, the New York Herald-Tribune ran an approving headline: "For Dictatorship If Necessary." Other newspapers sounded similar notes in their coverage. The immense crowd at the inauguration gave its most tremendous applause when FDR said he was ready to assume extraordinary powers if Congress failed to act against the emergency.

Eleanor Roosevelt said she found the reaction "a little terrifying," realizing the public would do whatever her husband wished. The people

were scared. *Though this talk of dictatorship was widespread, FDR chose the path of persuasion and democratic action, not coercion. Well, relatively little coercion.*

From a later vantage point, I can say law and order prevailed, with no jailing of enemies, deprivation of free speech, or corruption of elections, unlike in those awful foreign cases I've mentioned. I'm afraid it could even happen here and people would cheer!

The New Deal's Dawn, 3/33

During the darkest days of the Great Depression, Franklin D. Roosevelt delivered his first inaugural address before 100,000 people on Washington's Capitol Plaza.

Unemployment in Toledo, Ohio, had reached 80 percent, and nearly 90 percent in Lowell, Massachusetts. *Can you imagine, almost everybody there is unemployed!*

The banking system had collapsed, 25% of the labor force was unemployed, and prices and productivity had fallen all the way to 1/3 of their 1929 levels.

During his inaugural address, President Roosevelt had said to us: "... first of all, let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself – nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance." *Fear is truly stalking the land.*

He saw countering that fear at his first job. He promised that he would face the "dark realities of the moment" and would "wage a war against the emergency" "as if we were invaded by a foreign foe."

I felt my spirits rise as did many others', I think.

To build confidence in the banks, Roosevelt declared a four-day bank holiday to stop people from withdrawing their money and endangering shaky banks. Within the week, Congress passed the Emergency Banking Act to reorganize the banks and close the insolvent ones.

At last, we have a leader!

His first "fireside chat," three days later, urged Americans to put their savings back in the banks. By the end of the month, almost three quarters had reopened.

You could feel the country standing taller and breathing easier. Especially me.

Starting, Chatting, CCC, 3/33

In the first of his many “Fireside Chat” radio broadcasts, President Roosevelt proclaimed, “Your Government does not intend that the history of the past few years shall be repeated. We do not want and will not have another epidemic of bank failures.”

He followed this up by instituting the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), which put unemployed young men to work in the nation’s forests and parks. *What better thing to do with hordes of unemployed young men!?*

The CCC ultimately employed about three million men in conservation work-- beginning with planting trees, reducing erosion, and fighting fires.

Why didn’t our Republican Herbert Hoover take such prompt and decisive action? Clueless? Ideologically impaired?

Frances Perkins, 3/33

Brianna Livingston dropped by my office to discuss TVA and politics. She is so impressed with Frances Perkins, who is clearly at the core of Roosevelt’s new administration. In 1929, as the newly elected governor, Roosevelt had appointed Perkins as the first New York industrial commissioner, overseeing an agency with 1,800 employees.

Brianna rhapsodized: “Perkins helped move the state to a leading position of progressive reform. She expanded factory investigations, reduced the workweek for women to 48 hours, and championed minimum wage and unemployment insurance laws. She worked hard to end child labor and to provide safety for women workers.”

I wasn’t aware of Perkins until she became a prominent figure in FDR’s Washington circle, but she had been an early invitee to meet with our TVA group in its planning stages and was frankly not impressive looking. “Unappearances” can be deceiving! The more I learned of her, the more impressed I was. And the more ashamed I was of my “beauty bias.”



“She was well ahead of her time, wasn’t she?” I inquired.

“Oh, yes! When Roosevelt asked Perkins to join his cabinet, I’ve heard she presented Roosevelt with a long list of labor programs for which she would fight, from Social Security to minimum wage. She wanted the federal government to provide unemployment insurance, health insurance, and old-age insurance.

I wish I could have seen that moment and the next!

Perkins later recalled: “I remember he looked so startled and asked, ‘Well, do you think it can be done?’” When he nominated her, the nomination was met with applause from the National League of Women Voters and the National Women's Party, founded by my old friends Alice Paul and Lucy Burns.

When Perkins had met with Brianna for an interview, Perkins told her she had been moved toward social activism and toward using the government to adjust the harsh conditions of industrialization [after witnessing the 1911 Triangle Shirtwaist Fire](#), in which 146 workers, primarily women and girls, died. They had been trapped in the building because the factory owner had ordered the doors to the stairwells and exits locked to prevent anyone from slipping outside for a break. Some fell to their death ten stories below, wrapped in flames. *Greed killed them. And maybe power, a lust to control.*

That fire was another moment of national tragic awareness, like the Lindbergh boy’s kidnapping and death.

Perkins’ firsthand experience with such tragedy propelled her unwavering commitment to transforming labor standards in America. Perkins believed that government intervention was not only necessary but morally imperative to protect vulnerable workers from exploitation

and disaster. This conviction would become a defining force in her subsequent policy efforts, shaping the bedrock of the New Deal's social reforms.

Sadly, but fittingly, she is the first woman to hold a cabinet position. If we were finally going to have a woman in the cabinet, we couldn't do better than Frances Perkins

"Gosh, Brianna," I worried, "I hear Congressmen are anxious that unemployment insurance and federal aid to dependent families will undermine a man's willingness to work. Can that be handled?"

"Well, Mercy, it turned out that she had essential support beginning with a California physician.

"How so?"

Brianna resumed, "Outside his office window, Dr. Francis Townsend had seen old women rooting through garbage cans for food. Horrified, he proposed that the government provide every retired person over 60 years old with \$200 a month to be spent within 30 days, thus stimulating the economy. You know the idea was immediately popular, and people came up with ways to achieve it."

"Yes, and now we're about work on the problem, I'm sure!"

More CCC, 3/33

As mentioned before, The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) is an exciting New Deal government program for unemployed, unmarried men ages 18–25. It supplies manual labor for conservation and development of natural resources in rural lands owned by federal, state, and local governments.

Organizing the young men into camps, it provides them with shelter, clothing, and food, along with a monthly wage, of which a portion must be sent home to their families. My friend Rebecca is grateful that her son found a place in it, as women are struggling to pay her for midwife services, and a share of his earnings will be a welcome relief. Her boy writes enthusiastically of the outdoors he's seeing, as if for the first time. Olivia Two Tents says her younger son hopes to get into the Native American division, which will focus on reservations.

Get the mothers on your side, and you're halfway home, guys!

The New York Times told me that as governor of New York, Roosevelt had run a similar program, started in early 1932, to "use men from the

lists of the unemployed to improve our existing reforestation areas," and now we have country-wide CCC.



I heard a couple of women chatting happily at my trolley stop, about their sons' prospects for CCC employment, afraid their boys' spirits would be broken before they could find their first job. One's son had said he was useless, just a drag on the family, that he was worn out with trying to find somebody to hire him. His mother said she was afraid he would be dead without the hope the CCC promised him.

"Dead without the hope the CCC promised him." *My mother's heart aches at that.*

This was one national treasure, young men, creating another, public land development.

Reading a list of CCC projects a few months after its start, I'm warmed by the thought that in a hundred years we may still be enjoying the fruit of their labor! Corps workers planted trees, built dams and bridges, and preserved historic battlefields. They provided trail networks and lodges in state and national parks. The CCC also led to a greater public awareness and appreciation of the outdoors and the nation's natural resources, as well as the continued need for a carefully planned, comprehensive national program for the protection and development of these resources.

I later saw this summation: 45% of these young men came from urban areas. 3% were illiterate; 38% had less than eight years of school; 48% did not complete high school; 70% of enrollees were malnourished and poorly clothed. Few had work experience beyond occasional odd jobs.

With this base, wonders were accomplished!

Well done, strong young men!

And that's not all: in June, President Roosevelt signed an executive order to place all national parks, monuments, and battlefields under the National Park Service (NPS). Later that summer, he provided that the NPS, rather than the War Department, should manage historic American Civil War sites as well as other national ones. So, there we have our grand park system. And I want to visit these jewels: treasures in our national bank!

Out there waiting are waterfalls wider and deeper than I've ever seen, forests beyond reckoning, and canyons too deep to see the bottom without risking a fall! And Williamsburg, about to open to the public!

*There's so much to be proud of in the New Deal. What did my Republican Party do after it built the Panama Canal? We emasculated the League of Nations, rendering it less effective than it desperately needed to be. We did free the slaves but then allowed them to fall back into the semi-slavery of Jim Crow, doing too little to back their freedom. My **former** party: I have decided.*

King Kong, 3/33

And, in a whole different vein, the *King Kong* film opened in New York City. The movie is the first feature film to use a fantastic new stop-motion animation technique. Susan and I can hardly wait for it to come to a theater near us! Maybe Ray would like to see it, too, and Reynolds. "You bet," they both said!

Back, sadly, on a previous monster vein, real monsters, the Nazi party won nearly 50% of the federal election votes. Dachau, the first Nazi concentration camp, was just completed in Germany and was built to hold 5 thousand. More such camps are planned to "educate" the populace. *Um, how many? What kind of education?*

Getting Rich for Fun, 3/33

The real estate trading board game, Monopoly, has been brought out. Reynolds got us one of the first in Knoxville, saying wryly, "This should be good for a laugh." He says he could suggest a few rules . . . but wouldn't allow the cannon game piece. *I am so glad he can joke about this!*

What a treasure it is to me to have my replacement father still alive and joking!

First Fireside Chat, 3/33

Franklin D. Roosevelt was inaugurated as the U.S. entered its fourth year of the Great Depression, the worst downturn in our nation's history.

The stock market was down 75 percent, and one-fourth of workers were unemployed. Things were getting worse. Some 4,000 banks had been forced out of business, as millions of people had lost their life savings, when only savings provided safety. Depositors lined up to withdraw their money from the remaining banks, and those lines threatened to bring down the whole financial system.

To say things were bleak would be a terrible understatement.

Two days after his inauguration, he declared a nationwide “bank holiday,” temporarily shutting down the nation’s entire banking system to protect it from overwhelming withdrawals. *Without money, there is no banking system!*

Called into a special session, Congress passed the Emergency Banking Act on March 9. The bill granted the federal government the authority to examine each bank’s finances. Those deemed healthy and stable enough would reopen on March 13.

But the day before banks were set to reopen, it wasn’t clear enough that these emergency measures would calm the fears so that the banks **could** reopen. That evening, Roosevelt addressed the nation via radio broadcast, sitting next to a fireplace.

“My friends, I want to talk for a few minutes about banking,” he began. For roughly 13 minutes, more than 60 million Americans listened as Roosevelt explained—in straightforward language designed “for the benefit of the average citizen”—what the federal government had done in the past few days to address the banking crisis, why they had done it, and what the next steps were going to be.

He carefully laid out what had happened to cause the current crisis. He argued that the government’s emergency measures would enable a survey of the nation’s banks and allow stable ones to reopen. After that, he said, people could feel completely safe returning their money to the banks rather than hoarding it at home out of fear. “I can assure you,” he said, “that it is safer to keep your money in a reopened bank than under the mattress.”

“Let us unite in banishing fear,” he concluded. “Together we cannot fail.”

I suspect I wasn’t alone in crying with hope. Oh, my sad, aching, country!

Party Time is Coming, 3/33

President Roosevelt signed the Cullen–Harrison Act, allowing the manufacture and sale of "3.2 beer" and light wines, before the full repeal of Prohibition coming to the United States in December. Prohibition had been a noble experiment. But....

