

COPY

Dexter, Maine
August 1, 1942

U. S. Senator Harry S. Truman
Senate Office Building
Washington, D. C.

Dear Harry:

I am delighted that you and Mrs. Truman and Senator and Mrs. Kilgore expect to be with us for the gala launching at Portland and Bath of eight ships. So far as I know this is unprecedented and very impressive plans are developing for the affair with a nationwide hook-up on the Red Network and also a short wave broadcast to Britain as some of the ships to be launched are ones originally ordered by the British.

You and Senator Kilgore are each down for a brief address of three to five minutes at the launching ceremonies. These are out door with amplifying arrangements and I believe yours will be at the so-called Todd Bath Yard which is the older yard where the boats are built in basins by the new system developed by Pete Newell and then launched by lifting the gates and letting in the water, while Senator Kilgore will be at the Maritime Commission yard adjoining. Governor Sewall and I will perform similarly at Bath where two destroyers are being launched.

The plan now is for two special cars out of Washington. I have reservations for you all including Hugh and General Lowe at the Eastland Hotel for Sunday and Sunday night so that will be your initial address.

General Lowe is arranging for three Army cars for our service during the week in the inspection of shipyards and airports along the coast and in the interior of Maine.

Monday, August 17th, we plan luncheon with the Governor and Mrs. Sewall at Blaine House which is the executive residence and a spot where I spent four very interesting years; going on then to Dexter where we will spend the night at our home.

U. S. Senator Harry S. Truman

August 1, 1942

-2-

COPY

Tuesday morning planes will take you and Harley and myself to Presque Isle where is located the hopping off port for all our transport shipments across the North Atlantic although this is very little realized. General George has been doing an enormous business there and General Lowe has advised him of our prospective visit. This will give one some idea of how we are operating this North Atlantic ferry and the amount of business that is being handled.

A recent visitor told me of seeing 235 planes take off one morning, although this seems difficult to credit.

I have personally seen, however, 150 planes in one flight heading for England. Some of these go by Labrador, Greenland and Iceland.

The flight carries us over a very interesting country and into the heart of the great Potato Empire of northern Maine where we raise twenty per cent of the potatoes of the entire United States in Aroostook County.

We return that night to Moosehead Lake where we will be the guests of Mr. Guy P. Gannett at his very comfortable camp on the shore for Tuesday and Wednesday nights. The ladies meanwhile will proceed by automobile to Greenville and meet us there Tuesday afternoon for the trip up the lake and visit Mr. Gannett's camp.

Moosehead Lake is quite impressive as it is forty miles long and twenty miles wide and entirely surrounded by wooded mountains. We claim it as the largest freshwater lake in the country entirely within the borders of one state and the fishing is very fine.

The lower end of this lake is the junction point of Canadian and American railroads and also the transit point for Canadian planes across the State of Maine from Montreal to the Maritime Provinces with a fine airport recently developed.

Thursday we go down to the Bangor airport which is the most northerly operation base in this country for the Army Air Corps and on the Bar Harbor where a patrol base is just now being located for patrol work along the coast, returning thence along the coast possibly with some Coast Guard boats if General Lowe is able to arrange for it, spending as much time as your plans will permit with a half day at the end

U. S. Senator Harry S. Truman

August 1, 1942

-3-

COPY

for the Kittery Navy Yard at Kittery, Maine as you leave the state. This yard is where submarines for the Navy are built.

I think this program will give you a very good idea of defense activities in both our shipyards and airports as the shipyards are scattered along our coast building the wooden boats and barges of which you have heard so much from Senator Kilgore and myself.

None of our program will be formal in any way so that you will not need to give yourself any concern about dress other than to have something that will be comfortable in a Maine summer which is, I imagine, about like a Missouri winter.

It thaws out in the day time here so that we are comfortable without an overcoat, but we always sleep under blankets. The season is delightful now and we are looking forward to giving you all a little glimpse of Maine as well as a little respite coupled with a very good picture of our war effort as the entire North Atlantic fleet is now based on Portland.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Senator Kilgore for his information as well.

I have felt a little guilty at being absent in these busy weeks but trust my absence will pay dividends in the week or so you spend up here.

Cordially yours,

Ralph O. Brewster, U.S.S.

B:M