



Laura Jane Musser and
family papers.

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AIR MAIL



Mrs. R. D. Musser
Linden Hill
Little Falls
Minnesota

from the Berenson Plaza
101 West 58th Street
New York City,
N.Y.

back on the time you've wasted, but
perhaps you've won half the battle
when you realize your mistakes and
are willing to want to try all over again -
Perhaps, these next three years will
make a new person of me so that
I can say life is beginning for me
again -

I'll be at Barbara's on Nov. 26,
and home by Dec. 4 -

Yes I know of Miss Anderson's
marriage and hope she'll be happy. She,
too, realizes the value of an understanding
companionship. All women need their
men, and all men need their women -
Perhaps I'll make somebody proud enough
to want to introduce me to some outstand-
ing young man who will be my future hus-
band - and oh mother & dad, I need him so!
Can you understand? Can you help me find him?
Your loving Laura Jane

I phoned Doubleday Doran's and (Nov. 22, 1942
think you'll get the book. Monday of next week and
darlings, I'm not LAURA JANE MUSGER even too tired to
do things for you -

Mother & Daddy Darling;

Now wonderful it was to
talk to you this morning - I'm
sorry I didn't feel up to my usual
cheerfulness, but life here has been
very hard for me, because I am so
much by myself, and the things
I do, I do mostly by myself. I don't
need friends - it isn't that kind of
loneliness - I have those - but I
need an understanding companionship
with one of my own age or thereabouts -
I haven't met anyone yet who qualifies -
men or women. You see when you &
Daddy go, there'll be no one so I have
really nothing to live for - Being alone

to be just so proud of me! Life is not easy because people are too selfish to want to see, but so long as I have a father & mother who do care, life can be beautiful! Perhaps, it's I who have been blind. I can think of the times I have turned away from those who have really been anxious to help me unselfishly, with little things, and I have been too proud to accept their help. I am thinking of the many opportunities I've had like society with Aunt Maria & her friends, and Aunt Maria & her friends, and I have been stubborn - not that I'm approving society because society itself is a hideous selfish unselfish motive but sometimes you have to fight fire with fire - in other words give people of society a chance to burn the kind of stuff you've made of with out making you heat on your sleeve. It's not pleasant to think

this way makes me brood, and brooding isn't good for one. The Brighams haven't pressed the point of contact. Betty seemed so ashamed of me at the wedding - almost as if I were some awkward goon from the country. My clothes seemed out of place. She looked so stunning and chic. My clothes were out of place, because everyone was partially in formal attire. I've honestly tried to cultivate the habit of drinking cocktails and smoking, but I just can't seem to like it. I know it's my fault - not so much my manners as my appearance. So perhaps the nicest thing you could do for me would be to buy me "sophisticated" dresses for my birthday and Christmas, and privately initiate me into the habits of smoking and drinking or cultivating the so-called graceful arts. You are always a figure in groups, and I am so proud of you all the time. I want you

AIR MAIL
H



Mrs. R. D. Mueser
Linden Hill
Little Falls
Minnesota

Nov. 6, 1943

LAURA JANE MUSSEY

Mother Arling;

Just got your letter yesterday, and I called up Double Day Doran Book Shop for a book on Holland & Queen Wilhelmina & there's a new book out called "Juggernaut Over Holland" by

Please order the book
on Holland at once -
Our 3 day blizzard is on -
Letter just received -

Van Kerssens (?). It tells
about Holland at the time
of the German invasion -
its political situation etc.
Should you like me to
order it for you?

Will you please let
me know im mediately?

With much love,

- Laura Jane -

Phone him this afternoon. Should
4PM!

Love you & Daddy so dearly
and think about you all the time
Don't you please write soon?
Love you -

Nov. 4, 1943

LAURA JANE MESSER

Mother Darling;

Thank you so very much for your
lovely letter. I had written you a long
letter, and wonder if you have received
it by now. As I look forward to your
letters so much, I'm writing this in
hopes you'll answer soon.

Last night was Marian
Anderson's initial appearance at
Carnegie Hall. Tosh Lucy
Mlanowsky with me, and
we both of us enjoyed it very
much. Miss A. looked stunning
in a gown of wine red velvet.
The program was a new one
consisting of several arias from
early Italian operas, and one
from Gounod's "Queen of Sheba".
The remainder was devoted to works
of Brahms, Saint-Saens, Faure,
Beethoven and the Spirituals of course.

