

Aug 19, 1968

Darling Mum:- It was so exciting to have you call on Saturday! -- or was it yesterday? it's so easy to get mixed up on time. She up here on our dear River. I'm only sorry that we weren't all gathered in the Gloom: as I think I told you, Arch and Linda had gone off to pay ceremonial calls on Aunt Polly, etc., Phil had just left to photograph birds at the head of Whiskey; and I nearly went with him, which would have meant that no one might have been here to answer, as the remainder of the household, Paul, our two kitchen gals and Jenny, had gone off to Clayton for an afternoon of festivities. Jen sailed our skiff down to the big town, having entered it in a class called "Antique Boats -- Sail Division". The only other contender was the Haxalls' sailing skiff, manned by Bodie and Barton. Poor Jen managed to tip over right in front of the reviewing stand but wound up winning first prize! A man came here yesterday and handed her a little silver cup and today a lady from the local newspaper called up to get the proper spelling of Jen's name, builder of boat, age, etc. This last part, which is tricky, I had obtained from Uncle Jimmy, who thought it was the work of George Marshall, a boatman for Aunt Martha & Uncle Hewitt at Cement and builder of boats during the winter months, -- anyway it's been dated at between 1905 & 1910. Jen claims she got the prize because she tipped over and the judges felt sorry for her.

Phil came up on ~~NXXIX~~ Thursday of last week and Arch and Linda got booked a Friday evening plane which was meant to leave LaGuardia at 8:30 but never managed to take off until 1:45 am! Phil went to meet them at Watertown airport and spent the hours of waiting asleep in the back of my Volkswagen bus. They got in here around 3 or 4 a.m. I'd go to bed but was quite determined to stay awake long enough to see them. Phil found me lying comfortably sound asleep, with the light blazing, a book on my tummy and my glasses dangling somewhere under my chin. He didn't try to wake me. When IM told you over the phone that I'd had a "feeling" about Arch the first time we met him at a party in NYC way back in April, it was just that: a "feeling" with nothing to support it, no special behavior on the part of either of the young people. He and Lindy spent a weekend with us in Croton in mid-June and everyone was so busy talking politics that no further "feeling" even popped into my head. Of course the whole subject gained in interest when I called Linda on her Birthday down in Miami and she said that, whatever the outcome, the whole staff would get a week off right after the Convention and she and Arch were planning to fly to the Virgin Islands and pay a short visit to his parents. A few days later she called from Miami Airport just before taking off for the Virgin Isles and told me she and Arch planned to get married. Jenny, who had been the first to get the news and had left Miami Thursday night to stay with the John Whites (Sugar Bush-Hickory -- remember?) called shortly after this, all bubbling over and announced with pride that she would be the only bridesmaid and Cynnie Ryan Lambros the Matron of Honour. The date is Saturday, Oct 26th; the church is in Briarcliff (can't remember the name right now) and the reception will be at our house, with a tent in case of bad weather. We wrote the newspaper release yesterday and Linda was to mail it out today "for immediate release". I hope the Paris Times-Tribune, or whatever they call it, will run it. In any case I'll save you a clipping.

What can I tell you about Arch? We like him and think he's just the man for our girl, and that's saying a good deal. He's intelligent and gentle and has a lovely way of making you feel intelligent even when you're floundering around in a topic that is way beyond one's ken. He's 6 foot 4, weighs 145, has a fine sense of humor and an alert and active mind that, so far as I can see, is free of clichés and hang ups. I laughed when Linda told me you'd asked about his hair. It's curly and black and rather on the thin side -- not his best feature. His age is 34. He was married once before and, after a lot of anguish, got a divorce about a year ago. There are 2 children somewhere around, but I haven't heard him mention them, nor his first wife; I asked him about her yesterday and she sounds odd; about 3 months after they were married she developed a relationship with a gentleman from Indonesia and this still goes on, rather like a Somerset Maugham story where spells are cast. Lindy has a few days of cleaning up at the Rockefeller office and then she'll take a week off, up here maybe. After Labor Day she plans to return to the Museum to tie up some loose ends. Beyond that I don't know. Did I tell you in my last letter that the Guv had taken notice of her and might offer her a job in his regular office? This we got from Allie. Arch touched briefly on her remarkable administrative

ability ("we need the Lindas of this world"), her way with people and also a part of her own self which she has been down-grading: the scholarly part with a passion for research. We didn't have much time for talk but I gathered he rather liked the idea of her going back to the Met. It's less high-powered than a job in Rocky's office might be and Lindy could more easily combine that with the children they want to have right away. Mind you all this is guess-work based on a very short conversation out on the Western rocks.

