

November 30, 1952

Of all the feared diseases of mankind, polio is probably the most alarming. It has crippled so many of our young people and the past few years has begun to take toll of even those in my age group; that now it is no longer considered a childhood menace.

It is with deep regret that I learned by radio of the death of Sister Elizabeth Kenney, the Australian nurse who, with her simple home method of hot pack treatments, did so much for polio patients.

She endured heart aches and years of struggle to have her method recognized the world over as of great importance to restore action to nerves and muscles deadened by the affects of polio. Some doctors still will not approve of this simple treatment that has proved so effective; perhaps because it is one without fancy equipment and not originated from a great named medical center.

Fame is seldom recognized for the living heroes. I know that Sister Kenney has gone where her work will be appreciated; and perhaps the day will come when her earthly labors will be honored and her name will shine among the great heroes of the world.

Eleven months I have kept this page a day a going. When I began little did I know what a job was undertaken. Thirty one more days should be a "drop in the printer's ink". There have been evenings I forced that extra ounce of strength to flow into lazy, tired fingers and oiled the wheels of my brain to type out another page.

December 1, 1952

This being the first of the month and time to pay the garbage man, the water bill, and the electric company, I begin to believe we are being cut short on time in 1952--it seems these duties were just yesterday for the month previously.

I read Eleanor Roosevelt's "My Day" in the newspaper and she remarks how fast the year melted; but when I sum up the activities for each one of the past months, it would make quite a stockpile of work; and if these tasks were not done for each day, they would get as far behind and as hard to do as my diary is when I neglect it.

My days aren't as exciting as Eleanor's; one would find her unusual life quite a book when all of her day by day writings are volumized, it is an interesting saga on international relations.

If I were to write of this Monday I would began:
My day began at seven a.m. when my husband poked me and reminded a half dead brain it is time to arise and light the oil stove and turn on the electric heat. I groaned and turned over and stretched to find the bed the most comfortable it has been all night; so argued with my awakening conscience whether I should arise now or procrastinate.

The school bus does not wait for lazy mothers to decide such an issue; so by 7:20 the cereal water was boiling and daughter was reminded the fateful hour of morn was upon her. A quick breakfast, school lunch packed, dishes bathed; and off to the back porch and the Monday task of washing the family laundry. A rainy morn; so the wet clothes were toted upstairs.

By 9:30 the wash was done and I nervously went from one room to the other awaiting husband's visitor to leave; so we could take the daily journey to the doctor. By noon we were home and eating again, and washing dishes again. The afternoon was consumed with a variety of tasks and some sewing for the holidays. By five it was time to eat and wash dishes again. I did some knitting and mending and finished the ironing.

No one could call this an exciting day; yet there are more people following just such a pattern than there are walking like Eleanor Roosevelt in the public eye. My days could be called "My Daze."

December 2, 1952

I guess I will never be a writer. My life is such a dull affair compared to the authors of some of the latest books.

The reviews are headlining "Lady on the Beach" by Norah Berg. This is a story as wild as the ocean waves of the life and neighbors of beachcombers up in Washington State.

The principle characters do a little inhaling of the spirits and a lot of inhaling of the salt breezes; the latter finally sobering them and making it possible to narrate the tale of life along the lonely beaches. Without the spirits one would lack some imagination; so a swig from the bottle now and then adds zest to the tale.

Not having dipped my pen of life from the inks of an exciting existence along the beach or in the lumber camps, I am hardly capable of unraveling any exciting readable literature. Our community has both the beaches and the lumbering industry; but they are as natural to my existence as water.

I have taken little time to beach comb--days are occupied with family tasks. Most tourists have more knowledge of the wonders of our playground than I. My relationship with the lumbering industry is through bookkeeping and the needs of modern logging equipment. I have not tasted the rough and tumble life of living in a logging camp as did Olive Barber, Coos Bay author.

Nor am I clever with plots and words to invent a story of intrigue or love entwined with the background of our coastal area; so I leave the exciting life of an author to more capable hands. And I hope we have more and more of these stories based on this neck of the woods.

They laughed at me when I sat down to write a story--little did they know they were the characters in that story.

December 3, 1952

When I was in high school, I had the privilege of visiting Oregon State College and one exhibit by the agricultural students has always been remembered.