The President went on to sign the Securities Act of 1933 in late May. The law is designed to reduce fraudulent activities on Wall Street. *Boy, we had many such activities in the run-up to the depression!*

PWA 4/33

I'm so excited to see the new administration programs taking off! The first big action agency beyond CCC has been announced! The new Public Works Administration will be a large public works construction agency. Its goals are to provide employment, stabilize buying power, and help revive the economy. Just what we need, eh?

Over the next decade, the PWA would invest billions of dollars in tens of thousands of infrastructure projects nationwide with private construction firms that would undertake the actual work, building large-scale public works such as dams, bridges, hospitals, and schools.

A former classmate said her father was about to fold his construction firm, displacing all his employees, when word of this gave him hope to hang on. The firm had financed her own college education, and now it might do that for her coming baby, her husband having given up and run away.

Frances Perkins had strongly suggested a federally financed public works program, and the idea received massive support from other progressive leaders.

Projects funded by the PWA would still be valuable to the country for dozens of years or more. This is what we do at our best!

The Birth of TVA, 5/33

To my great joy, on May 18, Roosevelt signed the New Deal bill creating the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA). *I didn't realize I would play such a satisfying role in its start.*

The TVA was controversial right away, actually. Some people fervently believed it was a socialistic overreach by the federal government. *Guess which party?* Supporters of TVA responded that the agency's management of the Tennessee River system, using only its revenues and

without appropriated federal funding, had saved federal taxpayers millions of dollars a year.

President Roosevelt appointed our Harcourt Morgan to the board of the newly formed Tennessee Valley Authority, along with Arthur E. Morgan (no relation), a civil engineer and educator, as Chairman, and David Lilienthal, an attorney and public administrator with expertise in public utility law.

Chosen for his agricultural expertise and familiarity with the region's people, Harcourt Morgan considered TVA's unified approach to agricultural and resource development to be the ultimate opportunity to implement his "common mooring" ideas. *In TVA's early years, he was to provide a critical connection between the agency and the often-suspicious local population.*

Though I was sad to leave my high school behind, I was proud to be asked to help with this as Harcourt's assistant and roving ambassador.

Unfortunately, from the outset, Harcourt Morgan and Lilienthal found themselves at odds with the chairman, Arthur Morgan. My boss insisted on working through the established extension services of state agencies and land grant colleges to make the best use of existing networks, rather than directly with the farmers. Worse, the chairman sought to work with private power companies operating in the valley. These had never been open to serving the public, preferring to exploit them for high profits. *I was torn between these strong-willed men, one my mentor, the other my ultimate boss.*

TVA Kicks Off, 5/33

The Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) was created this month to provide affordable power and sorely needed flood control, *which it would continue to do for many years to come.*

Harcourt and the other initial directors, David Lilienthal and Arthur Morgan (unrelated to Harcourt), have been meeting in various places, including Harcourt's office at UT. I was puzzled and honored to be included in the initial meetings. During the third such meeting, Harcourt made it a point to ask my opinion on an item up for discussion, saying he'd like me to be his "full" assistant. Just like that. *I gasped. What more could I hope for? Nothing!*

Afterward, he apologized for making the offer on the fly, explaining that if I agreed, I'd be working out of the main office of TVA, which was coming to Knoxville. I'd make occasional trips to school districts around

the region as part of an educational campaign. *Fortunately, Susan will be able to stay in her old room at the nearby townhouse of Reynolds and Louise while I am out of town, if Ray is tied up. With the job mostly here in Knoxville, not much will change except for vastly shorter commutes. Yay!*

By the way, Ray has gotten an assistant coaching job at UT. One step closer to his dream! I'm so glad for him, but I wonder what a college coach's wife is supposed to do. I did get to many of his high school games. Does this college wife duty become more political?



Harcourt Morgan, Arthur Morgan, & David Lilienthal

On Leaving Teaching, 5/33

Now, I must touch on a more personal matter.

With mixed feelings, I'm realizing that I'll be leaving classroom teaching at the end of this month. I feel guilty for leaving mid-year and sad at abandoning my students, but I'm convinced this is what I need to do. TVA and all it will do for our people are important, but I have a feeling I'll never really leave teaching. A Catholic friend told me she'd been taught priests' souls are eternally marked. They ARE priests. *I think it's the same with teachers. Could I ever not care?*

Teaching TVA, 5/33

One of my first tasks for teaching about TVA is to prepare a description of the project. I will be going to schools to explain it to faculties, parents, and students—and dealing with resentments we know will exist. Their land will be taken, often in forced sale, and much of it will be submerged forever.

This is land their families cleared and farmed for generations, for improvements that may not be seen again for years, maybe never. Why wouldn't there be anger? *I have never faced anger in my teaching and*

hope I can handle it well. These people deserve better than they have had. I dread facing a man who says, "But this is my family farm, my land, which I always expected to pass to my children! Now I'm supposed to work for someone else, someplace else?" I choke up thinking of hearing that, even though I know it is for the better, needed.

I had to stop writing for a while before I could write the next bit. Can't cry into my typewriter!

So, now I say goodbye to classroom teaching. I suspect, though, if you have taught and loved it, you never really leave it. I'll still get excited about school starting in September and graduation in May.... And I'll miss the new class of freshmen!

I am getting ready to go out and teach the glory of TVA, which I can do with enthusiasm. It will meet so many concerns that have been growing me for years, like flood control, affordable electric power, and economic development. I am spending hours in the new office pulling together all the material I can.

The TVA will provide jobs and electricity to the rural Tennessee River Valley, an area that spans seven states in the winding extensive bed of the river. The basic act invested TVA with the "power to acquire real estate for the construction of dams, reservoirs, transmission lines, power houses, and other structures, and navigation projects at any point along the Tennessee River, or any of its tributaries. The dams will be used for flood control, navigation, and electrification of the Valley!"

This is decidedly no small thing. I remember well my horror at the flooding when I was first starting to teach!

Expanding TVA's Work, 5/33

The act also called upon TVA to work with the region's farmers, developing and distributing powerful fertilizers that would restore the region's farmlands, which had been wrecked by devastating flooding—to say nothing of generations of poor farming practices. *Wow, just what our people have been needing!*

Please, may I faithfully convey that care was taken in the act to ensure that power produced by TVA will be prudently distributed throughout the valley to modernize rural communities and to encourage economic development—and that rates will always remain as low as feasible. Low rates and access for all remain a sacred priority.

People in this area have long been suspicious of government. (It wasn't just a matter of hiding their moonshine stills, though that has been

important around here.) It would break my heart to add to that suspicion. I have been in the sparse homes of many of these people and cared for their often raggedly clothed children in class.

What place are we talking about here? Having grown up in DC, there was little land or people to call my own and to love, as I now have in Tennessee. With our state's diverse terrain and populace, from east to west, it contains a mix of cultural features characteristic of Appalachia, the Upland South, and the Deep South.

What diversity! America in microcosm.

The Blue Ridge Mountains along the eastern border reach some of the highest elevations in eastern North America, and the Cumberland Plateau contains myriad scenic valleys and waterfalls. The central part of the state, which I explored with Susan and Ray, has cavernous bedrock and irregular rolling hills. Level, fertile plains define West Tennessee.

The state is twice bisected by the long and wandering Tennessee River before it merges into the Ohio River. The awesome Mississippi River forms the state's western border, stretching hundreds of miles north and south from the short connection.

This state is my home! Yes!

AAA, 5/33

Brianna Livingston, now with the *News Sentinel*, is keeping tabs with me. I think I'm her TVA beat as well as a friend. I need to be careful not to say more than I should, given my lack of official standing in much of what we discuss. She's also my own farm beat, which may come in handy. *I think you know.* Brianna was my first contact with the wider UT, you may recall, welcoming me into the school newspaper.

Over coffee in my office, she said, "FDR remembered the farmers like my dad, didn't he!"

"Yes," I agreed, "He's serious with another part of his agricultural plan too, to raise the value of farm production, increasing their power to purchase the output of our cities, and to preventing the growing loss to farmers by foreclosure of their small homes and farms."

She replied, "Yeah, that's where the Agricultural Adjustment Act (AAA) he's just created comes in." *I saw she's done her homework and I think, "I'd better watch out. She **is** a reporter."*

Brianna leaned forward saying, "The program provides farmers with incentives to reduce excessive production, thereby increasing their aggregate income." Briana smiled discretely and continued, "I'm sure you know the logical response of farmers to falling income is to increase production, further increasing surplus and ultimately reducing income."

Yes, as I make my rounds, farmers come up to give a lot of credit to the AAA, glad for the income, sorry for the waste, and some suspecting they're putting one over on the government.

I ask Brianna, "Does it bother you that to stabilize prices, the government paid farmers and ordered the slaughter of many of those pigs like your daddy raises?"

"Yes, it does. When I was home last, I held and bottle-fed two piglets whose mother had died. Daddy forbade our giving piglets pet names, given their destiny, but it was hard to resist sometimes.... Such as with these innocent, lovable, guzzling babies!

"Well, you know the government also paid to have a lot of the killed meat packed and distributed to the poor."

"Thank Goodness! It would hurt to see those lives we nurtured wasted."

I am happy to note that within President Roosevelt's first 100 days in office in 1933, programs were quickly initiated to do all this, to conserve soil and restore the ecological balance, and so much more."

Will any president ever equal this record of action? I hope none ever has to!

Nations: Take Note, 5/33

Here's hope for the future, from the sometimes-honorable past: The Norwegian Government had proclaimed the annexation of East Greenland, thereby creating a controversy with Denmark, which would have to be ended by the World Court at The Hague. In a couple of months, the court decided that Greenland belongs to Denmark and condemned Norwegian landings on eastern Greenland. *Norway submitted to the decision, of course, as a law-abiding country.*

Science Keeps Advancing, 5/33

From the NY Times, I learned that a young scientist, Karl Guthe Jansky, had announced his discovery of radio waves emanating from the center of the Milky Way in the constellation Sagittarius. As a result, he became one of the founding figures of radio astronomy. *Sigh! What could I ever discover?*

Jansky had determined that the signal repeated on a cycle of 23 hours and 56 minutes. He discussed the puzzle of this with an astrophysicist friend, who pointed out that the observed time between the signal peaks was the exact length of a sidereal day—the time it took for "fixed" astronomical objects, such as stars, to pass in front of his antenna every time the Earth rotated.

Later, in 1935, Jansky suggested that the strange radio signals were produced by interstellar gas, specifically through the "thermal agitation of charged particles." Jansky accomplished these investigations while still in his twenties with only a bachelor's degree in physics. So exciting: should I consider a shift? Nah. Math might be a problem.

I am no scientist, but I am so glad to be able to keep up with the exciting advances in the realm. Bless the bold explorers—and particularly the women among them, often not mentioned—though you sometimes see them on the edges of the triumphant male-centered pictures.

Changes with Roosevelt, 5/33

By 1933, as the new administration was gearing up, the unemployment rate in the U.S. had risen to 25%. About one-third of farmers had lost their land, and about half of the 25,000 banks had gone out of business. The U.S. government, under President Hoover, had been unwilling to intervene heavily in the economy, instead choosing to rely on the private sector to fix itself.

When Roosevelt entered office, the stock market had lost about 90% of its pre-crash value. Action began promptly, as the nation and I held our breath.

