

11th September 1956  
G.P.O., Hobart  
Tasmania, Australia

Dear Schuyler:

Recently I returned from a week in Sydney and found a long missive by Jean awaiting me. It is of the same general tone as yours of last July. Really, you people should not write such letters as they leave a very poor impression on the reader. Apparently you have talked to each other at long length about me and are now both convinced that I am an old man of the sea who is the root of all evil. Nobody likes to be raved at vocally or by mail. I should be insensed but reculiarly enough I'm not. You are still my only close living relative and I still feel we should get along amicably.

In regard to the house, I have only the meager information you send to me. Last July I agreed with some alacrity to all your wishes mainly because it was a simple way of closing the entire affair up. I thought the house had been moved long ago but according to Jean it still remains on the property. Now I receive a request to sign more papers which would reopen the whole matter in a most vague manner. Obviously, I'm not interested in any such thing. I agreed to your proposition nearly two months ago in good faith and I see no reason to not hold you to it. If the figures you gave me have any substance, you will still make out very well. I cannot attempt to go over all that again. As far as I'm concerned you do not need any more paper work to move the house and garage as I'm confident that Bert will take out the 1000 dollars due me from your half of the money received from the sale of the land. However, if it will make you feel better, please have Bert draw up proper papers according to our mutually agreed understanding as above and I will sign them promptly. In the mean time you may feel free to go ahead with the moving.

There is another matter I have been intending to call to your attention but keep forgetting. In the contract with IBT which we all signed, there is a paragraph which says IBT is to make a survey after the property is theirs. Then if it is found that the parcel of land is less than the specified 60 x 100 feet, they reserve the right to return it to us and we are to refund the money. I didn't like this at the time, but it seemed not worth arguing about in view of your urgency. However I am quite sure the plot is not a rectangle of this size; also that it is a bit short on at least one and perhaps more sides. In my estimation it would be prudent to make sure that IBT is satisfied with the property on this count as there is no possibility of our delivering more land than we own.

The trip to Sydney was quite a success. The main purpose of the gathering was to welcome Bart J. Bok, an astronomer from Harvard, who is taking the post of Commonwealth Astronomer and Professor of Astronomy at the National University in Canberra. He was well received and made a good impression. Naturally I was delighted that an American was appointed. Really, just another straw in the wind that Australia is leaning more and more in the direction of America instead of Britain. I gave a short talk on my new results and everybody had a good time. Trips were made to the field stations at Fleurs and Dapto which are respectively about 40 miles east and 60 miles south of Sydney.

One afternoon I hunted up some half casts living near Botony Bay and bought some boomerangs on the provision that they would teach me how to fly them. This seemed an unusual stipulation as apparently most people buy them as ornaments. However, after selecting the best ones of quite a variety, they made good and we spent a pleasant couple of hours flying boomerangs over the sand dunes. This is an art which allows the player quite a range of skill as they may be made to dive and swoop as well as return. Much better than flying a kite. I'll give you a demonstration some time.

So much for the present as this should go in the mail today. Now Schuyler, inspite of all our differences, agrivations, etc., I don't harbor any grudge toward you and I would be delighted to receive a pleasant, friendly and concilliatory letter about what you are doing. However you may feel, I still say

Best regards,