



Laura Jane Musser and
Family Papers.

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MYT

Dear Laura,

Mother told me today that she had heard that you had returned to New York ill with measles! I hasten to write you just this note to tell you how sincerely sorry I am, and to wish you a very speedy recovery. Such illnesses can be very disturbing, especially when one is past the age of childhood. Last winter I

caught myself a wonderful dose of chicken pot, so I can sympathize with you fully!

This evening I walked around a few holes of the golf course with Mather. In the forest of hole number five we saw some sweet little crocuses; indeed, they were so irresistibly lovely that I picked three to draw. Below is the result; not very good, but perhaps good enough to stimulate your imagination to a memory of spring in Minnesota!



Very best wishes to
you, Laura, and do write
when you feel able. I am
missing your letters!

Sincerely,
Maxine T.

Little Falls, Minnesota
April 24, 1941

[April 24, 1941]



Miss Laura Jane Musser
605 West 115th Street
The Parnassus Club
New York, New York

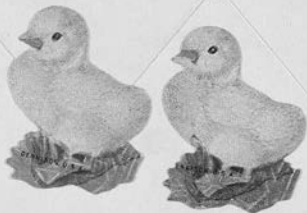
501 Third Street So est
Little Falls, Minn sta

Maxine
Taylor



Miss Laura Jane Musser
605 West 115th Street
The Parnassus Club
New York, New York

501 Third Street Southwest
Little Falls, Minnesota



Happy
Easter





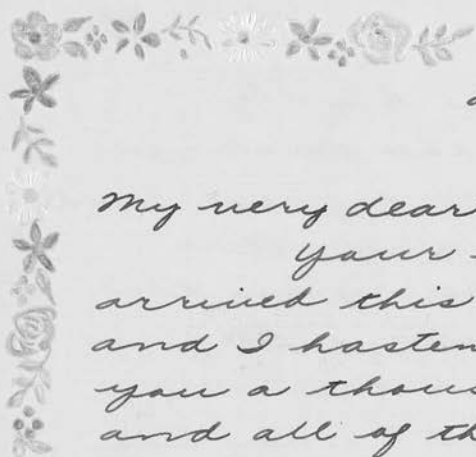
*It's just a tiny little card.
But still it can express
A lot of special wishes
For your Easter happiness.*

*Hi! Laura — did I fool you??
I wanted to make your mail
look more interesting by a
change of scene! All in fun
and much love. Maxine Taylor*



Miss Laura Jane Musser
605 West 115th Street
The Parnassus Club
New York, New York

501 Third Street S.
Little Falls, Minn



Little Falls, Minn.

May 12, 1941

My very dear Laura,

Your beautiful book arrived this morning, and I hasten to thank you a thousand times and all of them from the bottom of my heart for such a glorious gift! I have not yet begun the reading - indeed, I have not yet had time - but I have studied the photographs and the general format of the work, and anticipate a most delicious reading experience. Mother also is most anxious to absorb this "portrait", for we heard Miss Anderson sing in San Francisco and ever since then have been sincere admirers. Thank you so very much, Laura.

I have also enjoyed studying the book lists

which you so kindly enclosed in the package.

I love good and great books more than any other material luxury in the world, I think, and just hearing about them is a great treat for me. Now I should like to add some of those advertised selections to my small but precious library! - Art books particularly, some of which are selling at great reductions now.

At Mills I had the great joy of taking a very inspired art course on Italian art of the high Renaissance. Although my knowledge of art is more nearly non-existent than even meagre, I am passionately fond, and I think somewhat intuitively comprehensive of it all the same. I love to see the Carreggio which hangs above the fireplace in your home, Laura!

