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April 17, 1981



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO

817 University, El Paso, Tx. 79902

JOSEPH M. RAY
Professor Emeritus
President Emeritus

Chillun:

Here it is April 17, the day after Scott's birthday, 42 as I reckon it, and I was asleep when Jettie reached him finally on the telephone this morning. Beth spent the night with us last night and we are going to take her home after supper and take the Robin to Dorothy tonight. Jettie wrote her Robin letter this morning, I think, but I haven't read it yet.

Things have been hopping around here in the past month. Scott was here for 10 days late in March; always big doings for us for the whole time: capped off with a swank buffet dinner for 30, including the new president of UTEP and other old friends to meet our kids (George was sick to his belly), and with Scott bartending so heavily that he didn't have a good time, I fear; but supper delicious as always with Jettie fixing it. No dog with Scott this time; rabies regulation cost him nearly \$100 to get him home last time. Nellie Bly, a miniature gray female poodle, found in a parking lot in Bardstown last summer and unreclaimed got run over by a car in Beneseo some months back.

Put Scott on a plane on a Thursday and met Sylvia & Rob on Monday for six days ~~and~~ and all of them good ones. Got a lot of time in examining the picture books and finding out about the Ray side of her family. Sylvia had about 2 hours of home movie of the red-headed league she lives in. Every day was for us full and delightful. Got a letter from her back home, reporting that the little girls had weathered the paternal supervision of her absence. Ole Bob was a prince to let her come to see us old folks.

Got to say something about Ronnie Baby. He's awfully pretty on a two-inch lapel button a friend in Connecticut sent me. Tried to wear it to a restaurant one night and Jettie threatened to throw it and me out of the car. I've got three or four old cronies (in Illinois, Oklahoma, Alabama, Connecticut, and San Antonio with whom I exchange low opinions of Ronnie Baby; make sure we don't spare the horses. So I won't bore you, since some of you won't want to hear them anyway. I don't like him, as you all know, and I hope to see him turned out in 1984, which he almost certainly will be, running the country for the big rich. Most of our Republican presidents have been hand in glove with the big rich, but none thus far have been so blatantly vocal about it. That's why I'm clean off of Carter, Joanna. I will have to stick to my guns on what I said in my last letter about him. He was the least effective president since Hoover and Coolidge. Even Truman was far more effective, pri-

(over)

marily because of his great strength of character. A panel of raters about 1965 (sixty historians) ranked him near great. (Ike near blew a fuse when he heard that Truman was ranked (more effective) than himself. Ineptitude is the word for Carter. He'll be ranked, when the time comes as below average, if not a failure, along with Taft and Grant and Harding. His greatest failure was, with 2/3 of the American voters democratic, he lost a fair election to a man (and turned over the powers of government) who talked and stood for the big money without blushing in apology, to a John Bircher openly and avowedly, and still is and is carving up our governmental policy in a manner that will keep John Birch's memory bright. Maybe he didn't belong to the John Birch Society. The John Birch society has about disappeared. The name has earned a deserved repose, but John Birchers are still with us, and Ronnie Baby is one of them. Whether he belonged or not, according to the old saying, if it quacks like a duck, and waddles like a duck, and runs with other ducks, dammit, it's a duck. John Bircher is a choice phrase in my lexicon, and Ronnie Baby is one. Here I've given off an anti-Reagan blast after I promised above not to. I started in on Carter. That's the man Carter turned the country over to. In 1976 I voted in high hopes for Carter; in 1980 I voted along with 44% of the voters for him as opposed to the first avowed candidate of the big rich to offer himself for the presidency. In retrospect any republican could have beat Carter. That's what Carter has done to my country. If I were a citizen of Plains, and he should offer for dog-catcher, I wouldn't vote a third time for him, ~~for a third time~~. I don't hate him; I just have reached a mature conclusion that ineptitude is the word for Carter. *I was so sure of him.*

This typing is execrable, and my old hands are worn out with it. I'll scribble the rest of my letter.

What next this and a good Robin is that 3 letters are from Red-foe + two from manuscript, all of the subject.

Sorry Wilma didn't feel like writing this time, when you feel up to it, Wilma, we'd love to have you put in a letter. We'd love to have you as a participant Scott, you still send the Robin to Wilma, & Wilma you send it to Sylvia, Dan & I, ⁴⁰⁰³³ ~~40033~~.

