

C-1

GENERAL

Caracas, July 15, 1944

Dear Family,

V-3
p 1/10

Taking advantage of a quiet afternoon at the office and of a beautiful new Underwood, here I am. I wish you could look with me over the desk and out into the patio. I am on the second floor, and over the red tiled roof I can see a green mountain and a blue sky with only one or two ice cream clouds floating in it. As everyone said, the climate is lovely. It sometimes becomes a little too chilly of an evening for my admittedly odd tastes- in short a coat is required now and then, and a suit comes in very handy indeed. But most of the time it is just as I could wish it, nice and warm with a cool breeze.

But I suppose I should begin at the beginning. About a year or so ago, when we left Washington, the train was late, very late indeed, so by the time we got on it was about time to think of going to bed, which we did in short order. We had two lowers opposite each other in a car that was airconditioned until about noon of the next day, when the mechanism gave up the ghost and the car began to get warmer and warmer. We both read all day. William had his book and I had been fortunate enough to light upon a copy of the complete works of Jane Austen for only a dollar twentyfive, which I have been reading ravenously ever since. The time past rather quickly. I usually enjoy enormously eating in a dining car, but the air conditioning had broken down there too, so we were obliged to hurry over our meals in order not to melt. It was~~x~~ terribly, incredibly hot in that car. The only advantage was that there was always plenty of room! Our car never got half so hot, in fact remained reasonably comfortable all the time. I was quite excited when we began to approach familiar territory, and when we arrived in Miami (two hours late) I was having quite a time to myself. Good old Miami! The city somehow manages to look like a temporary affair, something they built to tear down in a few months. But it looked like home to me, just the same, and all during our stay I kept William constantly bored by saying there's where I did thus and so, there's where we used to buy this or that, there's the first place where I had a coke, etcetera. Of course I had to be walked past the PAA office on Biscayne Boulevard where I used to leave on the bus early in the morning to go to the airport, and of course I had to look in the windows to see if there was any one I knew behind the counter. We had a beer the first night in one of the places where my old gentlemen friends used to take me, and took the same old busses from the same old hot street corners. I was sort of surprised to find how tender were my memories of the

V-3 p -2-/10

place. I called Mrs. Bliss the first night, just after we arrived, and made a date for the next day. In the morning we went down to Pan American, where I met two or three people I used to know, including one of the girls who went through traffic school with me in February 1942. There we were informed that we had been off-loaded from Monday's plane, and probably wouldn't be able to leave till the 14th. After being vexed for about five minutes we began to see the manifold advantages of a week's stay in Miami, and went off very pleased with the affair, much to the surprise of Pan American Airways. After lunch we got on a bus and went out to Second Avenue Southwest, where William's elderly relations live in a little house that seemed comfortable and very cool to us after walking two blocks in the hot sun. The mother is about ninety (all William's relations seem to live to a ripe age) and very bent, while her daughter is only sixty five or so and still going strong. They fell all over William and started immediately to tell droll stories of his infancy, and continued into his adolescence and young manhood, relating his triumphs in school, his clever remarks, his career as a boy scout, and what have you. I enjoyed it a lot, especially the parts about his triumphs as a scholar, on which subject he has been rather too reticent for my avid appetite. Apparently they thought he was just about the best boy that ever was. Then I urged them to haul out their photograph albums, and we spent an hour or so pouring over those. Janie came out better than William there, because she was a very pretty child, and William's handsomeness didn't manifest itself till later, specifically till after they took the bands off his teeth. We had arranged to go out to Coral Gables about five, but the two ladies kept us longer than we had anticipated because they had made some cupcakes that William used to think delightful at the age of eight or so, and of course we had to stay and eat them and drink ginger ale. Then we had to dash back to the hotel for two much needed showers and a change apiece. Finally we set forth on the good old Coral Gables bus. The driver was, as always, friendly and helpful. We arrived at the terminal there in Coral Gables (which mother will remember well) and changed to a local bus. Oh dear how nice the town looked to me! You would have thought it had been my home for years and years. And the "Blissery" as Mr. Bishop calls it, was as wonderful as ever. The three little dogs started to bark ferociously as soon as we approached and kept it up until they had each been scratched behind their ears. Mr. Bishop was there of course, and Tippy and Gladys came rushing out to be hugged, but in the end everyone hugged everyone. Just wonderful! We had drinks in the patio, and the lovely thymbodia grandiflora were hanging so far down from the netting they almost got into the glasses. The Blissess had rented their room above the garage to a nice young couple from Texas, so they were of the party also, as well as a gay couple who have moved into a house across the street. We had a good long talk before we went out to dinner. Does mother remember the Hotel Antilla, where the Coral Gables library is? Maybe not. Well anyway, there is a fine new restaurant there now, and that's where we had dinner. Batista's Spaghetti joint, where we would have gone without a doubt to have too much spaghetti and a bottle of red wine, was unfortunately closed

