October 20, 1939

Dear Jean Siddall:

Please do not measure my delight in your letter about "All in the Day's Work" by the long time I have taken to answer it. When it came to me I was laid up - I was foolish enough to overwork in the Spring - and had to take a period of quiet. The longest, my family said, that I had ever taken in my life. But I came back to work after Labor Day and I have had a hectic time catching up.

I was so pleased that you should write me as you did. I had many misgivings about that book and one of my regrets was that I had not done more about John Siddall and Bert. I tried so hard to keep the book down to work that I did not give my story warmth of friendship that I felt. I have been saying that I shall have to write another book all about my friends. I would like to give a picture of you and John as I remember you in your first apartment - what a joy to one who was all ready a rather tired old lady. And what fun it was to have you and John and Sammy Siddall at the Farm. You have given me a real set-up by your letter.

It was kind of you to write me as you did about Ella Tarbell. Isn't she the serious young lady, and isn't she a worker? It took me forty years to get anything like the gait in which she is going. But she will make her way, I feel confident. She has had all sorts of bunkers and discouragement of very hard times in the family. One interesting thing about it is that she never mopes or complains. It is a very wonderful world to Sister, as we call her. And I pray to Heaven that she may not lose her belief in it.

I wish I could see you, dear Jean Siddall. Ella and I often speak about you.

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She is carrying on in her usual brave way under difficulties too for my brother continues an invalid. He is just out after several weeks in the hospital and I only hope that he will not have to go back. What complications life brings, doesn't it? My problem is making something of life after eighty. There is no program for that, you know, and since the scientists have extended the duration of life there must be one prepared. I am thinking of writing a book on life after eighty. What do you think of that?

One of these days I am going to run in and see you, dear Jean Siddall, and in the meantime please believe that I was greatly comforted by your letter and that I have always for you the warmest affection.

Affectionately

Mrs. John M. Siddall
Tucson, Arizona

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