

Barry's letter

2311 N. 18th St.
Arlington, Va. 22201
28 June 1977

Dear Family,

I was so hot and tired I just crashed last night, so my part of this effort has had to wait Ginger's departure tonight for the Relief Society evening home-making meeting. I think she said she was going to be working on a quiet book or something.

Last night Ginger also told me no end of things she left for me to tell about, but I can't remember them anymore. It's not as lonely as you might think here; I have Blanche to keep me company. (Right now she's playing with the doohickeys that control the venetian blinds and destroying the curtains here in the study.)

Something needs to be said about the postage on this letter. It got here with 52 cents in stamps and 29 cents postage due. (The rates are 13 cents for the first ounce and 11 cents for each ounce or fraction of an ounce over that.) The letter does not need to weigh this much, if everyone will restrict himself to a MAXIMUM of four sheets and use front and back where necessary. Liz and Mom have been very good about this, but others.... Also, please leave a 1/4 in. margin on at least one side and top or bottom; otherwise I have trouble Xeroxing.

As for the name, I also switch my vote to Hallmanack so we can get on to more interesting things.

I went out in the garden and weeded a while before writing this, thinking it would cure my grumpy mood, but to no avail, from the looks of the above lines. We have had bounteous crops of green beans and zucchini, also carrots, lettuce, beets, broccoli and marvelous turnips (which I generally don't like that much, but these are really delicious). Our corn is in a poorer part of the garden, and it doesn't look like it will do much unless I fertilize or something--the stuff is starting to tassel out at two feet.

As usual, we really enjoyed the letters, but were disappointed at finding no word from Charlotte. Again this time I read some of Tracy's letter to Ken Solomon, my Jewish reviewer, and he seemed to enjoy it. I asked if he would like to go to the visitor's center at the temple, but didn't get much of an answer. He missed the original viewing of the temple, which he had planned to attend, because his father died a couple of days before the date of their tickets.

I even got a little misty reading Sherlene's letter. I guess impending parenthood is getting to me. I finished Bradley's book "Husband-Coached Childbirth" the other day, which I highly recommend, at least at this point of inexperience. It is very readable, and I don't find him fanatical as apparently a few readers do.

Ginger is a real trooper to keep going in this muggy heat. Even at 10:00 p.m. (now) I'm just sweating. At least my office is more or less air-conditioned, but we just can't afford to run the window units in the house all day, at eight cents per kwh. Tomorrow may be an exception, since it's supposed to be 95 (the equivalent of 105 in dry Provo).

Friday night was really a big mixup. Tim and Betsey were due in at 10:30 on the bus from New York. We were tired, so took key to our place down to Eric and Sylvia Bjorkland, who are subletting Tim Ricks' place for the summer. (Eric is clerking in Rep. Marriott's office.) Eric and Sylvia were going to pick Tim and Betsy up, though Tim's version is that he told them to wait until he called them from the bus depot. There was some kind of wreck in Baltimore so they arrived an hour late. We were in bed, but got a call from Betsy at "the bus depot," saying the Bjorkland's weren't there and didn't answer their phone, so could I go get them. Ginger wanted me to tell them to take a cab, but since Tim is a struggling law student I got dressed and drove down. I went up 12th st. to New York Avenue, and just south of the Trailways depot the car ahead of me stopped for a cab who was stopping for a cab letting someone out. There were two lights ahead, and the near one had been green long enough, so the car ahead of me turned out from behind the cab and proceeded, with me following. About this time the light turned yellow, but I entered the intersection thinking that at least I could

Our reception now has thus been quite good but we have been in a few of points connected with the same thing Friday. Got a letter from Ellen, which even mentioned a few of points connected with the same thing Friday.

