

Garmisch, Germany
Sunday, June 20, 1954

Dear Family:

Anne's mid-week "supplement" gave you her enthusiasm over our first three days in Switzerland. I'll cover the remainder of the week, but I'd like to comment just briefly on the first three days so you will appreciate why I referred to Anne's "enthusiasm".

The jinx that made us arrive in Zurich 20 hours late has stayed with us in the form of bad weather. But in spite of rain and fog and low clouds that have prevented Anne and Rees from seeing most of the wonderful scenery along the way, they have been as thrilled over what they have seen as though they were seeing the mountains and snow-capped peaks in all their glory.

After staying an extra day at Interlaken in the hope that the weather might clear for the trip to the Jungfrauoch, early Wednesday morning we started for the spectacular drive over the Susten Pass to Andermatt and the Schöllenen, and then down to sleepy, picturesque Altdorf. Half way up the Susten Pass road we ran into the clouds. Then as we crept along in the fog we came to more and more snow banks until at times we were going through one-way passages cut through snow as hard as ice. In these narrow passages the vertical walls of the snow often were well over the top of the car. Once we had to back up to let approaching cars pass. At the top we scrambled through the snow up to the Summit House. We could not see any of the panorama around us, but we had fun just the same. The terrific scenery along the Schöllenen was shrouded in mist, but from the narrow, winding road and the roar of the torrent below, we could imagine what we were missing.

Nearly every morning I have been getting up at six o'clock to have a look at the weather so as to know whether or not to wake Rees and Anne in case we could make an early start. Thursday morning at Altdorf we were finally rewarded. The sun was shining, it looked as though we were going to have our first "red letter day", so I put on my "red letter day necktie" from Florence, Italy, the good-luck tie I wore on extra special days on the 1951 trip with John and Judy and the 1952 trip with Bill and Jeanne. Well, it brought good luck this day, for it happened to be Corpus Christi Day. At 6:00 a.m. I found the street below my window busy with people decorating the store fronts and side walks. If you don't know the significance of Corpus Christi Day, just wait until you see our color slides of the decorated streets and of the procession and ceremony.

The spectacular road from Altdorf to Brunnen, carved into the cliff and tunnelled through it in spots, high above one of the fingers of irregular Lake Lucerne, was all the guide books claim it to be. I'll just mention our stops at the William Tell Chapel, and at Einsiedeln, both of which were very interesting. Being a day behind schedule on account of having stayed an extra day at Interlaken (in vain) we did not stay overnight at Lindau on the Bodensee but pushed on to Kempton, Germany.

Friday morning on our drive to Füssen and the castles of Nenschwanstein and Hohenschwangau, we noticed how the German farms were so big in contrast to the litte "plots" in Switzerland. The two castles took us off to fairyland -- Rees and I had a field day shooting pictures. Then on to Garmisch.

Saturday we brought our first week to a close with a fitting climax. The trip up to Zugspitze by narrow-gauge cog-railroad and the last 1,000 feet by cable-car took most of the day. The weather was bad, so our color slides won't do justice to the thrills we had, but since Rees and Anne had not had the trip up the Jungfrau, they could not imagine how the Jungfrau could be any more thrilling than the Zugspitze. That night we went to the Ice Show at the Night Club for the U. S. Soldiers sent here on vacation leave. I went back-stage and talked with the skating pro, Jimmy Grogan (who knows Hayes and Davie Jenkins well), and after the show he came out and visited with us at our table.

Thus endeth the first week, which has been wonderful in spite of the foul weather.

Enthusiastically

WPS, R. and A.