V3 p -3-/10

for the summer. After dinner we all piled into the cars and went to the Coral Gables Country Club, where I had never been, sad to say. Sad, because it was such a fine place to spend a Saturday evening. There was a full orchestra, a large dance floor, tables set out around the latter, and coconut palms ringing the whole. William and I danced for the first time in six months or so, and talked and laughed and reminisced till we got terribly sleepy, at midnight. A splendid time was had by all, and on the way out I met Art Nugent, my old boss at Dinner Key, whom mother once met and declared looked just like an actor. I hadn't seen him since I passed through Trinidad in January 1943. The Blissesses took us home to the Miami Colonial since the busses had stopped by that time. On the way we discussed plans for the morrow. We were to sleep as late as we all felt inclined to, then amble out to Coral Gables again in the afternoon, bringing with us our bags, because the Blissesses had a wonderful plan for us: their good neighbors the Stewarts had left for North Carolina, and we were to spend our four days in their beautiful little house next door to the Blissery! All this had previously been dismissed with the Stewarts, of course. We were simply delighted, which goes almost without saying. So you can imagine how peevish we were when we found out the next day that we had been re-instated on Monday's plane! It was by that time too late for the excursion to Matheson Hammock beach, which had been originally planned for Sunday when we thought we were going to leave on Monday. In the afternoon after attending to the details of baggage inspection etc. at PAA we went out to Coral Gables again. Mr. Bishop had to leave about fifteen minutes after we got there. He is now in the Coast Guard auxiliary, complete with uniform and strange hours of duty. He inspects ships and fishing boats for stowaways, and goes out in PT boats that cruise around looking for some kind of trouble or other. We had a sad farewell. An hour or so later Dwight Ozon, one of the Blissesses' friends with whom I used to play ping pong and go bicycling, came over for supper with us. The supper was delicious, as Gladys's always are. It was just like the old days. We had to leave early since we were to get up at three the next morning.

We did get up at three, and had breakfast in the Greyhound bus terminal's all-night restaurant, where I used sometimes to have a cup of coffee before leaving on the bus for the airport. The dear old bus in which I used to try to make pleasant conversation at five in the morning, still left at the same queer hour, but this time I didn't have to amuse its occupants. 36th St. Airport was as ever on the outside, but the interior had been changed quite a good deal. Among other changes was a booth devoted to Passenger Service, which had been promised us when I was working there. One of the Baggage men whom I knew had switched to the U.S. Customs, so we went through them in a hurry to the accompaniment of cries of what are you doing here, where have you been all this time, and such pleasantries. It was great fun. The traffic counter looked so familiar that I almost went behind it and started working! The one new experience was that of going on the plane. We all piled