wait between the two lights. At night, I couldn't see that there was no place to wait between the lights--it was just one huge intersection. So by the time I realized that and got across the intersection, the light had turned red. So had the lights on the cop car that appeared out of nowhere. While they were writing up the ticket, which really burned me, I looked around for Tim and Betsy, who were nowhere to be found. So I went back home, assuming that Eric had found them and that they'd gone home with him. When I got here, Virginia was up. She said Betsy had called again--that they were wondering where I was. It turned out that they had forgotten to tell me that there were two depots little more than a block apart and that they were at the Greyhound one. So I tried to call the Greyhound depot to have them paged to tell them I'd be a few minutes getting back down there, but just got put on hold for interminable periods which terminated by my getting a dial tone. Finally our phone rang--it was Tim, saying that they had finally found Eric and Sylvia, who had been there all the time--an hour and a half--waiting for the wayward Ricks. So I went back to less exasperating nightmares.

reception

It was nice having Tim and Betsey here, in any event. The wedding for which she came was a pleasant affair, held at the Rockville Civic Center in an old mansion. They provided a buffet which was really a complete meal, so we stuffed ourselves heedless of our plans for a cookout birthday party in our back yard afterwards for Beric Benson (who parks in our back yard with his 20 year old wife Irene, a German, and 21 month old daughter Heather). Beric is one of the most helpful people I've ever met. He's in the Army, and bought 40 acres north of Newport, Washington, where they plan to settle when he gets out. Therefore they have insufficient funds to pay rent, and are spending the summer in their Volkswagen van. Most of their stuff they either gave away or stored in our basement or baby's room (e.g., crib, playpen, chest of drawers, car seat, etc.). We still need a bassinet and some kind a stroller, also a pediatrician, but are otherwise well fixed. Ginger has done a terrific job with that room--just wish we were able to buy this place.

Beric has been harrassed by a ward hypocrite, Ray Miller, who got Beric and Irene to live in one of his five houses in order to fix it up, and they would then sell it and divide the profits. The place was a real disaster--roof over the kitchen falling in, rotten wiring with shorts everywhere, etc. After a couple of months Bensons moved out because Irene (who has asthma) couldn't take all the dust raised by working in there, but Beric kept working on it until the day he was painting the last eave with the paint Millers gave him, and Sue (Ray's wife) came over and said she didn't like the color, so would he hurry up and paint the whole outside over another color? So Beric had enough of that, but hardly anticipated that in the middle of June he would get a bill for "rent" of \$150 a month for April and May plus \$200 "utilities." The gall of this clown astounds me--after getting \$3000--plus in free labor from Beric, plus several appliances, he sends a bill like that, pompously worded, with copies to the commanding general of Fort Myer and Beric's company commander, for an uninhabitable place for a time when Bensons weren't there, and with no lease at all to back it up. Tim Ricks also got a nasty letter from Ray--because Ray didn't like the cabinetwork Tim did in the kitchen of that house (which looked fine to me). Was Tim paid, you ask? No! He did this because Beric had put a new engine in Tim's Saab as a favor, and Ray somehow thought himself entitled to repayment on things Beric did for others. I was there when Tim was doing the work, and thought he was nuts to spend all his vacation (3 days) between law finals and his clerkship doing this, but Tim is a nice guy. I wish I could enclose Ray's letter to Tim--it's a hoot: "I will be eternally grateful to you for teaching me this great lesson--that a verbal contract is not binding and that your word means nothing. No wonder our country has gone so low that Watergate was possible, with the ethics you and your profession have...."

P.S. I left out about how we got struck by lightning a week before last Thursday. Fortunately our antenna is grounded and we have circuit breakers so our wiring is OK - but it was scary. We & Bensons were watching TV as the cracks & flashes came loud & fast - then there was an unbelievably loud CRACK w simultaneous FLASH & all our lights went out & the TV fizzled. The cat jumped 3 ft in the air & Ginger says the baby just about did too.

Why watch TV when you can experience incredible dramae like these first hand?
over Memorial Day weekend

We had a great time with Bartholomews, and second all Sherlene said about those choice kids. If we could save anything, it would be for family camp. Love, Raven