
Charles Albert Converse Papers, 1939-1940
MS/158/ER1/005

April 13, 1940

Converse, Laura Trice "Dottie."
Letter about Charles Converse's
Health Condition to [unknown].

Naval Hospital, Washington, D.C.

For this and additional works see: <https://vtext.valdosta.edu/xmlui/handle/10428/3016>

UUID: F6E83244-0D10-4B8B-4BD4-632B739AE2DF

Recommended Citation:

Converse, Laura Trice "Dottie." Letter about Charles Converse's Health Condition to [unknown]. Naval Hospital, Washington, D.C., April 13, 1940. Valdosta State University Archives and Special Collections, Charles Albert Converse Papers, 1939-1940 (ms158er1-005). <http://hdl.handle.net/10428/3022>.

This item is free and open source. It is part of the *Charles Albert Converse Papers, 1939-1940*, at Odum Library Valdosta State University Archives and Special Collections. If you have any questions or concerns, contact archives@valdosta.edu

Naval Hospital,
Washington, D.C.

Saturday, April 13th-

To date the doctors prognosis is hopeless. The kidney poison has reached a percentage few men live to know about. But three different times in the past month the doctors have thought Charlie was going and because he is still living they are naturally astounded at his resistance and endurance. Cardiac complications were the most painful ones - ten days ago and for forty-eight hours every breath seemed to be the last - but he has gotten entirely over that. Four days after he walked into this hospital, the doctor told me a coma was eminent - that he was in a pre-comatose state - and he, the doctor, was astounded Charlie had managed to get here on his feet.

He has been so poisoned by the infection in the kidney that a toxic condition may have existed for some months and only his determination to do his work carried him on. Of course some times a poison of this kind affects a person so generally that in Charlie's case he didn't realize it. How he did carry on is beyond the imagination of the doctors here. I personally feel he was mentally affected too, and this is very possible, the doctor says. Of course a good night's rest would revive him and his perfectly astounding determination and physical resistance carried him on to his work. His sister, who crossed with him, tells me the first two days out he was quite himself, then he became very ill and was wretched the whole trip over. When I saw him I was so shocked, I could hardly believe my own eyes. I met him here as his older sister was in N.Y. too.

We brought him to the hospital on Thursday morning, the 14th of March, and by Monday the doctor told me he was afraid we were going to lose him. That has been four weeks this coming Monday. He made an astounding rally that week and was much himself except for his intense apprehension. The Kidney poison was increasing daily, however.

The following Monday he started becoming more affected by the poison and his heart was beginning to show the long strain of undoubtedly at least a year or more of hypertension. By Saturday, the doctor told me Charlie might go any minute so night and day we watched him, giving him oxygen to relieve his breathing and intravenous saline and glucos. The liquid around the heart had completely gone and Charlie was suffering so. Morphine was being used but it seemed to only quiet the pain and his mind became more alert, hence his apprehension increased and naturally, being distracted with the pain when it did subside, he was frightened of it returning. However, again he pulled through.

By this time, at the request of his sister, I had Christian Science help for him. This spell lasted until Monday night, then he slept until Wednesday evening, waking and being amazingly alert in but pathetically weak in body, naturally. Thursday all day he slept and Friday all day he was awake and mentally alert. He discussed how near he came to dying, etc., and how grateful he was to be alive and to realize what living really meant. He went over his life, year by year with me, and decided where he had made his mistakes and how he

was going to right them. How he was going to get well, as the doctors ordered him and then see what life had in store for him and his. It was like life beginning all over again to us both, and we thanked God for his resurrection as we both felt it was -- new life-- after that terrible heart spell.

Then on Saturday he went slowly into a semi-comatose state again and a carbunckle started on his neck. By Sunday the blood chemistry showed such an increase that the doctor told me it would only be a few days. This is another Saturday - and day by day we live Charlie's life for him - force feeding him - caring for him and treating him with Christian and medical healing. He has been dilerious for six days now- first two days distressingly so but since just quietly talking. He clings to me as I sit on his bedside and seems thoroughly aware of the fact when I move. Momentarily he talks to me.

The carbunckle infection has spread alarmingly while the edema has subsided. I have been through so much in the past four weeks following all the cables from London being relayed to me, that I have decided come what may my helping Charlie fight this horrible thing is a privilege and a small part I can have in his healing. I feel so confident in the face of all the doctors say that God in his great mercy will give Charlie new life to live again with our children and me.

He is so pathetically ill and has been for two and a half years, but Charlie just couldn't believe there were physical ailments stronger than his body. Unfortunately, this was not backed with Christian healing in his own mind which is so necessary in such cases.

You can well imagine what a task this letter has been for me to compose and the type will have to be forgiven. With Charlie's three sisters, my sister and his lawyer, I am daily swamped with letter writing. Naturally, I have been distracted with fear and yet I seem to have been given some supernatural strength to help here and I stay night and day when I am needed - or Charlie is restless. He seems so afraid I am going to leave him. I have never seen any one so ill and to see him so helpless, so childish and so pathetically ill - it just breaks my heart - but I am so grateful he did get home to me as he told me he knew he would have died if he hadn't.

The children are in Florida with my brother and sister. They only know that Daddy is very sick. They are all well and so lovely. I just will not believe, just when they were becoming such a part of Charlie's life that he is going to be taken from us.

My love and Charlie's too. This address - or 1010 - 25th Street N.W., - Apt. - 807.