In all these numbers she was most en-
thusiastically received - when she
stepped to her leftwards, she could
scarcely wait after you went down you
were warmly done and greetings. In fact
we were so busy talking about you that
I could not see her about her mother, so I
went to her instead (the mother, I mean).
Told Mr. Kopp about Maude & Co. and he
seemed delighted, and plans to see her
when he comes to Mpls. He wants me to

AIR MAIL



Mrs. R. D. Musser
Linden Hill
Little Falls
Minnesota

From The Barbyon Plaza
101 West 58th Street
New York City
#2838

"the whole idea, and gleefully showed me her collection of "tiny garments" - we had a fine dinner at a restaurant on the "U" campus, and they walked with me over to the concert hall - Anne gave a very creditable performance. Her voice showed much improvement from her having studied with Mrs. Lehman all summer. Took Lillian & Patty to the concert (Nelson & Jimmy couldn't go) and we all went back stage to see Anne afterwards. Both girls liked her very much. Anne told me that Maude W. Seaborn had been back to see her which surprised me very much for I hadn't realized she was back in St. Paul. When I reached Lillian's I phoned Maude altho' it was 11 PM and had a fine visit with her. She was much surprised to learn I was in town (Anne had not mentioned my being at her concert). Maude hoped I would be home come

How's this for a long letter???

So much love to you, darling
on your birthday
Oct. 27, 1943
LAURA JANE MUSSER

Mother Darling;

I just received your letter today from Kansas City. You of course did not receive my wire then because I sent it home. (I wasn't sure where to send it). I'm sorry you worried!

Judging from the N.C. letter, you must have had a grand time - or I should say several grand times on your trip. Yes, I missed having you & did get me to the train, but the girls were there in your stead so it wasn't as if I were leaving ALONE. That week at home really wasn't so bad - the ladies were all so dear to me - inviting me to

3 to have lunch with her - which I did - the movies etc. I had a few of them.
I found her rehearsing, and after she finished in to play cards, and Addie Grace, etc.,
she introduced me to her recompanion - and Pearl did their best to help me
Mr. Alapowsky. I found him to be married to forget how lonely I was without you.
to a friend of mine from Weybridge, Surrey. Bert came over the day I left to say
Good-bye. He begged me to phone her when "good-bye", so I really had a comfortable
I reached New York. This I promised to do. feeling that the town was with me -
after lunch, I had to leave to see Helen I left Tuesday evening for Minneapolis.
Butcher & Patty Wuthing. The latter I Lillian wasn't able to meet me so I
was supposed to meet down town typed out to her place to find her
but I was an hour late getting there, but waiting for me. She looked much better
as luck would have it, I ran in to her at and seemed happy altho' alone now
Margo's where I had ordered flowers for that Julie's joined the WAACS - we
Anne (Patty) was to take them home with her visited a little and gushed over all the
& keep them in the frigidaire until the concert letters she's received from her dear
Then, I left for Helen's where I was to Nana "down under". She's so much in
take dinner with her & Jimmy. Helen is love, it's pathetic they have to be
quite sizable but is well. The Doctor says separated this way. The next day, I
she may have to have a "Caesarean" for found that Aunt Brown was staying
she is so terribly small through the at the Nicollet Hotel, so I phoned her
hips. She is so thrilled & happy about and she asked me to come over there

8 Bald spot made him seem so much older. The Bridesmaids and Maid of Honor wore "Ashes of Roses" gowns with bouquets of roses in their hands. June carried a white orchid. Her little 5 yr. old sister Sharon was the flower girl, and quite stole the show! The audience was very select, many an aristocrat and blue-blooded society - After the wedding some friends of Betty's took me to Sherry's where we found June & Billy posing - a bank of flowers in the back ground. For these wedding pictures there were plenty of newspaper reporters around, and the air was charged with cigarette & whiskey aroma - and the on & off glare of flashing photo bulbs. As Betty had just returned to N.Y. her friends were ready eager to see her & quite monopolized her. You could see that this was her life - this was her element! She tried to introduce her country cousin, and see that she was happy

5 Thanks giving. She is looking forward to her visit in L. F. with us all. She asked me ~~LARA JANE MUSSEY~~ if I were intending to go to Miss Anderson's recital with the Symphony, to which I of course said "yes". She then told me she had written Mr. Rupp about coming out to see her - Miss A. too if she could make it which made me chuckle inwardly. Her change of heart seemed somewhat humorous to say the least.