V-3p4-10

in and took our seats while the steward arranged the baggage and busied himself with whatever stewards find to busy themselves with. After about ten minutes he announced that the plane wasn't going to go because something was wrong with one engine, so we all piled out again with our baggage, our books, our hats, our babies; we went back to a waiting room, and that's where I composed those hasty letters to you. After we had been there for half an hour or so one of the girls from Traffic came up and asked William if he was Mr. Krieg. On receiving an affirmative answer, she announced that since we had the most recent reservations and the new plane wasn't as big as the other one, we had been chosen to stay behind. That time we were mad. Getting up before dawn even starts to crack has no very good effect on the disposition, and we certainly didn't want to do it again, so it was with the utmost effort that we managed to retain indignant screams. We sat there stunned for three minutes or so while the other passengers showered us with condolences. Shortly the young woman returned at a gallop to say the first plane had been put into working order, and that we were to go after all. Even if we hadn't been numb from sleepiness, we would have felt numb by that time. We got on the plane in the manner previously described and were off, while I looked down at Miami and tried to find Mrs. Blisses house. The whole journey, excepting the stopovers and the meals, was spent by me in reading Jane Austen and by William in reading and being airsick. We stopped at Camaguey, Cuba, and were immediately assailed by the Cruz Roja Cubana who made us all buy little paper lapel buttons saying we had joined the Red Cross and were doing our bit. We stopped next at Port au Prince and had a chance to admire the truly lovely mountains, as well as the handsome face and figure of the Haitian Guard Officer who kept us from leaving the airport house. He was really a fine looking cafe au lait figure of a man! The Passenger Service girls there were also beautiful cafe au lait characters, and I really mean beautiful. Our next stop was at Ciudad Trujillo in the Dominican Republic, and I remember nothing of it. However, I can always say I've been there! At Willemstad in Curaçao we were offered and accepted some fruit juice, by the local Passenger Service girl. It turned out to be a passionate sunset pink concoction which I was informed was nothing more nor less than Orange Crush. They could at least have given us some curaçap liqueur. The plane ~~xxx~~ started to leave just as I had made up my mind not to finish my Orange Crush, and I started to board along with the rest of the passengers, when I suddenly noticed that William wasn't around. I looked for him in the plane while they took away the little gangplank, saw quickly that he wasn't there, and screamed to the steward to jump out and stop the plane from leaving immediately. The steward did, then went back to the airport house to look for my wandering boy. He was, as might be guessed by the imaginative, in the men's room. I was all of a flutter. But desiring to shield him from the ridicule and whatnot of our fellow passengers, I sat down and started reading as he came in; since that moment I have been accused of hardheartedness, terribly unjustly as can be seen by the foregoing account.

Monday, July 17

William dragged me away from the typewriter last Saturday before I had even gotten us to Caracas, inspite of four pages of efforts in that direction.

V-3 p-5/10

Anyway, we did eventually arrive at Maiquetia airport, just outside of La Guaira. It is on the sea, and beside it are the mountains, and behind it are the mountains; very commendable varicolored green mountains, but we were too tired to pay them the respect due their beauty. We went into the airport house and started to wait our turn at the customs and immigration, when we were surprised and pleased to see three Americans come up to us. They were Mr. Williams, the young career Vice Consul here in Caracas, and Mrs. and Mrs. Cory. Tom Cory runs the Vice Consulate in La Guaira. Willie Williams is an excessively smooth young man addicted to calling people "old boy", but he was kind enough to drive us and our bags over the steep, beautiful twenty-five-mile-long road that leads up to Caracas. By the time we left it was completely dark, so we couldn't appreciate the many lovely views along the way, but as we drove along both of us thought of the many political refugees we had read about, all of whom had gone down the road we were going up, in order to escape this or that dictator or caudillo. They all used to leave from La Guaira and go to Curacao for safety.