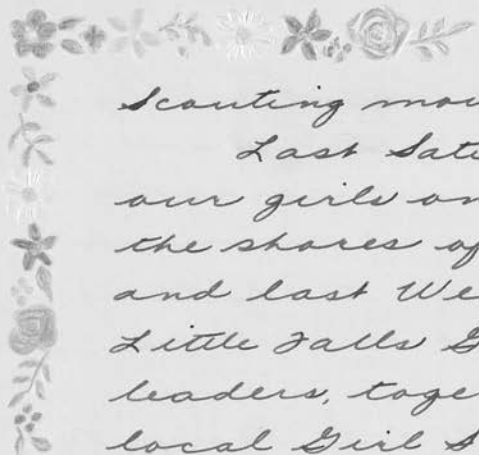
Again - I'm so sorry that those silly measles disturbed you at the time of your Easter trip!! Naturally such a pest would curtail ones pleasure on such an occasion. But you must nevertheless have derived much pleasure from the journey, for your description of the Huntington gardens was indeed vivid and most particularly enjoyable to me since I have been far so long so confined.

Needless to say, I was most interested in hearing all the details of the Marion Anderson concerts. How glorious to have those quite intimate interchanges with such an artist! And to have her sing ones requested encores! It was so lovely that Joann could share such an experience

with you, I think. She must have been deeply grateful!

Spring in Little Falls is by this time lovelier than ever, Laura. Our garden is a very great joy to me with all its fragrance and color. This time of year always makes me feel very immense; as if our world is too confining for a joyous spirit; as if I must somehow escape into something much greater for very ecstasy.

I am serving now as an assistant leader in a Girl Scout troop, and I am exceedingly happy in this new work. Our girls are twelve in number and come from the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades of the Washington School. They are very enthusiastic and spirited, and their association benefits me much. I greatly believe in the worth of the



Scouting movement.

Last Saturday we took our girls on a hike along the shores of the Mississippi; and last Wednesday all the Little Falls Girl Scout leaders, together with the local Girl Scout council, had a picnic at Lindbergh's Park. As it happened, the day of the picnic was cold and rainy, and we were therefore obliged, for comfort's sake, to find refuge in the log cabin shelter which now adorns the park. In the fireplace we built a big, cozy fire, and then proceeded to spend a most enjoyable evening with some very good food and Girl Scout chatter. I love log cabins and grate fires!

Last Thursday evening Dad and I saw, in Minneapolis, "Fantasia".

I think you must surely have already seen it in New York, and perhaps you enjoyed it as much as I did. I do truly think it is a most remarkable production.

I should like to write you more, Laura, but really I have quite run out of news! My life is still not sufficiently active to generate much material fit for correspondence.

Perhaps you would enjoy a queer little spring poem taken from a song by Luor Nouello. A friend of mine at Oberlin with a lovely contralto voice sings this charmingly; I had the great pleasure of accompanying her during the few weeks of last fall that I was in Oberlin. And so the poem and then goodbye to you, Laura, until another letter. —

A Page's Road Song

Jesu,
If Thou wilt make
Thy peach trees bloom for me,
And fringe my bridge path
Both sides
With tulips red and free;
If Thou wilt make Thy sky
as blue
as ours in Sicily;
and wake the little leaves
That sleep
On every bending tree,
I promise not to vexen Thee —
That Thou shouldst make
Eternally, Heaven my home.
But right contentedly
a singing page I'll be
Here in Thy springtime,
Jesu.

— W. A. Percy

Much love from Maxine



Miss Laura Jane Musser
605 West 115th Street
Barnassus Club
New York, New York

501 Third Street Southwest
Little Falls, Minnesota

ME

Little Falls, Minnesota
March 13, 1941

My dear Laura,

Thanks much for your interesting letter about the operas and plays which it is your tremendous privilege to attend! How I would like to be the feather in your hat, button on your coat, or what have you, on such occasions! And will I be glad to have the present bunch of restrictions retracted so that I can see and hear some great things again!!!!

Since that much fun evening when we saw "The Philadelphia Story", I have seen some other very entertaining movies such as "Santa Fe Trail", "Dr. Kildare's Crisis", "Kitty Foyle" - super! - and others. It's such a treat to be able to see movies again!!

she was so kind as to give me a private command performance of three book reviews which were to be presented for the Drama Club on the next evening. Her selections were "How Green Was My Valley", "For Whom the Bell Tolls", and "A Portrait of Jenny", and her reviews were perfectly delightful. It was so good of her to read them just for my (very great) enjoyment!!!