This Robin thing is a wonderful institution, one of the finest aspects of life.
Love to all, Uncle Joe

Route 2
Lebanon, Ky. 40033
June 8, 1981

Folks,

I am finishing the final two days of my yearly two-week post-school work in my library. With all the belt-tightening frenzy these days, there is talk of eliminating (or at least lessening) this extended employment. I'll not be overly distressed, however, if my four weeks after + before school are cut, as I can certainly use those lovely summer days at home.

We in Lebanon have been in a state of tension the past three weeks because Mama's husband, Ray Reinhart, has been suddenly cut down by a rare viral nerve disorder called Guillain-Barré syndrome (symptoms similar to those suffered by people who had an adverse reaction to the swine flu shot years ago). Ray is in intensive care in Lexington. He can barely raise his hands or move his feet, but he is expected to recover - though it may take as long as 1½ - 2 years. He is 63 and an extremely dear person. He and Mama have really enjoyed life the 4½ years they've been married. Mama has been very strong through the present ordeal but it is a constant strain, of course. No one can predict how much

or when Ray will recover, as it seems everyone with this disorder reacts somewhat differently. He has beaten pneumonia in the past three weeks and has a strong will to survive. We are optimistic.

Emily, Bob and I guffawed at the humorous excuse notes from parents. They, of course, are not only funny, but frighteningly typical.

Bob and I are still having good thoughts about our April visit to El Paso. It was peacefully relaxing — and I enjoyed being with Uncle Joe and Aunt Jettie more than I can describe. In pouring through family albums, I was particularly interested to find a photo of my grandmother, Vera, and her twin, Iris, at age 13 — a picture I'd never seen before. I think Audrey and Irene will be intrigued in years to come to realize that their great-grandmother and her twin were born almost exactly 100 years before they.

Love,
Sylvia

Route 2
Lebanon, Ky.
September 30, 1981

Dear Folks,

The tornado photos were dramatic, Emily. I vaguely remember hearing about a Minneapolis tornado in June, but until I read your Robin letter, I was unaware that your house had been a target. I suppose all damage is repaired by now. After a severe tornado roared through Louisville in 1974 I had nightmares of approaching tornadoes for many months. It was only after the 1974 incident that our local schools began conducting tornado drills.

Scott, I think you will agree that it is most amazing how beautiful My Old Ky. Home grounds still are after the July, 1980, tornado cruelly twisted off so many stately trees in front of the house. I nearly wept when I first saw the damage a few days after the trees were downed, never dreaming the area could be restored so quickly and be so attractive. Why, if a fellow had never witnessed the beauty of the old, majestic trees before the storm damage, he wouldn't guess My Old Ky. Home had ever

been more attractive. And the picturesque home is more visible from the highway now.

Irisine and Audrey will be 5 in October. Nearly every time we take them to church, one of them makes a remark which often causes Bob and me to lose our composure. Recently one Sunday morning, Audrey noticed a second priest had entered the altar area to assist the main priest with communion. Off-handedly, she made the comment, referring to the just-arrived clergyman, "You know, that man doesn't get to play God very often."

Love,
Sylvia

1/19/81

Dear Joe and Lettie,

Barbara and I returned from N.Y. Sat. night. Bill and Eric met our plane at Muskegon, and since the weather was fine we had a good trip home after a delicious dinner.

We left here at 2 P.M. on the previous Saturday and arrived in L'ville around 10 P.M. We did not know whether Emily would join us at O'Hare, but just a few minutes before our plane was due to take off, her plane arrived and she arrived at the gate in time.

We spent the night with Louella and the four of us went to B.G. by bus on Sunday, arriving around 2 P.M. We had reservations at the Holiday Inn on the 31 By. Pass where we changed clothes and then went to the Funeral Home.

There was a huge crowd at the Funeral Home. We met many of Joe's

parishioners and visited with some very nice ones. We also talked with Mary Jane, Bill, and James.

Wilma insisted that we go to the house (1253 Park) for supper, as so much food had been brought in. One of Wilma's sister's family went and one family from Scottsville and a friend of the boys. So much good food!