The Consulate General had arranged for us to stay at the Hotel Ambassador, which is only two blocks from the Consulate on a rather nice plaza near what is known as the Bosque de los Caobos, the Mahogany Wood. We have found it a very pleasant place, although up until Saturday we had a very dark, damp room right next to the place where they wash (and break) the dishes. The food is very good, however, and the Austrian Jewish refugee proprietor most attentive to our every known or imagined want. The place is in the gingerbread style only too prevalent here, and whoever chose the wallpaper couldn't have done a better job had he set out intentionally to be nasty. All examples of Venezuelan interior decoration which I have seen so far have been so completely, astoundingly execrable that the decorations in the hotel now seem not quite so insupportable merely because they are not particularly worse than the rest. I am very glad indeed that we will have our own furniture, for I have been going around with the wife of a new auxiliary Vice Consul who arrived a day after we did, and who is looking for a furnished apartment. Every place we have visited has offered the same dreadful prospects of impossibly bad taste in furniture. The outsides of the houses generally are not bad, so the shock is even greater on entering them. Well, I am very glad we will have our furniture.

William and I both slept late the next morning most willingly. He went down to the office at eleven, while I attended to such household affairs as the despatching of dresses and suits to be cleaned or pressed. The little maid and I had quite a time with my Spanish, of course, and whenever I made a mistake she refused very politely to admit that I had made one, or to correct me, but eventually the business was done! After the office was closed William came home with a non-career vice consul named George Phelan, who is famed literally the world over for being the consular officer with the largest family. He and his Venezuelan wife have produced a grand total of 13 children, a remarkable record. Mr. Phelan took us in his car to his house to pick up his attractive-looking wife, and then we went to see about a house which he knew of as being for rent unfurnished. First we had to visit the elderly Italian father of the owner (now away on business in the United States) who resides in his son's magnificent

-6-
V-3P6/10

house on the side of a hill. Mr. Phelan told us that the son is very rich. His house was very expensive looking, very spacious, made with the very best materials, had a completely supplied bar both in the enormous living room and out on the enormous terrace, was assured of lovely views on every side by the wide use of glass in the walls, and was all done up in particularly bad taste. After the formalities were over we went to see the house which is for rent, William and the elderly Italian father following us at a slow pace and conversing happily in Italian. The house wasn't particularly suitable for us, having a very small living room, a larger dining room, and four small bedrooms upstairs. When I remarked that we were only two, and wouldn't be able to fill so many bedrooms, it was suggested that given sufficient time we would be able to furnish them with babies. But so far we haven't demonstrated such talents along these lines as the Phelans possess, so I think we will hold out for a smaller house when we finally take the step. After looking the house over we returned to the mansion on the hill, and were urged very politely to have whiskey and soda. It turned out to be real scotch.

That evening we met the Fitzpatricks. They were married a month or so before he was appointed to the Foreign Service Auxiliary, and this is the first time she has left the United States. They are both very nice people, and I am happy to have Mary Louise for a companion of what would otherwise be my lonely hours. We have been having almost all our meals together since they came, and they have been gay and talkative meetings.

On Wednesday we went to the Consul General's house for dinner. A very lovely house. The Fitzpatricks, the Moffits, and their seventeen-year old daughter plus the Krieg family had cocktails and too many peanuts before going into dinner, which was copious. I sat next to Mr. Moffit and we talked about affairs in Stuttgart, where Mr. Moffit had been about a year or two before William was assigned there. Stuttgart always seems to fascinate people who have been there, and from association with them, I have come to know quite a good many things about the place. We talked animatedly. After dinner Willie Williams and quite a few other people arrived, among them a couple named Bernbaum, the male half of which is third secretary at the Embassy, and one of the very few Jews in the Foreign Service. The female half is a very nice girl indeed. We had stopped at their home after seeing the rented house, and she had kindly offered to take me around to see the home of a friend of hers which will be unoccupied during the friend's vacation, and consequently rentable for two months. Betty Bernbaum has light hair and a faintly freckled face, and is not Jewish. As soon as I entered her house I saw one of her paintings, and immediately liked it enormously. She is very good at it. Well, to get back to the dinner party, we had coffee and those who like it had brandy, then Mr. Moffit suggested a song, whereupon we gathered around the piano and started singing a way, ending finally with a beautiful and spirited rendition of "Frankie and Johnie" by one of the talented members of the group.

