

Karen Arrives

And, then Tah's time came for the birth of our second child. Well, it was not another a boy. It was Karen! She was born in the General Hospital in Danbury, Connecticut, at 7:30 AM, November 19, 1945--three days and one hour and forty-five minutes late!

I expressed our joy by interpreting her moods and actions.



Our Christmas Song is in the nursery;
Where child, Christ-like, reposes in peace.
The music of the Spheres
 tell no sweeter ode
Than the hunger cry of
 Sonya Karen.

J.M.F.
Christmas, 1945
Wilton, Connecticut

Little Jim, hear Sonya Karen!
Baby Sister's crying;
Mummy sings a rocking song--
Look! the snow's a'flying!

Sonya Karen wants to eat;
Sonya Karen's hungry.
Sonya Karen wants her food--
She wants it when she wants it.

Sonya Karen loves her bath;
She really thinks it fun.
She coos and kicks and laughs aloud
and splashes everyone.

Panda's in the corner;
Panda's lonesome, see!
Panda wants a playmate--
Someone just like me.

Panda's sleepy

He's winking now at me.

Houses So-o-o-o Big!
I build them to the sky.
They tumble down
Upon the ground
When rumbling guns go by.

Swing, swing---swinging free
Swinging 'neath the old oak tree
Sing, sing---sing to me
Sing a song of swinging.

In Search

Three months after starting the commute between Wilton and New Haven, I became ill, exhausted from the overload of study and work. It seemed crystal clear to me that I had made the wrong choice. The world had changed or I had changed, or both had changed during the four war-years.

It really wasn't just the four war-years that had brought about the change. That was only a part of it. It had actually been ten years since I graduated from college, and there, at age 32 in December, 1945, stood a man still in search of a career identity!

Fast Switching

During that 1945 Christmas holiday season, I went back to Standard Oil to ask whether the management trainee job offer was still open. It was, and I could start in January. I did.

The two Lovells at Hopkins (Headmaster and Athletic Director) were generous in their expressions of forgiveness of my abrupt leaving. To this day, I feel a continuing apology for my apparently ungrateful treatment of the school administration and staff. I rationalized the situation by convincing myself that the switch was fair to everybody involved: Hopkins, Yale, Standard Oil, my family and myself. My regrets and self-denunciations disappeared in the excitement of new adventures.

So, we moved to Scotch Plains, N.J., within easy commuting distance of Bayway Refinery, where my training program was to take place. We bought a modest two-bedroom house, the second one which we bought in our family career. Jimmy, who was four months shy of age two, went through his third move. Karen made her first relocation at age two months. This was Tah's and my 9th move in five years!

The management training program went well. I was assigned to Danny Shea, the Manager of Personnel Relations for Bayway Refinery. He spent a great deal of time with me at the beginning to help me become acquainted with the Company and his department's responsibilities.

One of those responsibilities was to arrange "re-entry" training sessions for war veterans returning to Standard Oil to resume their careers. Danny allowed me to draft a plan of re-entry for those returning to the Development Company, a

separate subsidiary on the same site as the Bayway Refinery.

He approved my draft and then suggested that I test the program on a real, live returning veteran. I drew E. C. (Ted) Whitmore as my guinea pig. Ted and I worked closely for six weeks, at the end of which time, according to my program's thesis, he should return to his former department and job. What really happened is that Ted decided not to return to his former department. He gave no explanation.

Within three months after he left, Ted Whitmore telephoned to tell me of an opening in his new company, Textron, in which I might be interested. The job was Manager of Industrial Relations for the Apparel Manufacturing Division of Textron, involving six cutting and sewing plants in New England. Ted assured me that I need not know the technology involved. He felt that I had the basic capabilities necessary to do a good job. The management was looking for someone to advise and guide personnel relations.

I had read about Textron and its founder, Royal Little. The prospect was exciting. After interviews, I was offered the Textron job in the Fall of 1946. The management of Standard Oil said that they foresaw a bright future for me in Standard Oil, but they could not match the compensation offered. They said that it would be understandable if I went with Textron.

I switched to Textron as Manager of Industrial Relations with an office in Manchester, N.H. We moved to Mont Vernon, N.H. within a short commuting distance of Manchester. This was Tah's and my tenth move in six years. Jimmy, at age two and one-half, made his fourth move and Karen at age one year made her second move.

Tah's letter to the family, June 21, 1985, recalls some of the adventures of that move from New Jersey.

"We just talked to Tita and Tom..they are showing their house for sale and will purchase another one, more suitable for them and 10 min. from town, on Aug 2.... between showing the house, getting ready to move and taking care of 2 little ones, Tita is a bit busy."

"When Jimmy was not quite 2½ and Karen 11 months or so, I had the same situation in Scotch Plains, N.J.--

also complicated by having a dog in heat as well. Every-time someone would come to look at the house, I would "quick-mop" the floors, pick up all toys off the floor and fling them into the oven--(closets were not good, as they always open closets)--tie up the dog, give the kids icecream, put on a skirt and some lipstick and a smile, and hope that the dog would not piddle on my clean floor, and the kids would keep their diapers clean for awhile. . .

One time, as the realtor and the prospective buyers opened the door to go in, the neighbor's dog pushed them aside--he was a German Police dog, male--crashed through the screen and went after our female cocker spaniel, who yelped in terror. Around and around the playpen in the middle of the living room they tore--the kids screaming and crying; the dogs yelping and howling; things flying all over. . .

PS: Yes, despite it all, we did sell the house--but NOT to those people. The neighborhood was too wild for them."

Roots in the Ground

After a few months I was promoted to a broader-based job in Textron, which required me to switch my office from Manchester, N.H. to Lowell, Massachusetts. Fortunately, we found a house for rent in Westford, Massachusetts, on Chamberlain Corner, a short distance from my office in Lowell. This move, Tah's and my eleventh, Jimmy's fifth and Karen's third, permitted us to stick some roots into the community ground, which over the next eight years (1947 to 1955) became our "home base". That is, Westford as a community, became home base. Actually, we lived in five different houses in Westford (two of which we owned), and in Santurce, Puerto Rico during that eight years. Nevertheless, Westford became home base and even today, we tend to think of Westford as the place of our origins. The reason for this attachment is probably that as a family we began to mature there. Our third and fourth children, Bob (Robert Frank) and Tita (Suzanne Margaret) were born in Lowell General Hospital while we lived in Westford.

I have often wondered "what might have been" had I stayed with Standard Oil of New Jersey. Such speculation availeth nothing. On the other hand, I consider my decision to join up with Textron as the wisest one I ever made. It led to not only a great series of experiences in the world of industry, it introduced Tah and me to Royal Little and Jim and Jan Robison. Throughout our post-war lives, those three were our closest friends - so close that we think of them as family.

Personally, I owe Roy and Jim more than I can ever repay. My indebtedness is not measurable in terms of currency.

It is not only immeasurable, it's also unmeasurable. Repeatedly, they gave me the opportunity "to be all that I wanted to be". Without our having ever discussed it, they understood the advice which John Poteat, a visiting Minister, gave me as a junior on my college campus - "Don't ever let another person set limits on your personal goals of achievement. Only you can do that".

Bobby Arrives



"Oh, my! Look what Mama did!!"

Three small children shouted in horror in a crowded department store at noon in Lowell, Massachusetts.

Tah was very pregnant; but it was three weeks before the expected delivery date--when, horror of horrors, her membranes broke, flooding the floor in public!! She had just taken Jimmy, Karen and another toddler with her on a shopping trip.

Tah tried to hush the children up and hide her embarrassment as she left the crowded store, amid concerned gazes and gestures and offers of help.

"The baby is on its way, dears. We must go home now." Tah spoke in a quiet, controlled voice.

She drove the 45-minute trip home and then desperately called to Sally Drew for help. I was somewhere enroute to Providence, R.I. and could not be reached. It was during regular school hours; so the regular baby-sitter was not available. As usual, Sally came through in style.

She chauffeured the visiting child home; calmed Jimmy and Karen down; and found someone to stay with the children while she drove Tah to the Lowell General Hospital. Dr. Ralph Cole, friend and neighbor from Westford, took care of Tah during the delivery--most reassuringly.

Jimmy's and Karen's excitement was naturally about the imminent arrival of the new baby. But they were still upset about the condition of the car and their mother after what had happened in the store.

And, so, Bobby announced his arrival with drama and flair--as he has continued to do ever since with most of his announcements.

IV. Home Is Where. . . .

We Leave Home

"I need an Executive Vice President of Textron Puerto Rico," Roy Little said to me as I walked into his office in Providence, Rhode Island.

The thought flashed through my mind that he was about to assign to me the task of recruiting a person to fill that job. However, he continued, "I have decided to replace the one who is there now. I think that you are the person whom I need in that job. Will you go?"

I stammered a bit but finally said, "If you think that I can do the job, and if Tah agrees that we should do it, the answer will be 'yes'. But I must go home to Westford and discuss it with Tah. Can I let you know tomorrow?"

"Tomorrow will be fine with me. As to what I think about your being able to do the job, you can do it and we need you there."

This was one of the cross-roads in my career. In late 1947, my job with Textron/^{had already}expanded from a Divisional to a Company-wide responsibility as Industrial Relations Director. Royal Little, Chairman and Chief Executive of Textron, Incorporated, transferred me from Lowell, Massachusetts to the Company Headquarters in Providence, Rhode Island. My responsibilities continued to be spread throughout plants in New England and also to cover all Textron plants throughout the South. We continued to live in Westford, Massachusetts because I was in Providence only two days out of the week and on the road the rest of the time.

The most efficient mode of travel for me was by train. I could board a train in Providence at four PM, eat, and sleep overnight, and arrive in Greenville, S.C. by ten AM the next morning. The last time I made this trip was in late spring, 1949. Guy Cromer, Executive Vice President of Textron Southern, met my train and told me that Roy Little had telephoned him to put me on the next airplane back to Providence. Guy was as puzzled as I. Neither of us had any inkling of why Roy wanted me to return.

So, Guy spent two and one-half hours driving me to the nearest airport, Charlotte, NC, to catch a noon flight back to New York and Providence.

