

February 3, 1927

Dear Mothers:-

Although it is very late and I have not been getting too much sleep recently I cannot let the night slip by without a word in explanation of the cable that you will have read and digested many times before this letter reaches you.

I believe that Teddy informed both of you that nothing was expected to happen until the middle of March. Well, that was a mistake in our original reckoning. We went by the encyclopedia method which recommended two ways of counting for date, which when applied to our situation gave two dates with a difference of three weeks. We took the later date for announcement purposes in order that no one might be overly excited ahead of time. The doctor came along and told us that even the earliest date which we figured on was too late and he said that Feb. 24th was the latest date that we could count upon. That was after Teddy's letters to you folks had gone and when she learned the case she thought that it would be just as well to leave you in ignorance of the right date anyhow and thus prevent worry as the time drew near. Well, Sunday when the doctor was here before Teddy went to the hospital he brought a little chart with him just for fun and on that he worked it out that Feb. 1st was the right date. Teddy laughed and said so that is the latest date in it? and he replied "No, February 6th or 7th is the latest date."

Everything had been quite normal up until last week when Teddy gave the doctor a little uneasiness because the sack of fluid broke ahead of time and he thought that Teddy was going to have a long drawn out period of "dry labour". He was not particularly worried about Teddy because he seemed to think that she could stand it on account of her age, but he informed us that the infant mortality in such cases was higher ^{than} elsewhere - shut up and worried for three days. Then Sunday the sack had broken on Wednesday evening and sent us on a wild-goose chase to the hospital at midnight pain began and the doctor still thinking that the labour was going to be a long one did not expect anything to happen until Monday. I called him on Sunday morning and he came around twice to see how things were progressing. The last time he told me to come to the hospital at seven or eight in the evening with Teddy. He wanted to come a third time and take her but we both thought that we could get a cab and save him the third trip in one day. I asked him how I was to know that I should start off, and he in his usual manner told me, "When she begins to groan and sweat and hang onto the furniture come over, but there is no hurry". I told Teddy and we had a good laugh. We had hardly left the house at noon when Teddy's pain began to come on in what seemed to me a more lively manner, and I decided that she was "hanging onto the furniture" and after some coaxing got Teddy to leave for the hospital at 3 o'clock instead of seven. By the time we arrived she was glad that she had taken my advice for she was ready to go to bed. The doctor and nurse were ready for us even though we were early and at five o'clock when the pain got real bad he gave Teddy a little dope enough to take the edge off. I might stop here to say that Dr. McDonnell among many other things seems to me to be pretty much of an obstetric specialist, for this dope business made things pretty easy, comparatively, for Teddy and yet did not seem to interfere in anyway with her muscular activity. She says that her real pain was over by five o'clock although what followed was painful, yet the thing she remembers about it is only the physical effort and not the pain. By six o'clock the nurse and the doctor were pretty well pleased with the way everything was going and the doctor found that some of the water had not

yet been lost in spite of the fact that it had been draining out for three days previous. The little that was left did some good, at any rate he told me at six o'clock that Teddy was having a perfectly normal labour and did not seem to be any the worse for the accident of the loss of the amniotic fluid. He thought that everything would be over by midnight. But after each examination Teddy fooled him and the process seemed to get continually faster and he had to revise his guesses several times until the last time he guessed 10.30. It looked as if it was going to be all over at ten, for at that time the little fellow appeared and for this last stage I had to administer some ether. All the time I had been kept busy with odd jobs. I was a well initiated obstetric assistant before the night was over. My main job was etherizer. Had I been told at noon that I was to do such a job I do not think you would have gotten me within ten miles of the Hospital. I am not much on that kind of business. However, I got away with it. In fact the ether had a stronger reaction than the doctor wanted and the last stage was delayed about ten or fifteen minutes as a result until the effects could wear off and Teddy do the final work in the matter, but even with delay it was all over ten minutes ahead of the doctor's latest prediction 10.20 P.M. I said to the doctor that Teddy had always seemed to be ahead of what was demanded in the situation and he said that that was true, that not once had she called on her reserve strength, which was mighty fortunate. I kept telling her through it all that she had not yet lost her pink cheeks and sure enough the next morning they were still there and they are now. Of course she is weak and stiff and sore but nothing like what I had expected from what I knew of such a business and from what I had heard. The whole thing was perfectly normal and unusually so for a first child. Between efforts her pulse beat was absolutely normal up to the time that the ether was given and it only went up then under the stimulation of the ether. For these two days of convalescence both her pulse and temperature have been normal. Teddy never gave us a moment's concern, but we can hardly say as much for the baby.

For some unaccountable reason he nearly left us when he was born and because he didn't we can only thank God and the doctor. He and the nurse worked for twenty minutes until the sweat stood out on their foreheads and they did not stop even when they thought at one time that they might as well. Fortunately the ether had put Teddy to sleep and she was asleep for the half hour following the birth so that she missed those terribly tense moments. When the little fellow finally did cry and begin to breathe I wasn't worth the proverbial pincers of snuff. Teddy does not yet know what went on and she can wait a week or so until she is stronger before she finds out. Once he started to breathe everything was all right and the doctor pronounced him in good shape and went back to Teddy. By half past eleven everything was in good shape and Teddy had dropped off for a real sleep although she was pretty much excited naturally, but the physical effort plus the dope in her system were too much and she could not stay awake. Sometime the nurse refused to go to bed even though the doctor assured her that the baby was all right and she pulled her chair up beside him and kept herself awake by talking some lace until four o'clock when he let out several lusty yells and that seemed to satisfy her for she dropped off for a cat nap after that. I slept about two hours between midnight and morning but I was too nervous and excited to do any more.

In the morning the doctor said that it was perfectly all right to talk that everything was all right, so I did. Walter Craig (we are going to call him Craig in order to avoid any confusion) is progressing in good shape in spite of his bad start. To-night the nurse pronounced him a strong babe, and says he is none the worse his rough treatment. Believe me