The next morning I arose at 6 AM, breakfasted thanks to a thoughtful Lillian, and tapped to the depot. Once on the train I slept the entire way to Chicago reaching there at 3 PM - A casual acquaintance (a young Miss. girl N. Y. bound) and I ate lunch at Warwick's, and at 4:30 boarded the Pennsylvania to N. Y. I had a roomette, and being still dead tired slept 'til 9 PM. as it was too late to get dinner. I had the very nice Porter on our section - being very

At the Martin Beck (of Gilbert & Sullivan fame) so I asked Esther Yoon to go with me. We both of us enjoyed it - albeit it was decidedly too "sexy" for my liking from the aesthetic viewpoint.

The next day, my trunk came & I had a lesson with Guarnini who seemed happy to see me again. He was very pleased with my summer work - I forgot to mention that I also phoned Mr. Newstead and arranged to take lessons with him once a week. Mr. G. twice a week on account of orchestration - at 5:30 PM. was the wedding. I wore a blue suit. Betty was there - looked fine, and seemed so happy & thrilled with her baby. Dick's success by now. She told me Dick W. is in Philadelphia preparatory to being sent overseas. There was a good-sized crowd there - June looked lovely & Billy extremely proud of her. This

supper to the roomette.

The night moon we reached N.Y. And I found my room at the Beekman Place with no difficulty - It's tiny but is just right for me. I'm on the 26th floor, and the air is grand - a decided contrast to the New Weston. I phoned Jody Schuyler and received an invitation for Halloween - also Mary Frances Vesely, and Lucy Fredel Wapowsky. M.F. is going to "Cello" with me tomorrow evening and Sunday eve Lucy invited me to take dinner with her - I also phoned Uncle Play and found the wedding dated for Saturday Oct. 23. The ceremonies were to be held at Dr. Darlington's Church at 5th Avenue & 90th Street & was to be informal (5:30 PM) with a reception at Sherry's - I finished my phone calls and I proceeded to get unpacked. Jody had told me about Katherine Sanborn and her dancing troupe.

19
hardly ever sees her ~~mother~~ ^{mother} except
once or twice a year, and is neglected
most of the time. Meanwhile Anne
is trying to get a divorce from her
husband because she's in love with
another man. Anne now is so
nervous, and doesn't know which
way to turn! I feel so sorry for all of
them, and if my friendship can help
her I hope it can!

The weather has been dreadful
these past three days - rain & a terrible
wind almost a hurricane. The dampness
gave me a slight cold, but thank
Godness I'm almost over it!

I'm ordering your birthday
present from Anderson's which I hope
you receive in time. Did Grace Wood-
worth tell you about how we celebrated
the sixtieth wedding anniversary of her parents?
I played a couple of numbers for it.
Do please write to me soon. With so much
love to you & M.

but the sudden attention made her
a bit giddy, and soon the country
cousin was left ~~AWAY~~ ^{AWAY} ~~ON~~ ^{ON} the side lines.
not that I minded - for it proved a
wonderful source of amusement -
so innocent, so correct, so forcedly
jovial & polite. - Back of it was emptiness
& boredom to the point of hysteria - a
stereotyped people trying desperately
hard to enjoy themselves in a stereo-
typed way - a group of puppets with
the elements of naturalness and refinement
snuffed out of them - manipulated by
predatory emotionalism and impulse -
I thought "These people do not know
how to live - their minds & hearts are
slaves to their passions". So was my
first, and I hope my last introduction
to New York Society - I asked Betty
if they had received your present and
she said "yes" but they didn't thank me

15 She said that she had nothing more as property - nor did they make any mention to live for ^{in N.Y.} and was leaving or going away as to how they liked it - I still don't know what you sent them; they didn't tell me. I finally left, and went to the movie "Phantom of the Opera" which I enjoyed very much!