The Congress responded first by separating commercial and the more speculative investment banking. It established a federal system of bank deposit insurance. *About time!*

FDR's Calming Words, 5/33

Roosevelt was the first president to use the medium of radio so effectively to speak directly to the American people. Using a slow, calm, and steady voice that rose and fell naturally, he seemed to be engaging in a conversation with his listeners. *I've heard that in reality, his words had been carefully written, revised, and fact-checked by a team, but Roosevelt made them feel informal and fresh.*

The effect was powerful: On March 13, when healthy banks reopened, people lined up in droves to return their cash. More than half of the

funds Americans had withdrawn during the crisis were back in the bank within two weeks. March 15, the first day stocks were traded after the banking holiday, saw the market's largest ever one-day percentage price increase, reflecting a new surge of confidence among American investors.

Thousands of letters had begun pouring into the Roosevelt White House every day, many expressing gratitude for the president's words. A single fireside chat could generate more than 450,000 cards, letters, and telegrams. *Wow!*

Money! 6/33

One lesson learned during the Great Depression: leaving naturally greedy people, as we all are, on their own to do what comes naturally to them was a bad idea under Hoover and will always be. President Roosevelt soon signed the Securities Act, designed to reduce fraudulent activities on Wall Street.

He also signed the Banking Act of 1933 ("Glass-Steagall"). It separated commercial and investment banking, walling off banks' use of deposited funds to speculate in investment funding, and created the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) to insure bank deposits, curb bank runs, and reduce the number of bank failures.

Moving along, he signed the Home Owners' Loan Act of 1933, to assist mortgage lenders and individual home owners by issuing bonds and loans for troubled mortgages, back taxes, home owners' insurance, and necessary home repairs. The act also created the Home Owners Loan Corporation to administer its provisions.

Not finished, President Roosevelt signed the National Industrial Recovery Act. Title I regulated certain business activities (but was ultimately ruled unconstitutional by the Supreme Court). Title II created the Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works. *It eventually became known as the Public Works Administration (PWA).*

While he was fixing the economy, President Roosevelt signed the Farm Credit Act, making credit more accessible to farmers, and with fairer, lower interest rates.

Pretty good ideas, eh?! Why weren't they done long ago, thus avoiding this depression mess? Greed.

Greed kept such laws from being passed long ago. People with money wanted no interference with keeping it, doing as they liked with it, and making vastly more. Greed (financial ambition) can be productive, as long as it is kept within limits. That's what's happening here, now,

keeping it within limits! *With this and all the rest, that's awe-inspiring work for his first 100 days, eh. I'll bet it will never be matched. But he's not done yet! I hope things will never again be so bad that it must be matched!*

We're so lucky Ray's fortune lets us avoid this jungle--thanks to his brilliant money manager! *It's a shame the country wasn't in his hands instead of in Hoover's!*

Preparations? 6/33

President Roosevelt authorized up to \$238 million in Public Works Administration (PWA) funds for the Navy.

I later learned that from these funds, 32 naval vessels were built. I think he was getting us ready for what he couldn't say yet, in a nation not ready to hear it. I trust him. It's not like he's making money on the side.

Eleanor Roosevelt, 6/33

Working on a hot summer afternoon, we were astounded when Eleanor Roosevelt and flyer Amelia Earhart walked through our door to visit our office. *Really! There they were!*

I knew the First Lady had been very interested in TVA, making favorable comments as it was being developed. What I didn't know was that she had a wild side. She loved to fly along in Earhart's Lockheed aircraft, nicknamed "old Bessie, the fire horse," and to show up unexpectedly. She'd been a close friend of Earhart for some time, on one occasion sneaking out of the White House with her to go to a party. *She'd actually obtained a student pilot permit but did not follow up, since Franklin discouraged the idea. Having Amelia spend the night was one thing, but that was another!*



And now she'd asked Amelia, my daughter's idol, to fly her here on an informal visit to Knoxville to see our first regional development office. I was too incoherent to think of a way to ask if they would wait for Susan to be brought in to meet her. *Damn! Well, I was in awe of both women.*

In 1924, Mrs. Roosevelt had campaigned for Democrat Alfred E. Smith in his successful re-election bid as governor of New York State against the Republican nominee (and her first cousin) Theodore Roosevelt Jr.-- Franklin had spoken out on Theodore's "wretched record" as Assistant Secretary of the Navy during the Teapot Dome scandal. In return, Theodore said of him, "He's a maverick! He does not wear the brand of our family," which infuriated the First Lady.

She dogged Theodore on the New York State campaign trail in a car fitted with a papier-mâché hood shaped like a giant teapot that was made to emit simulated steam (to remind voters of Theodore's supposed scandal. *After Theodore was defeated by 105,000 votes, he never forgave her.*

As First Lady of the United States upon her husband's inauguration, Roosevelt redefined the position from one of decorative support, which obviously didn't suit her that well. *Too catty? I'm sorry. She is a beautiful person.* She broke precedent by holding regular press conferences and wrote a daily and widely syndicated newspaper column, "My Day". She wrote a monthly magazine column and hosted a weekly radio show.

In the first year of the administration, she earned \$75,000 from her lectures and writing, giving most to charity and maintaining a strong political presence.

In early 1933, the "Bonus Army" protest group of Great War veterans marched on Washington for the second time in two years, calling for their badly needed veteran bonus certificates to be awarded early. President Hoover had ordered them dispersed by an Army cavalry charge and bombarded the veterans with tear gas. This time, Eleanor visited the veterans' muddy campsite, listening to their concerns and singing army songs with them. With the tension defused, one of the marchers later commented, "Hoover sent the Army. Roosevelt sent his wife." *How could we not love her?*

She-She-She Conceived, 6/33

The CCC camps quickly became very favorably known, so there was eventually a counterpart program for unemployed women, informally called the She-She-She (*heh!*) Camps, championed by the First Lady.

She had been troubled by the plight of so many women, including ones who did not show up in the breadlines but instead lived in subway tunnels and "tramped," foraged for subsistence outside urban areas. "As a group, women have been neglected in comparison with others," the First Lady said, "and throughout this depression have had the hardest time of all."

Women seeking jobs approached two million by 1933. Many employers still believed women belonged in the home, so they were less likely to hire married women and more likely to dismiss those they already employed." Many New Deal programs were likewise built on the assumption that men would serve as breadwinners and women would stay in the home. *I can't help thinking of the line from hundreds of years ago, "There but for the grace of God go I."*

Ultimately, many more than could be accepted tried to enroll.

Electrification and Bias, 7/33

In the initial action of the New Deal, the Public Works Administration announced grants to start construction of the Bonneville and Grand Coulee dams on the Columbia River. At the Bonneville site, 3,000 laborers from the relief rolls, working in non-stop eight-hour shifts, were paid 50 cents an hour for the work on the dam. It was the largest water impoundment project of its type in the nation, able to withstand flooding on an unprecedented scale. *From our east Tennessee viewpoint, I like the sound of that!*

The original navigation lock at Bonneville opened in 1938 and was, at that time, the highest single-lift lock in the world, with a vertical lift of 60 feet. We are building MONUMENTALLY!

In Tennessee, it was believed that a dam in the upper Tennessee Valley, with dams at Muscle Shoals, Alabama, could provide badly needed flood control to East Tennessee and help keep the Tennessee River consistently navigable year-round. U.S. Senator and Progressive Republican from Nebraska, George Norris held out for the dam to be government-sponsored, fearing a private entity would be too much concerned with power generation rather than flood control. *My thinking never strays far from control of disastrous floods!*

Interesting that a Republican leader strongly backed government power. A dam in East Tennessee was named for him. YES!

Heartless governments, 7/33

The Nazi Party in Germany introduced a law to legalize eugenic sterilization. I had to check that means killing and preventing births of undesired babies to improve the national "welfare". *No. Babies are babies. Hold them in your arms, nurse them, and then say otherwise, if you dare. My Jewish friend Hannah Schwartz told me the Nazi racial purification ideas actually had their root in our Jim Crow South, studied as a model and picked up with enthusiasm by the Nazis in their racist laws.*

Under the Soviet Union, the Holodomor famine-genocide in Ukraine has reached its peak, I hope, with 30,000 deaths from human-made starvation each day. The average life expectancy for a Ukrainian male born this year is 7.3 years. *Will the remainder ever cease to hate Russians? What else will the Russians do to Ukraine?*

And the Ladies, 9/33

Two million women were seeking jobs by 1933, suffering from the belief of many employers that women belonged in the home. They avoided hiring married women and tended to dismiss those they had already employed. Even New Deal programs that sought to increase employment were built on the same belief.

A feminist writer, Meridel Le Sueur, noted that once out of work, women "will go for weeks verging on starvation, crawling in some hole, going

through the streets ashamed, sitting in libraries, parks, going for days without speaking to a living soul like some exiled beast". So sad for the woman without husband or other family! *I glimpse them sometimes while I'm driving through Knoxville. Heartbreakingly defeated.*

There are orphaned children in the same situation. Oh, my dear daughter! Thank God, not you!

Surplus, 10/33

The Federal Surplus Relief Corporation (FSRC) was created in October. (The name was later changed to Federal Surplus Commodities Corporation.) *The agency provided millions of tons of food and essential commodities, such as blankets, to those in need.*

This past summer, when the Agricultural Adjustment Administration attempted to boost the wholesale price of agricultural produce through an artificial scarcity initiative, crops were plowed up or left to rot. *Some farmers claimed their mules refused to trample the crops because that was something they had been trained precisely not to do.)*

In horror at the waste of animal lives, I had written letters to Congress, and fortunately, I was not alone. The public outcry over this tragedy led to the FSRC. This organization aimed to also direct commodities such as apples, beans, canned beef, and cotton to local relief organizations. *For example, in December 1933, the agency distributed three million tons of coal to the unemployed in six states, and in September 1934, shipped over 6 million pounds of food to the unemployed in 30 U.S. states.*

It would later provide the first federal contribution to the school lunch programs and was the first step toward the national school lunch program. In March 1937, there were nearly 4,000 schools receiving commodities for lunch programs serving nearly 350,000 children daily. Two years later, the number of schools participating had grown to over 14 thousand, and the number of children had risen to nearly a million.

Now, this is a record to be proud of. I am!

League's Work, 11/33

Touching base with my friend Brianna Livingston, we discussed our mutual passion for the League of Women Voters. We're proud of what the League has been doing for the country and to have been a part of their action! *We talked long after the group's last meeting over banana splits.* Among other things, LWV worked successfully for the enactment of the Social Security and, earlier, the Food and Drug Acts, as well as providing information on voting.

We recalled with satisfaction that since its start, the League has helped millions of women and men become informed participants in government. In fact, the first league convention voted nearly 70 separate items as statements of principle and recommendations for legislation, many of which we ourselves have worked on. Among them were protection for women and children (my favorite), rights of working women, food supply safety, social hygiene, the legal status of women (Brianna's favorite), and American citizenship. We agreed we need to push to get more potential members involved.

Brianna and I almost played verbal ping pong on our favorite parts of LWV's activities, our heads going back and forth as each of us bought up another favorite activity.

The League's first major national legislative success was the earlier passage of the temporarily abandoned Sheppard-Towner Act, providing federal aid for maternal and childcare programs. As you'll know from what I've written, Sheppard-Towner was a favorite of mine, and I'm so glad the New Deal has re-incorporated it into Social Security.

In Knoxville, we worked to improve library services, establish a family service agency, and invest in child welfare programs. We published the city's first brochure on voter education and worked to abolish the poll tax.