It could be called a mechanical Elsie (the cow). She was strictly a product of test tubes and actually gave milk. Some doubted whether the process of digestion could be imitated in the test tube to the point of manufacturing milk; or whether it was a good hoax, I don't know; but it was an impressive demonstration.

Our human body has been likened to a chemical plant--giving my curiosity a work out; thinking perhaps some one could assemble a pile of tubes and scrap parts and imitate our processes of digestion, etc.

If this were successful, then experiments could be begun and many secrets of human actions and diseases could be studied.

I would like to see a glass human with the same chemical balance as mine; so I could study what makes me tick and why I have some of the aches and pains. If this were possible, I would probably go on a diet without any further coaxing.

Probably some of the mixtures we humans consume, would eat up any type of test tube invented; accounting for one reason such an experiment has never been successful.

Well, it would be interesting to first feed the glass stomach and watch the reaction; then there couldn't be any doubts.

December 4, 1952

Teeth have caused this family much pain the past few months; that is for Chet and Haysel; they have had to endure the aches and I the worries.

Chet has overcome the discomforts of the Bell's Palsy and well on the road called "Recovery", when the old meany, "Toothache" began to haunt him. So to the dentist we went yesterday; through storm and wind and rain.

Last night he could not sleep and neither could I in greatest of sympathy. But he didn't have the toothache; and that was a blessing; but he had a cold chill and a set back of his nervous ailment.

Tonight he feels more relaxed and ate his first dinner in two days; so we hope that is another bridge crossed; and there won't be another such rickety one for many a mile.

When I see December at the heading of these pages, I began to work a little faster to keep in step with old Santa Claus. Before I get the chimney dusted, he will be wanting to squeeze down it.

I have been exercising the sewing machine every chance between trips to the doctor and dentist. I think I will beat Santa--if no other misfortunes arrive before he does.

This gift buying makes one stop and scratch and wonder what to give who that won't cause too much pain in the giver's pocketbook.

I keep busy all other months of the year; and somehow Christmas gets wedged in along with the December's usual work. It is going to take some midnight oil a burning this year to keep up this page a day and help dear old Santa, too.

December 5, 1952

Did I say I wasn't going to have a 4-H Club this year? You heard me wrong. I said I was going to have one and this club tops them all.

Picture me scouting the hills for first hand information on trees; followed by a band of 25 boys--and you will see a Forestry leader in action. I am assuming two dozen lads will follow me; time will tell.

I think, at this writing, it will be fun. There won't be any lost stitches or blind stitched hems or giggling girls. There will be wrestling, rough, and tumble boys. I will begin a new chapter in my book of knowledge entitled "trees," and "boyees".

"You cannot do it," I have been told. "They will drive you crazy." This is a challenge and I hope to meet it with success. (My fingers are crossed). Surely boys aren't' hopeless brats. Time will tell.

Warning was given today. Behave, boys, or I will walk out and not come back. We can have fun; but not destructive fun. We can learn or not be in the Forestry Club. We came here not to play but to work together and learn together.

From now on, I will talk and live the language of the trees and won't be calling a Fir a Pine.

December 6, 1952

Mt. Everest has never been climbed. For months a Swiss expedition has attempted to conquer this old peak; but now they, too, have had to return without reaching the top.

I guess there should be something in the world man cannot conquer--nearly all other hurdles have been surmounted. Mt. Everest may always remain a challenge to man--belittling him and sticking above the clouds into the unknown.

It is a great risk just to get to the top to say, "I am the first." Every man has this desire--to be the first in everything. It is a matter of pride or vanity--the part of our makeup (be it chemical or just plain stubbornness) that keeps us working for the highest peak.

I am getting too lazy to climb very far from now on. Or too fat.....?

I, like a million or a billion others, if they have any money left, have been trying to do the Christmas shopping. The shops are loaded with merchandise; the family purse is on a diet. To make a Merry Christmas for the little ones, requires a bulging bank account. I have yet to see toys higher. The cheaper ones would not last a day.

This "what to give who" has become a headache requiring a special brand of pill. It is almost as bad as trying to think of what to feed the family for the next meal. Little wonder I am developing a case of nervous stomach.

For all the complaining, I wouldn't vote to impeach Christmas. Be a very dull year without ending it up with the excitement of the holidays.
