

Mourmelon-le-Grand  
Marne, France  
September 2, 1948.

Dear family,

All our thinking nowadays is dominated by the imminence of that boat's sailing. We've started packing- most of the books and the clothes we wont need again here- and we feel ourselves marking time ~~wait~~ impatiently until we can put the rest of the things in trunks and boxes and start moving. Poor Hews hardly knows what to do with himself here. He's been stencilling addresses on things (first having made the stencil), doing some minor repair jobs, and catching up on his sleep. As for me, at least there is always the regular routine of meals, sewing knitting, and errands, tho all our traveling the last two months has thrown me off stride rather badly. The children go whooping it up as usual, happy because at last there's a break in the nasty rainy weather that we've had all during their vacation. It hasn't rained now in five days ('Faut pas crier trop haut.), and the meadows are drying out ~~xx~~ enuf that they can run in them again. They hunt blackberries, which are only just beginning to ripen -it's been that cold all summer- and the first, slightly green, hazel nuts. Sunshine is wonderful stuff.

We've had a letter from Leonard that has really given us courage to cope with all the annoyances that must precede our sailing. He's found us a house! A real house, mind you, with a yard, and a kitchen. Why, I'll bet you can even heat the place in winter. Not only that, but it's only a couple of blocks from them, near a school, and near a bus line. I'm trying not to let myself get too excited, remembering how good this place sounded in Lucien's letters, but in spite of myself, I'm anticipating it. At least, I know Leonard, and I think I can have confidence in his judgement. He says it's a good place, and I'll take his word for it. He says the house has a living room, dinette and kitchen, and two bedrooms, of which one is fairly large. It has a good sized yard, and is a little over a year old, so it should be pretty ~~x~~ clean, too. It's to be left 'partly furnished', but so far, neither Leonard nor I knows exactly what that will mean. But just think of our having a house, a whole house with a yard, all to ourselves! We really didn't expect anything like that.

Those trips we made were tiring, but very, very interesting. We find ourselves with a new perspective on Europe that we needed. In Denmark, tho we saw very little besides Copenhagen itself, we saw that quite thoroly, and had enuf of coping ~~xx~~ with the ration system and being with the local people and listening to them talk about themselves and their lives to give us the feeling that we know a little of what it's like to live in Denmark. In Holland, the same thing was true, tho of course to a lesser extent because we had less time there. Everyone was very good to us, especially Joan, and Joran Birkeland, who devoted an enourmous amount of time and energy to taking care of us and seeing that we knew what we were looking at in Copenhagen. In Amsterdam, the Bernhard's were so good to us and so wonderfully friendly and hospitable that in the two days we were with them they made us feel that we had always known them, that we were really part of their family. Wieta devoted every minute of her time to guiding and translating for us, and Mr. Bernhard came with us himself all one afternoon, and spent the evenings showing us around their lovely place, and the boat, and the shipyard. Besides their other nice qualities, Mr. Bernhard ~~reminded~~ looks so much like his brother John, and has so exactly the same way of making little jokes that we were at ease with him from the first minute we met. They're such nice people! I'm glad we had a chance to get to know them. But I still think you got the nicest of the Bernhard's, Mom.

Dearest Mom & Pops

September 4

My dress arrived last week and I wore  
it for the first time with much pleasure.

It looks ~~you~~ very nice, & has been much  
admired. The stockings, incidentally, ~~you~~  
have come. Do you know what date they  
were mailed? Not that there is much chance  
of my tracing them. Maybe Lord & Taylor can.  
I got two pairs from Mamma M<sup>r</sup> Cairns for  
my birthday, tho, so I'm not completely  
barelegged any more, and besides - it's not  
for long now.

Will you do something for me? Since  
the house is to be only "partially furnished,"  
will you send Sam, right away, a list of  
whatever is there that we can use, and ask  
him to have it packed & shipped by slow  
freight care of Leonard. That way will  
probably be the least expensive to get it  
up there, & maybe it will arrive about  
the same time we do. We don't want the  
bookcases or their contents yet - we won't be  
ready for them right at first - but anything  
else that will fill up bare spaces. ~~It~~  
~~you~~ I would say send us a list & we'd send  
it to Sam, but there isn't time, so we'll  
have to leave it to you. I'll write Sam  
& tell him that you're sending the list  
& explain about the shipping.

One other thing - you'd better reserve

hotel space for us in New York. We won't  
want to stay there longer than we must  
but we may run into a customs tie-up or  
something. The boat is scheduled to  
arrive in New York the 8<sup>th</sup> & if any  
changes come up, we'll let you know.  
Doesn't that sound imminent? You've no  
idea how imminent we feel! My goodness  
but it will be nice to see you all again!

Dedichen & Mikkelsen ~~both~~ <sup>each</sup> took us to  
dinner in Copenhagen, which we enjoyed very  
much. Mikkelsen's collection of primitive  
Jewish art is fascinating - ~~but~~ <sup>the</sup> more  
interesting than the ones we saw at the  
Museum of Modern Art that time. We probably  
would have been with Dedichen & Mikkelsen more,  
but it so happened that we arrived in  
Copenhagen at the same time as the Marshall  
plan representative, & they were pretty much  
tied up. They asked me to give you both  
their very warm regards.

I've the same message from all the  
Bernhards. We had ~~so~~ fun talking about  
your visit. You certainly seem to have left  
~~a great remembrance~~ "des bon souvenirs." Mon.