Harry's Still Around, 11/33

Harry Burn married Mildred Tarwater. I wish them well. He rose to his duty when he had to, though it may have ruined him politically. I still consider him a friend, and we exchange letters occasionally. He's thriving in his banking ventures and his family is growing. *Maybe Ray and I should consider adding a child to ours. Or are we having too much fun?!*

CWA, 12/33

Under criticism that his initial work program was just make-work, producing nothing of lasting value, Roosevelt created the Civil Works Administration (CWA) for mostly manual-labor jobs, employing four million(!) men, primarily focused on improving or constructing buildings and bridges. *Some people will criticize whatever was done, desperate to find fault. Do they want to pull the pipes out of the ground, flatten the schools, and break up the roads?*

I later got the figures: CWA workers laid 12 million feet of sewer pipe and built or improved 255,000 miles of roads, 40,000 schools, 3,700

playgrounds, and nearly 1,000 airports. Well, the roads I drive and the school Sue attends have been improved. That's what counts. Right?

End of Prohibition, 12/33

Hoover's Wickersham Commission reported its findings at the beginning of the year and the amendment repealing prohibition was put into effect by the end of the year. The report recognized that evasion of the law was widespread and that prohibition had fueled the growth of organized crime. The current joke(?) is that bootleggers have been behind it from the beginning, as the only people who profited from it. This prohibition experiment has proven to be a sad waste. Even though the dangerous drug wasted lives, that waste was true before, during and after Prohibition. Kids will still come to school battered by drunken fathers and will still die in drunken wrecks, and police and courts have been corrupted in the meantime. *If I could save that by never drinking another drop, it would be a well-made deal. But we know now that can't be. That knowledge is worth a lot! We paid the price.*

A bit of booze, cautiously taken, helps me get by when I'm aching with emotional pain. It elevates my mood to rise above that pain. Considering it's only a bit, and consumed rarely, I think it's OK. and, frankly, I enjoy the relief, though I'm uneasy about it. *I must wonder how somebody as blessed as I am can sometimes be painfully depressed. Alcohol helps, but I know it's a danger. If it were worse, I'd have to find another means of dealing with my problem. I'm relieved to see I'm not drinking more. Less even, the busier I am!*

My depression isn't bad or long lasting. I don't know why it comes on. Maybe it's just a flaw in my character.

Note, 12/33

It has occurred to me that I have omitted much great stuff that has already been done in the New Deal. Well, this is not a history book; it's just what impressed and moved me during these amazing years, what I thought would interest others, and what I wrote about at the time.

15. Charging Ahead, 1934

Dictator Talk, 3/34

I overheard women talking at the beauty shop about President Roosevelt becoming a dictator. I bit my tongue, but I resolved to think about it. One woman actually said she heard from her minister the reason you don't see him walk much is that he has hooves instead of feet, and it is

painful for him to walk upright. *How do you deal with such vicious stupidity?*

FDR's painful truth about his ailment is already coming out to those willing to listen. I don't really know how much of this negativity might be true, but my heart tells me it's empty, ungracious babble. Well, I'll check. I don't want to be the last to find out Santa's not real again, twenty years after the first time.

Scary, eh!

People were afraid. Some were ready then for him to take more than his four-year term.

Later, watching what he did and didn't do, I concluded that FDR faithfully chose persuasion and democratic action, not coercion, when he could have gone much further.

Conservation in Anticipation, 3/34

In early January 1934, President Roosevelt appointed a Committee on Wildlife Restoration. The administration had geared up for massive construction, but they had the foresight to realize they must proceed carefully to avoid harm to the environment in the process.

As a result, we got the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamp Act, popularly called the Duck Stamp Act, which provided funds to buy marginal farm and ranch land for wildlife refuges. We will avoid devastation in favor of conservation. Federal agencies working on water resources development will be required both to mitigate adverse impacts on fish and to promote new wildlife refuges on other federal lands.

Legislating responsibility! What an idea! We have destroyed so much in nature, not really thinking what we were doing

President Roosevelt went on to declare 1934 the Year of the National Park and declared Cedar Breaks in Utah a National Monument – *the first of twenty-one such “monuments” he would designate during his presidency. He would eventually sign legislation for eight National Parks, including the Shenandoah, Everglades, and Olympic parks. I am thrilled that nature will be preserved for all our children, and I am proud that he didn't focus solely on pressing economic issues. Might that be Eleanor's hand or Frances's? Whose ever. I learned to love nature in my early teens, tramping in the new Rock Creek Park, which runs from the zoo, near Father's rectory, almost to the Potomac River.*

She-She-She Gears Up, 4/34

Labor Secretary Frances Perkins championed She-She-She camps after Eleanor Roosevelt held a White House Conference for Unemployed Women on April 30, 1934. Soon, Eleanor Roosevelt's concept of a nationwide jobless women's camp program was achieved. Admittedly, this was far short of the more than 3 million men who participated in the CCC, but it was an achievement of pride, nonetheless.

Eleanor and Frances determined the men-only focus of the CCC program left out many young women who were willing to work in conservation and forestry and to spend the six-month program living away from family and close support. *Can you tell I love those two women?*

Big Beginning, 5/34

Back on November 11, 1933, a powerful windstorm stripped topsoil from dried-out South Dakota farmlands in one of a series of severe storms that year. Then, beginning on May 9, 1934, a two-day dust storm again removed huge amounts of topsoil in one of the worst such storms. Dust clouds blew past Chicago, dumping 12 million pounds. Two days later, they blotted out the Statue of Liberty and the United States Capitol. Dust even worked its way into sealed homes. Now the clouds of dust are making it hard to do so many routine things.

Heaven, 5/34

Oh, my god, I am in heaven. Eleanor Roosevelt just called and invited the five of our little family to dinner at the White House in two weeks. Not only that, but since air service doesn't connect Knoxville and Washington, and since train service is tedious working through the mountains of East Tennessee (*don't I know!*), she asked Amelia Earhart, in her Bessie, to pick us up and return us.

Mrs. Roosevelt and I had been writing occasionally since her visit to the Knoxville TVA office, and I'd told her how disappointed Susan had been not to meet them. *How does she find time to communicate with so many people, even nobodies like me?!*

What is going on here? This dinner feels like something Reynolds would set up, as he's done before to help me politically.

Eleanor (as she told me I should call her) said, "Franklin is looking forward to meeting all of you, especially your daughter. He enjoys children so much!"

The Dinner, 6/34

We enjoyed a memorable meal in the beautiful Presidential mansion, in an intimate upstairs dining room! The table was set with President Roosevelt and Eleanor at the ends, me, Frances Perkins, Susan Hamlin, and Amelia Earhart on one side, and Ray, Harcourt, Reynolds, and Louise on the other.

The President quickly called Susan over and charmed her into her delightful laughter. He threw his head back to roar happily! Meanwhile, Ray, Harcourt, and Reynolds were engrossed in UT basketball, while Louise, Eleanor, and Amelia were trading tales of travel. I felt like the queen bee, taking it all in and talking Tennessee politics with Frances, feeling glad for my role in getting it all arranged.

The talk quickly flowed around the table. A perfect dinner party! And I started imagining being involved in more, with pride and joy. *What if Now, Reynolds, hush! I already have the best job I could have!*

After a bit, Eleanor clapped her hands and signaled for everyone to change partners. The President motioned for me, Harcourt, and Frances to drag our chairs close to him and asked us about TVA. I'm glad I also waved Ray and Reynolds over to the fringe, because of what came out soon. Susan was in animated conversation with Amelia about flying, on happy arm wings. Louise and Eleanor talked enthusiastically about their sons.

The President said to Reynolds, "I can see you were right about this young lady. After she's made the rounds in TVA, let's get her into that House race."

Just like that, I was on a whole different life track, by Presidential order. *My head is still spinning! It's a good thing I didn't need to say anything, with my heart up in my throat.*

Indian New Deal, 6/34

I was reassured to find out about the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA), which deals with the status of American Indians. It restored to Indians the management of their own land and mineral rights. *These had been taken over paternalistically (and worse) by the U.S. government.* In trying to create a sound economic foundation for the residents of Indian reservations, this act now returned or added tribal land, spurred the development of tribal business, created a system of credit, and promoted tribal self-governance.

John Collier, Commissioner of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), realized what he needed to do to reverse the considerable damage to American Indian cultures from the arrogant attempt to force Indian assimilation into the European culture.

Unfortunately, his proposals infuriated the powerful interests that had long profited from the management and sale of native lands, so Congress weakened his proposals to merely preserve oversight of tribes and reservations. As a result, two wo-thirds of Indian land had been converted to traditional private ownership. Sadly, most of that had been sold by the Indians allotted it, often being unable to pay local taxes on the lands. The IRA now provided for the recovery of land that had been previously sold—our grudging response to problems we created. *It's being called the "Indian New Deal".*

I happily told my Cherokee friend Olivia Two, who turned her broad face to me, paused, and said, “Better late and half-assed than never at all!”

Dust Bowl, 7/34

Looking across our back yard, I saw a coating of dust everywhere and a dense red haze in the morning light, indicating more dust was arriving. I realized some farmer's land had arrived all the way from Iowa. A pity. He needed it; we didn't. The states that have had their topsoil lifted and blown away have been labeled “The Dust Bowl.”

The heartbreaking thing is this was probably avoidable. No less an expert than my mentor, Harcourt Morgan, told me that there are dryland farming techniques that would have helped prevent the land from parching in the age-old Great Plains cycle of drought and abundant rain. These techniques, invented by nature and supported by our Native Americans, could have made a significant difference. *Harcourt should mentor the whole country. Well, now he sort of does in the background.*

With insufficient understanding of the ecology of the plains, farmers had inflicted extensive deep plowing on the virgin topsoil during the previous decade. Predictably, this displaced the native, deep-rooted grasses that usually trapped soil and moisture even during periods of drought and high winds.

During this extensive drought, the unanchored soil turned to dust, and prevailing winds blew it away in massive “black blizzards.” These are choking billows of dust that reached past the Atlantic coast. On the

plains, they often reduced visibility to three feet. *That's about as far away as a very tall man's fist could extend helplessly, before being pulled back to wipe away his tears!*



Now the clouds of dust are making it hard to grow crops even where the water is adequate. Farm income is plummeting, and grain supplies are running low nationwide, resulting in price increases. One farmer joked about planting his crops in the sky where the soil is better.

But now a different kind of storm has arrived, resulting from all the vegetation being killed by the first: the grasshoppers are starving and swarming the area, desperately killing more vegetation in their path. Soon fabric, leather, house paint, varnish, and even wood will be endangered by them.

In the meantime, Canada's plains share the problem, and there is talk of evacuating farms there. The heavy clouds turned day to night in Alberta, and the wind itself was causing heavy damage.

Now, in the United States, the CCC is being put to work building a hundred-mile-wide, thousand-mile-long belt of trees to prevent erosion and wind damage in the long run, *but only in the long run, unfortunately. Eventually, more than 200 million trees are planted from Canada to Texas, to break the wind, hold the water, and stabilize the soil. Too late, alas, for many who had to give up and leave their farms behind.*

The Okies, 7/34

The Dust Bowl had forced out tens of thousands of poverty-stricken families, unable to find work or pay their mortgage. Many of these families, often called "Okies" because so many came from Oklahoma, migrated to California and other states, only to find often that the Great Depression had rendered economic conditions there little better than those they had fled. *Oh, our suffering people! Forgive them, Father, they knew not what they were doing!*

Many have seen in recent months the light of midday so blotted out by such darkness that the headlights of automobiles could scarcely penetrate. They have seen windows and windshields frosted and paint stripped from cars and houses by the protracted sandblasting of the storm. They have seen furniture in their homes and offices begrimed in an hour or two, despite tightly closed doors and windows.

The drought and dirt blowing out of the Dust Bowl affected approximately 100 million acres, centered on the Texas Panhandle and Oklahoma Panhandle, as well as adjacent parts of New Mexico, Colorado, and Kansas.

