

March 12, 1942--1 P. M.

Darling:

The best news I've had today came in a wire from Aunt Effie this morning--a copy of which I shall enclose. In February, 1939, just before she came to see us in Washington when we were living at 1910 Kalorama Road, Aunt Effie wrote Uncle Claude, asking him to tell her just how much money she had because she wanted to make her will, and "if it is in perfectly legal shape." He answered that she had approximately \$52,000 and that her affairs were in good legal order. It appears that Miss Bernice (it was at her house in Jefferson that Aunt Effie was staying when she wrote Uncle Claude and received his answer) has found this letter!!! We had given up all hope of finding it. That ought to make Aunt Effie's claim a lot easier to prove, and maybe we won't have to even suggest the compromise I have worked out. I sent Senator the original wire, and wrote him two days ago that I thought we ought to go to Alabama before April first by all means.

I am very pleased at the business like way Aunt Effie is going about getting her claim ready, from all the evidence she can obtain and with conviction that it is quite right and she can win it. I was afraid she would not want to brook the probable selfishness of Uncle Harry, and maybe others, by demanding something we all know to be hers in equity but of which she has very little written evidence.

While we are on the subject of Aunt Effie, my dearest love, I want to remind you that we've made all the plans for her to come to Washington April first and I very much want her to, even though it is conceivable you might come home and Nellie and Mary might not move out. Aunt Effie hasn't been with us in three years and this is something I really want to do, my heart.

Next, I believe I shall give you the resume of office personnel, as I see it. Of course, remember this is by one who is very new and inexperienced in judging people and their performance. But here goes!

O. J. He is the most valuable person in the office. He does all the calling to the Departments and does it very well. He writes the bulk of the difficult, technical, and involved letters. He is not the easiest one in the office to work with, but I get along very well with him. He has far more information than any of us. I am trying to learn everything he knows, by having him explain to me the calls he makes and the steps he follows in solving the problem in each letter

--if it is something I do not know. All in all, he is the only one in the office it would be really hard to get along without. However, I do not believe his judgment is any better than mine, though his store of information is.

Mary She is the easiest person to work with and does her job splendidly. I have learned a lot from Mary and she is completely tactful about teaching me everything she knows without appearing to do so. She has been writing letters during the last three or four weeks (her own, not dictated) and I think she has a fresh approach, very necessary in an office like this. (It is so easy to become stale and use the same phrases all the time.) What I like most about Mary is that she is really interested in these people who write us their problems--at least in those whoseseem honestly to have merit. She is tickled pink when we get a yes answer on one of the "good cases" and grouches around when we fail. If there's any business where you ought to have a heart, and where you are more open to losing what sympathy you do have, it is this one.

Ed I see very little of Ed. Among the rest of the force he has the reputation of being slow; I have had no particular chance to observe this. He is quite agreeable. Much contrary to his reputation, he presented what may turn out to be one of the best ideas the office has had lately. It seems the OEM gets out bulletins of changes in priorities and orders affecting materials, which would affect various businesses. Ed suggested we send in to OEM lists of businesses in our district, made up according to what they sell--lumber companies, cement manufacturers, etc. OEM would then put them on their mailing lists for such releases as would affect them. I thought it was well worth looking into, so we got Texas Business Research Bureau at the University to send us a list of all manufacturers and retailers and asked OEM to send us a few sample bulletins. If it looks helpful, we'll see that our business houses get the bulletins and write them a letter to that effect.

Gayle I'm afraid Gayle just doesn't make the team. He is in too deep water. I would hesitate to say this if I thought he were trying hard and was earnestly interested in staying here in this office. I do not think he is. He apparently does not read his letters over before sending them in to me, though O. J. has told him to do so repeatedly. They come in with some glaring mistakes--perhaps he does not hear well when O. J. dictates to him. I think this will be taken care of in time, as I understand he has mentioned wanting to go home and I guess we could get him a job down there somewhere. He works hard enough, but he just doesn't have the necessary brain power and background and does not care.

Nellie She goes to school from nine to twelve and gets

down to the office about one or two, or later if we are having company and there are groceries to buy and some preparations to be made. She does all the clipping of newspapers and takes care of the scrap book. She brings in to me the list of clippings of births, deaths, weddings, 4H prizes won, mothers with five sons in the service, and all occurrences about which we might want to write a letter. I go through them and pick out all who are friends or acquaintances or whom I feel we can write though unknown to us (see letter dated either March 10 or 11). I divide these between Nellie, Mary, and myself. Nellie wrote some extremely clever letters to little boys winning calves in 4H contests and to some child of a friend who had a birthday, and I put her down to handle all future letters to children. She fills all the pens, keeps paper and supplies on all the desks, and does the purchasing as you requested. She is learning to file. In off minutes I thought she could start addressing the Blanco County poll tax list, which Mrs. Redford has already sent us. She is very willing and interested but still very much of a child.

I'll give you a report on me soon.

It's been a long time since I took any exercises, so I believe I'll quit for a couple of hours and go down and do that. By the way, dear, they tell me your watch is ready at the Jewel Shop, so I'll pick it up. My watch (the Jurgenson) stopped about three weeks ago. I at once took it to a jeweler; he said he could not find a thing the matter with it, but would undertake to fix it for \$4.50. He said he could fix my other watch for \$5.00 and guarantee it for a year because it was a simple and well known type of works--he was a little doubtful about the Jurgenson. The old watch is ready today. I suppose I might as well go on and have the Jurgenson worked on.

Goodbye, my love, always all my love