

Friday, December 17

Dear Bob —

This will probably be a not particularly intelligible letter because I haven't much that is intelligent to write about and it is late afternoon — early evening on Friday.

I keep telling people that you are coming home — and to more practical purpose asked Sig Lopez, Mr. Carroll's secretary, about applying as a substitute. There is a form — and an interview — and they very much need men substitutes. I've suggested also applying in CHS #3 (Nepher, Calhoun, Kennedy). Even if you decide to go back to Chicago at the end of March, you could do some substituting at a time when many teachers are out for illness.

I have the Beethoven Emperor Concerto on, now — very stirring (yesterday was Ludwig's 201st birthday).

I was becoming rather annoyed — as you know — with my World Lit. class. There are only 15 in it, and they are by law the brightest class I've had recently — and one of the laziest. A few days after I said they didn't have to sit in assigned seats, I was disturbed to notice how far they scattered from each other — and from me. After a really draggy first discussion of *Gay*, the *Selved Country* Tuesday, when I moved in Wednesday I made them move into a circle — they had to look at each other when they talked, and I wasn't in any dominating place — and everything went much better. Yesterday I was out (a cold bothered my eyes — nothing serious) — and fortunately knew one boy is good with A-V equipment. I asked that some of the record-filmstrips sets on the Middle Ages be shown. Today I showed the rest — and he automatically took over the projector while I took care of the records.

I was able to do 5 units in the one period - and the best part was not having to ask - he just did it. I wish there were something that each one in the class could do like that - without my having to appoint them, though. They need to be less passive, and I should also be willing and able to relinquish some activity, work whatever you want to call it, to them. (No - don't worry. I'm not going to try "one more year")

Did I tell you we have the record-filmstrips set on Civilization? It is based on the Clark series - often quotes him - but has other artwork, sometimes and an American narrator (better for the kids) - and adds 20th c. units. Also, each record-strip is about 15, not 50, minutes. But they are good. The school library has a machine with a screen like a TV screen and a record-player that automatically advances the strip to correspond to the record - so the kids can go in during study halls or after school to use them.

Later - a bit after 10:00

A cup of tea, the last side of the Bach Christmas Oratorio, and then - I had good intentions of marking at least one set of short compositions tonight and perhaps baking one batch of bread (challah or cardamon braid) for Christmas presents - but instead I watched the news, played most of the clarinet-piano book I bought for Jimmy and Tricia, looked at the Life double-issue on children, listened to Flanders and Swann, finished the background on Tricia's needlepoint bed, took a shower and used the Gaidley's English Lavender Talcum (the real old fashioned kind) that Abby and Al sent me as a present,

listened to one side of Fischer - Dickson - and now I'm writing to my little brother, will go to bed early (before 11:00?) - and get up early to finish Christmas shopping, bake bread, correct compositions, make lesson plans, write greetings on those postcards I brought in England for Christmas from them to fix the best-sized envelopes I could find - and so forth.

The week I have off in February is later than I thought - Saturday the 19th through Sunday the 27th - so you really should be home by then -

My opera subscription - spring season - starts 2/26 - Marriage of Figaro - Mozart

3/4 - Trefistofele 1/111 - Brito

4/15 - Così Fan Tutte - Mozart

4/29 - La Bohème - Puccini

(all Saturday matinees)

They are also doing Maria Stuarda (Donizetti), Summonee and Sonoke (Holby - something new, eh?),

Carmen, Cavalleria + Pagliacci, Giulio Cesare, La Traviata, Butterfly, Manon (Massenet),

Rigoletto, Roberto Devereux (Donizetti),

Susannah (modern American), The Makropoulos

Affair (Janacek - sounds repulsive), The Turn

of the Screw (Britten), and Tosca

King Lear should still be around (reviews sound good) - and Tiram! Vivat Regina!

The Robert Bolt play about Mary and Elizabeth is due to open soon.

I'd better end this before I get carried away.

Stay well - and happy - and do try to call Centerport Christmas Eve.

Love,  
Lois