Dinner Aftermath, 7/34

Susan is still excited about dining with President Roosevelt. (*I am too. She doesn't know half of it all.*)

Old as she is, she's pulled out her dolls for dinner parties. The White House made that big an impact and she wants to relive it! She has added two new names: Amelia and Mr. President. She checks the newspaper to see how Mr. President is doing and won't stand for any criticism! She comes to me for reassurance on any she encounters. *I wonder what she'd think if she knew I might be running for Congress. And I wonder what she'd think if she knew what I'm sure now Reynolds must have in mind.*

Reynolds and I frequently talk politics. And me. This man has believed in me as long as he's known me, at least since having lost his son. *When I've talked about what could be done politically, this experienced political operative never minimized but always supported me and added ideas.* His faith and faithfulness make me want to cry, like now....

Right after dinner, I received sweet notes from Eleanor and the President. (I don't think I'll ever be able to call that great man "Franklin"). She thanked me for bringing the dinner together; he congratulated me on being promoted deputy to Arthur Morgan, which I

had **just** heard about. When Harcourt Morgan told me of the promotion, he said my job was to organize “that other guy”, also surnamed Morgan, “who had talents” but “couldn’t pour piss out of a boot” on his own. *He pointed out I was blushing and said, “You’ll toughen up, Dear. You’re getting into a rough world.”*

The Big Day, 8/34

Finally, my girl is 16 and has her pilot’s license. Ray has been taking her up every day for lessons, and she couldn’t have a more careful and caring teacher, from my backseat view. Now the license is won, but the lessons have continued. On the last one, Ray went to sleep. Or said he did. *Do I trust him? Well, do I let my baby fly with him? Now I’ve got to stay out of the cockpit. She’ll be able to fly by herself soon anyway!*

She wants to work up to bigger planes, with multiple engines. Just when I was getting comfortable with her flying. Oh, well, she is good, I can tell—no hesitancy or uncertainty. And Ray wants a bigger plane.

The Work of TVA, 8/34

Harcourt told me President Roosevelt had envisioned TVA as a novel agency, unlike any other in existence. He had asked Congress for “a corporation clothed with the power of government but possessed of the flexibility and initiative of a private enterprise.” *Well, it looks like he got that!*

What a wonder as it comes together!

As Harcourt had proposed it to FDR, “Its mission will be to integrate resource management of the river drainage basin and the adjoining territory affected by it.”

This is where the dream comes true! No more gullied out fields, unfarmable with the topsoil washed away. No more farm ponds too muddied for the cattle.

There are so many elements, never before attempted all together: flood control and navigation of the Tennessee River; reforestation and improved use of marginal lands; and enhanced conservation and development of natural resources.

Finally, we see the elements of prudent river system use brought together, each contributing to the welfare of the region and its people.

All over the reach of this massive river system, we are seeing the beginning of generation and transmission of electric energy; application of electric power for the balanced development of the region’s resources;

agricultural and industrial development; and the production of chemicals necessary to national defense and useful in agriculture.

At its root, this is what TVA is about, beyond selling power, as private utilities would have left it, their having no motive to go further.

Eventually, it developed fertilizers, taught farmers how to improve crop yields, helped replant forests, controlled forest fires, and enhanced the habitat for wildlife and fish.

There you have the complete picture. This is why we are doing what we are starting. This is government planning at its best. And I'm damned proud of it!

As power spreads, if you drive down a remote country road on a dark night, the lights on the farms reveal the spread of civilization "unto all the inhabitants thereof," as Leviticus expressed it for liberty, and was put on the Liberty bell.

It is a wonder how both electric lights and modern appliances have made life easier and farms more productive, drawing industries to the region and providing many needed jobs.

Can you tell I'm excited, finding I enjoy helping to organize such efforts and bringing them to fruition?!

Two Worlds, 8/34

Brianna Livingston, previously of the News Sentinel has dropped in. Of course, our talk turns to politics, and I ask how things are going economically around her home in Murfreesboro.

She nods her head a bit. "Well, it's gradually been getting electrified, and that's made a big difference. Factories are now allowing machinery to take over much back-breaking physical labor."

I lean toward her and ask, "What about in the country?"

"Oh, it's only gradually begun to change. Their lives had become increasingly difficult. Crop prices and farm income had fallen badly in the 1920s, and families struggled to pay rent, taxes, or mortgage. Thousands lost their farms, while others were reduced to living much as their pioneering grandparents had."

I lean back, literally taken aback. "That sounds bleak!"

"Only candles and kerosene lanterns for artificial light. Pumping and hauling water, cutting and toting firewood for heat, as well as for cooking and washing, take up much of the day."

“A whole different world,” I almost whisper.

“I’ll say! Subsistence farming remains common, as many families struggle to grow most of their own food, leaving little to sell. Their diet is supplemented with a few chickens, hogs, and possibly a cow, along with cornmeal, wheat flour, and homegrown produce. A little variety comes from hunting squirrels or rabbits, growing a few fruit trees, and bartering with neighbors. Only a root cellar and perhaps an icebox keep food fresh for a limited time.”

“They eat squirrels! Sounds like the 1700s.”

“Yeah, I hear they taste like chicken. Washing is done in a big iron pot, with clothes cleaned using lye soap, a scrub board, and muscle power. Ironing is done with flat irons. even in hot weather. Saturday is often the one bath night, with water shared.”

I must ask, “What about reading?”

“Largely limited to the Bible or an old newspaper passed on by someone who had recently visited town, and a Sears and Roebuck catalogue. Of course, many adults are illiterate, anyway.”

I sigh, “Yes, a different world!”

Office Incident, 8/34

“Mrs. Philips”, screamed one of our staff, “Rose is in hard labor, all of a sudden, and it looks serious!” I heard Rose’s agonized screaming before I even saw her.

I dropped the proposal I was reviewing and ran into the staff office. “Oh, God, where is Rebecca when I need her?” sprang to mind when I saw the bloody mess. I desperately looked around and saw no one confidently stepping forward as Rebecca Freeman had in that awful incident of many years ago. “Well, thank goodness, I somewhat kept up my training with her over the years.” Just then, the baby thrust out a purpling hand in supplication. I realized he likely had gotten the cord around his neck and himself wedged in the birth canal.

“Scissors,” I screamed, just in case, as I worked on turning him. Fortunately, he (or she) was small. I dispersed the crowd of onlookers and worked on positioning the baby, noting the blood emerging at an alarming rate, and the darkening infant hand moving convulsively. *It was hard, tedious, painstaking work, and I was afraid I physically couldn’t do it. Please, where is somebody who knows how?*

I could hear sirens approaching and feet pounding up the stairs just as the positioned baby popped out, strangling on his tightly wrapped cord. With no time to spare, I grabbed the scissors and cut the cord, grateful for the sure hands lifting mother and child to safety. But what were the brief flashes of light, I wondered as I focused on finishing up? The next day, I knew, when I saw the pictures in the Knoxville News Sentinel with the caption, "TVA Deputy Saves Mother and Child."

Although it was petty of me, I thought I looked ghastly. Well, I had to admit it all made a good story of a day at the TVA office.

It even made the Washington Post and the New York Times, likely due to my position, as I mentioned to Harcourt. Well, I'm glad I was able to pitch the importance of midwifery to the reporters who showed up for interviews later. Harcourt laughed, "Did I mention part of your job is getting good publicity for TVA? No need to say it, I see."

I got that baby safely out! Yes, I did it on my own! Mostly.

Letters from the Roosevelts, 9/34

I was thrilled to get sweet letters of congratulations on my impromptu midwifery from both the Roosevelts. God, how do they manage this with casual acquaintances? *Dare I hope I'm more than casual to them after so little contact?*

Eleanor was very gracious, and the president asked, "Do you remember my saying how important my religion is to me? *Yes, I remembered, but I wondered then if that was just political talk. He seemed so sincere, but I was shamefully skeptical.* Well, he does say he's a Christian and a Democrat, in that order, and he continued, "I'm wondering if God intervened for me to send you to that office."

I had to choke back a sob.

Arts! 11/34

Lizzie French asked me to stop by for lunch. It turned out she was eager to discuss the new *For The Public Works of Art Project (PWAP)*. She'd been in Los Angeles just in time to attend the ceremony for the completion of the *Astronomers Monument*. Knowing how enthusiastic I am about astronomy, she took photos of all six of the statued men. She included the space by the statue of William Herschel commented, "This should have contained one to his sister and collaborator, Caroline Herschel. Then Lizzie said, "I toyed with chalking in her name by his, for you." The only "signature" on the *Astronomers Monument* is "PWAP"

1934" referring to the program which funded the project and the year it was completed.

What a blessing to have this program to pay unemployed professional artists to create works of art for public buildings and parks. *I hope, as expected, it encourages artists to provide a permanent record of our times.*

This piece might well have been titled, "Ad astra per aspera" the Latin phrase that means "to the stars through hardships". My heart rises toward the stars looking at it! Have you read what Caroline Herschel went through "helping" her brother, who got all the credit?

Although this program lasted less than one year, it employed over 8000 artists, who produced nearly 16,000 works of art. It was a prototype for later federal art programs, including the Federal Art Project within the Works Progress Administration.

Blowing in the Wind, 12/34

The dust continues to move eastward.

Dust worked its way into even the most sealed homes, leaving a coating on food, skin, and furniture. Many people developed sore throats and dust colds. Some fell ill and died of dust pneumonia or malnutrition due to the damage to crops. A young mother in my office told of being afraid to wipe the grime off her baby's face for fear of getting it in his eyes.

What are we doing about it all? What can we do?"

During President Roosevelt's first 100 days in office in 1933, they—WE--also began to educate farmers on soil conservation and anti-erosion techniques, including crop rotation, strip farming, contour plowing, and terracing, even in our own Tennessee Valley. I've been plumbing Harcourt for agricultural information and reading widely.

But this dust storm problem is NOW, right now. *How much more trauma must our people endure?*

The Economy, 12/34

American's lives are improving! The unemployment rate is down to 16% (from about 22.9% at the start of the Roosevelt presidency), gross domestic product rose dramatically (up 16.9% from 1933), the Dow Jones Industrial Average was up to 104 (from 60 in 1932), and there

were just nine bank failures – compared to 4,000 in 1933. *Jobs were bringing in money and banks were safeguarding it.*

The corner had been turned, though the recovery would be slow and halting!

16. Recovery Continuing, 1935

Youth Uniting, 1/35

What a surprise! Brianna Livingston just burst into my office. “Mercy! I had to tell you that I’ve been nominated for a Pulitzer Prize for my series on the American Youth Congress. Thank you so much for putting me in touch with Eleanor Roosevelt. She opened the door to the AYC for me. That and her early backing of it gave me the standing I needed to get into the story deeply.”

“Wonderful! You can be very proud! Your writing is so clear and informative! I would second the nomination if I could.”

“Thanks, Mercy, coming from you that means a lot!”

“And Brianna, I’ve been meaning to tell you that was an interesting character you wrote about, that Texas state administrator of the National Youth Administration.”

Brianna giggled softly. “Oh him. Lyndon Johnson.”

“Yeah, whose job, fortunately, allowed him to travel around Texas making political contacts, while seeking financial sponsors for NYA construction projects.”

By now, I’m holding back my own laughter. Brianna resumed. “So, within six months he had 18,000 young Texans working on roads, parks, schools, and other public buildings. What a political advantage! What must the future hold for him! And you!”

“You think that’s what I’m doing?”

“I think you’re going to have quite a base for a political campaign.”

