

Nov 16, 1931

TUESDAY NIGHT.

Dear Dad:

Have just gotten your letter telling of the F&M's closing; this is the thing that I feared last June and, strangely enough, discussed with Mamie only last week when I saw the bank's statement in the Democrat showing its slight cash, large loans, etc. It happened just about two weeks earlier than I had suspected that it might. The consequences, I imagine, may be rather severe on all business in the county. Naturally your own situation is the main thing that interests me.

you Would have wired you tonight but figured that by air mail this would reach/Thursday morning. Of course I can see Perkins if it will do any good at all. I can't imagine him~~x~~ refusing to see me although he might, in which ~~xxx~~ case I would exhaust~~x~~ every means here to gain entree and, this failing, suggest you have Jim Howard wire him to see me. However, I don't anticipate any difficulty in getting to him, on my World's Work card. It happens that the Chemical is the bank for Scripps-Howard and I feel sure that Perkins will know, or know of, Lee Wood whose letter of recommendation I shall take along in order to bolster up my case with Perkins. There are other angles that I can work here to win his regard, I believe.

~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ I hope, as you do, that he will give an extension of time in which you may be able to re-finance the Democrat mortgage. I don't know what plans you have for effecting this but am suggesting this as an alternate: if Perkins will not extend time, or does and you are unable to re-finance, perhaps I can persuade him to permit me to assume a portion of the debt and amortize it at a fixed rate of, say, \$100 per month. Doubtless you could get some funds down there so as to reduce the face amount and make the maturity shorter on the part I would clean up by instalments. I could even give him \$1,000 down if it was the only thing that would keep him from ~~xxxxx~~ selling the paper at foreclosure. That, of course, is the main object~~x~~; it seems to me that we should do everything possible to prevent such an unhappy turn of affairs as that would represent. Impaired as the earning capacity of the paper is by general depression, the Democrat can make good money when business becomes more normal.

It would be a good idea, I imagine, for you to talk over with Jim Howard in detail just what we might be able to offer Perkins who will be guided, no doubt, to some extent by Howard's recommendations. By the way, is Baxter Jackson still in the Chemical? It occurred to me that I might use him as a means of reaching Perkins if other avenues were closed.

I don't know by what means you plan to re~~x~~-finance the Democrat loan but suppose by bonds; you won't, of course, give up control of the paper. The important thing, though, is to save it, even if you have to put it in friendly hands for a while. Looking at Pierce's indomitable efforts to come back it looks as though almost any handicaps can be overcome by will.

Although addressed to Dad---because it's principally business --- this note is really to all three of you, including John Henry, whose epistle

has been duly receipts and contents noted with disgust. He gives very good reports of himself but I am still dubious, knowing his inaccuracy. The sooner that boy gets a hod on his shoulder instead of an ice cream soda under his nose the better off he'll be; I agree with old governor whatshisname~~x~~ about higher education.

Also with Mother and ~~Elmer~~ Alexander about work. It's an unpopular theory, however. Mr. Phillips stands pretty high in the ranks of planners and doers. Despite low cotton prices he probably will survive because he made a bumper crop of everything he planted---790 bales of cotton, 5,000 tons of hay, etc. Perhaps the size of the crop will make up for price. He can't keep that up indefinitely, though.

I can't say that the Parrishes worry me as Aunt Snow does you-all. They aren't so helpless and have a better way out of their difficulty. So far as I can see Aunt Snow is ~~helpless~~ beyond hope, particularly with W.P. on the scene. Seems to me we've enough troubles of our own---both of us---without bothering about somebody else, other than to feel a natural sympathy for those who are down. Will, of course, is determined to fleece her of everything she has and will do so, no doubt. No one can prevent that without actually taking over her financial affairs---an impossible event.

Am glad to hear that Oscar is working with Dad. Perhaps his morale can be built up again; he has reason for it to be low. I don't see why the authorities don't put Richardson's boy in the reformatory. It seems to be only a question of time until he does something really criminal. He is doubtless abnormal in some way, as Mother suspects.

So is Frances W. for that matter. Martha said she confessed to her that she ~~was~~ queer, never happy, generally maladjusted, etc. Bad lot, she and the sap-headed little sister. Surprising again, isn't it, that Wright would take \$200 more from ~~Jesse~~ and then never come back, after taking her other funds. I rather expect him to pop up here in New York some day; is there a reward of any sort out for him? I wouldn't mind collecting it.

We both got quite a kick out of J. Emory's initial blast which I'll preserve among my memorabilia. Many times I have thanked le bon dieu that I didn't get into that deceptive Huntsville field. What a pickle it would have been! As it now stands, it seems to me that it will wind up in a big killing eventually, with Reese Amis---one tough mug---peppering Lane and perhaps Pierce. Newspapers cannot dwell in amity in Huntsville; the public is too meddlesome and so are the editors. What a spot for poor Johnson, a nice kid according to my friend Jack Purcell who knew him here. I simply marvel at Pierce's ability to keep going, although he will go broke again in six months, I feel sure. Amis is lucky though; he got rid of mud-turtle O'Neal, the world's worst newspaper man. Pierce is starting a full page of comics which is positively uneconomic and a trunk wire which is sheer insanity.

If you get a copy of Charlie's bugle please forward it along to complete my files. I want to see his Did You Know items..

I've some re-writing to do now, so will close and write later in the week.

Devotedly,

Wm.