

Bedford City
Va.

Nov 18 - 1901

My Dear Duffy:

Thanks for the frame. Had been
intending to look it up long before I left New York
but never got around to it. I was born
Aug 27th 1871 at Terre Haute, Indiana.
My father was a manufacturer of woollens and
an expert buyer of such products. I was raised
at Warsaw, Indiana, but I would be
more truthful if my early life were ascribed
to not so much to one place as to the whole
state. All my life I have been a traveler.

I ~~have~~ spent my early years - up to 20 -
in such places as Terre Haute, Vincennes,
Evansville, Sullivan, Switz City, Bloomington,
Silver Lake, Indianapolis, with Warsaw
as a centre. You can understand how
this was. Our family had relatives and
friends in these places and I knocked
about a great deal. Bloomington was
the site of the State University, which
I attended for several years acquiring
absolutely nothing save a disreputable
and dried method of imparting information.
This is not wholly true however, for

the beauty - natural and architectural - which
invited the scene carried ^{me} to mental heights
not previously attained.

The attempt to live out as a farm hand
was really my first effort to earn my own
living. I was fifteen years old, in my
second year in the local high school, and
dreaming of earning something during the
three month vacation which began in June.
The result I have told you.

Two years later I ventured alone to
Chicago, secured a position at three a week
in a hardware store as a helper and
was shortly discharged. Next I secured

a position as clerk in a real estate office
where I earned four, but never got it. The
man finally paid my due help, for me
which was almost as good. Then he failed.

I next secured a place with Hibbard
Spencer, Bartlett and Co - wholesaler hardware
as clerk and earned five a week. While
working here a year I discovered I could
go to Kealey for a year, for \$300⁰⁰ and
made an arrangement with a friend of
mine to advance me half of this. The
rest I earned and in 1889 adjourned
to Bloomington and my own state again.
What I acquired there, I have just told you.

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Once out of college I went back to
Bellevue and secured several jobs - one
in a real estate office, another in a laundry,
a third in an easy payment house as
well as and fourth in a better grade
house of the same kind. Through these I
tried heaven only knows with what
misgivings and gloom over my future. The
last three positions mentioned were taken
largely because of my lungs. Eight-
teen, ten and twelve dollars - thus my
salary arose.

All of this time about five years - I was
fiercely dissatisfied. Revolving was my great

chance - anything, everything. Eugene Field
 was then on the Chicago news - my friend
 Lussacius pastor of Plymouth Church. I
 knew neither of them then, but Field's
 delicate and humorous presentation of the
 delights of literature in the Daily News and
 Lussacius' sermons delivered Sunday
 evenings at Central Music Hall fired
 me immensely. When the convention
 which nominated Cleveland in 1892
 assembled in Chicago, I threw up my
 hands a week job, sought the office of
 the Chicago Globe and hung around
 there in such a desolate and yearning

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frame of mind that I think the city editor
hired me out of sympathy.

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From there on I came to the thousand
and our influences, race, women, newspaper
cities, which affected and colored me.

I was hired by telegraph by Joseph B.

McCallagh, editor of the St. Louis Globe-
Democrat, was made traveling correspondent
for the St. Louis Republic. ~~Went~~ Went
to Toledo and met Henry, for whose
paper the Blade I did some work. Went

to Pittsburgh and worked for the Dispatch
the leading paper - when I was a free

lance and not very hard pressed with

work. From there I left - to try my
 luck in New York. Was hired on sight -
 by Brisbane of the New York World. Stayed
 there about four months when I persuaded
 Howley Hamilton also to found Every-
 Month. You ought to know the rest.

Plays, poems, dramas, articles - find
 my trunk is full of them. I shall have
 a bon fire one of these days in honor of
 my escape from their influence

It is very pleasing here as I have
 said to you. We are not in the mountains
 but at the very edge. I have been on
 one walking tour and made 25 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles

in one day, to say nothing of climbing 6000
 feet to the top of High Peak. We are thinking
 of going farther inland into the heart of
 the mountains. It will be colder but
 somewhat more picturesque.

Thanks again for the magazine. I

hope my article on weeds is not out of date
 by now. Regards to Mrs. Duffy and the
 others. Mrs. Decker includes her

Yours

Decker