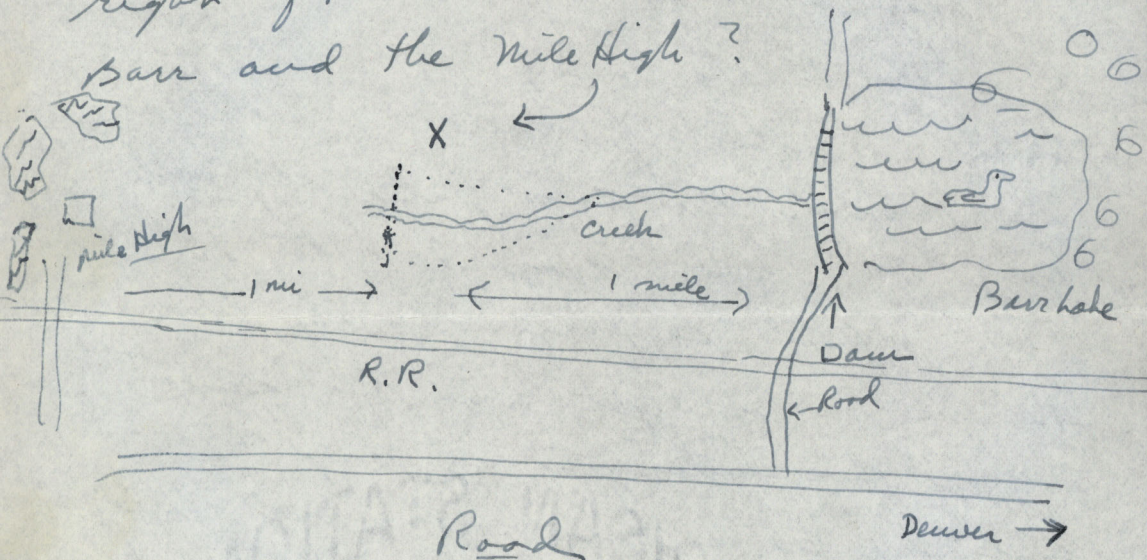
MRS. HENRY SWAN II
46 GRIGGS ROAD
BROOKLINE
MASSACHUSETTS

Jan. 17, 1943

Dear Pop,

Today as I was driving into the Hospital in the misty early gray light, a flock of mallards sailed in through the snow-flaked sky with wings set and dropped into the Fen about 30 yards from the bridge. The one on the right was the drake! I guess this Hitler guy is going to past-Tense for a year or two our already too-long verdue duck shoot. Anyway it made me think that maybe now when people are thinking of other things might be a time to put a corner on a place where we can go and shoot as we want + when we want

as in the old days at the 70.
And that brought to mind a question I've meant to ask before. Do you know who owns the place on the right of the road in way between Barr and the Mile High?



Road

If a fellow built a dam at X and made a little 2 or 3 acre lake with a slew above below would it all the ducks shot at on Barr or at Mile High like to drop in on a nice stool of decoys? Only 35 minutes from town? What do you think of that?

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Just before he left for active duty I talked with Dr. Churchill, who was exceedingly kind & gracious to me. I learned from him more concerning the Auxiliary Surgical Units of which I write you. The service sounds very promising as he describes it. Each Army has an auxiliary Service, the internal set-up of which is less fixed than fluid. (i.e. - opportunity for advancement in Rank unlike general & Base Hosp. Units). As the general Surgical parts of the auxiliary service, the men are divided into teams - a major or Captain as surgeon - a captain or Lieutenant as asst. surgeon - an anaesthetist, nurse + 2 or 3 orderlies (enlisted men). There is no

hospital affiliation. The idea is to send the teams where they are most needed. When the casualties mount in one sector - there you go to do the surgery. Then, when the pressure is on somewhere else, off you go - to do the surgery - etc. The most appealing aspect of this service (if Dr. Churchill's dope is accurate) is that it is limited to young men. The fellows throughout the country who have finished surgical residencies, etc. In short - a good portion of the cream of the present generation of surgeons is being enrolled, a stimulating and enjoyable group with which to be associated.

There may be a catch in all that - if your Army doesn't get hurt, you sit + twiddle for the

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duration. But all in all it sounds good if true: ① almost sure foreign service in more place than one. ② good chance of getting some surgery ③ chance of advancement ④ desirable and stimulating companions.

Dr. Churchill has written a letter to Lt. Col. Roland B. Carter, Surgeon general's office who apparently is in charge of recruiting for the Auxiliary Surgical Group, recommending me for the job. Apparently whomsoever Dr. Churchill recommends gets the job. He suggested I write Dr. Carter at the time I take out my papers, which I intend to do in about three weeks.

What would be your reaction in evaluating this assignment in comparison with a detail obtained through your friends friends, Cols. Genge + Hall. I suspect there is a chance of a Captaincy in the Auxiliary Corps, tho' perhaps not. –

Do you feel that Col. Hall's note indicates that he can and will get an assignment at Walter Reed or other large General Hospital. If so, do you think such assignment preferable from a surgical – personal + service to uncle Sam point of view?

Two other items: ① I have your book by Pancoast. I read ½ of it on the train coming back + the other ½ during the Christmas holidays. Will send it under separate cover.

② Tell Mom Flatch is wangling with Beals' to get a bigger size over shoe, + will communicate re same.

Love, H