The upshot of the offer by Roy was that Tah agreed that it sounded like an opportunity. She also surmised that there must be plenty of household help and baby-sitters in Puerto Rico for our three youngsters. And, even though it had no real bearing upon the merits of deciding to go, the venture offered a great opportunity to get rid of all the miscellany (some call it "junk") which we had acquired over six war and post-war years of traipsing around--a mish-mash of furniture, linens, dishes, etc. These we arranged to be sold at auction, along with our house on Depot Street in Westford.

So, we went to Puerto Rico for a new family adventure. Jimmy was five years old, Karen three and one-half, and Bobby one.

Tah's letters home tell the family story of living in Puerto Rico.

Tah's Letters Home

67 Washington Calle
Condado
San Juan, Puerto Rico

October 31, 1949

Dear People:

I have decided to return to my old habit of writing long letters fairly frequently and sending carbon copies to those interested, adding personal notes at the bottom of each letter. If you don't like the system, say so now, and I'll write you a handwritten letter all for you, every six months to a year--maybe.

And now for a blow by blow description of what has happened since we left the States. The two older children slept very well on the plane. Bobby woke up every hour on the hour and cried for ten minutes--otherwise, the trip was uneventful. We arrived in a rather mussed-up state. It was quite warm upon arrival and we all had about six layers of clothing (too much) on. We took a cab to the house, which is a very nice one and beautifully furnished. There was meat in the freezer, but that was all--dishes and utensils as well as drinking water and glasses were not there. So we went to the Condado Beach Hotel for our second breakfast.

The sky is blue, the weather balmy and the ocean just wonderful. Afterwards we persuaded a grocery to open its doors so that we could get something to eat at home for the next few days, since eating at a very elegant hotel with three small tired children is rather hard on the parents' digestion, especially since Jim kept meeting business acquaintances as Bobby was flinging scrambled eggs on to the floor.

It was then that I found out that the only way to get milk is through the dairies; none of it is sold in the stores, because of the comparative mild shortage. We were without milk for three days but now the dairy and I and my Spanish see eye to eye and we get daily milk delivery. We then went and raided a handful of dishes from Fred Cellar's old apartment (this being on Sunday).

Luckily, in the last minute of packing I found I had room for three sheets in my suitcase; so I put them in--we all used these three sheets until our crates arrived. We were using diapers for towels--neither Jim nor I had realized that the house came completely furnished with the exception of linens and dishes and silver. I think we did rather well under the circumstances.

Poor Jim had to leave at 4:30 a.m. the next morning for Ponce and was expected back on Wednesday night--it just could not be helped--some meeting or other; and he left us, confident that while the cook and the maid would handle house and children, I could go shopping for the essentials, and all would be wonderfully under control...Monday a.m.--no maid, no cook! Now I know better, and I would never have expected them to arrive, especially since Jack had paid them in advance--a horrible mistake down here. I spent all Monday morning answering the doors, all three of them--I had

no idea what they all wanted--and after much head shaking, gesturing with the hands and guttural noises. (Why is it that one tends to shout when not being understood? I knew perfectly well that English in a louder tone of voice was just as unintelligible as that spoken normally to these people).

My fifth caller was a neatly dressed, prim, elderly lady who arrived at the front door while I was getting nowhere with two girls at the back door. She smiled, bowed, talked in a low voice, looked cultured, and proceeded to walk into the living room--"Aha!", I thought, "a neighbor come to call!" I introduced myself and I guess she introduced herself--I really don't know--she spoke no English--she asked me a question, I thought she asked me when I arrived or where I came from, so I made the sound of an airplane and said "Puerto Rico--yesterday" and then changed to buzzing like a plane spreading my arms and saying "Puerto Rico--no manana" (the extent of my Spanish)--in case you don't understand it, I was trying to tell her I arrived by plane yesterday. I thought it was very simple. She shook her head and asked me a question, with the nicest smile--I had absolutely no idea what she was saying but this had been going on all morning and the breakfast dishes were still waiting to be done. After 20 minutes of this sort of gesturing and getting nowhere I was ready to stop but she persisted. I didn't want to be rude to a neighbor and was about to offer her some coffee when someone came to the side door...I went and there was a huge darky, who asked me in English "Do you need a laundress?" I was so glad to understand someone that I hired Maude on the spot, officially as a laundress and actually as an interpreter. Then Maude translated for me--my "neighbor come to call" was a beggar, begging for money!

Maude has been with me since--helping out in major domestic crises and doing the laundry. You will understand the Major Domestic Crises when I tell you to date I have hired 8 people, fired 4, 2 never came back after I gave them carfare for the next day, and I now have "Re Gregoria" and Maude--all this in 14 days.

In order to keep any help at all you must have a cook, a maid and a laundress--if you don't have all three the others won't stay--their wages are ridiculously low--but the problem is getting three who will work together and three who know their jobs.

The last cook I hired was hopeless--she spoke no English and could make scrambled eggs and coffee--period. I spent my days in the kitchen showing her how to cook potatoes, etc.--tying up Gregoria, who was supposed to watch the children, as an interpreter, and getting nowhere....finally I told Gregoria to tell her to cook anything--just anything, since I had to go shopping--and it turns out she can cook scrambled eggs and that's all...even after my two days of demonstration...so now I'm back to Gregoria and Maude... and Gregoria will leave if I don't get a cook...never a dull moment.

The housing problem is really a tough nut to crack. I won't bore you with the details, but the big "white elephant" next to the Country Club is for sale only and he finally reduced his figure to \$35,000, but it is in very bad condition and will need several

thousand dollars repair yearly--so we gave that up as a very bad investment--the owner himself said it was in very bad shape and the best thing to do is to tear it down and build again. But we still have four weeks and we keep hoping and plugging away.

The island itself is gorgeous. I take the children swimming at the Country Club every afternoon--the water is a clear blue and so is the sky--it is not too hot--sometimes we even sleep with a sheet on us. Life is very leisurely here and very pleasant once one gets used to slow motion of everything. No one can understand the need for immediate action or being on time--this can be very irritating at first and Jim and I say we are banging our heads against the Puerto Rican Stone Wall of inactivity. However, I can understand why there are so many people here who do not want to return to the states--and others who can't wait to return.

We sleep under mosquito nets every night, the windows have no glass or screens but one really does not need them. The Puerto Ricans, other than the servant class, all speak English and are very charming and gracious. They are mainly of Spanish extraction--the servant class is a mixture of Spanish and black--at least from my two weeks here that is my conclusion and it really does not mean a single solitary thing. We are purposely entering the social life here very slowly and cautiously--in the first place, I have to be more certain of my help and what they can do--and in the second place, I have to feel my way around a bit more to see how things are done here. But as every day passes, I like it better and better. The water, the sun, the balmy air, the leisurely tempo (provided you don't have your heart set on getting anything done at a certain time), all are extremely pleasant and relaxing. I read a good deal, swim and play with the children--am getting a Spanish teacher lined up; and, as soon as we have a house and have moved, I will get to work on my tennis.

Love,

Tah

1125 Piccioni Calle
Condado, Santurce
Parada 51, San Juan, P.R.

December 6, 1949

Dear People:

As you may gather, we have found a place to live and have just moved. It is quite a large house for down here--4 bedrooms and a bath upstairs; a living room, a dining room, a large "fat" hall, another bedroom (which we use for now as a playroom, but which we can easily reconvert to a bedroom when we have two couples as guests) and a bathroom downstairs. The kitchen is very tiny and was apparently built out of the space that was left kicking around. As a matter of fact, all the rooms are on the smallish side but they are adequate, and as you see quite numerous.

It was quite a feat getting a house, believe you me,--we saw numerous old run down hole-in-the-walls and I was very discouraged--so much so that we almost took the least awful one of the ones available--but then we came across this one. As soon as we saw this one (one night with flashlights), we decided to take it--the owner asked a fantastic rent, but we were desperate and agreed to it and wanted to sign a lease right there and then--but still the owner hesitated (in Spanish--we had an interpreter). Finally, he said that he wasn't sure that he still owned the house--seems he had a \$29,000 mortgage on the house and had not been able to pay the interest on the loan for quite some time. The next morning he cleared the matter of whether he still could legally rent the house with his finance company and the lease was signed.

Brother, and then our troubles began. We had to tear down a wall in order to bring a refrigerator into that tiny kitchen--(the owner said the refrigerator belongs in the dining room)--we had to hire a carpenter to make some cabinets--not a shelf in the kitchen--we had to purchase a hot water heater, to say nothing of a stove and refrigerator,--and the crowning blow was that all light fixtures and sockets had been removed and nothing but bare wires were dangling from the ceiling and the walls--so the first thing I had to do was to tear downtown and get wall sockets and light fixtures. They say that in Java not only the light fixtures are taken along with each move, but also the sinks--well, they left the sinks but the shower curtain rods were gone when we came in.

I have finally gotten around to buying those rods today--and now the long drawn out process of battling with a handy-man begins. The carpenter who made our kitchen cabinets had to make them three times before they fit--and the final result looks as though I had tried to make them myself. Honestly, you have no conception of what it is to get anything done--the carpenter just wore me out and I just finally said, let him finish any way he can--I just don't care anymore. The net result was that we cannot get a single bottle of liquor in our liquor closet..the shelves are not high enough. He had put all the cupboards up and called me with great

pride--only to find that we could not open the doors of the cabinets in the corners--he had not left enough space for the door to swing open. This goes on ad infinitum--need I explain more?

I will only add that I have gone through nine different servants and now have faithful wonderful Maude (the laundress I told you about) and servant #10 and #11. I don't think I'll keep #10 very long but #11 is a nurse girl whom I like well enough to get some uniforms tomorrow. Does this all explain why I have not written sooner? I've had this new nurse for three days now (Alvita by name) and life already seems somewhat smoother with Alvita and Maude as a good working team. Rita, my new cook of 4 days, I will eventually have to replace but she will do until I get what I am looking for.

The wage and hour hearings are going full blast now and keep us quite busy socially entertaining all kinds of visiting firemen constantly. Banquets, parties, tours, etc., etc.--really a lot of fun. Since we have moved to our new house we have no dining room furniture (I am having it made and that takes time--especially down here) so that our entertaining has been simply at the hotel, which is easier than wondering if the new cook of a day or two knows how to set a table and serve, and finding out she does not, at a dinner party. That happened to me at the other house. This last week was pretty hectic in the party line and next week promises to be--but we have a few days to recuperate and write letters. All this sounds like and actually is a rat race, but I love it--I'll love it even better when the kinks such as the servants, rods, drapes and dining room furniture and closets are straightened out.