I believe it was the next day that Betty Bernbaum came around and collected me in the car. Mary Louise came along too, and off we went to the part of town known as "Mis Encantos", where is situated the little home of Mr. and Mrs. Ansell, Betty's friends.

V-3 p7/10

July 21

William keeps dragging me home in the middle of this long composition. However, I have sworn a mighty vow to finish it by to-morrow afternoon, come what may.

Te continue: I liked the little Ansell home immediately, and was very much taken by the price it is offered at, which is 360 bolivares a month including telephone and a maid. I also liked Mrs. Ansell, who is very middle western, and later I met and liked her husband, who is very British (of the Roland Young school). They are about to take a holiday in Barbado's, and are more or less giving us their place at cost. The maid and telephone are delightful extras. Their furniture is plain American, thank the gods. I have since learned that they will be coming home again before their two months are up, probably within six months, but that doesn't bother us very much, because we feel that our furniture will be here before then and that we will have had ample time to find a house of our own. We were very lucky indeed to find such a place to park ourselves at such a price. Unfurnished, un-maided, and un-telephoned houses are often as much as 450 bolivares a month. Roughly speaking, one can divide bolivares by three to find how many dollars they make.

Last Friday we went down to La Guaira to get our car. The Corys came up in the morning, had lunch with us at the hotel, then took us "down the hill" to the seacoast. It is a beautiful, twisting, seaskick-making ride, a road cut out of the sides of the cordillera. Mrs. Cory and I sat in the backseat and talked about Barcelona most of the time, for that was their previous post and it interested me. At one point William and I had to get out of the car and admire the breathtaking view for a few minutes because we were feeling rather sickly from the constant hairpin curves. When we arrived at La Guaira we found ourselves in a typical tropical seaport- hot, dirty, crowded, full of babies and of street-corner loungers. The streets were all narrow, not made for automobiles, and in the Plaza was a statue of Bolivar, as ever. The docks crowd right into the city, which in turn is crowded almost into the sea by the mountains behind it. We had time only for a short visit to the Vice Consulate, and not time enough to go home with the Corys for a drink, as we were invited to do. The Vice Consulate was reached by a dingy flight of stairs, had high cieldngs with big fans hanging from them, and was everything you would expect a Consulate in a tropical seaport to be- Hollywood couldn't have done a better job. After our visit we went to the dock where our car was parked, got a barrel of glassware which had already arrived for us as a wedding present from the senior Krieg family, and drove off. The car had suffered a good deal of minor damages: someone had stolen the lighter (a com mon occurrence here, I'm told), the chromium from one side of the running board, had pried up the gasoline tank lid, broken half of the stop light, and for some reason torn off part of the inside lining under the dashboard. Petty thâ every with a good admixture of wanton frolicsome vandalism, apparently. Still, it might have been worse, and we have the consolation of knowing that they found no gasoline in the tank! On the wqy we saw a double rainbow and the sun going down till it reached only the highest peaks. I like mountains, and these are now green from the rains, so everything was jake. What's more we didn't get car-sick on the way back, for some reason. Nice. The trip takes about an hour and a half, I should say, although it is only five airline miles from the Plaza Bolivar in Caracas to the Plaza Bolivar in La Guara.

K-3 PB/10

July 22

The trouble is I can only work here after five on weekdays and in the afternoons on Saturday, with the really sad result that I am still writing this letter. The Fitzpatrick and William have been wondering whether I shall ever finish it, or whether because of the continuity of newsworthy events I shall be writing the same letter for years and years, perhaps never finishing it till we leave Venezuela.

