

Mrs. Katharine Weber
108 Bealon Road
Bathany, CT 06525

Dear Katharine,

When John told me you write well I remember ^{ed} what perhaps you do not, that you were quite an accomplished story teller when you were a little girl, in 1965. He sent me a copy of your "Without a Backward Cast." It proves his point.

I've forgotten what I think was a Dickensian name you gave to a family whose story you told with rather good drawings and posted on the kitchen wall at its inside doorway. They were rather imaginative and sometimes funny.

I was sorry I was not able to get to your wedding. Travel has been dangerous for me as the result of a series of complications following successful surgeries. That I sit with my legs elevated, medical instructions, accounts for my typing. But as I near 79 I'm as well and as content as I can be.

Accumulating years ^{permits} the accumulating of recollections. When you referred to the little fish that got into the cabin from the spring that provided its water ^{that} reminded me that years ago little ~~is~~ fish coming from Philadelphia's ^{was} faucets ¹ were not uncommon! (And more repugnant things, too!)

When I was young I used to enjoy fishing, too. When my wife and I worked for the Senate before air conditioning I'd take her fishing in the Potomac hot afternoons. We'd work in the cooler night to make it up. She became the patron of all the river's eels and that ended our joint fishing. (Maybe some day you'll experiences, as I did when younger than you, the fine ride an able eel can give you if you hook him from a canoe!)

I was reminded of my last fishing trip, only a weekender. The Department of Justice had borrowed me from the Senate to help it with a sensational prosecution of that day, the 1930s, against 65 Harlan County, KY., coal operators and their deputized gun thugs. Have you ever heard of "Bloody Harlan?" It was THAT Harlan.

During the trial, in London, Ky., with a local friend and two labor-board regional directors I went to Morris Lake, TN, to bass fish. The people who owned the small hotel in which the official party stayed had a camp at that lake. We left on a Saturday morning, to return Sunday night so I took only my toothbrush. Save for one pair of pants I had only city clothing anyway.

We were no sooner well into the lake when the clouds burst. By the time we got back to the camp we were thoroughly soaked. The woman of the couple who owned it was abundant enough for a wraparound she loaned me while I sat at the fireplace to be more than ⁶adequate. I could not wear her small husband's underwear but with the drawstrings on his pajamas I could keep them from falling, if not ~~re~~joining at the waist. I could get my feet partway into a pair of his scuffs and one of my companions had a sweatshirt that I could and did use.

Then my companions decided that we just had to go to the Fox restaurant in LaFollette,

TN. It did very well with steaks and was not far away.

The two labor-board guys had gotten together and plotted a spectacle. They parked a ~~back~~ block or so from the restaurant, which was on the main street, and they walked behind my London ~~fire~~ friend, Homer Clay, of the well-known Kentucky Clays, and me.

As soon as we got into what for that town was a Saturday night crowd they hollered ^(up) "Look at him!" and pointed at me. They got their laughs.

Homer was a lawyer who also owned the local weekly newspaper. That week he was in Lexington trying a case. His paper went to press Tuesdays. That Tuesday afternoon his wife phoned me to ask if I could come over and write a couple of stories, she had space to fill. I asked her how much space, she told me, and I wrote her two stories.

It was the time of the Loch Ness monster stories. So I wrote a story about the monster seen at Norris Lake - me. That Tuesday was also the day after the second championship prize ~~fight~~ ^{fight} between Joe Louis and Max Schmelling. So the second story was headed "Joe Still Champ; Max Still Schmelling."

That headline really tickled the large contingent of big-city reporters.

We have a pond where we now live, not at the farm John remembers so well it pleases us much. We had bass so tame they came when they heard our voices. They'd swim along beside us as we walked, knowing they'd be fed, and when we stopped they actually opened their mouths for us to throw pieces of bread to them. We never got the golden trout that tame. We lost them all to the record-breaking freeze of 1977 when the pond froze solid.

One of the bullfrogs played games with a pair of local boys. One would carry him to the other side of the pond and he'd swim back to the other one.

Trust tames most creatures. We had Canadian geese, ~~hinkers~~ ^{hinkers}. They would bring their young to me for me to feed them. They ate from my mouth without biting and soon their young also did.

Now we are content to watch the birds and the deer and other animals. Especially the skinks and the 'coons when before daylight I go out to the road for the papers.

I hope you all stay well and happy for a long, long time!

all the best,

Harold W. King