We still go swimming almost every day--Jimmy swims like a fish and dives off the diving board now. Karen cannot swim yet, but is making progress. It is quite hot during the day--but one definitely needs a sheet over one after 10 p.m.

Two weeks ago I went to a banquet at Ponce and the drive over the mountains is lovely. To have mountains and ocean all in one place is just ideal...palm trees, coconuts, sugar cane, banana trees--all in abundance--blue sky and lovely clouds, unbelievably beautiful colors, some wild and others very much on the pastel side--natives walking barefooted along the road carrying huge baskets of fruit on their heads, naked children scampering around (one was really dressed up--all he had on was one lone necktie--period); lizards always and constantly around--I rather like them--shacks clinging by their fingernails to the side of the mountain, very narrow roads consisting mainly of curves and loud blowing of horns and screeching of tires--and wonderfully refreshing cooling air at the very top of the mountains...these are the impressions one gets of that drive over the mountains.

Mother, thank you very much for Karen's birthday present--*the dress* she loves it and altho I try to keep it for special occasions, she begs to wear it at least twice a week so that she "looks cute" and she does look so adorable in it that I cannot resist and I let her. She is such a happy girl when she wears it and really takes special care of it. We did not celebrate her birthday or even tell her that

it was her birthday because it fell on the day of the "big move" and I could not possibly have any sort of celebration for her. I thought that we would celebrate it sometime in February when she also would know some children so that she could have a party.

I have found a new nurse-girl and she is quite good so that things in that department are running much more smoothly. Bobby is growing in leaps and bounds--I only wish I had a motion picture camera to take some action pictures of him--he is so cute. Jimmy is growing up very fast and getting to be quite sensible. He thoroughly enjoys school. Our Spanish is not making much progress at the moment--as soon as our victrola-radio is connected, we will get some spanish record-lessons and get to it very seriously...at this moment I really have hardly a breathing space.

As for Xmas--I could use some nice large oil paintings--all our walls are Kemtones (solid color)--the bedrooms are in peach; and the hallway and all the downstairs are a light green. I have the oil paintings you gave me on the airplane up in the living room. If you have the time, please send me the crate of pictures from Westford and any other oil painting that you can spare that is suitable for the modernistic-tropical house. Other suggestions are--records, jewelry, perfume, or anything for the house that is "nice". The Xmas present I am sending you is of solid mahogany--made here by the natives and when I first picked it out I said, "This has a flaw in it! I won't take it" at which point everyone in the shop stopped and looked at this "gringo americana" who picks the finest piece of mahogany there is, and picks the most beautiful part of the piece and calls it a flaw! What you and I would think is a flaw, because we are so dumb, is what makes that piece what it is. I thought I would tell you, in advance, just in case you are not up on your mahogany-grains. Ha, I told you all about your Xmas present and you still have no idea what it is--am I not smart?

Jim is extremely busy but the wonderful guy has been taking me to some business dinners because we see so little of each other--I enjoy these dinners very much altho I sit there quiet like a mouse since it is strictly business--I am learning a lot of Jim's problems and at times I wonder how he manages to keep an even keel--this Nashua publicity was very bad for him--labor is very poor and now there is this committee down here to increase the minimum wage (from Washington)--if the wage is increased substantially, it will kill the industrialization of P.R. By the way, be sure to get hold of last Mondays Herald Tribune--there is a special section devoted to Puerto Rico--also, an article on Textron and some of Jim's supposed quotes (Dec. 5th--anyway, on a Monday). If you cannot get one, go to the library and read it; it's well worth your while.

Love,

Hertha

Dear Mother and Ernst:

While you are having a nice, crisp winter-day Xmas, with perhaps some snow, we are swimming and the children are wearing their sun-dresses and cotton clothes. It seems peculiar to see Xmas trees in this warm weather, and as yet, I have been unable to get into the Xmas spirit. Nightly, there are carolers coming to the house to sing Xmas carols--but they are all to a rhumba rythmn with castinettes--or the equivalent--in Spanish, so that we did not even recognize them as Xmas carols until a neighbor told us what they were.

The children are going to a Xmas party tomorrow--held at the Country Club swimming pool--where there will be a Santa Claus--a bit incongruous. One thing I have noticed. one sees very few pictures of Santa on a sled! Actually, the Xmas Day itself is not such a big holiday here--the big day here is 3 Kings Day--on January 6th. It is then that allthe P.R. children get their presents.

We are slowly getting settled--and what I wrote is exactly that--slowly--because I have to combat the Great P.R. Inefficiency. A man comes to put up my china closet--The first day, he forgets the drill to drill a hole in the cement. The second day he had the drill but forgot the screws. He brought my lamps but forgot the lampshades. The third day he brought only one screw instead of two--brought me two lampshades but they don't fit on the lamps. Today he actually put the china closet up but forgot the lampshades!--Tomorrow--?

And so it goes--all day, every day--without the slightest bit of exaggeration. Everything I had done to date or tried to get done is exactly in the same pattern--and the help is so inefficient you just would not believe it--really. The nursemaid, who has nothing else to do, will sit in the kitchen while the two older children are on the street and Bobby is screaming his little heart out in the dining room. This is not unusual; it is typical.

But enough of this--other than the inefficiency of the people, the place is ideal now. Flowers in bloom, gorgeous ocean, wonderful weather.

Last week Textron went up before the Wage and Hour Committee down here and finally succeeded to have a recommended 30-cent minimum wage recommended for textile workers in P.R. to Congress--(because of the "difficulty of training personnel")--instead of the 75-cent minimum which the labor union leaders wanted. If it had become 75 cents, we would have had to close the mill since production with that labor at that rate would never have been successful.

Jim has the "monga" now (a tropical flu) and has been in bed for the past few days--temperature 103 degrees. He is now better, no temperature and will slowly get back on his feet.

The salad bowl is solid mahogany and the finest piece I have seen here. Everytime you have a party, we will be with you in the salad bowl. We will miss you very much, especially at Xmas Eve. While we are listening to the rhumba-Xmas-songs we will think of you with your lovely candle-lit Xmas tree, all singing around the piano. Believe you me, we will really miss that.

Jim gave me a deep-freeze in advance of Xmas, as we need it. We get meat once a week from the States and have to keep it in the freezer. (I feed eight people now.)

I do hope as many of you as possible (Webers and Neelsens) will come down here soon. All our difficulties will be ironed out very soon I hope, and then we can enjoy a good visit, plenty of sun and ocean water.

Have a very wonderful Xmas, think of us and do come soon! (Sometimes I think I need a "leveling agent.")

Choose a candle for me and make a wish (about my remaining unruffled) for me--one towards the bottom.

We miss you.

Love,

Tah

December 29

Remember I wrote you about the difficulty I had getting two lampshades that match. When I bought the lamps in the store, the shades matched; only on delivery did I run into trouble.

Well, the man has been here four times since then. We now have two matching lampshades, but one fits on the lamp and the other one does not! About four more trips may do it.

Oh yes. We finally got a phone! For five weeks we tried to get one by ourselves with no success. All we got was the P. R. runabout. Finally, we asked Ted Moscoso, Head of the P.R. Development Company (the "big wheel" here) for help. You know what happened?

The phone was listed; we had a number; we were charged for it--all in order, excepting that they forgot to install it! Ted called information, got our number and was told the phone was "out of order." Out of order--my eye. We had the bare wires, but no instrument.

But now we have an instrument and it is really installed! I cannot believe it!

Thanks again for making our Xmas such a very nice one. We thought of you and missed you very much.

Jimmy is very homesick. Poor boy!

Love,

Tah

January 2, 1950

A Very Happy New Year to All:

I found it very difficult to get into the Xmas spirit this year. It got quite uncomfortably hot just before Xmas and lasted thru Xmas day--so that the children and I spent most of our spare time at the pool cooling off. Carollers came every night with drum, and gourds and other native instruments literally shouting minor-keyed rhumbas (which I found out later to be Xmas carols) into the open doorway. Not a single Xmas parcel (including the tree-stand and decorations) arrived until late Xmas eve. All these things made it seem as tho Xmas was months away.

Three days before Xmas one of the gasoline storage tanks at the harbor sprung a leak and the harbor was filled with gasoline--a state of emergency was declared because of the terrific fire hazard. The boat with 4500 Xmas orders and a load of dynamite lay outside of the harbor for 3 days and could not be brought in--and on this boat were all the Xmas presents, ornaments and tree-stand I had ordered--our Xmas tree stood forlornly in a corner, in a pan of water and I had visions of having Xmas on New Year's Day--luckily the boat came in on Saturday and the packages arrived Saturday afternoon. 'Twas a close call. We put the tree up while swatting mosquitos and wiping the perspiration off our brows, but we had a wonderful Xmas. Went swimming in the afternoon and Jim played some tennis.

Last week was some week re the help situation--and was so all over the island. My laundress just did not appear on Monday, so on Tuesday I hired another to come Wednesday. She did not come; so on Wednesday, just to be sure, I hired two to come on Thursday--and none turned up. On Thursday I hired three to come on Friday--and you guessed it, none turned up; so on Saturday I went down to the section where they live and bodily picked up one and brought her back--two hours later she had left to go to a beauty parlor to have her hair done--the laundry was still there unironed. And today, all seven of them appeared between 8 and 9 a.m. It was quite a show!

My newest cook started today and I believe I have finally found what I wanted--truly a dream, a gem, etc., etc. Now I am all set (I hope), I have gone through 15 servants to date and I believe I have earned my good nurse-girl and excellent cook.

Polly MacDonald is going thru the same thing I did, only she cannot get a nurse-girl--I think she has hired something like 8 girls, they stay ten minutes, say they have to go home to get their clothes and never come back--The one I sent over to her today, did the same thing again--I just cannot understand these people. As someone aptly put it--they love to go look for jobs, but as soon as they actually have to do some work, they back down. However, I believe my worries in that line are over, for a little while at least.