“Oh, I’ve hardly given that a thought.” *Hah! Hardly any.*

“I’m sure it hasn’t occurred to your political mentor, Reynolds Hamblin, either. Anyway, that’s an inspiring bunch of AYC young people discussing the problems facing youth as a whole in this economy. Didn’t you love that *American Youth Bill of Rights* they sent to the U.S. Congress?”

I responded, "Well, with young Americans not legally considered adults until the age of 21, they make a good parallel to the founders' emphasis on exploitation of Americans and the revolution. Do you remember I almost wasn't allowed in our university because I wasn't living with a parent?"

"Yes, I remember that well. And, Mercy, I want to tell you that the First Lady was right on hand in my AYC discussions. She seemed genuinely worried about youth's discouragement over their economic prospects and by the influence of Communist leaders among the youth hostile to the administration."

"Oh, yes, and I heard her say she feared losing the entire generation if their needs were not attended to."

"That's a strong statement.", Brianna replied.

"I...." I had to bite my tongue from adding I'd heard it face-to-face at an intimate White House dinner.

"Mrs. Roosevelt said she was determined to work both ends: to convince both her husband to make an effort for youth and the AYC to convince them that the pursuit of achievable goals, partnering with the White House, would accomplish more than just criticizing and undermining the president."

I allowed myself to say, "I'm confident that she wouldn't stand by and see that happen."

The AYC accomplished those goals in its few short years. It was disbanded in 1940, primarily due to internal conflict over what to make of the Nazi-Soviet non-aggression pact, forcing its more radical youth to make a distinction between pro-Nazis and pro-Communists. It had done its job for the young by then.

War Clouds, 2/35

On February 26, Adolf Hitler ordered the reinstatement of the air force in violation of the 1919 Treaty of Versailles. Less than two weeks later, he announced German rearmament in further violation of the treaty. After a few weeks more, Hitler announced the reintroduction of conscription to the army, expanding Germany's violation of the 1919 Treaty of Versailles, and less than a month later, Britain agreed to a German navy equal to 35% of her own naval tonnage in further violation of the treaty limits.

So, this rearmament was no secret. Why was it allowed in violation of the Treaty of Versailles? The allies who demanded the limits allowed them to be bypassed for some reason. *This cannot be good! A lack of will? What will come of it? Is Germany testing political figures for their backbones?*

Conflicts, 3/35

If there was a lesson in all the above about Germany, I'm afraid it is that the strong do as they wish while the world looks on, instead of uniting in opposition. All greedily driven by their own short-term interests.

In March, an attempted Greek coup was put down by strong government action, rightly or wrongly. *You know, I'm getting the feeling that if we give the boys guns, they're by God going to use them. Maybe the world should follow the example of London city and keep guns out of their hands, from the top down. Why should we be having coups around the world? That is not the kind of world where I want my daughter living! By the way, when is the last time a coup was led by women? That might be the Greek woman who urged women to refrain from sex to end a war in an ancient Greek comedy, which shows how long ago that was.*

Also in March, a massive race riot took place in Harlem after a rumor that a teenage Puerto Rican shoplifter had been brutally beaten. Eventually, the riot died out, perhaps as a result of community action by ministers, and continuing police presence. *My Times had little to say on what ended it. That's important! Peace must be made to prevail!*

More in the Wind, 4/35

"Black Sunday", April 14, 1935: a cold front from Canada swept south across the Great Plains at 60 mph, kicking up mountains of dust. Once it arrived, the temperature dropped 30 degrees, and the winds increased to 60 mph. Between gusts, the dust fell straight down, so densely that there was practically no visibility. You couldn't even light an oil lamp outdoors, as there wasn't enough oxygen free in the storm to keep it going.

More than 500,000 Americans have been left homeless, as they had their mortgages foreclosed by banks, or felt they had no choice but to abandon farms they'd struggled to save, in search of work they might not find. Many of them fled hopefully to the west. Parents packed their jalopies with their families and a few personal belongings and headed into the unknown West. So many families left their farms and moved westward that the proportion of migrants and residents was nearly equal

in some Great Plains states. *I understand there is a slow, steady, drain of students from my old school.*

I heard one of my favorite students, Billy Johnson, disappeared without a word to his friends. Billy, of such unfailing good cheer. I suspect he was humiliated to be joining the Okie trek. "Oh, Billy," I thought, "I wish you had come by for a kiss. *But how could you, in your embarrassment?*"

Roosevelt ordered the Civilian Conservation Corps to plant the Great Plains Shelterbelt, more than 200 million trees from Canada to Texas, to break the wind, hold water in the soil, and thus hold the soil in place. To Harcourt's joy, the administration also started to educate farmers on soil conservation and anti-erosion techniques, including crop rotation, strip farming, contour plowing, and terracing.

By 1937, the federal government began aggressively to encourage farmers to adopt planting and plowing methods that conserved the soil. The government paid farmers a dollar an acre to use the new methods. In just a few years, the amount of blowing soil had been cut by 65%. The land still failed to yield a decent living, but then by the fall of 1939, after nearly a decade of dust, regular rainfall finally returned to the region. The government still encouraged the continued use of conservation methods, however.

Soil Conservation Act, 4/35

President Roosevelt signed the Soil Conservation Act, creating the Soil Conservation Service (SCS). The new agency will do much to preserve America's agricultural land from erosion and overuse.

In the process, it has helped facilitate the creation of thousands of state-level soil conservation districts, building for the future.

It has been heartbreaking to see our soil, like the blood of our land, being washed away down denuded hillsides. That must stop now.

Rural Electrification, 5/35

The President further turned his attention to the countryside. He created the Rural Electrification Administration (REA) in May, to bring electricity more widely to America's rural areas. He felt it was time to further create badly needed jobs in rural areas: electricity was needed to give modernization and efficiency to rural families and American agriculture. *While cities had enjoyed electric power for the many in 1935, "fewer than 11 of every 100 U.S. farms were receiving central station electric service."*

The power companies were unwilling or unable to string wires over long distances, across farmland and backcountry, at an affordable price. REA had presented an opportunity for the power companies to partner with it, but they showed a lack of interest in bringing electric power to rural areas.

I'm content that if the private companies wouldn't address such an important need, the government should. Or why have government?

Court cases, 5/35

In May, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled part of the National Industrial Recovery Act an unconstitutional restraint of interstate commerce. The offending section of the law had imposed a system of codes on American businesses, controlling things such as production and wages. *Not the way things had been done, businesses protested. No, the Supreme Court was all about how things had been done.* Later, in January 1936, the Supreme Court found the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1933 unconstitutional, ruling that the control of agriculture is a state function, not a federal one.

Well, the law and the court can change, by God.

Puerto Rican Development, 5/35

Not to leave the separate Puerto Rican territory behind his New Deal, President Roosevelt created the Puerto Rico Reconstruction Administration. *Congress would have happily forgotten the islands.* With no votes in Congress, they're invisible.

The agency lasted for many years and significantly improved Puerto Rico's infrastructure. I'm so glad we took responsibility for these citizens.

Sick Chicken/Sick Court, 5/35

The Supreme Court unanimously declared unconstitutional the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA), a major component of the New Deal. *Sometimes, don't you feel like declaring the Court unconstitutional? The President is trying to save the country, and the court insists on quibbling in somebody's narrow self-interest.*

The rejected regulations included price and wage fixing, requirements regarding the sale of whole chickens (including unhealthy ones), maximum work hours, and the right of unions to organize. There is talk Roosevelt should pack the court by adding a new majority open to action.

Well, he tried that and got slapped down by the public when he moved to get a bill passed to allow him to add justices to replace those over seventy who don't retire. Fortunately, the Court may have seen the writing on the wall and moderated its frequent obstruction.

DRS > FSRC, 5/35

The Federal Surplus Relief Corporation (FSRC) was established to regulate crop and other surpluses. In a May 14, 1935, address, Roosevelt said:

“... The federal government formed a Drought Relief Service (DRS) to coordinate relief activities. The DRS bought cattle in counties that were designated emergency areas. Animals determined unfit for human consumption were killed; more than 50% were so designated at the beginning of the program in emergency areas. The DRS assigned the remaining cattle to the Federal Surplus Relief Corporation (FSRC) to be used in food distribution to families nationwide.

Although it was difficult for farmers to give up their herds, the cattle slaughter program helped many of them avoid bankruptcy as they could not afford to keep their cattle, and the government paid a better price than they could obtain in local markets."

Out of pain, progress! I hope!

More Disasters, 5/35

We've seen that the continuing dust storms are frighteningly visible in the newsreels. I saw one engulfing Spearman, Texas, in May. You could almost plant crops in that cloud! *Could this new radar thing be used to look at storms?*

Across the world, a 7.1 magnitude earthquake destroyed Quetta, in modern-day Pakistan, on May 31, killing 40,000.

Jesus, can you even picture 40,000 bodies? And how many more would be injured? I'm guessing five times as many are injured as killed. How many more suffered from disease and starvation as a result? We cannot predict where the quakes will occur or their magnitude: all we can do is respond to the loss of life and damage. And do we? Maybe we need a quick reaction force? *Is anybody thinking about that?*

The 1935 Labor Day hurricane, the strongest ever to strike the United States, hit the Upper Florida Keys as a Category 5 storm with 185(!) mph winds, killing 423. *How prepared are we to deal with such storms?*

We can't continue to just rely on: "Run for your lives, kids. Here comes another damned twister!"

There appears to be a need for a widespread government effort, given the widespread occurrence of weather-related problems. We can't change the weather, but we should be able to track it better. I just read there are regional offices in Jacksonville, Fla., Washington, D.C., San Juan, Puerto Rico, and New Orleans, La. The offices comprise the nation's first hurricane warning program. That's a lot of open space between them. *How many more would be needed?*

WPA, 6/35

The Works Progress Administration (WPA) is a New Deal agency that will employ millions of job seekers (mostly men who were not formally educated) to carry out public works projects, including the construction of public buildings and roads. It is a key part of the second phase of the New Deal, nicknamed the Second New Deal.

Reynolds tells me many of his former constituents have contacted him with gratitude that their needs are finally being met, saying things like "Not only am I earning a salary, but I'm learning skills that will be useful when this damned depression is over!"

That's what I like to hear! And how does it all come together?

WPA will supply 10–30% of the costs of the projects. Usually, a local government sponsor will provide land and often trucks and supplies, with the WPA mainly responsible for wages. WPA sometimes takes over state and local relief programs that originated in related government programs.

By its end, WPA constructed more than 600,000 miles of streets and over 10,000 bridges, in addition to approximately 800 airports built or expanded, including New York's LaGuardia Airport. These projects allowed major expansion of air travel.

ER, Civil Rights Leader, 6/35

I'm seeing that Eleanor Roosevelt is a significant voice and advocate for social causes within the administration. Notably, she has become an essential connection to the African American population in this era of segregation, vocal in her support of the civil rights movement. After she inspected New Deal programs in Southern states, she concluded that the programs were discriminating against African Americans. Roosevelt became one of the strongest voices in her husband's administration insisting that benefits be equally extended to Americans of all races.

Roosevelt also broke with tradition by inviting hundreds of African American guests to the White House. And, in 1936, she became aware of conditions at the National Training School for Girls, a predominantly Black reform school located in a *predominantly Black neighborhood of Washington, D.C.* She visited the school, wrote about it in her "My Day" column, lobbied for additional funding, and pressed for changes in staffing and curriculum. Her White House invitation to the students became an issue in Franklin's 1936 re-election campaign. Too bad for the bigots!

