

Hilliard, Ohio  
May 18, 1959

Dear Mom & Dad -

Ann is much improved now, and is helping some with the housework -- so it gives me more time. Since she is slightly behind with her letters, I told her I would write to you. As you probably already have a copy of the "Newsletter", which went to Alice, Jewell and Dorothy, you are already pretty well aware of Ann's trip to the hospital.

I should write to you and Dad once in a while, anyway, and I think I would if I had a typewriter here all the time. I have one borrowed again from the office, trying to do some of Texaco's work so that I won't be completely snowed when I go back to work next week.

I'm not sure I told the girls in the Newsletter that I was taking two weeks of my vacation in order to stay and do housework during Ann's convalescence. This means, of course, that we won't be able to make a trip to your house as we originally planned. We couldn't have, anyway, the first two weeks in June, because the doctor told Ann she couldn't make any trips for six to eight weeks after the operation. I still have one more week coming, scheduled now for Thanksgiving week. We plan to see you then, or else change it to sometime in late July or early August. Anyway, we'll see you all for sure before the next school term begins. And we may also be able to get down over a three-day weekend holiday -- there are some of those coming up -- like July 4th and Labor Day. Maybe we can all come down and shoot a few firecrackers. Can't shoot 'em up here because it's against the law. I suppose it's illegal in Tennessee too, but I know there are always some available. Personally, I don't see anything wrong with fireworks, if their handling is supervised by grownups. Boy I sure used to look forward to Fourth of July 'crackers, fishing trip, picnic, etc. Dad always saw that we did something, I remember. Now I'm rambling, so I'll start a new paragraph.

The nextdoor neighbors have two small children -- not school age yet -- and over the weekend their daddy built them a sandbox. Result -- we couldn't keep ours out of it, so today I built them one. Materials cost just a little over five bucks and I believe it was worth it. They sure love it. It needs a little more sand, because when David gets going with his shovel he gets into the mud underneath, because it doesn't have a wooden bottom -- just dirt. Tonight when I bathed him, I could feel sand in his hair -- "but not barry much" -- as he put it, so I didn't wash his head yet.

Mom, I want to ask you something -- how in the world did you ever wash, cook, iron, make beds, sweep floors, wash dirty ears (16 of them) -- when you had all us kids at home. I'm having a heck of a time keeping up with four kids with only eight ears. Of course two of them are big enough to clean their own. But one of them I have to "inspect" sometimes -- that's Billy. Besides, I have an automatic washer, and I've found that's the easiest job of all. I just pile in a load of clothing (sometimes have trouble sorting the loads) push a button, and the washer cleans 'em, rinses, and then spin dries them. Oftentimes the lighter materials come out dry enough to ~~dry~~<sup>iron</sup> and wear immediately. Sure wish you had one of them -- although I guess you still hire some of your washing done, don't you? Of course, the work begins after they're washed -- I'm no expert at ironing, and I always manage to have a big pile somewhere in the house that needs to be ironed and put away. I suppose you got some help from us lazy kids -- but I think I remember carrying up the water for the wash and that was about all we did. And boy, what a job. I always thought I was going to break my fingers before I got there, but of course little boys have great imaginations, don't they? YOU knew it wouldn't hurt our fingers, didn't you? But, honest now, when you write, won't you admit to me it was an awful lot of hard work? And you were always singing, too. Maybe that's the reason you were able to carry on!

Dad, I'm a little bit disappointed that I didn't get down there in June as planned. Of course, nobody plans to be sick, and it's just something that couldn't be helped. We're just real thankful that the patient is doing OK, and we'll be down later. I think I'm going to buy an Ohio fishing license for once, and try to take the boys fishing up here. Guess I'll leave Judy at home so she won't fall in the creek.

Right now we're getting another shower. Weatherman here predicts that we will have showers off and on for the next several days. Perhaps Ann has already told you we have a garden at a friend's place, about 10 or 12 miles south of us. This will make it grow. We have sweet corn, peas, beans, radishes, carrots, and onions out. No tomatoes, yet, but I hope to get that done in the next week or so.

It's time I should be in bed pretty soon. The kids are all asleep, and I'm gonna have a try at some of the office work before I turn in. So will close, now, hoping you are all feeling OK. Tell Dad I said to eat as much as he can and get some fresh air when the weather is pretty. Tell Caroline NOT to eat so much -- but she can have all the fresh air she wants. And you, Mom, eat as much and as often as you like, but don't work so darn hard. I've been doing a little housework, and I know now what it's like. Quit before you get everything done that you want to do, and rest a while. Lots of things can be put off 'til tomorrow, and sometimes not done at all and the house will look just as good.

Love to all,

*Bill*