I believe I wrote you that it looks as tho we will stay here for a while, the minimum wage in the textile industry was raised to 30¢ instead of the threatened 75¢ which would have closed all the mills down here including Textron.

Royal Little came down here a few days ago (Pres. of Textron, Inc.) and gave the most gorgeous party at the Caribe-Hilton Hotel I have ever been at...very formal dress, corsages for all ladies, champagne, wonderful food and we danced every dance--it was wonderful. I have never seen a man take such pains for a party--he fussed and fumed about the seating arrangements, had tables reserved for us at the bar and in the dining room, each corsage was different and exactly matched the wearer's dress, etc., etc..but then he is a perfectionist in everything he does, from trust funds to parties and dancing--a wonderful dancer who insists on dancing every single dance. He has a charming personality. He is coming back on the 16th and giving another party (the last one was for the Puerto Ricans; the next one for the Textron officials) and I am really looking forward to it.

New Year's Eve is the gala occasion down here--we went to a party in San Juan, then drove to Ponce, changed to our formals, went to a party and then a dance at the country club. That whole evening I could not help thinking how much I would have preferred to be with you...that is the day one should be with those closest to one..so quite frankly, I was a little homesick.

Last night for the first time I put a blanket on each bed.. tonight we are back to plain sheets. It was a little too cool to take the children swimming today, because they stay in the water so long so I took them to the so-called zoo--which consisted mainly of some birds, three alligators and about 4 inactive monkeys--but the children enjoyed it--especially trying to catch the pigeons.

I do hope you are keeping my letters for me, Mother, since I am not keeping a diary. I am anxiously awaiting the date of when you are coming. We went up to El Yunque the other day (the highest mountain here) and it was the first real jungle I have been in--tremendous ferns, as high as trees, wonderful plants, and there are trails for hiking and pools for swimming. You would love it. Now, please come. I simply do not know of any other way to urge you to come other than to say "we really want you to come".

Love,

Tah

1125 Piccioni Calle
Santurce, Puerto Rico

January 22, 1950

What a week we had this last week--everything from good to bad--from the very peaceful (but not for long) to the hectic. The hectic is due mainly that we have been more or less flooded with "Visiting Firemen" from Textron from the states--and Jim tells me that 15 more are coming in dribbles and drabbles in the next few weeks--it's lots of fun, really, especially since I love getting dressed to the teeth and going dancing...Jim and I have decided we should try to take some dancing lessons soon, since dancing our style is possible to about 1/3 of the tunes, and we make a mess out of the Latin tunes. Some of the steps are very easy to do and fun--such as the Bottya--where you just roll around like a boat--Jim calls it the "Ape Walk". Its lots of fun to do with a good P.R. leading so I love it; but Jim says he would feel silly dancing with a man, and thats the only way a P.R. could lead him around. All the other dances you keep the shoulders and upper part of the body absolutely straight and immobile, all the action being from the hips down, and believe you me, there is plenty of motion there.

The good news is that Jim is now on the Board of Directors of Textron, P.R. I haven't had a chance to speak to him at any length in private lately so I don't know too much how much extra work that entails, but it seems to be quite a feather in his cap.

The bad news is no longer bad since it is practically over-- On the way to the airport to meet Jim last week, Jimmy ran into an iron gate, narrowly missed poking his right eye out and received a deep cut in the cheek. The next morning he awoke with a temp. of 105 and was retching..within a few hours he was heading toward convulsions, and the next day, in spite of the huge amount of penicillin he was getting, there was danger of septicemia as well as a brain infection--both eyes were swollen shut and a vivid red, and his forehead was starting to swell...We considered taking him by plane to the states but realized that the change in altitude during the flight might cause the pus to go just where we did not want it to, in the brain...and suddenly he got well as quickly as he got sick--he still has one blackish eye and a swollen cheek and that will take another week to clear up--the doctor told us the penicillin saved his life. The episode added ten years to our lives, tho. Now he is so lively and full of mischief, we hardly know what he will be up to next..so there are no bad effects.

The day Jimmy got out of bed Karen got a severe ear infection-- and I decided I had better go into the wholesale penicillin business--she was sick but not as desperately ill as Jimmy was. Three days later, yesterday to be exact, we took Bobby to the hospital to have his palm sewn up--three stitches--cut with a milk bottle. I think they know us pretty well as the hospital now. Now they've all had a turn, I expect at least two months of no accidents.

Today the weather is just perfect--couldn't ask for the slightest bit of a change--the last few days it has been a bit chilly, not enough to wear a coat in the evening, but a scarf

on the shoulders felt good if you were out of doors in the evening. I even have a blanket on each bed, Jim and I seldomly use ours but Jimmy usually ends up using his late at night. We went to the country club yesterday (before Bobby cut his palm) for the first time in ten days (due to all these illnesses) and took some movies with our new movie camera. This is our first attempt--hope something appears on the film.

My help situation seems still to be solved--it seems it was just a question of finding the right ones--Anna is a wonderful cook and loves to have parties but is rather weak on the dusting line and unless I check carefully we are apt to have a dinner party with good food, good service, and flowers picked and beautifully arranged by Anna, and an inch of dust on the table tops--but that is no great or drastic failing; so I say nothing and dust quickly myself and we are all happy. She is wonderful with the children, even much better than the nurse-girl and they, all three of them, adore her. Here's hoping my luck holds out.

Yesterday, we went out to the country to show Mr. and Mrs. Cushman (Visiting Firemen of the last few days) some pineapple fields. They were the first ones I had seen myself--also the sugar cane fields, banana and grapefruit farms. Did you see the Caribe Hilton Hotel written up in one of the later Life magazines? It really is quite a fancy hotel--we wonder how they are ever going to pay for it.

Mother, I wonder if my post-card about not using those nice mahogany plates as hot pads reached you in time...honestly, that is almost as bad as if I cut up that beautiful white lace scarf of Oma's and made doll dresses out of it! I was feeling very sentimental and flush the day I ordered them--they are to be used as regular plates in Candlewood, and have been specially treated so that food and warm meals can be served on them... but they will react exactly as a mahogany dining room table top if you put a hot casserole straight from the oven on them.

Jim said he had a wonderful visit with you and thoroughly enjoyed himself in Mt. Vernon. So sorry the movies did not turn out but I'm glad he saw some pictures of Oetz and your trip. Jim will get you your plane ticket here and send it to you or some such arrangement--pick out the plane and the date (exact) and let us know--how about the sleeperette on March 30th? Let us know. I am getting all excited about your visit. Better send me the necklace and earrings since we do not know when Jim is coming back the next time--do not declare it as jewelry since I will have to pay 20% tax on it--or is it (the tax) only on new jewelry? I do not know.

Love,

Tah

1125 Piccioni Calle
Santurce, Puerto Rico

End of February, 1950

Puerto Rico has so many different sides to it--it's amazing!

And sometimes it makes me feel very provincial. Most of the Continentals we meet, we meet through the country club-- a very unpretentious club and quite nice--the majority of the people are associated with the large firms which have branches all over the world, so the new people coming in are from places like Ceylon, Shanghai, Brazil, Argentina, or from islands I have never even heard of, the Near or Far East.

The people who have been here long enough are utterly amazed that I don't recognize the difference between a Yorkshire accent and a London accent--whereas I have difficulty telling the difference between a downright British accent and a Chilean speaking with an English accent. And then to confuse the thing utterly, after I have definitely placed a person as straight from the British Isles I find out they are from Australia and they are dumbfounded that I was unable to tell what part of Australia they are from--just by the accent, mind you.

At any rate, my knowledge of geography is improving, and the other night I learned a lot about the Aborigenes, and how they compare with the Zulus, etc. And the world is getting considerably smaller when people talk in an offhand manner of just coming in from Shanghai, or spending a vacation in Chile or dropping in to see relatives in Peru or sending the children to school in England or Switzerland.

I simply must tell you of a wonderful weekend we just had. Bill and Olive Gonzalez invited us to their country place in Aibonito. It is a two-hour drive from here into the mountains. It was a hot, sticky day in San Juan--rather uncomfortable as we left--and I felt more like just submerging in the pool for the afternoon than driving for two hours in that blazing sun. As soon as we got in the mountains it cooled off enough to be comfortable and that evening I wore a sweater for the first time since I have been down here--it wasn't necessary, but it felt good.

Early the next morning we got up and six of us went on horseback for three hours over the estate--Bill naturally had to stop at each of his tobacco drying houses to see how things were going and to speak to his supervisors--one for the tobacco, one for the cattle (80 head), one for the coffee and one for the gardens and one for the horses--some such arrangement. We rode through the tobacco fields and under the orange trees--all at this very terrific angle--I was certainly glad the horse did all that climbing up and sliding down again--not me..I merely concentrated on sticking on his back and keeping him from galloping down the hillsides that were not quite 90 degrees (slight exaggeration, but from where I sat, not much). The roads were extremely muddy and after the first half hour we went in the fields and in the

river. The horses were sinking past their "knees" in the mud and the sucking sound of six horses pulling their legs out of that mud was something to hear... So Bill said, "Let's get out of this mud and take the river", and galloped off over a field and then into a river. The horses were at times up to their bellies in the water--but it was fun, wading up a river on a horse with all these tropical overgrowths hanging down--and then tearing like mad up the next hill and weaving your way thru and up a tobacco field until you reach the highest point and looking down that sharp hill, seeing those bright red blossoms on the trees, that blue sky, the dark green palm trees--It was really lovely. We did not ride thru the coffee forest because the horses tend to trample the plants too much--altho they were beautifully trained going thru the tobacco fields.

After three hours Bill had seen most of the tobacco drying houses and shown us some of his Brahman cattle and the pig house (his pigs are kept on cement and hosed off a few times daily, etc., etc.)--we still had not seen anywhere near all the farm--he has some 480 acres. It was all so very nice... So lovely and friendly--Bill and Olive made a point of stopping and having a little chat with everyone we met--their carpenter, their herdsman, some tobacco men, the serving girl's mother. The serving girl's mother was not feeling well, so as soon as we came back, Olive wrote a note to the local doctor to see her. Bill is a well known lawyer here and they usually spend the weekends on the farm--or they used to when the children were home..Tita is now at Wheaton College and the boys are at Amherst. At any rate, you can gather from these last few pages of rambling that the country and mountains here are truly lovely.

