

THE CREIGHTON UNIVERSITY

OMAHA 31, NEBRASKA

1/23/59

My dear Brick:

I am going to give myself the pleasure this morning, first thing after breakfast, of thinking you for your last wonderful letter & also for the deeply appreciated gift enclosed. Hearing from you, Brick, is always here. a shot in the arm for a slowly wearing out old bum. I passed the paper matches (panning Russia) on to an old lay - Brother here who got quite a kick out of the gage on the cover. This old Brother is 83 years old & my loan companion in the Community. His room is next door to mine & first met him at Florissant just about 52 years ago. At that time he had charge of the Dairy Barn & Creamery at The Novitate. Always liking the atmosphere of stables. I used to visit him often on the job & got to know him quite well. Another thing that endeared him to me was the fact that he used to make his own home-brew out in the bain. those were the days of prohibition. Being a generous soul he used to dispense his beverage to some of the other old Brothers around the place who worn out by their labors used to drop in on Brother Nick for a snort. This, of course was too good to last long. The Provincial heard about it & shipped Brother Nick to the missions in British Honduras. After six months there he was shipped back to the States & finally, like myself ended up here at Creighton. He was born in Kerney

Patch, St. Louis, an Irish ghetto; went to work as soon as he could to help send a younger brother through Florissant & his Jesuit training, then, after this brother was safely on his way, he joined the Order himself as a simple lay brother with no educational at all. His dad was an old-time food-carrier, going up & down ladders with loads of brick. The priest - brother later became President & Rector of Creighton U. & Brother Nick was assigned to the Community in various menial capacities, refectory in charge of the Laundry, etc. Now Fr. Pat, his brother is dead, & Bro. Nick is still going in spite of his 83 years. A good deal of the time he is sitting in his room smoking his pipe & communing with God. Whenever I feel in the need of a little relaxation or inspiration I drop in to see him & get plenty of both. He reads the paper, watches the antics of the human race, knows he can do nothing to straighten things out except to pray for the salvation of sinners & so spends his declining years in peace handing out his wisdom here & there & watching the fragrant smoke of his old pipe curling upwards like the incense of prayer. He radiates peace & contentment has the traditional Irish humor" & is all there mentally, even though the old body is giving way to the wear & tear of time. All his life he has been handicapped by a deformed leg that is just a little bit better than a wooden leg, pre-natal polio, the doctor's say, God bless you, Brick always
As ever:
John