

Tuesday, September 13, 1949  
Bethesda

Dear Mama ,

I was so sorry to hear about your seeing the pretty dress and then not being able to get it! Especially as I know what a fine grand feeling it is to get a dress that fits you and looks good. Also I'm sorry you feel you can't come down here. I wish we could rush right up there instead, and maybe we will sometime before the weather gets bad, if William's work eases up enough to let him get away over the weekend. For the past three weeks he has had to go to the office almost every day including the weekends. I'm glad to say that he feels he has done well, though, and that his bosses like his work. He has had a lot of dealings with the new Assistant Secretary of State for Latin America, Mr. Ed Miller, and they appear to agree on many matters, which is always a help to a young man.

The dining room sounds simply wonderful, and I have a good mental picture of the mantel in its new place. That sounds even better than the first idea, and will give you a good place to put a buffet or the Virginia sofa as you prefer, - between the two windows.

The boy hasn't broken out with the chicken pox as yet, though he is still susceptible to them until the end of this week, so I have to keep him out of school till next Monday, according to the law. Poor little Betsey has them now, and Coit is all over his. She has a fever but can't be kept in bed and doesn't really feel too bad. Her poor mamma has quite a time to keep her amused. I'm sorry that the boy will have to miss the first two days of school, which are so important for his personal contacts, but it wouldn't be right to send him and possibly expose the other children.

Mrs. Lobenstine brought me up from Peru eight perfectly lovely silver bowls for ice cream, which cost us only six dollars apiece,

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although of course they are sterling silver. Virginia Davis and I both asked her to get them for us last spring. Had I known then how strapped we were going to be this fall, what with the dishwasher, etc., I wouldn't have bought them, but now they are here we must of course buy them from her. And they are lovely! The bowls are plain, but they each have little decorated handles on each side, and they stand on little decorated bases. I imagine they would cost ten or twelve dollars each here in the United States. The only hitch is that we really can't afford them at all. They will have to be our Christmas and birthday presents to each other, I guess.

We are going out to the Hart's in Alexandria today, which is why I have the time to write to you. It has been a thoroughly rainy morning and Laurence has had no one to play with, so I have spent my morning sewing on his clothes while he played with his tinkertoys and puzzles. When I am in the room with him to talk to him he doesn't mind playing alone so much, but I can't do much housework. At least it gave me an opportunity to do some button-adding on his new trousers.

Everyone who comes to the house always admires the things you gave me first of all- The white mirror frame, the bottle in which I keep my snerry, the coin silver spoons, and the chest of drawers in our bedroom. And of course, the darling little silver coffee urn on its silver platter! So the things you gave me are the showpieces of the house, really. I only wish I could afford and then could find some place to put that wonderful sofa, too! I know that would be the prize piece of all. I think and think, but I simply can't figure out how I could possibly get it in this house in any spot where it would show to advantage. However, when we go out to our next post we will undoubtedly have a bigger house than this one, and in that case my first thought will be for that beautiful sofa.

Here is a check which is for your birthday more or less, and with which you can either buy that dress or do whatever you want in a reckless sort of way. I know how dreadful it is not to be able to buy the one thing that suits you.

Love and kisses