When we returned from our ride we had roast pig--the Puerto Rican way--(whole roast pig on a spit--roasted over a charcoal fire out of doors--a man sits by the hour and slowly turns the spit and the pig until it is done). The taste is out of this world. (P.S. After that three-hour ride, I was unable to walk like a human being for the next four days)

We celebrated Karen's fourth birthday (officially November 19th) and Bobby's second one (officially February 19th) all in one afternoon with a little party (peanut-hunt, cake and ice cream and home-made movies). You should see Bobby when he sees himself on the screen--he whoops and hollers, laughs with glee and tries to climb up and pat the pictures. We took some good ones of Jimmy diving off the diving board.

Mother, we are really looking forward to your visit. Bring one evening or dinner dress with you--you won't need a wrap. I don't even possess one. Otherwise bring cotton dresses, one or two cocktail dresses and don't forget your bathing suit. You will not need a sweater and skip the rubbers and umbrella--bring dark glasses if you have some and something to protect your head from the sun. I have turned P.R. and am using a parasol for walking--it is much cooler.

We went to a baseball game the other night--Caribbean series--Venezuela played Cuba and the P.R. played Panama--not like the Red Sox, but fun anyhow. The crowd was much better behaved than I had imagined.

You would laugh to see me in the streets these days--I use a parasol (and so does Karen) like so many of the natives--to keep cool--brother, that sun can really beat down and it is only February--I shudder to think what September will be like (September and October being the really hot months down here).

I finally "took the bull by the horns" and had a party--formal dress, mind you, because the P.R. like to dress up--I am finding I have a lot in common with them--like to dress, parasols and lazy. It went off surprisingly well--surprisingly in that my servants came through all right, the only mishap being that altho I ordered dinner served at 8, it was finally ready to be served at nearly ten--but at that stage it didn't really matter too much--everyone was having a very good time, and, down here at parties, dinner always is served at ten or later, perhaps for the same reason that mine was served at that hour.

A friend of mine just dropped in--she just moved into another apartment and came to tell me how the "gun" worked. As I have already told you all the walls are of cement and the problem of hanging a picture, etc. is a big one--I wrote you the trouble I had getting the glass cabinet hung--now I have draperies and the drape covers the glass closet! I had two alternatives (1) going through that long drawn out process of getting three men, one cement chipper, two screws all together (preferably not at dinner time) in one house at the same time; or (2) cutting a hole in the drape, which would look rather peculiar to you but everyone down here would understand why--those were my alternatives. Then, George and Beatrice came one day all elated--they located a "gun" which, literally, "shoots nails into the cement, neat as a pin". Wonderful! We may borrow it the next day after George has hung a few pictures.

Now comes Beatrice's report: All is deathly quiet in the Young apartment. In front of the center wall in the living room stands George, a huge pair of goggles and cap on his head, a gun in his hand one foot from the wall and pointed to the wall--Beatrice is ducking behind the desk--a terrific explosion, cement flying all around and when the cement dust has settled, there is a hole 4 inches in diameter and one inch deep in "the" spot--and in the center of this hole is a nail, so deeply imbedded that you cannot even get some dental floss around it. Exit the gun. (P.S. - after careful investigation, the other side of the 3 foot cement wall seemed to have survived the blast). Solution: a Japanese print scotch-taped over the ragged white Hole (with a nail head for emphasis) in a green wall.

We are not going to try the gun--I think George threw it out. The picture still stands on the floor in a corner..I suspect it will stay there.

Last night I found out how important the "hunt" we have nightly is. Just before you crawl in under the mosquito net at night, one generally has a hunt to be sure there are none imprisoned in the net. I forgot last night--At 2 a.m. I woke up just covered with welts and itching like mad--for the next fifteen minutes I hunted and killed seven mosquitos which had been feasting on me. I'm still scratching.

Love,

92

Almost May, 1950

I really have not forgotten to write at all--this is the first day I ventured up after a week long session with the munga or some sort of dysentery--I am sort of crawling around today and Elvilda announced I looked quite different--I think she admires the drawn out type of female and altho, after careful scrutiny, I noticed I still have cheeks instead of holes (I haven't eaten for six days--and you know how I love food) I really am disappointed that I don't look like Katherine Hepburn--after all that, I might at least look interesting--the only noticeable change is that my hair is very dirty!

Last week during Jimmy's birthday party I suddenly was unable to cope with the movie projector any longer, turned the miles of unbound film lying on the floor over to Lucia Butler and told her "I don't think I can face the armored knights tomorrow"..and went to bed. I don't know yet what I was referring to; neither does Lucia. It's all over now. Jimmy's party was a success and I'm back in the groove again.

Jimmy and I went together and bought a bicycle..he had earned or received \$23.00 during the last year and I had promised him to match the money he had. All year long, from his fifth birthday on he has been saving and earning toward his bicycle and we really had a gay afternoon looking at bicycles and his deciding which one he wanted..He had 50 cents left and bought a horn for his bike with that. He is very proud and very happy.

We also got a new bird cage--no bird as yet. We're waiting for the boat from Spain to come--they are supposedly bringing a load of canaries and I thought it would be fun to take the children to the boat and pick out the bird. Jim is rather pessimistic about that..He says that the boat from Spain docks here very irregularly, sometimes every two weeks and sometimes not for months--Well, we shall see.

My new cook, Edith, is working out rather satisfactorily. (Anna, DEAR Soul, chose the day of mother's arrival here to "up and leave", completely unannounced. Edith is long, lean and lanky and black--about 26--and cooks much better than Anna--however, she is given to letting loose in Spanish in exceedingly loud tones for ten minutes every two hours or so--and when I say loud, that is exactly what I mean--What she explodes about we are never sure but in ten minutes all is peaceful and calm again. The last few days, the oven door gives you a shock when you touch it--brother, you should hear the noise in the kitchen now!

The new curtains are up and look simply wonderful! The room looks larger and more airy and elegant. Everyone admires them greatly. The mocca cups arrived last week--unfortunately, one cup and one saucer were broken--and well broken--into at least twenty pieces apiece; so there is absolutely nothing to be done about them. Another saucer got a small chip but otherwise they

arrived in fine shape and they are lovely--So are the spoons. Thank you very much.

I ordered the straw-hanging for the dining room wall with all the plugs--but haven't been out of bed until yesterday so was not able to go and get it yet. As for the silk prayer rug--yes--if you think it will fit in here--I think it will be a fine idea. Twice now, on Wednesday, your "News of the Week", the Times "Magazine" and the "Sports Section" have arrived and both Jim and I immediately took a flying leap at them. We read every word--even the ads. You don't have to send the whole sport section--just those two or three pages to do with baseball. We really appreciate the time and effort it takes to send them to us.

As for getting the picture stretched--that is a long, long story--the "art" store you found when you were here would not touch it; the other place does framing but would not try to fix it--and the same story with three other places that sell postcards or oranges, etc. and do framing on the side. Finally, I found a place where they specialize in hideous religious things--there the man very doubtfully said he would try it. He did it and rather nicely too, to both his and my surprise.

I had the ring made smaller--to the tune of \$5.00 which irked me, but its worth it and I wear it frequently. It really is lovely.

And as to the knives, the jeweler here and a jeweler there in the states are in a long correspondence and I was told it would take at least 6 months--I haven't figured out yet whether the correspondence will take 6 months and then the knives will perhaps be fixed; or, if the knives will be all fixed in 6 months--let's be optimistic and hope for the latter.

Karen and Bobby are playing the victrola now in the playroom and Jimmy is at school. Ten days ago I got a phone call from the school--Jimmy was in the hospital, would I please come--he was either pushed or fell and whanged his skull on the cement--I was to take him home and keep him quiet and observe for concussion--no concussion, thank goodness--never a dull moment, tho.

Poor Jim's problems change every week--I wonder how he stands it. He hasn't taken any time off these last two weeks but promised he would stay home on Sunday and sleep. They have now found out that one of the numerous reasons the air conditioning in the mill is not working well is because they installed \$6,400.00 worth of filters which should never have been put into a cotton mill-ever. Great Efficiency! On the good side, they made their first piece of cloth in Humacao (rayon tricot) and everybody is very proud. Jim himself varies from tearing out his hair to giving a half-hearted smile--- it ought to get better pretty soon.

Love,

Tah

74
May 8, 1950

Dear Folks:

You don't know or realize which are the little things you are used to and enjoy until you do without--To me, a chocolate milk shake with vanilla ice cream is practically a "must" after a movie--and since we left the states I have not had a chocolate milk shake. What the country club proudly calls a milk shake is a glass of milk with one drop--perhaps two drops if you insist--of chocolate sauce. The Condado Beach Hotel opened up an "American Fountain, Bar and Grill" last week and we made a bee-line over there and filled ourselves with milk shakes and cheeseburgers--also, there are real ice cream cones there, something the children have not had since we have been down here--so now you know where to find us when we are not at home.

In my last letter I wrote you I was all over the munga--that was a snare and a delusion--the reason I thought it was so hot was that I was running a temperature and didn't realize it. Went to another doctor, who is very good, when I got worried about amoebic dysentery and found out I had a good case of acute enteritis and remained miserable for the next five days! I got loaded down with Sulfa and practically no food--all is well now and I play tennis and swim and the weather no longer is stinko hot.

Notice Jim's picture in the May issue of Fortune magazine--if you stretch your imagination you might recognize him--a surer method is to read the caption--it's a horrible picture of him, but the background is good. Herbert Solow, who wrote the article had us in stitches one day--the Governor's secretary called him up and invited him to the Governor's mansion at 6 o'clock on Sunday. Mr. Solow calmly said he was sorry but he had another engagement--an audible gasp at the other end of the phone, followed by a gentle suggestion that he had better cancel his other engagement--Solow said he couldn't, it was a big party given in his honor. Then, he was bluntly told that when the Governor asks you over, you go--period--that is, if you ever want any cooperation or an interview. Mr. Solow went, with about one hundred other people to the cocktail party and had a distant glimpse of the Governor, but he got his interview the next week because he was a "good boy". I do believe he is the only man in P.R. who ever said he couldn't go to the palace when invited.