I am enclosing a clipping of a unique concert given in the Minnesota Union of the University of Minnesota last Monday afternoon. If you have not already heard about the occasion, probably it would amuse and interest you (as it does me). The concert was presented by the Boogie Woogie Club of the University, a club which was founded last fall in

This evening Mother and I have been invited to a dinner and bridge party by Mrs. Burton, and can you imagine how I am simply popping with expectation ???!! But was is me! I was also invited to a bridge party by Mrs. Luedke for this afternoon, and Mother didn't think I should attend parties in both the afternoon and evening (too strenuous - gr grrrxxx!!), so I was obliged to decline Mrs. Luedke. Oh why oh why does ones social life have to pile up in such a way ?? Perhaps you don't know Mrs. Luedke, for she is quite new to Little Falls. Mr. Luedke was formerly a banker in South Dakota. Mrs. Luedke is very charming, and is a most excellent bridge player. You would love her!! She is witty and intelligent and very well read. A few weeks ago

the following manner:
(this information from a recent radio interview of the founders of the club which I heard). One Mr. Sid Smith one day strolled into the Minnesota Union and there beheld a short, stocky fellow "playing the piano like mad". Sid listened, fascinated, then ventured conversation with the pianist. While the students were thus airing their views on sewing, the care-taker of the Union interposed with the very definite information that the piano of the main room of the Union could not be mutilated by such music, but that, if the boys wished to organize, they should secure the cooperation of other students interested in sewing, form a club, have the club officially chartered by the University, whereupon the organization would be assigned a private room in the Union



which would be furnished with a piano. This procedure was followed, with the result that today there is a very active group of about fifty students, and an additional 50 students who are "members in good standing". They play their jive regularly, and the proud presentation of Monday afternoon was the group's first concert.

The club's masterpiece, "Beat Me, Dimitri", had its origin thus: One of the club's members strolled down the foyer of Northrup Auditorium one afternoon while the Minneapolis Symphony, conducted as you know by Dimitri Mitropoulos, was in rehearsal. This lad caught a phrase of the symphonic music which struck him

in such a very lovely way!-
Such kindness is not at
all necessary, you know,
but that very fact makes
it all the lovelier and
more appreciated!!

I too enjoyed your
last evening of the vacation
so very much. It was so
thrilling for me to have
dinner out!- and I have
not forgotten the lovely
organ music and food
before a blazing fire and
beneath a Correggio
masterpiece! How very
fortunate we are in our
American way of life,
n'est-ce pas, Laura??

This letter is dreadfully
long- I hope I haven't
wearied you with all this
chatter! Please write
again if you can find
time; it is a great pleasure
for me to hear from you.

Meantime, best wishes
and much love to you, Laura,
Sincerely,

Maxine Taylor

immediately as adaptable to
swing. So the phrase was
elaborated in the swing
idiom past all recognition,
provided lyrics, and titled
"Beat Me Dimitri"!!!

The club has already
received some quite national
recognition- a recent
issue of Time contained a
notice which Mickey
Rooney read and thence
telegraphed the club his
congratulations and best
wishes for further
success; and the Arthur-
Murry school of ballroom
dancing has cooked up a
dance to augment "Beat Me
Dimitri". Isn't it a crazily
delightful novelty? I
would love to hear the
Boogie Woogie band play -
wouldn't you, just for
fun?

How grateful I am,
Laura, for the book on
Marion Anderson which
you say you have ordered.
It has not yet arrived,
but I know it will be
a true pleasure when it
does. You are so kind and
generous to remember me



Miss Laura Jane Musser
Little Falls, Minnesota

M Y T

Dear Laura,

Thank you so very
much for the sweet,
luscious perfume!
It is a real luxury
for me, and
luxuries are such
fun!

We have had a
delightful Christmas,

as I am sure you
have had too. And I
hope your New Year
will be filled with
happiness, Laura!

I'm looking
forward to a chat with
you, and perhaps a
game of bridge during
the vacation! It's
been a long time
since we have
played together! We'll
call you soon, Laura!

again thank you
so very much for the
sweet Christmas gift.
Laura dear.