T. Lee would be enchanted at the bustle there's been of late around various boat-houses. One afternoon the 2 Haxall boys came over with 2, 3 or 4 Moore boys and asked for help in getting their "Grandma Morgan boat" down off the ceiling of the Club boat-house. I can't remember who was here exactly, but think that in addition to myself there were the two White boys and Olivia Smith and a friend. We dashed over there and heaved at ropes and things and down the old boat came and was slid right into the River. The word LEE appeared under one of the seats, so it must have been T.K.'s fishing skiff, later adapted for sailing. I said, more as a joke than anything else "Since we're all here and so strong, let's go back to Whiskey and get our Grandma Morgan boat down". Before I knew it we were all swarming around the boat-house and within a remarkably short time, that old craft was afloat alongside the dock. It's in wonderful shape and I even showed off the next day by rowing it over to Watch to show the Whites. Paul had been gloomy at first about the prospects, which was my fault as I should have consulted him first and had him direct the operation but now he's interested and also surprised at how the boat HAS taken to the water after all these years and says he wants to work on re-varnishing her this winter. We'll give the dinghy to Mr. Chalk in Clayton to re-finish and Rbb White is fixing the canoe in payment for the week they spent here, so we may finally wind up with boats that really work! There has been a revival of interest in just plain sailing among the young people and they don't want to see the special knowledge of handling the St. Lawrence skiff die down. Jenny is getting quite good at it, after getting lessons from David B. Both John Whites know how to perfection and of course there is Uncle Jimmy and Michael. I think we all got a shock when we visited the Clayton Museum last year and saw the St. Lawrence Skiff on display as if it were an artifact of no more youth than the Indian arrow heads and bird-stones. John Moore found an old skiff somewhere; it is beyond repair, but he's going to take it apart and use it as a pattern or template for building a new one. He and his wife bought the Red Barn land, as I think I told you, and will start putting up a house very soon. While the younger generation went about all this renovation down by the water's edge, I got Eathy and Joley and myself busy trying to extend the life of our old puffs. That ancient blue flowered material had become nearly transparent and the cotton stuff was oozing from inside. The first day of the Republican Convention I spent in front of the television struggling and sweating freely with the task of recovering a puff by hand and sewing machine. Alice saw me and the next day Paul arrived with A's grandmother's quilting frame. Alice herself showed us how to set it up and all the business of tacking and knot-tying, etc. This contraption has been in the boat-house for several weeks now. I can't remember how many puffs we own but we're working on the last of the bunch right now. I'm sure Paul will be relieved when the frame is finally "out of the road" and he can move freely about his boat-house. John Carter changed his plans so often I finally had to beg off until next year. He was coming with a friend (male) in the friend's car; then this developed mechanical trouble which had to be fixed. Shirley offered his own car but the friend didn't want the responsibility -- I take it John still has no driver's license. There have been about 5 calls between here & Yarmouth. John's last suggestion was to arrive today. Phil Pochoda and wife come tomorrow; also Linda may arrive towards the end of the week and Phil B. will take his vacation starting soon. I feel bad about turning John down but I know from bitter experience what happens to my temper when there are too many people around for too long.

We adored reading David C.'s opinion of DB's novel. Auntie Nanny analyzed it at length (she's the only one of us who liked the ending). Uncle Jimmy's comment was succinct: "when you use a phrase such as 'I kicked him in the arse', you should spell the word right, now 'ass', as David did".

I must get this off. We all loved Leone's remark about Lindy's heart having spoken. What a beautiful way of putting it! Much much love to you & Auntie Do & D&P.