Mother, thank you very much for the canasta set--Jim and I played together last night and I got soundly trounced, but I thought of you every time I picked up the cards.

Jim was so worn out that he took Saturday afternoon and all day Sunday off this week--I am so glad, since he had been doubling his pace since you left and really needed to recuperate a bit. New problems--no market for the yarn now. Jim has decided he needs a full time man to handle the advertising and marketing of the cloth down here--he has been trying to do that by himself, too--on top of running the mill just about single handedly, as well as the sewing plant plus building the new tricot plant in Humacao.

Love,

Hertha

95
1125 Piccioni Calle
Santurce, Puerto Rico

September 26, 1950

Dear "States-siders"--

The most amazing thing is happening--it is quite hot here. People say that this is the hottest summer in the last 11 years, and I fully expected to come back here and really roast after that nice cool summer in Maine; but I don't mind the heat. I feel it (you just can't miss that hot oven-like blast), but I don't suffer with it and I sleep every night. As a matter of fact we all do, which was not the case last year when we first arrived--so I guess our blood has thinned out and we are acclimated or that we filled up with enough "coolness" to last us for a while. Whatever it is, I am extremely grateful for it.

The trip back was really pleasant; the children were very good; the plane left more or less on time, and the ride was very smooth. The trip from Maine to NYC was also pleasant and not difficult at all. In NYC I went shopping with Mother one day--took the children to the Bronx Zoo another day--and practically had to pry them out of the place, they loved it so--and went to visit some friends for the day in Armonk--We also went to the theatre and did some night clubbing afterwards--So you see our days were full and lively.

Life by now has settled back to a comfortable routine. We arrived here at 6:30 a.m. on a Sunday, got to the house and found it empty and well locked. All the doors to which we had keys were bolted from the inside. Jim had to break into the house so that we could get in. Jim took the two older children in a cab to see if we couldn't find something to eat or drink--(there was no drinking water in the house) while I cleaned out the refrigerator and made some beds--and in the midst of all this activity, Edith walks in--(remember I said I would not have her back because of her temper?)--Well, she looked so nice and clean and cool and had such a nice smile and jumped right into her uniform and went to work--Well, here she is to stay! She has been as good as gold--She left our tenants because she could not "stand THAT woman" and then just hung around watching to see that "That Woman" did not make off with any of our stuff--It must have been quite a sight, Edith sneaking by at night to see if all was well--Anyway, Jim maintains that such loyalty can be trained and that perhaps, we can "make a Christian" out of her, yet.

Our nurse-girl never came back, which saved me the trouble of getting rid of her since I wanted someone who speaks Spanish only so that the children will learn it. We have finally found one who pleases both Edith and myself--Edith has to have someone who is not too light in color--since I have made Edith the "boss" and color plays an important role that must be taken into consideration for the peace in the house. Bobby now no longer screams when Alicia takes him, and the other children think it's a great game to try to figure out what Alicia is saying. So all is calm here.

Our weekends are full now since we are entertaining the local Textron executives--from Ponce and Humacao. Jim has rented a small apartment in San Juan for three months and we invite the executives and children in groups of about six to spend the weekend in San Juan and swim, dine and dance at the Caribe-Hilton. This is important because in those small P.R. towns there is none of that in the American style and homesickness is bad. These weekends are good morale builders.

I am really a dark color now--can now pass as a P.R. in color anyhow, provided I keep my mouth shut. The Spanish teacher I had located is in the States until November, so I am back at the records and this time I am really gaining ground--perhaps because I insist Edith speak Spanish to me and because I am forced to with Alicia.

The mill in Ponce is doing exceptionally well and the plant in Humacao is almost completed. Jim is very pleased with the new superintendent in Humacao.

Karen's kindergarten teacher wants to go painting with me, so I'm all set.

Mother, the rug is just perfect in here--~~At~~ the moment it is just draped over the railing--~~Just~~ got your letter re the sandbag idea to hold the rug down and think it is very good...Oma's sunflower picture is framed and hanging in the living room--it really makes the room--what a difference the right picture makes. The room looks larger and sunnier and everyone comments on the picture.. I had the other pictures framed and will get them up in the hallway as soon as I have some holes drilled--this weekend, I hope. The coffee table has turned Lucia green with envy--it really is lovely--that is also in the hallway--I put some ferns in that Turkish flower-hanger-thing and hung it in the corner between the windows in the living room; the other one you gave me last winter is hanging between the windows in the dining room...they look very nice and, best of all, a little unusual. The venetian vases and "pot" fit very nicely on the buffet in the dining room. The demi-tasse cups and saucers did not break so that now I have enough.

Before I forget it, I owe you \$5.34 for the Desitin--I meant to leave the money and forgot in the last minute. Did you send the film off? I left some money on the hall table for that. Thank you for having me and all the children over night on the way here. I sincerely hope Alice has recuperated from her "ordeal". I really think she did a wonderful job taking care of us and I gave her some extra money to buy some toys for her "children" (are they grandchildren or what?). The children are still talking about her so apparently she made quite a hit with them..they thoroughly enjoyed their stay at Mt. Vernon and definitely want to return--they also want to know when you are coming down to see them--~~When~~ I mention you, Karen jumps up and down and claps her hands and wants to see you; and Jimmy, who is not the jumping type, just

says he'll catch a fish for you if you come down and you can even ride his bike provided you come (and THAT is a big concession since no one can touch his precious bike)..So you have apparently passed the test of being a much loved and wanted grandmother and also, a mother--Thanks for everything.

Love,

Hertha

In the summer of 1950, Tah and her good friend, Sally Drew, rented a large beach house in Goose Rocks near Biddeford, Maine. The five Drew children ranged in ages from 12 (Renny) to 3 (Joey) while the three Flack children ranged from 6 to 2 years. Two "nurse-girls" came with this group: Trudi, a German exchange student living with the Drews-age 18, and Barbara, a high school junior from Westford. They divided up the 8 children between them and spent their evenings and free days happily together.

The Drew contingent wanted a summer on the beach away from their fruit farm in Westford and the Flacks needed a cool climate and uncomplicated living. The Flack children all had a bad case of boils from the constant perspiration in the Puerto Rican climate and unaccustomed germs--these cleared up within two weeks of the cool Maine air.

Jim Flack came every 2 weeks for 2 days to stay with his family-- Ben Drew came every weekend. The 2 men had to learn to contend with wet, sandy beds, courtesy of each of their youngest sons who would crawl into their Daddy's bed at night with sandy feet. The excitement of having Dad there would usually be too much and result in a bed-wetting accident of both youngsters--well-loved Dads must bear the consequences!

Tah and Sally went bicycling, clamming, drawing and generally recuperating after the household chores for 8 children. There was the erratic stove that worked sometime and always was a challenge; as was the daily laundry for 12 people--all hands helping with the fun--the row boat, the swimming, the visiting--it was a wonderful summer.

September, 1950

99

Sally, I have been knocking myself silly trying to think of some nice, unusual way to thank you for the wonderful summer we all had with you. It really was wonderful.

- ...remember the bicycle tour we took which ended up being a gift shop tour?
- ...the boy's bike without adequate brakes?
- ..."attempts" at "art"--especially the masterpieces we made of Ben?
- ...how I got stuck with being able to make only one kind of sky?
- ...your trip to the "mountain" climaxed with a thunderstorm and your wet bedraggled homecoming?
- ...speaking of homecomings, how about the time you took the older children on a picnic to the island and came home at 9 o'clock to be greeted by a bevy of irate parents?
- ...the clambake of Fortunes Rock?
- ...the party where we, for all intents and purposes, didn't know a soul?
- ...the trip to see Sandy and our one and only sail of summer?
- ...The time we bunked 18 people in that amazing house, and still had one sofa to spare?
- ...the bustle of activity in the house in the morning--of children doing their chores, or balking (luckily not balking too often)?
- ...then, at about 9:30 the house would belch forth with children from all doors--and perhaps a window, especially if it happened to be laundry day and we were fortunate enough to persuade one of the children to help hang up clothes (with the aid of the \$.25/hr. minimum wage rate?)
- ...how we fought the "battle with the boils" by having a minor soaking skirmish in the kitchen three times a day--how the children loved it and often as not we'd have someone soaking with the others, without a blemish on the skin?
- ...the day Bobby got lost and was located at the end of the beach in the arms of a strange woman who was going from house to house trying to peddle him off but not having the remotest idea to whom he belonged?
- ...how cute Bobby and Joey were together and sometimes how funny?
- ...remember the time we had 9 baby seagulls in the house--how cute they were when the children fed them cracked snails?

- ...how we enjoyed the summer theatre plays and finally got so we almost felt that we knew the actors, having seen them in so many different roles?
- ...the time I headed for Wells and after an hour's drive end up in Biddeford?
- ...the fun the children had at Holly's birthday party at Old Orchard Beach?
- ...the wonderful desserts Trudy made for us at the drop of a hat?
- ...the midnight swims Trudy and Barbara would take, coming into the house like cold, wet happy fishes?
- ...the picnic for the swimming class and how fortunate we were to have asked the life-guards to come since they took complete charge of entertaining the 20 children?
- ...the walk at low tide to Fortunes Rock and the scurry to get back before the tide changed?
- ...the unsuccessful attempts to go clamming, and the time you and I decided to make a meal of mussels and ended up with cold cereal?
- ...and all those lobsters and clams we had during the summer?
- ...the picnics on the island?
- ...remember the stove? I should say "The Stove"--lunch starting to cook at 10 a.m. to get done at noon and biscuits baking one hour--on wash day, the oven being completely null and void?
- ...the every-thing-found-on-the-floor-goes-in-the-kitty-and-costs-you-a-penny-to-get-out idea and how it backfired--at least with me, I put more money in that kitty than all the children combined?
- ...the fun we had in rearranging those tremendous pieces of furniture in the living room, trying to dwarf their size or increase the size of the room?
- ...how patient Ben was in moving that piano back and forth and back and again forth until we all had made up our minds it was best where it was, the first time we moved it?
- ...that wonderful sand dune in our front lawn and the buckets of sand we had to shovel out of the house daily?
- ...how you and I would stare at the waves and try to decide what colors were there?
- ...allowances on Sunday and our attempts to guide the younger ones on wise spending?

