

Marion's Diary

1958

April

3. Thursday: [Linford's birthday] Read the Grand Duchess in Anastasia, and broke down suitably in the crucial scene. Mrs. Freis likes brass. Nice house. Bought paper to trim the bathroom. . . . Submarine sandwich and nut patty on the cliff at Nahant with tail end of lashing storm – Grand! Linford got a volley ball, Silly Putty, Danny Kaye record, and permission to use the good machine, and a model. He's taller!

4. [No entry]

5. Saturday: Finished the bathroom door and put up [towel?] rails. It is so much better. We moved the bookcase from the front porch to the stairway – STUCK! Durn. Newlin's dental project gets started with two out.

6. Sunday: Newlin on income tax – took Ruth Arnold along to Easter dinner at Hee Hong Guey's – enjoyed it. Added a set of exams and played at rummy. Wicky likes it. Damp noon – rain in afternoon and evening.

7. Monday: Newlin had two more teeth out – then to Nominating Committee Meeting at Cambridge. I went to School Committee with Mrs. Povey. Howard Bridgman was there – discipline at Hobbs in Exec. Session. Mrs. Kelfer brought us home. My first fan mail – letter with faked name and address. . . . Small period, much cramp.

8. Tuesday: Washed many sheets. Period still hurts quite a bit.

July

[In the meantime the Smiths bought a dilapidated Quonset hut on Baker's Island, a 52-acre island off Manchester. Some fifty houses were clustered mainly on the west side, leaving the east side relatively wild and rocky. With no electricity, and only a couple of jalopies for transport, it was an idyllic place for kids of all ages.]

19. Saturday: Unpacked, put away, washed underclothes. Sprayed for earwigs. Newlin and Wicky did yard and trimmed and loaded on chlordane. Looks better. Piles of papers and mail. Ironed in evening Bought a turkey. Old hen!

20. Sunday: Gorgeous cool day. I washed sheets and changed beds. Newlin and Linford to Meeting! Newlin cleaned up jar corner and trains in attic. I did a turkey. Both boys had supper with Abbots. Wrote a letter home. To bed, talking of beds!

21. Monday: Still gorgeous! I weeded an hour in the garden – no worms! Linford, Chick and Jon went fishing. Wicky and Ernie in attic, SMOKING! J.R. phoned H.S.S. has caught a cold. Washed clothes. Did turkey for traveling all day. A bucket of soup!

22. Tuesday: Preparation for the Island. Newlin went shopping at 1:00 – returned at 4:45. I did all packing and arranging for good, personals, and household. Too much! We made the boat, by a new route forced by a detour! Chick enjoyed going. Learned the route.

23. Wednesday: The stove did come! And was installed by noon. It is wonderful! We even had Gordon Hurd for turkey and plum pudding supper. Newlin made headway in the nail department.

24. Thursday: Hot enough for the boys to go swimming and catch innumerable crabs. Then some fish too – we had fish for breakfast. Called on Collyer's hut – nice big living room and fireplace and windows and built-ins!!

25. Friday: Fish for breakfast again. Newlin power mowed what Wicky had cleared. A thick patch of stuff – will probably kill all grass! Stove is a treasure. Boys fished. . . . Home on 6:45 boat. Pleasant greetings from Abbots. Chick liked it.

26. Saturday: Quite a day – shopping and putting away and getting out. Kids played and read very quietly. Got on to Parcheesi so Wicky could play on equal status. Newlin did some in cellar and attic –

27. Sunday: They came early! Ruth, Debbie Shaw, Grace Hesse, Marion Kirk, for breakfast. 1 ¼ hours from Sturbridge. Sc[otch?] oatmeal with dates,

chipped beef, melba toast! Pleasant. Ruth brought pink lilies in the clam boiler – Marion B. (for Bonner) Smith. I must not get too careless and forgetful. . . . Newlin finished the attic – a tremendous job. I saved sent flowers!!

28. Monday: Muggy again! I washed everything and hung it in the pure and roomy attic. Put everything away from visitors. And got headache! Just tired, I guess.

29. Tuesday: Muggy – showers. Did little, getting over Monday's headache – a small one, thank goodness. But I can still get them. . . . To Stearns' for a nice two-table card party. How does she do it – five kids, well dressed, immaculate house, good food. Wonderful cards, interesting bids. Bishop, Abbott, Emery, Curtis, Wilson, Fulton, and me.

30. Wednesday: Muggy. I went shopping – \$4:00 sports shirts for Newlin, dungarees, play dress!, etc. Successful trip. . . . Linford to Dental Clinic. Could not wire his new eye-tooth! Wicky to Abbotts. Darned socks all evening. Newlin went through some newspapers!

31. Thursday: Ironed hastily between jobs. Muggy and rainy again. Off to see Debbie in "The Three Cinderallas" – distinct shock to see her so grown up and so pretty. Lunch. Then to Phillips Academy with Adrian! to measure the route. The boys loved the Museum. We played a game of Scrabble with them – Wicky went on to bed! Too bored!!