On Saturday last we moved from our dank and dismal room beside the kitchen to another house belonging to the hotel, where we have a comparatively luxurious and comfortable room adjoining a sunporch which is equipped with garden furniture. The latter is a very pleasant place to sit of an afternoon, being situated in a garden and possessing a rather nice view of the mountains. In the morning the sister of the manager, Frau Hessinger, brings me in my cafe con leche and a roll, and we usually have a short talk in a most wonderful mixture of Spanish, German, and English. I am happy to be out of the other room, which the sadist who decorated the place had given his most careful attention: the walls were faded mauve with carefully spaced splotches of silver which the most indulgent observer could unfortunately not attribute to inattention or error, and the sateen curtains had apparently once been entirely purple, but were now streakedly purple, mauve, lavender, and colorless. The beds were metal, but some ~~artist~~ ~~artiste~~ had painted them to resemble cheap veneered wood. Also, the water was cold. A common practice here seems to be to have a shower in the bath room, but no shower stall or bathtub, so that the water from the shower goes all over the bathroom floor until it finds its way into a ~~drain~~ drain in the middle of the room, so that the bathroom floor is completely wet until such time as the maid comes around to mop up. The bathroom we have at present is similarly equipped, but we are getting used to the idea, and anyway the water is hot!

On Sunday we had a lazy day, punctuated by the delicious and copious meals at the hotel, and by a trip to the Museo de Bellas Artes, which is almost next door to us. At the museo we saw an exhibition of really good photographs, then visited the permanent exhibition of paintings by Venezuelan artists mostly. The latter was contained in two salons, in the first of which out of approximately twenty works I counted four deathbed scenes, one sick child (probably dying), two murders, and one picture of Charlotte Corday being led off to the guillotine. All this in the gloomy style of the 1870's, as you may imagine. I had a lovely time! The other salon wasn't so productive, sad to say, since most of the subjects seemed to be in good health and have no murderous designs on their neighbors.

This week has been relatively uneventful. Mr. and Mrs. Ansell paid us a visit one evening, and invited us to their house for drinks on Wednesday. Mr. Ansell and a British friend of his from the bank picked us up at the appointed hour on Wednesday, and we drove out to what is to be our home soon. The British friend had just come up from the Argentine, and as he and I sat in the back seat together, I was subjected to a lecture on his opinions concerning the political situation in Buenos Aires, which would have been more interesting coming from a better lecturer. However, we

V-3 p 9/10

arrived at the Ansell's house and William was very pleased with it, as I had been. The outside isn't particularly nice, but the view is magnificent, and there are both flower gardens and, in the backyard, fruit trees and herb beds. The bananas are almost ripe, and the oranges and grapefruit will be ready to eat in a week or so. I soon learned that the little maid, Pietra, is very adept at making something that looks and tastes like potato chips out of plantains, and is also expert at making little cheesy bread twists which make good canapes. Our host was good at making martinis. After we had been there some time the Bernbaums came in, and we finally dragged ourselves away after a very good time had been had by all concerned. The Ansell's still thought they were going to leave this coming Wednesday, the 26th, and it wasn't till last night I learned to my sorrow that something had gone wrong with their reservations out of Trinidad and that they won't be able to leave then. We had been looking forward greatly to moving in on Wednesday, I principally to the adventure and fun of cooking our own meals. With no vegetables to peel and no dishes to wash I can't imagine (at present) anything I'd like to do better than cook, which is nice considering I'll be doing a lot of it. Cook, and look at the view from the Ansell's front porch. Now, unfortunately, we don't know when we will have the pleasure of doing both, for the present we must stay in our hotel room, which isn't at all unpleasant, however.