Sincerely,
Maxine Taylor

Little Falls, Minn.
December 26, 1941



Dear Laura.

We wish very much to give you a little birthday remembrance, but unfortunately the gift we have ordered has not yet arrived. So you won't mind waiting - please? We will bring it over as soon as it does

1941

arrive, and hope very much that its delay won't disappoint you too much.

Thank you again so much for the most lovely party of last evening. I can't tell you how much I enjoyed and appreciated every thing about it!

Much love from
Marjorie Taylor

Little Falls, Minnesota

June 5, 1941

[June 5, 1941]





Miss Laura Jane Musser
605 West 115th Street
The Parnassus Club
New York, New York

MAXINE Y. TAYLOR
LITTLE FALLS, MINNESOTA

[1941]

MYT

Little Falls, Minn.
April 3, 1941

My dear Laura,

Mother and I have just returned from a union Lenten service at our Church. There was a guest speaker from Minneapolis who spoke on three interpretations of Life and Death: those of Nero, Seneca, and St. Paul. The interpretations were interesting and, I think, quite exact, but the address was presented too dramatically to suit me! I love and believe in this philosophy of Bulwer-Lytton: "Hark the world so loud, and they, the movers of the world, so still."

Returning from Church, it was necessary for us to stop briefly at La Fond's Buick garage for a minor repair. Mr. La Fond, after doctoring up our buggy, whispered in an almost reverent voice, "Would you like to see something beautiful?" He of course assented, and thence were led to the back of the garage where rests in glory a "beautiful baby" - new Buick! It is your new car, Laura, which, Mr. La Fond said, will start off this Saturday for the East! It was like seeing a proud mother's first-born asleep in its satin crib to have Mr. La Fond lovingly show us all the new and wonderful devices of the creation! And Laura, you have a most wonderful new car awaiting you!

Seeing it acutely

reminded me that you have been neglected - and that I must tend to you immediately if I am to remain in your grace and also reach you before your vacation trip! Hence this —.

Again a thousand thanks for the Marion Anderson book, and I should indeed be perfectly delighted and thrilled if it were autographed! But will having that blessed signature affixed cause you undo trouble and concern? I should of course not wish you to go much out of your way just specially to please me! As you see fit, Laura; — anything will be lovely.

Please tell me about Marion Anderson's New York concert. — All about her singing, and will you really have seen her personally and talked with her? And sent flowers? — What kind(s)? How very thrilling to have had correspondence with her sister! Laura, Laura! you fortunate child!!!

Well, life here goes on same as ever. Spring has come — very lovely with robins and meadowlarks, new sprigs of fresh green grass, bonfire smoke — you know! Last week Mother and I spent several days in Minneapolis — a routine visit to Dr. Myers followed by a bit of shopping. As a result I have a new and very queer chapeau, some white silk blouses, and a summer suit.

Mother entertained Child Interest Club yesterday. Mrs. Brick reviewed Jan Valtin's "Out of the Night" — very grim, as you perhaps know. We have played less bridge lately; I have been

MYT

studying (trigonometry) more, and the two don't mix!

After spending the winter reading some great novels - Hardy, Dostoevsky, Conrad, etc., with spring I have turned to scientific subjects. The change is most refreshing. I have just finished a most interesting and instructive biographical anthology entitled "Makers of Modern Medicine" - and am at present trying to comprehend Darwin's "Origin of Species". I love science; more, I sometimes think, than I do literature and the arts.

Laura, someday I'll draw you a bit of a sketch - if you'd like! Now that it's warmer out, I can sketch out-of-doors. I've thought that maybe you might enjoy a vague pencil resemblance to your gate here in Little Falls - perhaps with a spruce tree peeking through. ???!!!??

I hope you have with your family a simply lovely trip, Laura, and a most refreshing vacation from your work. (The new piano teacher sounds fine! - by the way). I shall be looking forward to the pleasure of hearing from you again!

Yours lovingly,
Maxine

Old maid at a soda fountain:

"Ginger ale, please."

Attendant: "Pale, Madam?"

Old maid: "No!!! xxx! - Glass!!"

ah me.