When the Black singer Marian Anderson was denied the use of Washington's Constitution Hall by the Daughters of the American Revolution in 1939, Roosevelt resigned from the group in protest and helped arrange another concert on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial. *Clearly bigots have no shame, or they wouldn't be bigots! I wish she could succeed her husband! When will we be able to have a woman President? Franklin has a good heart but is hormonally deficient, as I later saw in his cold-hearted. if pragmatic, rejection of Jews fleeing Nazi persecution!*

National Youth Administration (NYA), 6/35

Jessica McReady, my friend from high school, finally arrived for a visit. We'd kept up our economical onion skin correspondence all those years. Can it really have been fifteen years since I saw her? As cute and lively as ever, and now a high school teacher, she is deeply interested in the plight of young people in this depression.

I asked her, "So, as a teacher, what do you think of the AYC being brought into the New Deal?"

"I had doubts about that bunch," she said, "what with that reputed communist influence in its leadership, but students kept asking about it. Eleanor Roosevelt's relationship changed my mind, so I was glad to see its being taken into to the National Youth Administration (NYA), as a part of the new WPA."

"Yeah," she continued, "she got the AYC into the government where it belongs, where it can provide work, education, and job training for unemployed young men and women."

I replied (so casually!) that I had attended a dinner at which Mrs. Roosevelt declared that she frequently experienced moments of real terror, terror, fearing that we might be losing this generation."

“Oh, yes,” Jessica responded, “people who don’t have a teen in the house might not realize youth unemployment has risen to 30% and the kids face the grief of not being able to live independently or afford education to become able to support themselves.”

“I love FDR,” I said, “but we are so lucky to have gotten ER as part of the bargain.”

Jessica responded, “I have to read her My Day column without fail. Can you imagine a First Lady being so fully involved in a major program?”

“Yeah, as an adviser, planner, investigator, and publicist? Amazing!”
And she still manages to write to me and have us for dinner!

“Hey,” chipped in Jessica, “We’ll be developing the youth’s talent while keeping them from stressing the still-tight labor markets,” I laughed. She put her hand on her heart and said, “I am so looking forward to all that!” I responded with the same gesture.

By 1937, looking back, more than 400,000 youth were employed or participating in occupational training under the NYA. This training included construction or repair of thousands of buildings and even tennis courts.

The NYA also trained young men in various workshop skills, including building or renovating nearly half a million pieces of furniture, repairing millions of pieces of playground equipment and other equipment, even mechanical equipment, and sidewalks.

Young women made up nearly half of the total enrollment. They served millions of lunches to school children, made millions of articles for hospital supplies, and produced more millions of articles of clothing for needy families.

“So”, I say to myself with delight, “we’re not forgetting the ladies, Abigail Adams! My generation is finally remembering your words from so long ago!”

Authoritarianism, 6/35

For some reason, perhaps due to the global depression and opportunism, there has been a turn toward authoritarianism.

My father-in-law, Reynolds, thinks the depression and the lingering wrap-up of the last war have brought out a vicious streak in the world. I hope that’s “all”, since that might change.

Otherwise

In March, Estonian Prime Minister Konstantin Päts staged a self-coup by declaring a state of emergency, with the approval of the parliament, beginning the country's Era of Silence. Soon afterward, in Austria, the May Constitution of 1934 marked the beginning of the Austrofascist Federal State of Austria.

It goes on

In the same month, Prime Minister Kārlis Ulmanis established an authoritarian government in Latvia, which might be instructive: Ulmanis, with the support of the Minister of War, proclaimed a state of war and dissolved all political parties and the parliament. The bloodless coup was carried out by the army and units of the national guard loyal to Ulmanis. They moved against key government offices, communications, and transportation facilities. Many elected officials and politicians were detained, as were any military officers who resisted the coup d'état. For the next four years, Ulmanis ruled by decree, without a parliament.

And on

Then, Kimon Georgiev staged a coup d'état in Bulgaria. And, at the end of June in Germany, in the Night of the Long Knives, the Nazis purged the left-wing Strasserist faction of the Nazi Party, as well as prominent conservative anti-Nazis, in a series of political murders.

And finally

Adolf Hitler became *Führer* of Germany following the death of President Paul von Hindenburg, and the army swore a personal oath of loyalty to Adolf Hitler. Two weeks later, in a referendum, 90% of the German population approved of Hitler's assumption of presidential powers. *Can you believe there were that many stupid voters? How can you have a democracy of such fools? Government of the scared and self-centered. I guess.*

I am afraid of the way the world is going. Oh, my darling Susan, is this the kind of home you will inherit?

In early September, a massive Nazi rally, a propaganda spectacle, was held in Nuremberg. Apparently, these will be held annually until? German rearmament is on full bold display.

In December, Japan renounced the Washington Naval Treaty of 1922 and the London Naval Treaty of 1930. They are shrugging off any restraints. *To what end? I'm afraid we can imagine.*

Labor, 7/35

President Roosevelt signed the National Labor Relations Act (or “Wagner Act”). The law enhances labor’s ability to unionize and, over the long term, makes labor-management relations less violent because labor won’t have to deal with management violence. *It is only fair that labor will now have a right to a protected bargaining position.*

The Arts, Thank God! 8/35

I am so pleased the Administration didn’t forget the arts: We must encourage writers and artists in these challenging times! I’m tempted to ask, “Or what’s the point?” Of course, the others would say, “If not us, what’s the point?”

I spoke with Lizzie French, my old suffragist friend, who had told me about the *Astronomers Monument*. about how the arts have fared. She sang praises of the Public Works of Art Project, which ended in May of last year. This 5-month-long program employed almost 3,400 artists and created over 15,000 works of art. There was also the Treasury Relief Art Project, established to hire unemployed artists to create art for public places.

We now have Federal Project Number One, lyrically named, don’t you think? Eventually it contained the Federal Art Project, Federal Music Project, Federal Writers’ Project, Federal Theatre Project and Historical Records Survey. Collectively, these programs created hundreds of thousands of artworks, performances, books, plays, historical inventories, and more, *and I’m damned proud of them! They made it easier for us all to get through this terrible time.*

In its Historical Records Survey, many former slaves in the South were interviewed, producing documents that are of immense importance to American history. *Its theater and music groups toured the United States, giving more than a quarter of a million performances. Its archaeological investigations led to the discovery of pre-Columbian Native American cultures and fostered the development of professional archaeology in the U.S.*

By its end in 1939, the program had created about 10,000 easel paintings, over 900 murals, and nearly 50 sculptures. The Historical Records Survey inventoried the historical records of more than 3,000 of the 3,143 U.S. counties. Both made heavy use of microfilm. If only I’d had that for my camera-Times articles!

Social Security, 8/35

Now we come to my favorite New Deal achievement, the Social Security Act. Finally, we have finally joined most European countries, including Germany, in providing health, old-age, and disability benefits.

The driving force behind the law was FDR's dynamo Secretary of Labor, Frances Perkins. She brought to the position a vision of government very different from that of the Republicans who had ruled in the 1920s. While men like President Herbert Hoover had harped on the idea of a "rugged individualism" in which men worked their way up, providing for their families on their own, Perkins recognized that this isn't always possible. The vision of a hardworking man supporting his wife and children was more myth than reality: her own husband suffered from bipolar disorder, making her the family's primary support.

Look at the unemployment lines, men shuffling along for hours trying to find a job, glad for a free donut in place of lunch. These are not men unwilling to work to support their families! The overwhelming unemployment, hunger, and suffering caused by the Great Depression made Perkins believe that state governments alone could not create a safe, supportive community for ordinary people. Unfortunately, congressmen had little interest in passing such legislation either, worried that unemployment insurance and federal aid to dependent families would just undermine a man's willingness to work. *They think the man shuffling along loves that stale donut?*

Perkins recalled that Townsend's plan to give everyone over 60 \$200 a month had startled the Congress of the United States into an awareness that the aged have votes. The wandering boys didn't have any votes; the evicted women and their children had very few votes. If the unemployed didn't stay long enough in any one place, they didn't have a vote. But the aged people lived in one place, and they had votes: Now, every Congressman had heard from them about the Townsend Plan.

Out of this awareness, FDR put together a committee to come up with a plan to create a basic social safety net, but committee members could not make up their minds until Perkins locked the members of the committee in a room with encouragement from "a couple of bottles of something or other" that she put out to cheer their lagging spirits. They finally agreed on a plan. It passed Congress overwhelmingly. *The time had finally come.*

It had been heartbreaking when The Sheppard–Towner Act was forced to expire in 1929, despite women’s groups having fought to preserve it. Now, it set the framework for maternal and infant care in the Social Security Act, which used the power of taxation to pool funds in a basic social safety net. It provided grants to states for maternal and child health services through the Children's Bureau, which could include some limited support for midwifery training in certain states. *In certain states. Sigh!*

Much later, Perkins said, “One thing I know: Social Security is so firmly embedded in the American psyche today that no politician, no political party, no political group could possibly destroy this Act and still maintain our democratic system. It is safe. It is safe forever, and for the everlasting benefit of the people of the United States.”

God, I hope so! My former party would surely never be able to undermine it, try as they might.

Nazi State Culminates, 9/35

Finally, in July in a final blow, the Nuremberg Laws went into effect in Germany, removing citizenship from Jews and effectually declaring war on humanity. One more result of the allies’ ignoring the limits they had set, in their own defense.

I’m relieved to say my Jewish friend Hannah Schwartz managed to convince her whole family that they had to leave before this.

Childcare, New Deal, 12/35

Old hands at government agencies are a treasure of experience and knowledge. Those at the Children's Bureau created the child-focused sections of President Roosevelt's Social Security bill: Imagine the lack of all of these guides!

Aid to Dependent Children provided matching grants for existing mothers' aid programs.

Maternal and Child Health Care aided clinics, professional education, and medical care for needy children.

Crippled Children's Services created federal matching grants to help children with physical disabilities.

Child Welfare Services gave state grants to address the needs of dependent and neglected children.

When the Social Security Act was signed in 1935, the Children's Bureau was granted authority to administer the last three of these programs. Aid to Dependent Children was administered by the newly established Social Security Board.

In the meantime, the Children's Bureau remained active in the campaign against child labor. In 1933, the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA) had opened the door for the Bureau to establish industry-specific child labor codes and the first federal minimum age for full-time employment. *Imagine, Dear Susan, children having to work full-time, even missing the schooling that was their way out!*

The NIRA was declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court. These safeguards were so overdue! Many of its provisions, fortunately, were recreated in the Fair Labor Standards Act passed three years later. *But three years later! Ground grudgingly given by the greedy! The Greedy Old Party (GOP). If I weren't trying to be reasonably ladylike, I'd use the plural of the P word I really have in mind.*

Marvels of the Year, 12/35

On January 12, our friend Amelia Earhart became the first pilot to make a solo flight from Hawaii to California, over 2400 miles! *Susan aches with jealousy and asks, "What will be left for me to do? There's no need to keep such news a secret from her. She reads my Times and listens to the news on our radio, too.*

The following month, radar was used to detect aircraft at Daventry in the UK. Lord, how many ways will this radar be used? Vital information from empty air?! Susan reminds me the air is no longer empty: *We have filled it with all kinds of noise and information.*

It Can't Happen Here, 12/35

Reynolds, Joe's dad, has been heavily involved in the ACLU's court victories, including the landmark case *United States v. One Book Called Ulysses* in 1933, which reversed a ban by the Customs Department against the book *Ulysses* by James Joyce.