Lucy told me that her husband thought me "crazy and extremely charming." Sunday evening found me in taking Lucy to Miss A's concert in November. She wants to hear her very much. at Lucy's. She seemed happy to have me, and we had a grand visit. She & her husband are the proud parents of a dear little 14 mos. old child. The mother-in-law was just leaving as I came in. She seemed to me a very charming person. Lucy & I had a grand visit & reminisced about Wartridge to our hearts content. She said that she & her parents who were dear friends of Miss Wartridge feel that she (Nell) committed suicide, because a few weeks before she died she was giving away or selling all her possessions. When Lucy on one occasion asked her why she was doing this,

Lucy & her husband were with Anne Brown in California. Mr. Wlanowsky is also Mme Schman's accompanist. She (Lucy) thinks Anne is artificial and puts on too much but ^{thinks} she does have a nice voice and a pleasing personality if she would just forget herself. I think the way she treats her child Paula is scandalous. Motherhood, I say, means nothing to Anne. Paula is only two years old but is in a nursery school on the Hudson. She



GRAND CENTRAL
ANNEX



Mr. R. D. Musser
Linden Hill
Little Falls
Minnesota

From The Hotel New Weston
50th & Madison Ave.
New York city
N.Y.

poly of Health talks etc. on dr. Zettle
for Dr. Chime on on the dried grass topic
and get some of the kudos she so far
has reaped. I'm a jealous soul as you
can see!

I haven't heard a word out Okla.
homa way, so assume the new soul
is still loathe to sever the ties that bind it
to the Blessed Kingdom. Dean well under-
stand Mary's impatience, however, and
I know how happy and fine she'll feel when
she can hold that blessed bundle in her
arms! Will she send Sarah to be with
you and mother during her confinement?

Please write to me soon, darling.

With so much much love to
two of the dearest little pieces of humanity
Your daughter, LPM

March 28, 1943

Papa Rastus Baby!

"How yo' Mandy just lubbed de 'fittle
what comes from her Rastus! Ah lone
mies yo' so muchly det Ah just feels
right sad to be 'otin' round hysch 'stead
of 'Lil' Falls'. Well darling, it won't be
long now before I'll be home for a
month's rest. Seriously, though, I feel
this vacation imperative because New
York has had so many serious epidem-
ics of infectious diseases, and with these
recurrent colds that I've had, imperils my
resistance, and makes my future none too
certain. Last night, my friends in wa.

After they left and I had eaten dinner, my Chinese friend Esther Yoon, joined me, and we went up to the Schuylers to spend the evening with them. They always have a small gathering of intellectual people, so the evenings there are always interesting. Jody, as usual, introduced us to a new health food - compressed grass. It looked for all the world like pieces of pencil lead, and tasted like dried spinach! This little food gem is supposed to have more vitamins than anything yet on the market, and unlike the capsules, do not upset one's stomach and are delightful and easy to take, so I mean to stock up with this latest discovery, and serve grass at the family board. From now on I don't mean mother to have the mono-

shington D. C. called up, and wanted me to spend a week with them from April 12th - April 19th. Then from Washington I'll leave for Little Falls getting home the 21st or 22nd of April, and will stay until the 20th of May - getting back to New York on the 22nd of May. That ought to make me fit for another two months of it. I want to finish my course in Composition so badly, and Mr. Giannini feels that I can this summer.

This week-end Joann Lordahl and her sister Barbara came to N. Y. to be with friends of theirs in Brooklyn. I saw them yesterday when they came in to do their shopping. They both looked fine, although Barbara looked a little thin!

busy and happy. Had a "comp." lesson with Mr. Scianini yesterday, and he's still pleased with me. Mr. N. also liked my work, but I guess I've antagonized him against Mr. Feagles. Please write to me soon. I miss you all so much - Jan. 24, 1943

Dearest mother;

Lovingly Laura Jane

Your letter came last Friday which made me very happy. Daddy too, bless his heart, has been very prompt, and he does say such encouraging things to me. Your poor little Laura Jane does try so hard to be a joy to her family, but I guess she was never meant to follow conventional patterns. I didn't ask for this way of life, but as I'm travelling along it, I suppose I have to make the best of things. It brightens things a lot and makes the way easier when you tell me encouraging things. I know I need lots of criticism and advice, but it makes me warm all over when that criticism is given with full unbiased knowledge of the problem.

I suppose by now, you know that Mrs. Burton has been at the New Weston all this week. We've been having great times together, and

I shall be very sorry to have her leave Monday. We have taken quite a few meals together, and have seen a couple of movies, "Shadow of a Doubt" and "Katherine," The Dee Bellus at the Center Theater, and an opera, "Aida," last night. She's such a thoroughly grand person, and I do so enjoy being with her.

