

25 BRADLEY STREET
DOBBS FERRY, NEW YORK 10522

June 11, 1997

Dear Margaret,

Enclosed is a copy of the picture of Pop, Aunt Lois and Grandmother McPhedran, kindness of Nancy Fraser Brooks, who lent me the negative. Pop's face is touching to me; was he wondering whether or not he was really part of the picture?

I am not sure that I ever saw Grandmother. Around the time of your birth, when she gave you the books, she must have already been sick with diabetes, the treatment for which she eventually refused to continue, and of which she died. Pop remembered her sadly and adoringly, describing how she played the piano and sang "My love is like a red, red rose" and "Break, break, break on thy cold grey stones, oh Sea." Do you know anything about her? Do you have a copy of the medical school portrait of Grandfather? I think Alex does; I don't know who else may have one, but I want one. I'll ask him. I seem to know a whole lot about Mother's family, but very little about Papa's, who were mostly so far away.

Do you recall, when Mother committed what Papa regarded as a dietary excess, his becoming very agitated and saying she might get diabetes from eating that way?

Past events seem to be often mixed up with present ones for me these days; I hope it is not a sign that the end is at hand. My current book

book for reading to Norman is Doris Kearns Goodwin's No Ordinary Time, about the Roosevelts during World War II. She quotes from Churchill's speech after the Dunkirk rescue--"We will fight..." I found I could not get through it and had to tell Norman that I must go back to my house to get a better pair of reading glasses. Now there is all this publicity about the 50th anniversary of the Marshall Plan speech. I was around at the time--in Cambridge, though not at commencement that year--but I scarcely attended to what I heard about it, being pretty well into my own concerns in those days; more so than in 1940. I remember that May at the Bach Festival, Pa buying the paper and the headlines about the imminent collapse of France.

I have left this in the typewriter too long; meanwhile, the drought has broken a bit, and the damp air has put a crimp in the paper. My garden is a riot of color--definitely a riot, as I have allowed the columbine and iris to sprawl and self-seed beyond their proper boundaries, and now I will have to correct this in some ruthless way. The gorillas have been here to destroy seedling trees and prune the suckers off the malus. They made quite a mess, but they got a lot done.

love,

