

March 23, 1952

All over the United States today the protestant churches are having the “One Great Hour of Sharing” to gather funds to help the needy in the world; and they expect to have five million dollars, which will be a drip in the bucket when one takes in the terrible situation most of the peoples of the world face.

Korea is but a small portion of the ravaged nations; but through war we naturally hear of their plight first. Our nation is sparsely populated in comparison to most of the countries and if we had to live on some of the diets that most of the human beings endure, we would die from neglect not starvation.

Actually a few dollars we give towards relief will never be missed; but when it is added up with a few given by other thousands of people, it means life for perhaps a million starving war stricken humans. This is but one example of what banding together (cooperation) can mean to the world.

Charity may begin at home; but this does not help the unfortunate without a home. The fellow without sympathy for his brothers, is a one-track pessimist; and doesn't have any charity for home, either.

The dollar we send to foreign countries to help buy food and medicine, will be returned ten fold in good will and Christian faith. Certainly we cannot find a better investment.

March 24, 1952

I hope my diary doesn't get like the songs we hear on the radio. It seems they have run out of subjects and some of them are just “corny”. Love and kisses has become a stale commodity for songs and now it is tragedies sung through the nasal passages in a slow false accent.

Western music is fine in its true Western style; but there are so many impersonations that it is being ruined—in fact it has gone farther than West. Two thirds of the record programs consist of this menu of the dying calf.

Like everything else, it is hard to please the public with music. I prefer a variety; but want it sensible and musical. Some of the disks don't have as much rhythm to them as the Indian war chants—and a lot less sense.

When the music was passed out, I was behind the door. This doesn't mean I don't appreciate singing and am highly embarrassed because I cannot carry a tune—somehow we can all get along without even an arm; so I have struggled without this gift and avoid singing games at any parties.

Although my make-up isn't that of a warbler or a canary, I do think I could make as much sense as some of the radio and record artists(?). One reason, I think, that we have so much of this off-key music in a sad mood, is because all the hill billies found out they

lived in a great big world instead of one mountain or a valley and they have migrated miles beyond the old homestead; so they want to pass on their talents (which are limited to one type of music.)

This is called folk music; but a little of it goes a long way with some folks. I agree there are some songs that are very pretty and should be “canned” for posterity; but the imitations are ruining the true folk music; and giving it a sour name.

March 25, 1952

Writing is like designing a dress; and my attempts at either one will surely establish some sort of precedent.

I would never be a Parisian designer of clothes for I do not care for all the frills and excess material and the color combinations. I could not design clothes that would go out of style in one season. Mine would be so practical they could be worn for years.

Likewise, my writing will never have frills in fancy words and sentences and it will lack painted phrases and flowery descriptions. My life I live with simplicity and conservation, wasting not words nor material.

Using only one side of this paper is almost a waste; but I started that way and have been sorry since. This is only for my amusement (maybe) and practice; so I should be more conservative.

The magazines I prefer to read are the digests and I gather more information from them than from all the books and lengthy articles. Of course, I can see why authors prefer to lengthen their works as much as possible—that is, if they are paid by the word. But most people enjoy their reading in condensed, concise portions.

I will admit, however, descriptions can be too short, and not give us an idea of the type of thing we are reading—human, animal, beast, or what; it is only natural to relive the story being read. So if a tale only read thusly: “The critter ran down the hill,” we wouldn’t know whether it was a cow or a man or whether the hill was covered with trees or a desert waste.

With writing as with all things, there is a happy medium of thought and description.

Note: Aunt Marjorie came by her “no frills” way of life naturally, as Grandma and Grandpa were very “no frills” as well, and “waste not want not” was a constant theme of my childhood in their household. Not much was wasted. Although they never used the word, recycling, they practiced it relentlessly. Anything of cloth was reused in as many ways as could be thought of, and anything not usable in any other way, that would rot in the ground and produce a richer soil, was put there. Clothes were patched and re-patched and used till they were no longer practical. It wasn’t till I got in high school and started to really protest, that I didn’t have to wear the same dress all week! During grade school, I only had a few dresses and most were homemade cotton print, but becoming a teenager changed my wardrobe considerably and I began to fit in a little

better. Girls wore pants rarely during those years and they were only considered proper if one was participating in a sport or doing outside work. I don't ever remember seeing my Grandmother is a pair of pants. She wore long brown cotton stockings, however. I digress. Sorry. As to Marj's writing style, I like the way she gets right to the point and makes herself very clear. Not much room for misunderstanding her meaning! - Virginia Vandehey, Marjorie's niece

March 26, 1952

How much courage does a man have? There hasn't been invented a meter for this yet; because no man knows until he is faced with fear, and each person has his own degree according to his make-up.