When Sinclair Lewis's *It Can't Happen Here* came out this year, Reynolds loved it. He urged everyone in the ACLU to read it as a manual for a coming struggle for democracy, saying the founding fathers foresaw the would-be dictator as the ultimate danger to the democracy they gave us. "I don't know when, but such a man will arise to try to lead us astray," he said.

America is nonetheless now waiting for the re-flowering of democracy. Too bad it took a horrible depression and drought to make it seem ready to blossom this time. Thank you, Mr. President!

Nazi Xmas Message, 12/35

Now we know, from the deputy leader of the Nazi party, that Germany's rearmament is a bulwark of peace. So, put away your gas mask, break out the schnapps, and run like crazy!

BERLIN, Dec. 24.—Rudolf Hess, Minister Without Portfolio and deputy leader of the Nazi party, in a Christmas message broadcast to Germans throughout the world contrasted tonight what he called Germany's "secured" peace with war preparations in other European countries. He declared Germany's rearmament was a bulwark of peace.

"A long time has passed since Germany could celebrate a festival of peace so secure as the peace this year," he asserted. "A year ago I could not foresee that kind fate would so soon make it possible for the Fuehrer to proclaim Germany's liberty to rearm."

++17. Milepost, 1936

In the Race, 1/36

OK, at President Roosevelt's direction, I got in the race running to represent Tennessee's District 2, centered in Knoxville. I'm afraid it was crazy. Reynolds tried to be polite, smiling tightly and just saying, "Ahh, you know this is a strongly Republican district with a congressman elected for nine straight terms already."

I had consulted him, of course, but nervously went ahead on my own, answering his stunned look with, "Maybe the voters will be bored enough with Congressman James Willis Taylor to elect me."

In Washington on a lightning trip to round up political support, I made the comment about bored voters to President Roosevelt. He threw his

head back laughed long, and said, "That might work, especially with some help from your friends to tell how interesting your background is! I'll make+ sure to have a campaign stop there to back you. I want you in Congress!"

Well, on my trips around the district, I often had supporting talks from John Morgan on Joe's Medal of Honor service, and my husband, Ray, on my "basketball service" (crediting me with getting women's basketball going as if it never had been at UT). Ray couldn't be restrained from mentioning the football game when UT played the congressman's college to a winning score of 104 to 0 in 1905. (*Ray was a waterboy then.*)

The woman whose childbirth I'd aided in my office, holding the chortling baby aloft, brought the audiences to tears. The high school, suffrage, and civil rights communities weighed in on my eager work for them. My contacts from my UT school paper days, many of whom are involved in papers around the district, did make sure I got good press throughout the campaign. Abby Crawford Milton spoke on my dedication and potential, mentioning the woman President thing she'd predicted for me, right in front of the President. *How embarrassing!*

Oh, I forgot to mention there was no opposition from other Democrats, just expressions of sympathy for my sacrifice. No one had bothered for years. But, when FDR pulled into town, even many of the Republicans cheered him and took in his lavish praise of me.

World Out of Control, 3/36

The world said nothing much when, in violation of the Treaty of Versailles and the Locarno Treaties, Nazi Germany reoccupied the Rhineland. *I heard that Hitler and other Nazis later admitted that the French army alone could have destroyed the German army. When will the Europeans ever learn to put down their teacups and again be strong?*

But, speaking of strength, **this** world away, the Remington Rand strike of 1936–37 occurred, spawning the notorious *Mohawk Valley formula*. That's a corporate plan for strikebreaking.

The plan includes discrediting union leaders, frightening the public with the threat of violence, using local police and vigilantes to intimidate strikers. If that's not enough, it extends to forming associations of "loyal employees" to influence public debate, fortifying workplaces, and employing large numbers of replacement workers. Finally, of course, it involves threatening to close the plant if work is not resumed. *You've*

doubtless seen the plan in action, maybe more than once, not always knowing its source.

Oh, and back to Europe, a Rome-Berlin Axis was formed in October. *I think this must be a war alliance. Great! Is this movie over yet? I think I have to go pee.*

Madison Square Garden, 10/36

I wish I could have been in New York to hear FDR's speech culminating his second presidential campaign. (Thank heaven for my **Times** to bring it to me.) FDR decried war on "Government by organized money" and stated that progressive taxation and mass unionization had drastically reduced the wealth and power of big money.

He declared that in 1932, the American people wanted peace. ... escape from the personal terror which had stalked them for three years. ... peace that comes from security in their homes: safety for their savings, permanence in their jobs, a fair profit from their enterprise. ... peace in the community, the peace that springs from the ability to meet the needs of community life: schools, playgrounds, parks, sanitation, highways—those things which are expected of solvent local government. ... escape from disintegration and bankruptcy in local and state affairs.... protection of their currency, fairer wages, the ending of long hours of toil, the abolition of child labor, the elimination of wild-cat speculation.... And, finally, they sought peace with other Nations—peace in a world of unrest. *Oh, may it be!*

He stressed that Government by organized money is just as dangerous as Government by organized mob." *Heaven help us if we ever have both. They are not that far apart.*

"Never before in all our history," he declared, "have these forces been so united against one candidate as they stand today. As he'd said in 1932, they are unanimous in their hate for me—and I welcome their hatred." **YES!**

"But they are guilty of more than deceit," he concludes. "When they imply that the reserves thus created against both these policies will be stolen by some future Congress, diverted to some wholly foreign purpose, they attack the integrity and honor of American Government itself. Those who suggest that, are already aliens to the spirit of American democracy. Let them emigrate and try their lot under some foreign flag in which they have more confidence No man can occupy the office of President without realizing that he is President of all the people."

I was especially proud to hear him say, "Of course we will continue to work for cheaper electricity in the homes and on the farms of America, for better and cheaper transportation, for low interest rates, for sounder home financing, for better banking, for the regulation of security issues, for reciprocal trade among nations, for the wiping out of slums. For all these we have only just begun to fight."

"We will persist in successful action for better land use, for reforestation, for the conservation of water all the way from its source to the sea, for drought and flood control...."

"Peace on earth, good will toward men," he concluded, "democracy must cling to that message. For it is my deep conviction that democracy cannot live without that true religion which gives a nation a sense of justice and of moral purpose."

Roosevelt Reelected, 11/36

I was nervous, but the people restored my confidence in their judgment. Despite the frightening continuation of the depression, they overwhelmingly re-elected the President by a margin of almost 2-to-1, securing him all but 2 of the 48 states. The Republican Party fell to a bare 88 seats in the House of Representatives with 16 in the Senate and won only four governorships. *(That Johnson guy from Texas won big, even from a hospital bed for an emergency appendectomy, maybe with the help of his 18,000 friends he'd helped get jobs.) My own race is still undecided, so I cling to my implausible hope. I keep saying to myself, it won't be a rejection of me if I lose, preparing to cry if I lose.*

Through it all, FDR continued to speak to the American people directly via his radio fireside chats, pulling the country together.

End of the Race, 11/36

After three long days of counting and checking, the results surprised me, being closer than I expected, but ... I barely won my seat. I'll get one vote in the House like those who won landslides. *Is this real? Me, Mercy Hamblin Phillips?*

Ray's been taking piloting lessons in his new four-seat plane so we can move back and forth to the home he bought us on Capitol Hill. Susan is excited about the plane, of course. So am I, with mixed feelings!

With that plane, there will be minimum disruption for Susan and maximum time for my work in Washington and in the district for me, leaving as little to chance as possible for the next race. *Next race! And very importantly, more alone time for Ray and me! You get the feeling I'm enjoying this political thing?* On my election to Congress, the president sent his congratulations and invited me to visit. *Ahh, I like the sound of that! I think he's not going to forget me.*

There was one thing I had to do at the Capitol. I walked up all those steps, and inside those great doors, I stood, just looking around the rotunda's dome, and feeling. Feeling it's a long way from that suffragist jail cell in 1917, eh!

McGhee Tyson Airport, 11/36

Work has already been completed on our new airport, and I just attended the dedication. *I've been invited to the opening next year!*

Construction began in 1935 as one of the first major Works Progress Administration projects in the area. It will open in June 1937 with much fanfare, including parades, an air show, and an aerial bombardment display by the 105th Aero Squadron, which is based at the field. *How grand to be able to fly into it in our own plane and, yes, have VIP treatment as the district's representative! Yes, I do like it all!*

Right now, the airport smells so new. Fresh concrete, a bare wiff of fuel.

Susan, keep me humble, as only you can!

Happy(!) New Year, 12/36

Reynolds, Louise, and I are gathered in front of our Christmas tree for eggnog, old year memories, and New Year wishes. Baby, our puppy, very old now but still with us, is snoozing at our feet. Can Susan be coming home from college and eighteen already?! Yes!

The door bangs opens and in comes Ray from the airport with her and special company: Grandma and Doc, who had said they are too old to make the trip, until Ray said, "I'll fly you in my brand-new plane, faster and more comfortable than the old one. You can sit and read a book or look at the scenery, and we'll be landing." *Well, they'd both been wanting to fly before they couldn't*

"That is some airplane Ray has! I wish we could all fit into it!" said Doc to us all.

I rolled my eyes.

Ray smiled and said, "Susan and I will be ready to move up to twin-engines soon."

Susan could only say, "Oh, my God! You've married a mind reader, Mom!"

Moving back to earth and to the dinner table through clouds of delicious smells, we could begin to go over the year's staggering events and eating the feast our excellent cook had ready. *I never did like my own cooking much! Thank God, there isn't much need for it now.*

Last Words, For Now, 12/36

I hope that if somebody reads this book some time, it will all seem so bizarre as to be impossible. A dust storm that big that lasted so long? Rich people so greedy that they fought the basic welfare of poor ones? Opposition to protecting the only environment we have? I wish I could still agree that it's crazy fiction, but I lived through it! I never heard of such a complex disaster as we've had. And to think it overlaid that other huge disaster, the worst depression in history! How could we survive it? Thank heavens, we didn't have the biggest war ever as well. That would surely have been too much! I hope that by the time you have finished my story, you'll know we did survive it all — and without that huge war that seems to be looming.

I'm the busiest I've ever been, but I hope to continue this story in the coming years. God knows what politics may bring about for me, via Ray, Reynolds, and Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

Author's Afternote

I have tried to be as historically accurate as possible, except for characters made up for the story's sake, namely Mercy Martin, her extended family, and her incidental associates. I think what I could tell with the help of the made-up characters makes it all more personally meaningful, as it needs to be. Changes made by the fictitious characters are fictitious, of course, though as realistic as I could make them. Mercy's sister suffragists are real and rendered accurately, I hope. Interactions with Mercy are necessarily fictitious, though authentic. The struggle for woman suffrage is one of the great human dramas of our time. Its impact on the related social issues is told in the last novel of the series. I expect that will be available through Amazon as Kindle e-books and paperbacks when completed within one year.

For historical accuracy, I have not capitalized black, white, and negro. Mercy would not have, at that time. My own preference, "African American," had not yet come into use.

I would be delighted to hear your opinion of the book in a review on the book's Amazon or Goodreads page. Other information on this and my first novel in the series are on my website on their Amazon pages. To leave reviews, scroll to the bottom of book's Amazon page (way down!). Feel free to write me at davidsmccr@comcast.net.

You might enjoy my first, let me say, very creative novel, *Fly Twice Backward: Fresh Starts in Times of Troubles*, an interactive multi-media science fiction novel that centers on a man finding he has fallen back to age twelve and is having to deal with “why,” “how,” and “what now?” It is described further on the Amazon page for the book.

My special thanks to my Fiverr betareader known there as Kathy_Doris for her extremely careful and encouraging reading. This novel owes a lot to her care and concern.