- ...how nicely Terry played the piano?
- ...and the fun we all had with Renny's boat--especially how nice he was and how careful he was when taking the babies and the younger crowd out for a little ride?
- ...remember Ben's pajama bottoms turning up as a sail for the boat?
- ...and how about the "plays" the "middle-crowd" produced on the third floor, tickets and all?
- ...how surprised and pleased we were when both Terry and Leslie produced some really nice pictures, and the painted shells they made?
- ...the shell shop Leslie and Jimmy opened for two days--they really enjoyed it while it was open?
- ...the nice sign Renny made for the house and how willing and helpful he was in doing odd jobs such as putting up the can opener, putting the glass, fixing the screens, washing the cars, and screwing in "The Doorknob"?
- ...how much Karen learned from your three girls--mainly going to bed without taking a good 2 hours to get there?

Holly and Leslie were the two cheerful ones, and as for Joey, I think of him every morning at 5:30 when I get awakened by a low siren wail--it echoes much better in an all cement house than in a wooden house. Those two babies had a wonderful time together and I believe Bobby misses Joey.

We have a new Ninera for him who speaks no English, so that by now, the little English he used to speak is well garbled up with baby-talk Spanish. I used to be able to figure out what he meant, but he is picking up words that are not in the first 4 Linguaphone records--so I don't know what they are. Yes, the Spanish teacher is in the States so I am back at the Linguaphone records and this time I am getting a great deal out of them--I believe more than out of private lessons. I have set aside from 9 until 10 every morning when I lock myself in my room and have my lesson--but my goodness, it's 9:45 now--I must close and get to my lesson.

How is Trudy making out? Please thank her for sending the doll dress. By now she must be speaking English like a native. How is the adjustment to school? Give her my best.

The children are back in the routine of being real fishes--they start into the water at about 3 p.m. and don't emerge until supper--even Bobby with the Life Jacket--the water is like a luke warm bath so it doesn't hurt them. I must do my lesson.

Love and thanks,

Tah

Nov. 2, 1950

Dear People--

Well, I never thought that I would be in a "revolution" but here we are in P.R. and things are popping around here somewhat. We are in no immediate danger--no continental has been hurt, attacked or even threatened; whereas in the last revolt in 1938 the slogan was "Down with Americanos and the carpetbaggers from the States. Apparently, that slogan has been completely forgotten this time. As far as we can make out, this is what has happened: (The Nacionalista is a non-registered minority party--fanatics to the extreme--who want P.R. to be independent from the States.)

1. Saturday, 112 prisoners escaped from prison--the prison break was sponsored by Nacionalista--in order to concentrate all attention and police in that area;
2. Jayuya, a town at the other end of the island, was stormed and captured by the Nacionalista early Sunday--the complete police force shot and firemen shot as they tried to put out the fire of the burning houses;
3. Sunday night outbreaks, riots and shooting in Ponce and numerous other towns;
4. Monday noon an attempt of a small group of these fanatics stormed Fortaleza, the Governor's Palace--machine-gunning etc. postoffices and other government buildings--the National Guard was called out to reinforce the police; the schools closed. Jayuya was bombed by the Government and taken back--also Jimmy gets the measles!
5. Tuesday, the leader, Albizu Campos is firmly entrenched in his house with a group of his followers and machine-guns anyone who approaches him--
The government wants to capture him alive; otherwise he will become a martyr.

They have the house surrounded; the electricity was cut off as well as the water and food; so eventually he will be starved out. Although the house is about 15 blocks away, unless you have an awfully good imagination, you cannot hear the shooting. Although, the sirens are clearly heard. When they stormed Fortaleza, even I knew something was wrong; and I was upstairs with Jimmy and his measles. Beatrice was downtown shopping, about two blocks from Fortaleza, and people shouted that it was not safe on the streets. She ducked into a store and they locked the door and pulled a table up and barricaded the door when the shooting began--not there--but two blocks away. She said that people dashed up to the door and tried to get in; but they didn't know whether they were friends or foes and wouldn't let them in. Shortly thereafter they were shooting at the post-office.

The whole idea behind it, as far as we can make out, is to terrorize the island and keep the people from registering for voting on the next Saturday. (They are to vote on a constitution.) There are only 500 or 600 Nacionalista, as far as they know. You wouldn't think such a handful of people could raise such havoc.

This is not anything of major importance in P.R. today. What made Jim and me think you would be hearing about this and worrying is the fact that one of the two men who tried to get President Truman was a Nacionalista from P.R. We expect Saturday to be a rough day (registration day) and then it will be all over. The whole thing is a very bad mistake because now P.R. will be classed with the South American countries that keep having revolutions. I repeat--we are in no danger. They are saving their bombs and machine guns for the government officials. However it is a safe idea to keep pretty much out of the way, out of crowds and off the streets unless necessary--to avoid stray bullets. At least that is what the radio says.

Of course there is no lack of talk. Bill Gonzales poo-poo~~s~~ the thing and says it will blow over any minute. And my P.R. neighbor practically has hysterics when I show myself on the porch, because I am an "Americano" and she is convinced someone will take a pot-shot at me! Tommy-rot--why waste a bullet on us?

After the leader has been captured, and registration day is over, all will be calm again. Schools will go on next week and we can go swimming instead of roasting in the heat--because it is hot now. The heat is due to break very soon though, about the middle of November.

Three weeks ago we were "Very Fancy"--went to a party given by the Governor at Fortaleza in honor of Secretary of Commerce Sawyer--even had our pictures in the paper--me digging into the food and Jim peering over my shoulder. Golly, I always look like a witch in pictures, but thank goodness Jim usually looks presentable. 'Tisn't fair!

Up until this last week we have been swimming daily--Karen swims the length of the pool and goes off the diving board head first, until she makes an awful belly-flop, and then she jumps off feet first the next few times until she gets her courage up again.

Jimmy planned his measles very well--the week of the revolution when there is no school. He has them now so that he is losing no time by being ill. And, also since we have to stay home, we might as well stay home for two reasons as well as one.

Love,

Tah

I fired Edith about a month ago--she sassed me once too often. I now have a wonderful girl who speaks no English but we get along beautifully and she is so kind to the children and they love her--~~Why~~ I did not make the change sooner, I don't know--~~the~~ nurse-girl left as soon as the shooting and the measles started, but I have "something wonderful" promised to me on Saturday--~~she's~~ loaded with references, something rather rare down here.

Jim has decided not to ask the National Guard to guard the plant because that would just invite trouble..and I believe he is right, as usual.

Mother, please read this letter to Greta and tell her all will be calm by the time she comes down here. We are looking forward very much toward her visit..and all danger of the measles will be over as well. I have not gone to a drug store this week because of the excitement but will have the Similac delivered tomorrow; so it won't be any trouble at all. I haven't heard from you in a long time--~~is~~ everything ok? Did you get my last letter written by hand? How did the flower look--did they come every week?

Love,

Hertha

December 28, 1950

Dear Mother and Ernst:

We had a wonderful Xmas, but we missed you so much, especially on Xmas Eve. I thought of you and your lovely tree, lights, music, and presents. I certainly hope that it won't be too many years hence when we can all have Xmas together again--but it will also be quite different then--with four children and six grown-ups.

The children decorated the tree almost alone this year. I just supervised and did the "high-spots". It was a lot of fun. It's a source of continuous joy to see how intelligent and sensible Jimmy is getting.

Bobby was overwhelmed with all the cars and trucks. I saved half of them for 3 King's Day (Jan. 6) which is celebrated here more than Xmas. He loves them. I think the electric train for Jimmy arrived today. Jim will not be here until Saturday so I am postponing opening the package until he comes, since I am sure it will have to be set up immediately and I am sure I cannot do it. Jimmy is all so excited about his new train and reacted very sensibly when I told him it was delayed and read him your letter.

Karen loves the doll--has been combing and brushing and curling her hair ever since she received "Susie." She takes her with her wherever she goes. I had bought her a new outfit for her birthday doll (which is larger but has no real hair)--however the old doll is put in the corner and Susie wears all the new clothes, despite the fact that the clothes are too large. She received a doll buggy for Xmas, and Susie and the cat are always being taken for a walk. She immediately wore one of lovely dresses. The personalized pencils made a big hit, especially since they both go to school now.

Of course, your big present, the set of silver, was wonderful! Many thanks. You know how much I needed that! Vogue and Harvard Business Review are fully appreciated. Especially now that I have found a good dress-maker. I really pour over Vogue and Jim appreciated the HBR very much. The nylon blouse is what I needed for my black silk shantung suit.

We took the two children over to Ponce for a day and a night. We had to attend a cocktail party and a pig-roast. Had a fine time. Many thanks for your very generous Xmas. I will send you a 5 X 7 picture of the children.

Jim and Tah

Sat. Jan. 6th, 1951

Three Kings' Day

This is the biggest holiday here in P.R.--much more important than Xmas--even our children put boxes of grass under their beds last night for the camels of the 3 Kings to eat in hopes the 3 Kings would leave some presents."3 Kings" emptied the grass while they slept and put presents in the boxes. Our kids were delighted.

This is a very short note since the really steady, big influx of visiting firemen just started. The Company lawyer's wife arrived yesterday for a week. Monday, Royal Little and daughter are arriving. In two weeks the Textron Treasurer will be here and so ad inf.

I gave a very small dinner last night to try out Delia, the cook. She does very nicely, excepting the serving and the table-setting. I will have to train her. It looks as though she might stay long enough for me to train. I must get an etiquette book and look up the rules and do it really right, if I am going to the trouble of training her (all in Spanish, of course.)

The Disney books came very spasmodically to 67 Washington Street last year--I hope you changed the address. Jimmy loved them when they came--it really is a wonderful present! I ordered "Little Lulu" for Karen's birthday present and have not received a single copy yet--and that was in October. Can't figure what went wrong.

We are signing a lease for a house three doors down from here--starting end of February or 1st of March. It is a much smaller house with only three bedrooms, kitchen, living and dining room, and all rooms are very small. We will be cramped but it is the best we could find after a two-and-one-half month intensive search. If you can come before then, while we still have a guest room, it will be easier on you. We do not plan to go to the States this summer. The few cool months do not counter-balance the terrific expense (about \$2,000) and long separation from Jim. At least, we will try it here this summer.

