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Title: Letter from Josephine Meredith to Josephine Davis

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De Leon Springs

Florida 2/26/64

My dear Mrs. Davis:

Thank you ever so much for all the Corson news. He has made quite a name for himself and so has she. I haven't seen her for a long time but I saw him last summer. He looks much older than he did but not nearly so bad as most of his pictures seem to show. He never did take a very good picture although I thought he was a good looking man.

I was in Carlisle last summer, my first visit in ten years. I hardly knew either the town or the college or even the highway into Carlisle from Harrisburg. It has all become so civilized. The college shows the effects of so much more money than they used to have before the government got so generous. It is really a very attractive campus now.

Poor old Metzger is no more. ~~That~~ ^{that} whole corner is to be made into a filling station and motel site. The building has been pulled down and the trees have all been cut down too. That corner has lost its looks but I am sure the motel will be a paying concern. Living as

I do, in the mid-west - I am often asked about a good place for western visitors to stay over night - before starting off in the morning to the cities, Harrisburg, Baltimore, Washington, Phila., and New York. It is surprising how many people travelling Eastward want to visit so many places known to us as quite far apart. It is interesting to live in this part of the country and hear what people say about the East - and its shenanigans. To some of them, we are an odd lot in our ideas.

One day last summer the Supt. of Property told me of the house directors and me to go over to Metzger's and take anything we liked as the place was going to be sold as a unit and the things left there were of no money value. We made a tour of the place and decided that the only thing worth carrying off was the kitchen sink. We decided against that so we went away empty handed. Metzger's was a sad looking place empty and dusty. I am glad the poor old place is no more. One of our former students was here a day or two ago and when I said something like what she said "How can you say that? I had a lovely time there and so did other girls."

You ask about my family.

Last fall my son-in-law surprised

of me, I thought he would never leave
the University of Illinois, but he did,
He got what he described to me as "a
very flattering offer" from the University
of Iowa and if we all went, how the
whole family likes the new home and
least likes his new work. It is a
much better position in a new kind
of organization. He is the Pres. that,
I think, is what a man likes, to be
the head of the department. We have
a nice house of a kind none of us
ever lived in, a brand new modern
house, equipped with all kinds of
gadgets. It is on a high hill from
which we can see a long way up a
beautiful bend in the Iowa River. None
of ever lived in such a pretty place
either. Of course none of the girls are
home. Martha graduated from Oberlin
two years ago and is now at North-
western working for an advanced degree
in chemistry. Chris is a senior at Carle-
ton. She had a very nice summer last
year. She got herself an opportunity as
an exchange student in that "Experiment
in International Living" and spent the
summer with a private family in
France. She was with very nice people.
The family consisted of a man, his wife
and little boy. They were educated
people and were very good to Chris. They
took her everywhere with them so she
got to the Pyrenees and on other good
trips in their car, we talked

about what Chris could take with her
as gifts from U.S.A. and decided for
the woman she was to take some U.S.A.
cotton material for dresses. We picked
some out and she was delighted.
It happened that she liked to sew,
made her own clothes and liked
what Chris brought her. Chris
decided that U.S.A. suited her
for convenience in sewing. Anne
our youngest is a Sophomore at
Oberlin "dear old Ohio" to her. She likes
what she is doing and where she
is living.

I am all right. My back is still
a nuisance and always will be but
if I do as the doctor told me to do it
doesn't bother me much. I still don't
know exactly what is wrong and if
the doctor does, he is not very clear
about telling me. I don't know what
happened either. I was out in the yard
about 1/2 mile the flowers one evening.
I leaned down to pick up the rose
and have never straightened up
since without a twinge in my back.
I feel it whenever I move but it is
endurable and gets no worse. It is
not a slipped disc but the doctor says
a pinched nerve. It is not too bad
anyway. It was painful at first but I
guess that long stay in the hospital
was a good thing. The doctor said
"flat on my back" was all I needed
so I did as I was told.

My sister-in-law has a nice little house here in Florida and I have been coming here to stay with her for some years. This year, she has had to have an eye operation and told me to get some one to stay with me until she got here. I think it is evident that she will not be here but I have an upstairs neighbor with me for as long as I need her. She is a retired librarian about my age. We get along sharing the expenses and work. It is nice for both of us. I miss my sister-in-law. She was such good company. However, this lady certainly carries her share of the work-load. I tell her everyday that I don't like to be waited on but she likes to fuss over a poor helpless soul which she takes me to be. I never had so much attention to my small needs.

We have something very nice here this year, The Volusia County Bookmobile. It comes every two weeks and stays in front of the post office practically all the day. They bring a lot of books with them and will next trip bring whatever you ask for.

can remember good meals of food things as they help -
pen, you would be surprised to find how many birds I have
killed your idea of a bird night or common studies.

all my friends seem to be reading
"Street-to-Street". We ordered it two
or three weeks ago but our town
to get it will not be for two more
weeks. They tell us it is very popular.
One of my library friends tells
me she calls it "interesting but
not profound".