“Courage is fear that has said its prayers.” This is an ample definition; so to meter courage depends on how well a man can pray. A task that takes courage to tackle requires mental stamina to push aside fear and conscience; and place faith in a power greater than ourselves.

In the comics, Dinny Dimwit argues with his conscience; and we are like him every day of our lives. “Should I or shouldn't I,” and the little old conscience is back of us pushing and pleading; but another force is there, too; and he wears horns. But when we humble ourselves to pray for courage for the right, little conscience prays, too; and the jerk with the horns leaves in a hurry.

Weak people are those who have little faith in prayer or themselves and are too lazy to conquer fear in any way. We have all had jobs we felt we didn't have the strength or ability to do; but if we would close our eyes and forget the weaknesses and take little good conscience by the hand, we can do anything worthwhile.

I got aches and pains; but I have work I want to do; so I will build courage and forget these body weaknesses and get to work—maybe I can get those blackberries cut and some clean-up done, too. (Anyway, there is always a bottle of liniment on the shelf.)

March 27, 1952

Thursday is rated as visiting day; so I did my duty and called on an old friend. I wish I had time to go to her house more often; as I always return home with a new lease on life and refreshed from my attic to the cellar.

She is everyone's friend—most people don't know that; they don't take time to make her acquaintance. On this afternoon I stole time from my blackberry cutting job and went next door to my friend's castle.

I was greeted with open arms of peace and quietude. Neither of us said a word; and the only sounds were those of our feathered friends, twittering and chirping in the surrounding rooms. My friend is an excellent housekeeper; the carpets are swept clean

with the sea breezes and the interior decorating is of the best tastes in greens and browns and rusts.

No one ever walked on softer broadloom and no one ever breathed fresher air in any home. Flowers abound everywhere and there is one for even the winter season. Her living room is as spacious as the whole out of doors and the ceiling is a changing picture of sky painted hues.

In the deep woods she abides with love for all; if they will but come and rest awhile and absorb some of the beauties of Mother Nature. I am going to visit her again real soon.

March 28, 1952

The greatest waste in the world is manpower; and womanpower. The greatest tools in the world are hands and heads; and it takes the first two powers to manage these tools.

There is actually more idleness than industry and with the old axiom "Idleness breeds discontent," little wonder we find so many restless people. We see more people twiddling thumbs and watching the clock, when this time could be well spent doing necessary odd jobs or learning one of the many wonderful trades or arts of the modern world.

I see too many garments without buttons and too many socks with an exit. In idle moments these could be mended; but along with time they are wasted. There is little need for unnecessary marking of minutes when every human life can be overflowing with time well consumed by work or constructive play.

The radio is a wonderful thing and can be thoroughly enjoyed while head and hands are performing their duties. The cake will bake just as fast while I am washing up the dirty dishes; and this diary can be written just as well while I am listening to a symphony (but not while a murder mystery is being untangled).

Crocheting and knitting are both good medicine for hurried nerves and while serving as this tonic, will in the end loop into a lovely garment. The only time one should be idle is watching a sunset—never miss a second of this panorama; here we see with our own eyes how fast time can steal away; and how it can be wasted.

March 29, 1952

Human beings are supposed to be one big happy family; but there is a difference between environments. There is a difference between city and country folks; that is, those that have spent most of their lives in either of these habitats.

I have attended social functions of both classes and immediately sensed the feelings in both. The city people do not have the personal friendliness and more or less gather in small groups and tend to leave outsiders in the cold; whereas, our country cousins are so eager for company and friends, they draw everyone into their inner circle.

This is no fault of the people; but of environment. If we all lived some distance from our nearest neighbors and only had time to fraternize with them rarely, then we would feel friendly towards all. City folk live constantly with people; so much so, they pay little attention to their fellow man; and neighborly goings on don't draw much gossip.

So we all notice the attention we get in a small community; here, everyone is hungry for companionship and news. More genuine fun can be found in the country—enjoyment is had from the simpler things as there isn't such a variety of activities as in the towns and cities.

But it is funny to note—the city people actually are envious of country fun; and visa versa. If we could all let the bars of distinction down then we could enjoy life to the fullest whether we lived in the country or the city.