August

1. Friday: Sunny! The first in weeks –

2. [no entry]

3. Sunday: Off at 6:30 for Friends' China Camp. Arrived at 12:00. Arrived at 12:00. Left at about 3:00, following Betsy Maxfield Miller and Ellen Gould. Very nice overnight stop on Quaker Ridge, Casco, Maine. Linford looked a little long faced as I left, taking his fishing stuff home.

4. Monday: 430 miles total trip. Left Betsy at about 10:30. Fooled around looking for mill stores. Biddeford would be better. Sanford had 40 x 77 orlon blanketing at \$1.90 and cut pieces of Seamloc carpeting. Home at 5:30

– not at all tired! Took a look at Amesbury – very industrialized. Lots of blueberries around.

5. Tuesday: Where is Dr. Braconier? Can't thee drive me? So – the day I hoped to get back to normal I drove all morning. Newlin's iritis [inflammation of the iris] was better with drops. I washed in afternoon – gorgeous day! Newlin to Council Meeting.

6. Wednesday: Lovely day is gone – now sticky. I ironed! Clothes and visit with Mrs. Branson. Blueberries are in. To bed, weary. Reaction, I guess.

7. Thursday: Did the last bit of ironing – put house in order. Ready for Backy, Jed and Tom for lunch. (Chinese soup, kippered herring, salad, blueberries and peanut butter cookies) – then up to see “Johnny Appleseed” – nice. Too hot to do anything. Mrs. Mack here. Iced tea on back step! Newlin to Plan E. Meeting. I worked on new green house dress. Wicky read a whole book.

8. Friday: Lousy sticky dog day! And the car at Mirak's! It had nothing wrong – off to Hut on 6:00 boat. Arrived in a fine BLOW after much dark blue cloud banks. Ernie fits in nicely.

9. Saturday: A Philo day, after some showers. I scraped a couple of windows; they all fished. Newlin puttied where necessary. The pink lilies-of-the-valley have been dug in! They were on the way since July!

10. Sunday: I took two loads “over the hill,” chatted with Mrs. Scott who has the stove. Home reluctantly, with Ernie up front on the boat with Wicky. Newlin drove route 128 to a Howard Johnson, so we could write Linford accurate directions. Such traffic!!

11. Monday: Another gorgeous day. Baked two germies. Spent \$3.28 at Idlewilde for vegetables. Tomatoes are down to .35/lb. from .45/lb. last week. For that they can rot! Got the tea invitations – they're big!

12. Tuesday: Still cool and nice. I cleaned the corner cupboard, preparing for Ruth. Quite a job. Glad it's done. Newlin to Council with Joe Plati. I found Aunt Sara's “Guest Book” again. Maybe we should use it at Soggy Bottom! Emptied Wicky's piggy bank for savings stamp money.

13. Wednesday [no entry]

14. Thursday: Took Adrian Garula this time to Island. He is accident prone! Impetuous, energetic – liked fishing. Newlin was with them a lot.

15. Friday [no entry]

16. Saturday: Home with Adrian sound asleep in car – at noon!

17. Sunday: Linford home from camp with Kellem of Providence. We hear all about it. Seemed successful.

18. Monday: Took Newlin and Fenwick to Cambridge for the early train connection. Finished organizing house. Helped heave wallboard to attic – [Linford's] room is started. Met Ruth on evening bus from N.Y. (Shopped Paines' while waiting.)

19. Tuesday: Wicky flew back fro Swarthmore alone, with a basket of tomatoes and his bag – so proud of himself! Ruth took pictures of him.

20. Wednesday: Consult on [Linford's] room.

21. Thursday: To the Island on evening boat – roughest this summer! Ruth didn't mind.

22. Friday: Rain and mist and damp. Ruth all tuckered out after walking to the top of the hill! She does move a big load.

23. Saturday: Talent Show on the Island. . . . I finished the second gold blanket with borders. \$5.50 for two nice orlon blankets for the bunk beds.

24. Sunday: Clear and perfect. Big steak dinner, outdoors corn in huge pots, baked potatoes, tossed salad, watermelon. So good! Ruth moved around more freely, but still not much.

25. Monday: Brought Ruth home from the Hut in evening. Fun in car calling it "The Drain!" Rain – stood on dock in pouring blowing rain.

26. Tuesday: Glad to be back and consult on radiator. Bosselman did it. We drove out to inquire about peaches at Flagstadt Farm – soon. Ruth enjoyed

ride, Concord, etc.

27. Wednesday: Up early. Took Ruth to Back Bay [Station] – then in town with Linford for shoes. Went on and bought two mattresses for 30” at Paines – \$36.50 each. Home, nap, pot roast, and prepare for next Island trip. How the money goes!! Awful.

28. Thursday: Much assembling, and off we went for the boat. Arrived at 9:30! Beck was there already, with Jed, Tom, and Joey? Much news of Hurricane Daisy – we did nothing. Fixed the front door pulley right! All went smoothly. Rain in p.m. after we had gone around the Island. Played Barnyard Fowls with seven – fun! Tommy is a riot. They eat simply, gluttonously, noisy, spilling, eager.