We went back to the Funeral Home Sunday night. Lucille came down and talked with us all of the time we were there. We were so shocked at her mental decline, she didn't know me or the girls, but she could give the ancestors' names back for many generations. She recited songs all of you sang to and about one another when you were little (Emily wrote them down). Often she would ask again who each of us was, and we would explain our relation to Ed. She wrote down our names and addresses and the next day she referred to her notes and said to me, "Now this is you, isn't it?" It is sad. She said

2.

that she goes to the farm every day. I asked what she does there, and she said, "Oh, I look around, eat lunch, and feed the dogs."

Mary Jane had told me in the afternoon that the paper reported that Lucille had sold the farm and she would be interested to learn if she told us since she had talked at length to her about the farm and had not mentioned selling. She didn't mention it to us either.

Louise came to the Funeral Home Monday morning and sat with the family at the funeral. She looks well, although she had just had a very bad cold. She was her same sweet, helpful self. She took Barbara and Emily to Virginia's house from the cemetery. Emily asked her about Lucille's mental state. (Emily knew nothing about Louise's and Lucille's bad blood), and ~~Lucille~~ Louise said, "I don't see Lucille. Lucille and Lovers are good friends, but I never see her. She drives by my house very slowly, looking in, but she never stops."

She would be welcome if she would come in, but she doesn't come.

Sam and Joe Eddie are darling boys. Sam drove us around, and we got to know him better. He was pitifully sad. Joe Eddie is the spit and image of his father. Wilma says that he works at it - makes a career of it. He is a handsome chap and has a personality plus. Emily heard him telling friends that he had flunked and that Western doesn't want him back. He said that he had cut classes and had not studied. He told me that he plans to get a job. I think he was working part-time.

Sam is in vocational school.

Wilma had painted and cleaned the Park Street House, and most of the furniture is just as it was when Virginia was there. It looks the same. The new parsonage was completely furnished, and Wilma had only five pieces there. Moving will not be a big

problem, a relief^{7.} as Wilma is exhausted. She was prepared for Joe's death. She said he had been getting weaker and weaker over a period of time.

None of Brown's family got to the funeral. Brown sent a lovely floral arrangement, and Martha and the six older children sent a large arrangement.

Barbara and Emily were the only Ray relatives, Lucille and Louise were the only Scott relatives, and Mary Jane, Bill, and James were the only Harman relatives in attendance. Sally and Willie sent their regrets that they were not able to come by their nextdoor neighbors. They said that Willie is dating a very nice man. They had been slipping around where they thought they would not be seen. The neighbors asked why they cared for people's knowing, and Willie said it had just been so long since she had dated that she felt embarrassed.

It was bitter cold in Kentucky -
two below zero in B. D. on the morning
of the funeral. I have never been colder
than I was Friday morn. on 4th street
in L'ville.

Due and his daughter Nancy went to the
funeral and took us home with her. Emily
had to fly home Tues., but the rest of us
stayed at Sue's until Thurs., when we
went to Louella's. We spent Thurs.
afternoon and Friday shopping, as
the sales were fantastic. I got
enough to last as long as I do,
according to Louella.

Pam came for lunch today. On
the way home from Muskegon, Bill
said, "Thank God for Pam!" She had
held things together in Barbara's
absence.

I am writing while I am by the
TV to be sure to hear about the
hostage. I hope you can read it.

Love,

Joanna

December 4, 1981

Dear Folks,

In the interim between Thanksgiving and Christmas I always cringe when I realize how ill-prepared I am for what looms ahead.

If I started on Jan. 1, I doubt I could get it all together the way I'd like. We do have 16 days off from school for Christmas vacation this year. Maybe I'll have myself organized in time yet.

Iris and Audrey paid their first visit to a shopping mall Santa yesterday. They wondered aloud later whether he was the same Santa who'd visited them in person last Christmas Eve. (They may have noticed that the mall Santa was somewhat less authentic looking than the portly fellow with the suspiciously-Ray nose who held them on his knees early on Christmas Eve, just before beginning his rounds. Though that Santa occasionally forgot his ho-ho's, he definitely did look the part.)

Dad spent several days with us at Thanksgiving. Glenn and Connie traveled from Athens, Ohio with 5-year-old daughter Betsy + 1-year-old Elijah in tow. Joe Adin was with us, too. Jack, in Missouri, couldn't make it but will be here Christmas after having moved to Carbondale, Illinois, and a different archaeological job.

