

7/31/71

Dear Mary,

Glad to get the optimism in your 7/23. Hope you can get here, especially because that will mean Buck is better.

Check on the cassettes. It does not pay to buy anything when you have a good machine, but something you might want to recall if there is such a possibility in the future is that you can rent machines with special capabilities. For example, my old Concordes, which are worth the overhauling I can't afford, are sound-activated and, with half-roll tape on a 5" reel, with the reel wound full, will go 3 hrs per side, and when there is no voice, will stop until the talk resumes, thus extending the reel time. They cost me \$100.00 each when I got them. They have more sensitive mikes and can be placed under a sofa and still get good, clear pickup.

If you make dubs, you'll do better to transcribe from the dubs if you make them on thicker cassettes, like 60 min., for the plastic is much more durable, less likely to stretch or tear. But do make the dubs first, as protection against damage to the thin (180 min) tapes.

From what Bud said when he told me he wanted me to go over it, it sounds promising. Bud rarely tells me anything, for his ego still eats and controls him, so I presume this is his evaluation of two things: the potential value and the possibility of my knowing what might be relevant.

If you do drive up, Buck might enjoy the Skyline Drive in the Shenandoah. But the old other roads used to be through pretty country, so I presume this is true of the new expressways, too.

You say "little 'ony recorder". If you have the W-40, one of which was given to me as a gift -, and its great - while we have done no transcribing with it, the friends who gave it to me tell me that they find the sandwich that is with the machine more convenient. Thus, they have give me their foot control, which they never use. You might want to try both. And, if you would like what is best for transcribing, I was given something I can't afford to get overhauled. It works, but not loud enough. I was given both master and slave units of a distobelt machine. It can be reversed by the single control, stops instantly, which the tapes do not, and dubbing on one of them would be much better for transcribing, much easier. If you can use it, I'll give it to you when you are here. I did offer it to Bud long ago. When you expect to transcribe interviews that are not clandestine, they are also better machines.

Lil is baking steady, but slow, recovery. She had just finished reading your letter when her sister came. They are now visiting while I work.

Bud told me nothing about Gary Shaw, so that means nothing. Ditto for the "Alvanack" (which you once said I had to have and you'd get it, I think). I have the affidavits, if you want to make a copy, and if you are not getting the States-Item, I have a set as they appeared in the papers I do not really need since I have the xeroxes of the originals. I have written Bailey offering to help. I have had no response to several notes to Ivon, so I've discontinued sending him notes. Bailey says that it's presumptuous, but I am confident I can be of some use to him...Do hope you can get here while Buck can still swim. The water has been great. Until loose dogs started coming for me, which reduced the joy and relaxation, I had stretched those aching muscles and stiffening bones and joints to where I could walk briskly to the highest point on the paved road up the side of the mountain, then back. Then a quick dip, which is refreshing to body and mind, then back to work. I am working on something where I now have a mindblowing addition to what excited you when you were here. It may be what we have needed. With luck and help, it can and perhaps will be. Best to you all,

July 28, 1971

Dear Harold and Bud:

I am sending a copy of this letter to both of you, as I owe both of you letters and my time is so short these days. I am trying to get my "boss" out of town for the month of August so I'm very busy at the office, and we now have Buck home from the hospital and I stay busy at home... He seemed to make good progress the first couple of days at home but has been losing ground the last couple of days. I'm going to take him back to Memphis to the hospital next week if he doesn't get better in a hurry. I have talked to the doctors there a couple of times and they want me to fly him back immediately. Of course, he doesn't want to go!

I have finally gotten a foot pedal and control for the little Sony recorder and hope to get the tapes transcribed this weekend. I'll send you both copies. I also intend to dub the tapes off. Harold, they are already on 90 minute cassettes... 45 minutes to a side -- four sides... 180 minutes total time. I have listened to all four sides and we got almost all of the important things. I had to be so careful and I was so clumsy changing the tapes without her knowing; she was "on tape", I was so afraid we had missed something important, but I think we got all of it.

If, by any chance, we do get to drive up to Washington and Maryland during August (if Buck should make a remarkable recovery) I'll bring the tapes and the transcription (if I haven't already sent the transcription) and you all make copy them then. Otherwise, I'll borrow the equipment and make copies here. Buck has said that he would so much like to drive up through Kentucky and Virginia one more time (he is very pessimistic --I'm sure he'll last another fifty years, but he is planning for his last rites), and if he is able at all, we shall take our time and drive up there for a few days next month.

I hope Lil is completely recovered by now... Give her my love. Also, give Patty my love...

I think Gary Shaw now has the four notebooks. He tried to call me from the airport the other night but I was at the drugstore. He tried to leave some message about the notebooks.

Bud, if you think about it, send me another copy of the "Almanak" on the Garrison thing (the 11 x 14 red paper thing put out in Austin.)

*Love,
Mary*