

(Mrs. Dragia Karabuykov)



Learning
never ends

Mrs. Ralph Johnson

3161 No. Buffum Street

Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53212

28 February 1981

Dear Alice -

This is your Cousin Etheldeen.
We spoke on the telephone (12-16-79)
when you called to ~~with~~ ^{wish} you Uncle
Arthur (or Earl 2nd) "Happy Birthday."
He was 91. Now he is 94+ and not
well.

While Dragiz and I were
at Giant Forest (Camp ^{Upper} R2weah) in
Sequoia National Park for 99 days
last year. we received word that

Daddy had had a flare-up of the cancer of the prostate gland for which he had had an operation ten years ago. He was given radiation treatments, and that took care of the pain. It's in remission now. We were ready to cut short our vacation, but that proved to be unnecessary; his wife thought I could do more effective metaphysical work for him where we were, and I wrote to him every day. (Later, he said my letters kept him alive.) As soon as we returned to Pasadena, checked in with our doctor, and took a deep breath, we took the train from Los Angeles to Oceanside, where they met us at the station. Daddy looked better than I anticipated, but more frail, of course.

Then on October 18th, his wife had an accident (because of the sun in her eyes, she ran off the freeway) which put her in the hospital. I didn't get word of it until I got home that Saturday evening, and I caught the 8:30 A.M. train on Sunday to be with Daddy during the following two weeks. It was obvious that he had failed, mentally, and could not be left alone. He would forget his medications, leave water running full blast, leave the fire on on the stove, etc. He and I had a fine visit, and I took him to a nice restaurant within walking distance of their home for a long lunch so he could rest up for the walk home. During lunch he suddenly started talking to me as if I were his Mother and he was a college student. I let him carry on at a great rate, and later wrote him a note to the effect that I was his eldest daughter, Etheldean. He read it, looked at me, and laughed. (Usually wrote notes because of his hearing problem. He kept losing his batteries and hated the ear-piece, which he said hurt his ear.)

His step-daughter, Anita, drove us to see Maurine in the hospital where we left them alone to visit while she and I did errands. Maurine said she felt that she could no longer care for Daddy at home and gave good reasons; her daughter agreed. So they located a really fine guest home that Daddy's doctor recommended highly when asked about it. I had the unenviable job of writing the bad news to Daddy, and I'll never forget the look on his face. I tried to soften it by telling him that this was a temporary move until Maurine got strong enough to have him home. (I soothed my conscience about lying to him by reminding myself

that he is only there temporarily; he'll be going to his real home, probably soon. And I thought she might miss him so much that she'd bring him home and get help as required.)

He told me that he had had a strong hunch and begged her not to go out that morning to some rummage sale, but she insisted. Unused to being out so early in the morning with the sun in her eyes as she drove eastward, the accident happened. She was driving her usual 55-60 miles per hour.

from So on Saturday, November 1st, my two sisters came Alhambra and Hemet (Maurine and Betty) to help me and our darling step-sister, Anita, get Daddy moved to COUNTRY SQUIRE GUEST HOME
25533 Jesmond Dene Road
Escondido, CA. 92026

We took pictures and knick-knacks he likes, plus two desks and a reclining chair to make him feel at home. And we all stayed to have lunch with him. It really is a beautiful place on a hill, with lovely views in all directions, a spacious drawing room with a grand piano that gets played not only by his wife when she visits. His fellow guests are quiet, kindly people for the most part, but even after four months, he is still insisting on "going home." Often he has everything packed, ready to go. It's heart-breaking, of course. His wife has broken out in a bad rash on her legs and thighs, probably from nerves, but she, too, is frail, and could not now cope with him. She came home from the hospital on November 4th and is gradually getting around, but soon she may have to move into Escondido nearer her daughter and granddaughters. They all love Daddy and go to see him often. I've been able to go twice a month and spend a full day with him each time besides half days. We walk a little, I take books with pictures of interest to him, and I try to answer his correspondence. He is pleased to have me do that. I discovered that he can't even copy a short item that takes his fancy, so I copy for him into his permanent notebook. And I continue writing almost every day with enclosures of jokes, up-lift items, and pictures I cut out from here and there.

Betty Lou (Elizabeth Louise Bailey Roberge) has

bought herself a lovely home in Hemet. I'll let her tell you about herself.

Maurine Cartland Bailey Rinker lives in Alhambra and works in the Fraud Investigation Dept. of Crocker Bank, a department to be disbanded by June (all the work being done in an office near San Francisco thereafter), and they'll be finding another spot for her, probably as secretary to one of the executives in charge of the District.

I remember when I used to visit your home in Redding, how much I enjoyed your farm, except for attacks of asthma at night that required my sitting up all night sometimes. Your Daddy took me out in the wheat field with him one day and built me a little hut out of wheat bundles--- what do you call them? I had a jar of water with me and lay down, eating wheat from overhead, making up some romantic imaginary story for myself.

It was such fun watching your Mother make butter. And I loved jumping in a big tub of water under a windmill with you and your sisters and brother. I'm confused as to who's the eldest, Margaret? And isn't there a third sister back East? I know John is the only brother. *→ Dorothy, I now recall.*

I had a crush on Dewey! Aren't children funny? Always, I was attracted to older men. When we lived in Ames, I had no interest in the fraternity boys next door, but I was daft about two young college instructors in the English Department, Jack Frost (yes, his real name) and Tom Freeman. That was before I was 12 years old!

Dragia is my Bulgarian husband who became a citizen on his birthday, 11-16-73. His son, George (Gosho) is also a citizen now, and we three live in an old-fashioned white wooden house, two-storey, on the northwest corner of Villa & Madison, within walking distance of our beautiful City Hall and the Main Post Office, i.e., eight to ten blocks. Obviously, we like to walk.

Although we have reservations at Sequoia, we may instead go to Istanbul in early May. We have our passports renewed and our round-trip tickets bought, but may change our minds at the last minute. I prefer not to leave my country with the world situation what it is.... Sequoia seems more restful!!

Fondly, Sam.

Don't ask me why I got the sudden urge to write to you on this fine rainy day! I found your address... Now if I could just find Margaret's!