On Thursday morning Mary Louise Fitzpatrick and I decided to go to town, and so we did. We got on one of the incredibly Toonerville-ish trolleys and went to the center of town, the Plaza Bolivar, where for two hours we wandered the streets, looked in the shop windows, priced this and that, decided that everything was expensive, then got on the same Toonerville trolley and came home for lunch. An adventure. In the afternoon Mrs. Moffitt came around for us in her car, and we went on a round of official visits. This is one of the most protocolaire posts imaginable. One is supposed to leave three cards at each visit: a Mr. and Mrs., a Vice Consul, and a plain Mrs. Since I had only our Mr. and Mrs., that was the only one I left at each of the ten homes we visited. Thank goodness not all the ladies were at home, so we managed to get in all ten of the visits intended for the afternoon. The Ambassador's wife is in the United States, the Counsellor of Embassy's wife was out, the other Counsellor of Embassy's wife was at home, and very nice. The Commercial Attaché's wife was at home, and had a little dog who tried to bite Mary Louise's last pair of nylon stockings. The wife of the Military attaché was out, as was the wife of the naval attaché. The wife of the first or second secretary of Embassy (I've forgotten which he is) was sick in bed, but receiving callers. The three of us, and the First Sec'y of the Mexican Legation and his wife had tea in her bedroom while her little daughter Anne passed round the cakes. The indisposed lady, Mrs. Dillingham, had met and apparently been friendly with the Mexican diplomat and his wife while they were stationed in Asuncion Paraguay, in any case we were subjected to a great deal of bofing and needless gossip about who had divorced whom in Asuncion, and what was wrong with all their friends down there. I hate gossip. The Mexican diplomat was an exact duplicate of the movie version of diplomats, and kept his part to the very last minute, when he took each ~~lady's~~ lady's hand and kissed it. The only trouble was that he wore saddle shoes, which didn't seem right to me.

V-3p10/10

After visiting Mrs. Dillingham we went to Mrs. Breuer's house. Her husband, another Secretary of Embassy, is away in the United States at present. She herself we had met before, at the Moffitt's dinner party. The Breuers were formerly in La Guaira, and while they were there they built this house of theirs in Caracas, because they didn't like living in La Guaira. It was a pretty house, and the living room was nicely furnished. I was pleased to see how effective was the red rug she had to cover the (omnipresent) tile floor, and I thought of all the excellent advice that had been wasted on me at Macy's concerning the inadvisability, not to say the foolishness, of buying cherry red sofas for the tropics. In the first place, Caracas is a lot cooler than New York is in the summer, and in the second place the local manner of building houses makes them almost universally pleasant and cool, if not downright chilly. I think it is the tile floors that do the trick. Also, the fact that the houses are very open, and while the sun is hot during the daytime, the breeze is always cool. At night it becomes too cold for us to sit out on our sun porch, for instance. Anyway, I'm glad I bought my little cherry red J.W. Campbell Memorial loveseats. I think they will be nice down here as elsewhere.

Incidental intelligence: Women are not permitted to stand up on the local Toonerville trollies, although men are. Most streets are not named, and the houses are almost entirely named rather than numbered, which makes it hard to find one's way. The locals haven't found a better word for it, so they still say "dry cleaning". When the mayors of small towns haven't as much money in their exchequers as they are supposed to have, they round up all the car-owners who haven't had a recent ~~fifty~~ physical examination, fine them each fifty bolivares, and put the proceeds in their deficient treasuries.

Somhow or other I seem to have caught up with events. The Fitzpatricks are leaving the hotel for a couple of rooms in the home of a Puerto Rican family, and we will be left to have our meals in lonely grandeur, which saddens us. We are going to do some more calling to-morrow afternoon, this time accompanied by our husbands and without Mrs. Moffitt. We are having the Ansells to dinner at the hotel on Monday evening. Monday, by the way, is Bolivar's Birthday, and of course a great event all over South America, but especially in this, his home town. I don't know how it is celebrated here, except by speeches, but I sort of hope there will be fireworks to make up for the ones we didn't see on the Glorious Fourth.

And there you are, and here we are. We're both well, both wondering still how we are going to enjoy life in Caracas when we are settled in a home of our own. I think we will like it. We have just had word that the American Consulate General at Lagos, Nigeria, had finally gotten around to our baggage (after two airgrams and a telegram to jog their memory) so it will probably arrive in a couple of months. We are hopeful that the furniture will be down from the U.S. within four to six weeks, so everything seems to be going beautifully. Meanwhile we await anxiously letters from you (the Fitzpatricks have already received theirs!) and are as fond of you as if we had found three letters apiece on arrival.

All our love,