

Tuesday, April 7, 1942

Dear Family:

I have just finished putting in a solid 13 hours of work, and now I shall try to do justice to this letter, but I don't think I can. I shall start with Easter Sunday morning.

I awoke about seven ... to hear what sounded like angels singing afar off. It was the most glorious sound, and truly the Resurrection Morning. I wasn't far wrong on the angels, for it was the full Cathedral Choir rehearsing already for their 7:30 service, for which I didn't have to be on hand. I lay there in bed and listened until they had gone into service. I think the instant I realized exactly what I was hearing was when I heard the mighty voice of Paul himself, threatening dire results if a certain soprano didn't stop "scooping" up to a high A flat.

I arose and dressed about 7:30 and then ate breakfast, for my choir was due to arrive at 8:45, which they did, all thirty-five of them. Then came my turn to forget the coming glory of the service in the immediate task of getting them worked up to the task at hand.

I can't begin to describe to you the feeling I had when I began the Prelude, and then saw my choir come in the huge doors in the rear of Bethlehem Chapel. What is left to say is anti-climax -- it went beautifully -- flawlessly -- perfectly. Dean Phillips, Canons Wedel, Smith, and Draper all had nothing but the highest praise for the job the boys did. In two months time they vastly improved their tone quality and ensemble, and sounded splendid and quite professional. Those kids wouldn't have let me down for anything in the world, and they did a magnificent job.

Then came the 11:00 service, and about that I can hardly say a thing, for it was something I shall never forget. The processional -- with flags, banners, 2 Bishops, 9 clergymen, the Dean -- all of it like I have always dreamed Easter Sunday could be -- was, in fact, somewhere. I had nothing to do but sit back in the alcove behind the organ console and enjoy it, and the emotions with which I was filled that morning were of every description -- dominated by pure joy. The music was perfection itself, and the brass and tympani augmenting the organ raised the vaulted arches right off the pillars. I made my communion at that service, which lasted until 1:00 p.m. What a service!

An estimated 12,000 people passed through the Cathedral that day, and the eleven o'clock service was heard in every one of the lower chapels through amplification, and communion given also with priests below saying the service when it started -- not until after Morning Prayer and Sermon was over, and all those not wishing to take communion had left, to be replaced by the thousand or so outside who were waiting to get in.

After that, I ate dinner with Paul, and then went back to the Cathedral to get ready for Evensong Service. Evensong was as impressive, but no orchestra, and after it came a splendid organ recital by Paul to climax a glorious day for him. I left at six and came to the

house to wait for Virgil, who was stopping off to play the organ here for a while since he is going to play a recital on the 29th of April.

After he had gone, I came back to the house and sat up and read "Jeeves" for a while ... and about midnight I gave up. I couldn't go to sleep, and I was hungry, so I started walking down Wisconsin Ave. and went all the way down to M Street -- about three miles, and there found a restaurant. I had something to eat, read some more "Jeeves", talked with several people -- a drunk -- the counter-man -- a college student -- a prostitute eyed me, but I didn't converse with her, not because I was squeamish, but because she wasn't talkative.

I watched the city asleep, or as asleep as a city ever gets, ate some more, read more "Jeeves", finally got to talking with a milk-truck driver, and he brought me up Wisconsin again and home, at 3:00 a.m. It was a splendid warm night, and I wrote a letter, then stood looking out over the city -- and still I didn't want to go to bed, for it had been such an exciting day -- and somehow I had the strange feeling that never again would I recapture an Easter such as this had been. I did go to bed though, and stayed there until eleven the next morning -- Easter was over! Easter -- 1942 -- I shall never forget, but now April 20th, 1942, is just ahead, and that requires all of my concentration from now on.

P. S - Maw, for Gawd's sake send some sox, the pair I have been wearing for three weeks are so strong they just walked out of the room chasing the Williams' cat!!!!