Last night we went to hear a woman
chemist address the Audubon Society
about the danger to birds in insect
sprays. She gave us each a long list
of household cleaning powders and
liquids that she called dangerous to
use. A woman next to me whispered
that she was going home to tell her hus-
band she wasn't going to touch any-
thing more to do with anything so
hazardous and using soap and water.
We all come home to see if we have been
using any of the long list of dangerous
things. I couldn't find anything on
the worst list but I found some minor
evils. However, I think I shall sur-
vive. It seems to me if we are as vul-
nerable as she says we are, we ought
to have better laws to protect us.

It is best time, if you like to write
letters, write to me. I like to write letters
and will be glad to write to you.
I hope you will keep well and

Best - mother
Joseph B. Merrill
I should begin another page I should have written it.

Home address

De Leon Springs

R.R[illegible], Fairview Knoll, Iowa City, Iowa

Wanda 2/26/64

Thank you ever so much for all the Carson news. He has made quite a name for himself and so has she. I haven't seen her for a long time but I saw him last summer. He looks much older than he did but not nearly so bad as most of his pictures seem to show. He never did take a very good picture although I thought he was a good looking man.

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I do in the mid-west, I am often asked about a good place for western visitors to stay one night before starting off in the morning to the cities, Harrisburg, Baltimore, Washington, Phil., and New York. It is [illegible] how many people travelling Eastward want to visit so many places shown to us as quite far apart. It is interesting to live in this part of the country and hear what people say about the East and its shenanigans. To some of them, we are an odd [illegible] our ideas.

One day last summer the [illegible] of [illegible] told me of the house directors and me to go over to Metzger and take anything we liked as the place was going to be sold as a unit and the things left were of no money value. We made a [illegible] of the place and decided that the only thing worth carrying off was the kitchen [illegible]. We decided against that so we went away empty handed. Metzger was a sad looking place empty and dusty, I am glad the poor old place is no more, one of my former students was here a day or two ago and when I said something like that she said "How can you say that? I had a lovely time there and so did other girls."

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Last fall my son-in-law surprised

me. I thought he would never leave the University of Illinois but he did, he got what he described to me as "a very generous offer from the University of Iowa and off we all went. Now the whole family likes the new home and Carl likes his new work. It is a much better position in a new kind of organization. He is the [illegible]. What, I think is what a man likes, to be the head of the department. We have a nice house of a kind none of us ever lived in, a brand new modern house, equipped with all kinds of gadgets. It is on a high hill from which he can see a long way up to a beautiful bend in the Iowa River. None of us ever lived in such a pretty place either. Of course, none of the girls are home. Martha graduated from Oberlin [illegible] years ago and is now at North Western working for an advanced degree in chemistry. Chris is a senior at [illegible]. She had a very nice summer last year. She got herself an opportunity as an

exchange student in that "Experiment in International Learning" and spent the summer with a [illegible] family in France. She was with very nice people. The family consisted of a man, his wife, and little boy. They were educated people and were very good to Chris. They got to the Pyrenees and on other good trips in their car, [illegible] talked

about what Chris should take with her as gifts from U.S.A. and decided for the woman she was to take some U.S.A cotton material for dresses. We picked some out and she was delighted. It happened that she liked to sew, make her own clothes and liked what Chris bought her. Chris decided that U.S.A [illegible] her for [illegible] in living. Anne my youngest is a sophomore at Oberlin "dear old Obie" to her. She likes what she is doing and where she is living.

I am all right. My back is still a nuisance and always will be but if I do as the doctor told me to do it doesn't bother me much. I still don't know exactly what is wrong and, if the doctor does, he is not very clear about telling me. I don't know what happened either. I was out in the yard about to [water] the flowers one evening. I leaned down to pick up the hose and have never straightened up since without a twinge in my back. I feel it [illegible] I [illegible] but it is endurable and gets no worse. It is not a slipped disc but the doctor says a pinched nerve. It is not too bad anyway. It was painful at first but I guess that long stay in the hospital was a good thing. The doctor said "heat on my back" was all I needed so I did as I was told.

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All my friends seem to be reading Herzog [so] bad. We ordered it two or three weeks ago but our [illegible] to get it will not be for two more weeks. They tell us it is very popular. One of my library friends tells me she calls it "interesting but not profound".

Last night we went to hear a woman chemist address the Audubon Society about the danger to birds in insect sprays. She gave us each a long list of household cleaning products and liquids that she called dangerous to use. A woman next to me whispered that she was going home to tell her husband she wasn't going to [illegible] anything [illegible] to do with any thing so hazardous and using soap and water. We all came home to see if we have been using any of the long list of dangerous things. I couldn't

find anything on the worst list, but I found some minor [illegible]. However, I think I shall survive. It seems to me if we are as vulnerable as she says we are, we ought to [illegible] better lands to [illegible] us.

It is bed time. If you like to write letters, write to me. I like to write and will be glad to write to you. I hope you will keep well and can remember good [illegible] of bad things as they happen. You would be surprised to find how many times I have used your idea of a birth right or convinced [illegible]

If I had begun another page I should not fill it.

Best wishes,

Josephine B. Meredith