I am surprised to hear of Joe Eddie's marriage, but I suppose he is in his early 20's now. He was quite an affable child, as I recall. I remember thinking he'd probably grow up to be a lot like Joe Wilson. Joe Eddie and Sam used to spend frequent weekends with Aunt Ginny when I lived with her ~~at~~ ^{during} college. Of course they were only frying size then.

Minneapolis has made national weather news twice lately with severe snow and ice storms. Hope a trend isn't set for the winter. Emily, you mentioned the twin research studies based in Minneapolis. Needless to say, twin studies fascinate me, though the research done in Minneapolis ~~is~~ primarily concerns identical twins reared apart (the ideal controlled experiment). Audrey and Presine are almost certainly fraternal, as nothing but their hair color is exactly the same. Their personalities, too, are quite different. They are double the pleasure + double the fun, though, most of the time.

Love, Sylvia



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12/10/81

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Dear Folks,

How do you like my wrinkled stationery that I held on to across Europe? This is a quaint, charming place right on the Rhine.

The Robin came yesterday, and I am out of character to be answering so soon. Maybe it is the Christmas spirit and again it may be that I was so happy that the Bird made such a quick orbit this time that I was motivated to get it on its way again. I really enjoyed all of the letters - and also the pictures.

Sylvia, no two of your little red-heads look alike. They are all cute - and so big.

Joe and Jettie, Beth and Mike are practically grown! Beth looks like her mother. Mike looks like the Moore boys. Cousins, huh?

We are having a taste of winter, but we can't complain, since it is later coming than usual. I have had two small parties in the last two weeks and each time the weather made the trip up my steps hazardous, in spite of my snow shoveling.



Wir bitten die Hotel-Zimmer bis 19 Uhr zu belegen.
Falls keine andere Nachricht vorliegt, müssen wir uns leider ein anderweitige Vermietung vorbehalten.

Nobody fell - to my great relief. A woman with a broken hip came yesterday in a wheelchair. He got her in via the alley, through the garage, and up the one back step and across an icy slab to the kitchen. Her husband was so sweet to go to no end of trouble to get her in and then come for her and do it all over again. All of us tried to lend a hand, but he did the hard part.

For the first time in my life, I am early with Christmas decorations. Also I am through with my shopping, I believe. Barbara and I went to Muskegon last week and hit some good sales.

I already have opened three presents. One, I felt sure, contained pecans, which I needed for baking. (I was not disappointed). I kept asking Barbara what I should use on my table for my Christmas party yesterday, and finally she confessed that her present for me was ideal. It is a pretty bowl and candle holders, which are gracing my table.

Scott, I was talking with a couple at church who were leaving for Florida. I mentioned that I grew up at Sonora, and they said they had been to Bardstown three times to see the Stephen Foster story, which they just loved. Over 500 miles each



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way to see a play, and they are not rich, by any means!

Jettie, thanks for offering me a refuge from the Michigan storms, but I believe I can take them better than the hassle at airports. I may go to Ky. to see spring arrive. I don't have the urge to drive down alone any more, and I used to think nothing of it. It isn't as safe as it was, and I am less brave.

We have Dial-a-Ride, which is as good as taxi service and costs seniors 25¢. I probably will not use my car much this winter.

Sylvia, Joe Eddie is the spit image of Joe Wilson. Wilma said he works hard at it. He is a handsome and genial chap. Sam is shy and quiet, but he was most hospitable toward us at Joe's funeral.

Louella was in B. G. for her 50th reunion and called Wilma who insisted that she come to see what she had done to the house. Louella said the house looks beautiful.



Wir bitten die Hotel-Zimmer bis 19 Uhr zu belegen

Falls keine andere Nachricht vorliegt, müssen wir uns leider eine anderweitige Vermietung vorbehalten

I am listening to Howard Baker et al. discuss the Libyan Affair. Do you think Qadhafi is after Reagan, or are they pretending he is to call off the Democrats and the Republican defectors? I feel better about Stockman after learning that he can add and subtract. I don't know why anybody was surprised at anything he divulged.

Michigan is in a really serious economic predicament, of course. I have faith in Bill Milliken, a good Republican, and I believe he will see us through, if it can be done. The future looks dark.

Jettie, have I reported to you that Helen of Michigan closed its doors for good in early fall?

Ludington has several new shops, and I can't see how they can prosper. It looks as if we are losing the boats, but a big and expensive condominium project is under way.

Pam is going after my Florida citrus order, and I will send the Robin to the Sutters.

Love to all,

Joanna