

L0005 (English)

Toronto, June 2, '55

Dear Mother and Siblings! I was very happy to receive the belated birthday letter and thank you very much. The jug was unfortunately still in the kiln to be fired, but I have sent it off now. The firing takes quite a long time, you see, then we glazed them on the last day of school, and then our teacher wasn't there anymore. I also have the record with Hungarian dances, 16 dances on one record, played by Jascha Heifetz. Did you not know Jascha Heifetz and Yehudi Menuhin? I already heard both of them here last year; they are the two best violinists in the world. Mechi is still asking me about it now. I have already renewed my subscription for the symphony concerts for next fall and winter. Mechi thinks she will fall asleep. The program will be very good. 5 of the best conductors in the world are coming, as well as Heifetz and Rubinstein (violin and piano). I'm already looking forward to that again. From the Metropolitan Opera, I saw "Madame Butterfly" and "Carmen." The hall is not very suitable for the purpose; it's actually a sports arena for hockey, wrestling, boxing, etc. But the voices and the scenery were uniquely beautiful; you can really tell that it's the best of the best. I liked Carmen better, but maybe only because I was too tired during Madame Butterfly, as two days before that I had slept at the cooking event, driven 300 km by car, and then gone to the opera right after. That was on the Monday of our long weekend at Deer Lake. We went with 5 cars and had 4 cabins. But there were only 5 beds in the girls' cabin, so I slept on the floor in a sleeping bag, but I didn't pay anything either. Each cabin cooked for itself, so we girls of course made out well and cheaply. We had to leave the cars at the shore; the cabins were all on islands. There was no electricity, just an oil lamp for light. One evening we had a campfire on an island, which was wonderful; there were plenty of dry trees. The islands are mostly not large and are so numerous and close together that one could easily get lost, even during the day.

Last weekend was Queen Victoria's birthday on Monday, so the office and factory workers all had three days off; they call that a "long weekend" here. On weekends like that, the youth group goes on its outings. 18 from the club drove to Deer Lake, 150 miles (225 km). Since I still worked on Saturday and Siegfried did too until 12 o'clock, we and two other boys didn't leave until 3 o'clock in the afternoon. We drove mostly in the dark, because all the others had already left at 7 in the morning. We arrived at 7 in the evening. We had to row in boats to the islands where the cottages were, in which we were cooked for by the girls and the others by the boys. Frau Kockendörfer, Inge, Hilde, Jule, Dagmar, and I were the girls. I immediately had a proper dinner: potato salad, sausages, and bread. In the morning at seven, since we got the overnight stay paid for, we took care of ourselves, which is why it was much cheaper this time. Afterwards, I went for a drive with Horst. Then I went fishing with Heinz, although I don't care for it at all, but I wanted to see if he would catch anything. He caught 3 fish, but then we were so bloody on our faces, in our hair, and on our arms and legs, often from the mosquito bites, that we couldn't stand it anymore. The next morning, Siegfried, Heinz, Dagmar, and I went out in the rowboat at 6 o'clock sharp to take pictures. The lake is very large and full of countless islands with wild forest, rocks, and undergrowth on them. Often just a rock is sticking out of the lake or wild trees. You will see everything clearly in the many pictures that Heinz, Dodo, and I took. At 9 o'clock

we drove back to the cabins, had breakfast, swam and played in the lake from the boat, and fished. In between, Heinz, Siegfried, and I went out again. We had seen a wonderful island in the morning where we wanted to sunbathe. But it didn't come to that, because there were so many from the club on the lake who kept following us. When they wanted to tow us with their motorboat, Siegfried sprayed them with water. That was the nasty declaration of war for the water fight that followed. But first, we left our clothes and the cameras and watches on an island. Then we attacked them live in the bay. That's how we fell out of the boat, soaking wet. Jo and Horst were in one boat, Varna, Dagmar, and Herold in the other. The last ones sailed to our island, hoisted our dishcloth, got it wet, and quickly took off. But we didn't mind, because we were the only ones. On the way home we first went for a swim from the boat, me in shorts and a T-shirt, because my bathing suit is still at the store, as usual. The water was wonderful. When we were drying off, we saw our dishcloth hung up in the trees on an island. We are proud that we managed, except for the rest in the evening when it started to rain. These lines are a nice report, etc., of the whole battle. In the evening we all sat in one of the cabins where Blomquist had made a fire. And when everyone was asleep, we made a campfire on an island and sang; we came home at 11:30 at night. The mosquitoes were going wild; if you didn't smear yourself with some stuff that stank worse than the fly repellent for the cows in Stitten. My whole head was full of welts; it was bad. On Monday morning, the bed was no longer visible at first, but later the sun came out again. The three of us laid ourselves out on an island and sunbathed. Darli, Inge, Hilde, Frau Kockendörfer, Horst, as well as Hans-Dieter already went back to Toronto at 1 o'clock; the Kockendörfers went to the opera in the evening. The next two cars drove home at 3 o'clock, so that then only Heinz, Siegfried, Uconfried, and I were together in one cabin. The weather wasn't very nice, so we went out again for a swim. On the way home we got into a terrific, lukewarm thunderstorm, and we arrived at the cabin soaking wet. I fried bacon, cooked pea soup and coffee; it was uncomfortable. The coffee water just wouldn't boil because the stove was almost out, so in the meantime we went out fishing, but no one can beat Heinz, but we had so much fun because the fishing line got caught on the many roots in the lake every five minutes, and we didn't catch a single fish. We left at 9:30 in the evening and at 3:30 in the morning I was in bed. I wasn't freshly rested in the morning, but still standing at the dock, and laundry everywhere from the judges and a beautiful memory of the 3 days. We left so late because you can hardly get through between 6 and 9 in the evening, the traffic is so heavy after a weekend like that, and 1 o'clock in the afternoon was too early for us. The last day was almost the most beautiful.

Then last week, I spent every evening faithfully developing film and enlarging pictures, which is why I didn't write sooner. - At the hospital, I rubbed myself with salt water, ether, with all possible remedies, so it looked bad. Now it's pretty much all over, just a little bit red in one spot. Thank God there was no infection, that can happen quickly too. - By the way, I have health insurance starting July 15th; it's a better feeling. This Sunday, Heinz, Siegfried, Jo, Enke, Dahl, and I were at Lake Minnetonka. It was nice; Jo, Heinz, Siegfried, and I went swimming. The water is chilly but nice. You know, I haven't had such lazy Sundays for as long as I can remember, and I wish with all my heart that you all could join in, but you get nothing from that. I want to see as much as possible this one year. Imagine, last week the latest film with O. W. Fischer was playing here. Siegfried went to see it. I go to the movies

very, very seldom.

Some of it has nothing to do with reality, but some of it is true.