Love,

Tah

March 5, 1951

Hi, everyone!

It's been ages since I have written you--we have indirect reports that the February weather in your parts was a bit rough--but it must be wonderful for skiing, etc.--sometimes I get a real yen to try my tried-and-proved-snowplow again--at least before I'm too old to slide down the hill on my rear--but the weather here is just ideal--really--it's just warm enough to go swimming and play a good game of tennis and ~~not~~ yet hot--and I mean the "not yet". I expect it to stay like this until end of April and then we start roasting..but now, I just cannot imagine a more perfect climate--no rain, sunshine every day with a breeze from the Trade Winds--the ocean is green in the winter with large beautiful breakers and white caps--I could watch that lovely motion for hours--in the summer it is a clear dark blue with less motion.

The last two months have been terrifically busy--with state-side visistors--and how I love it. I just adore taking people around and showing them things--probably because I have learned to love the natural beauty here--it is nothing overwhelming or awe-inspiring like the Alps--its just comfortably beautiful and a bit exotic--the mountains still surprise me everytime I see them. How on earth can such a little island have four separate and distinct characteristics?--cosmopolitan San Juan and yet in the very heart of the city you find the old walls, the old castle, the narrow blue-cobblestone streets and the naked children, the little mountains which seem so high and green and steep and cool one you are in them--and out of the flat coast line lined with palm trees and sand--the northern end of the island being so different from the southern end--more lush in vegetation, more streams, the earth seems better--the southern end has the street lined with flamboyans--the ground is dry, the fields are irrigated and there is where the sugar grows, the whole scene seems much more tropical and native and exotic and hotter--the western end again is quite different from either the mountains in the north or the south--and all this on one tiny island--it's amazing.

Our movies of Monkey Isle did not turn out as well as we had hoped. The shots of us "descending" or swinging down onto the sailboat are good and the individual shots of the monkeys are good, but the one where we walk up the trail and are surrounded by dozens of monkeys in the palm trees and grass is blurred and it looks as tho the grass were moving a lot--unless you know that that movement is lots of monkeys, you'd never know. The shots that Jim took of Mr. Little and me doing water "acrobatics" with flippers and goggles in St. Johns turned out quite well, excepting I think he missed the best one, e.g., when we realized that a barracuda was 6 yards away, licking his chops and watching our "stunts"--climbing out of the water in a dead heat with flippers on and falling all over ourselves in the process, would really have been good.

Miggs and Peter and little Craig came before Xmas and spent 10 days here--Mother and Ernst came end of January and spent a week and we enjoyed their visit so much--for the past six weeks we have had a steady stream of Textron people down here--Jim works with the men, I take over the sightseeing and plane meeting and seeing off department and we both take over "Wining and Dancing Department".

I have found a wonderful dressmaker who makes cotton dresses for \$3.50; so I am having a wonderful time designing my own clothes.

The children like the school now and are picking up Spanish--Bobby knows more Spanish than English--at least the maids know what he is saying and he knows what they say--I'm often left in the dark.

We are seriously contemplating getting an air conditioning unit for our bedroom--that is, I am--Jim is yet to be convinced that a house-full of big fans won't do the trick.

March 16, 1951

We had an influx of visiting firemen since I started this Letter and we are leaving for the Virgin Isles in an hour--six Textron people for the weekend--this has been very busy and fun for me, but work for Jim--we are in hopes that this will prove to be a relaxing weekend.

Jim & Tah

1112 Piccioni Calle
Santurce, P.R.
October 20, 1951

Dear Mother:

Much has happened and quite frankly I just did not realize that I had not written for so long. Textron is going to build a mill in Meridian, Mississippi. Jim has been there five weeks out of the last six (and will come here in three weeks for a week) getting the bond issue voted upon--now planning the mill and getting supplies, etc--and then start building in January. These next three weeks he will be in Monroe County to see if he can get another bond issue to build another mill there also.

Last week I was in Meridian with him looking for a house--then a lot and an architect, and getting to know people and the town. I think we will enjoy living there. It is a very friendly town--not typically southern--it could be anywhere in the U.S. as far as architecture is concerned. But the Southern accent is quite thick--and the people are open-warm-hearted. I believe it will be the easiest move we've had as far as adjustment is concerned. I shall miss P.R.--the ocean and palm trees etc., but living in the States has great advantages, which one does not appreciate until one is away--such as ease in getting things repaired--and so it is 6 of one and $\frac{1}{2}$ dozen of another.

We were unable to find a house large enough for our family; so we are going to build. We found a lovely lot in the best section of town and a very good architect. The house will be a one-story ranch-type. The children's quarters consist of 3 bedrooms and bath (2 small and one large room, with an accordion-wall so that it can be divided completely into two). We will have a large master bedroom, to contain two easy chairs and a small table for just chatting--and a bath. There will be a living-dining room with a folding French door or a partition and a den and bathroom--to be used for a workroom and guest room--a fireplace, of course. The kitchen will also contain a laundry etc. etc.

I forget whether you know that Bobby is also going to school now--from 8:30 to 12:00 nursery school. He loves it! The baby will be born in February--towards the end. I have two wonderful servants and a nice house here. So that when I move to Mississippi, the new house will be completed and all ready to move in. The move and the waiting period in P.R. will be easy and pleasant. I won't have all the fuss and worry of watching the house being built. Jim can do that. The schooling in Meridian is excellent. They go to school from 8 to 3 and have lunch at the school cafeteria.

111

Naturally, we are all hoping for a girl--Karen in particular. Jim, the diplomat, says it doesn't matter. We always wanted four and he doesn't care if there are one or two girls. Jimmy tends to side up for a boy; he wants four boys and only two girls in the family. Bobby hasn't said--but I want a girl. I have an excellent doctor; have my room at the hospital; have already made arrangements to have my tubes cut and am working on an American birth certificate instead of one in Spanish.

So now our family will be complete; although I wonder whether four years between the two youngest ones is not too big a span. But so it goes. I am in perfect health; the doctor was amazed at my age! We searched long and hard--the doctor, the lab, and I--to find something wrong. But I am not even anemic! Just getting big!

We go swimming every day in the afternoon. It's still quite warm and we sleep with fans on. The kids are at the pool now and I must join them.

Love,

Tah

Nov. 13, 1951

Dear Mother:

Will write you more about the new house later--just a short note now--to tell you we had quite a scare with Karen. Last week she had pneumonia with super-imposed asthma! Had to go to the hospital; had intravenous feedings--and oxygen was kept at her bedside!

Naturally these things always happen when Jim is in the States. She's home now and has to stay in bed for a while. She had the "works" including x-rays, four doctors, etc. She is still running a very slight temperature at night. Tomorrow she will be flouroscooped again, but she is definitely much better--in fact she is too active and I have to give her luminal to keep her from bouncing around in bed too much.

All danger is definitely passed--no need to worry. She was very good about those intravenous feedings (they take three hours)--fairly good about penicillin and other injections. But by now she is terribly spoiled, being used to constant attention for over a week. Although, she has learned to take medications like a lamb.

With all this excitement, I did not get Greta's birthday present off in time. I was spending 8-10 hours a day in the hospital. Well, I sent it off today with my love and apologies for being late. Please explain to Greta. I did not call you or Jim since there was nothing you or he could do at the time--she was in capable hands.

Jim is here now but leaving again tomorrow for Mississippi.

So, all is well now.

Love,

Tah

Friday, Dec. 21, 1951

Dear Mother:

Jim is expected tonight at 11 PM--However it is not too unusual that a cable arrives two hours before expected time of arrival announcing that he will be a day or two late. Therefore, I am writing you now what I know of our plans. But you have seen him more recently than I; and I know not of any plans, if any, you and he have made. I have, however, made reservations for the six of us on flight 216 A leaving San Juan Jan. 1st at 1 PM. In Jim's last letter he said something about taking the midnight train out of Grand Central to Lowell.

Where and how my fur coat comes in on this I don't know--all I know is that I have only a light gabardine fitted(!) raincoat here; and from the reports on the weather in NYC I shall freeze in that. I do hope that you and Jim made some sort of arrangements for me to get my coat before I turn into an icicle in my cotton maternity dress and raincoat!

The children put up the tree a few days ago--it is very difficult for me to get into the Xmas mood--with the cruise boxes sitting around in the house and half-packed--trying to rent the house and selling odds and ends. At the moment I am struggling to get packers to come on December 31st for my good dishes, those Venetian vases you gave me, the Turkish table, etc. So far, no success, but I will hammer away at it.

I have been unable to throw off my cold and am now blessed with asthma. However, Dr. Salazar has given me isuprel with an atomizer, which relieves very nicely. Has Greta tried that yet?

We are having wonderful weather here now, and I hate not going in swimming; but I dare not with this chest cold. The children go though.

Jimmy is looking forward to skiing on his skis that we stored in Westford. It will be nice to see you and all our friends. I have slowed down to a "tropical tempo". I wonder if I can get up to a normal tempo again! At the moment I am sitting around waiting for a delivery which was promised at 9 AM--it is now 11 AM. I am too late to do my last minute shopping and it hasn't arrived yet!

We shall think of you Xmas eve. It would have been nice to see you then--for us--but I doubt that you would have survived the six of us (Delia included). You are used to calm, peaceful and leisurely opening of presents. My three kids are so excited there is nothing calm, peaceful, or leisurely about our present-opening. It is with whoops of joy and loud, happy exclamations--Jimmy has gotten so sensible--but the other two are not yet. He is ready, willing and able to take turns in opening, but the other two are not up to keeping quiet and patient!

Love,
Tah

No Place Like Home

Bobito at age 2-1/2 years, wandered away from our home on Piccioni Street in Santurce, Puerto Rico. After about ten blocks of walking on the sidewalk, he sat down and started crying. He had wound up in front of the very last building he wanted to see-- The Presbyterian Hospital! That's where he had recently been pierced with a dull needle to inject a typhoid shot.

A neighbor recognized him and rescued him from the awful predicament he had wandered into. The neighbor delivered a humble child back to where he belonged--home.