29. Friday: Up – breakfast for seven – Chipped beef and gravy (of water) too salty. Rainy. Kids all went out to see the surf in the best get-ups! Daisy has passed. Clear by 2:00 p.m. Beck and I sat on a rock half an hour; boys fished. They made the evening boat. We cleaned up dishes; boys cleaned. We ate peanuts on the rock facing the Full Moon. Beautiful, timeless. To short Association meeting ; to bed, weary. . . .18 sheets of plywood.

30. Saturday: Clear, up on time. Puttered closing and cleaning the Hut. Hurried with wooden box – bad! Jalbert [captain of the boat to the Island] told of tax evasion by the rich! Chevy was the hottest I’ve ever felt! Went to Littleton, eating \$2.60 along the way. Bought 3 ½ bushels of peaches. Home, too tired to tackle them. Cereal for supper! The boys brought home a snake. Mrs. Miley moved. To bed – too tired.

31. Sunday: Up early – tackled peaches. Got nine quarts of Red Haven; ½ bushel and six of Golden Jubilee bruises. Seemed like an awfully hot day, but with good air, and only 86°.

September

1. Monday: More peaches.

2. Tuesday: Finished peaches. 24 quarts; 7 quarts applesauce.

3. Wednesday: Rushed to drive Linford in to Clinic. Trouble parking. (\$1.00 violation!)

4. Thursday: Ruth's huge packages came! Blankets, bedspreads (lovely), tablecloth, soup spoons, bathroom rugs – Phew! . . . First Day of School. Seems too soon.

5. Friday: Washed and pressed off clothes. Meat loaf and gravy to go to Island. Much traffic for 6:00 boat – we made it in good time. Walked around to Hurd's house. He talked of Island property – surprising amount. Newlin impressed with Pilot's Retreat! [Gordon Hurd introduced the Smiths to the Island.]

6. Saturday: Newlin put some oakum in over the far end. I painted the sixth window on the west side. Took two soil samples, with much hard rock digging. Mrs. O'Hara stopped in to see us. Lovely day. Found another well with Mary England. Boys swam!

7. Sunday: Got a bit more oakum in the crannies. Very leisurely closing. Emerys didn't come. Came on to rain for loading – big crowd – many bundles – Poured! Mr. Scott walked down. Jalbert ran out of gas! “Not that one”! Rainbow again – pretty. Boys swam again. Right of way for phone line debate.

8. Monday: The phone rang all morning. I washed bit. Wicky's little blanket came out NICE. Wrote a letter home. Went around for shellac, etc. Marjorie Johnson got started on Committee Meeting next Monday – I talked with Arlanson's wife, etc.

9. Tuesday: I went over the new wood with alcohol. Washed and painted the radiator. Looks fine. Stood at polls 1½ hours with stickers for Gibbons, McKay, and Volpe in place of the late Fingold! To bed early – sleepy. Another mess of Kentucky wonders [beans] for supper. Two mattresses came. [The beans were most likely from Marion's small garden next to the house. She occasionally raised eyebrows when she tossed compostable refuse out the second-floor window, onto the garden.]

10 – 14 [no entries]

15. Monday: The Board OK'd the program and addressed envelopes at Marj Johnson's house. Mrs. Torrey with wedding on Saturday! Sally G. home last evening. Done too soon. Supplementary list missing.

October

4. Saturday: Took Walter along and got two beautiful pin oaks from Weston. Tied up around applebox. Leaves show color. Gee – we would like to live in Weston – there’s no doubt of it.

5. Sunday: Arbor Day! We left early – trees carried very well, even on Peggy J. [the funky made-over lobster boat] – stretcher for one and wheelbarrow and rope for the other. Newlin worked HARD to get them in and propped up. Walter went along, and the boys put up the storm boards. Windy ride back – engine trouble – raisins for supper. COLD.

6. Monday: Shopped for sofa cover at Harringtons in a.m. Walked to Hildred Ashton’s for first Book Club Meeting. Sort of tired. Then PTA at night. Headache! A dilly. I was really sick. . . . Mrs. Plati would like a Saturday Evening Post subscription! Mrs. Povey reported Norton drunk!

7. Tuesday: Much telephoning – I wrote a long letter home. Still rocky from aspirin. Off to Sunday School Workshop. Dr. Mowry was excellent – and I did so poorly as “Leader!” It was a laugh! Fay Luder sure knows a lot – Biblical history, etc.

8. Wednesday: Feeling a little better. Got Board Meeting set up, walked up for two Adelle Davis books for Janet and Elaine and their youngsters. Early supper. Letters, etc. Marriage Committee at Sellecks. Paul Hare a prize. What should the Meeting do about divorce?

9. Thursday: Cashed a check – three quarts of oil! Then off to two more drapery places. I can’t seem to find what we really like. Belts for Cary not well received. To bed early Ruth’s check for \$32 (four days nursing at \$8/day!) deposited.

[That’s all she wrote in ‘58]