You asked me about Eddie. I didn't tell you anything in my last letter, because I hadn't heard from him since I arrived. I felt rather down about it, but decided to wait, and sure enough he 'phoned me today. He had been out of the city for two or three weeks, and Tuesday goes to take his physical examination for the army. He will 'phone me tomorrow, and I do hope I shall soon see him. Seriously, this is the first time I've been in love. - I sort of grow on you, but if he shouldn't be the one for me, I do hope I keep my head!

Tonight, I am going up to Nellie's to have dinner with her, and Tuesday, I see Esther so as you can see there's plenty to keep me

1041



GRAND CENTRAL
ANNEX



Mr. R. D. Musser

~~Little Falls~~

Forward to
Radisson Hotel
Room 1041

~~Minnesota~~

Mussey

~~Linden Hill~~

From The Hotel New Weston
50th & Madison Ave.

New York City
N. Y.

1214

dearest card from her the other day. It was a "thank you" note for a Gardenia plant I had sent her as a Birthday greeting. I haven't heard yet from Alice, and really don't expect to until I see her around April 9th.

On April 12th, I am planning to go to Washington D. C. to visit the Kimbroughs for a week - that will get me home around the 22nd of April, unless you hear otherwise. I shall enclose my rail road ticket for you to have picked up for me by Mr. Ettinger. Have him fix it from N. Y. with a stop-off in Washington on a 30 day limit. Have him do it early enough, please so that there will not be any travel complications - with many hugs & love. E. M.

I received your two fine letters March 31, 1943 and thank so much for them.

Dearest little "blogger";

Tomorrow will be the first of April, and it won't be long now until I'll be coming home, and won't it be grand to be with you all again! I certainly want to be out in the sunshine as much as possible, because the sunshine in N. Y. is practically nonexistent. I really feel very tired not so much from work or sleep - lack - but because it's impossible to get good food or exercise. The city air isn't the best thing in the world to breathe continuously, and the continual rush around gets very wearing at times. People really don't live normally in N. Y. especially now that we're at war! Guess whom I saw in the

From Glens Falls. I asked Bess to be
one of my guests at the Marian Anderson
Recital, April 11th. She hasn't a terribly
high opinion of Negroes, and I saw a
chance to do a little missionary work.
You know my methods! 'Watson! well,
I got her quite excited about the concert.
Tried to get Elizabeth to go too! But again
she refused - Sunday being her husband's
birthday, and a family day! Elizabeth is
certainly not an easy person to do things
for, and I'm not going to do any more for her
in the concert line! She evidently wants to
live her own life without accepting things from
anyone else. That's O.K. because that's one less
person to bother about!

Speaking of Miss Anderson, I had the

lobby the other day! - Bess Bennett.²
She had come in to meet a friend of
hers for lunch, and saw me in the lobby.
I had her come up to my room for a
few minutes, and she mentioned what a
fine time she'd had with you this last
fall. Bess looks well, but her husband is
not well; I think he's just had an oper-
ation or something. Blod is in the Army!
Bess showed me this picture, and I think
he's certainly a fine looking boy. Harriette
is still busy with her Art and family.
Bess' luncheon guest was a Mrs. Walter
Lapham. I thought she might be related to
our "Laphams" and said as much. She seemed
quite excited about it, and hoped that we'd
meet again to resume our acquaintance. She

Barbara, I believe. Told her about the time we were there, remember? - in the palmy days when there were such things as gasoline and tires! You know the more I think of it the more I think I was strangely prophetic when I kept asking daddy to "tell me a story about a tire". When I have children they shall probably ask me the same thing, but in this case I may be hard put to show them that there really was such an "animal". Ann said she'd like to stop in Little Falls on her way back - that would be some time in July or August.

Dr. Mitchell tells me that Billy may be called any day now for Army work. Betty, he tells me, is fine, and will have her baby in July. Was Mary's baby born yet? I have a few little things for her. Perhaps when you write, you will please send me her address, so that I can mail them as soon as possible!

Well, my darling blooper - I love you dearly, and long for that little grey head to be here. I was interested to hear about Rachel. I would have been sure, enjoyed her concert. With much love, Anne Jane.

March 19, 1943

Dearest little "bopper" -

I have been thinking about you and daddy so much lately. Your lovely letter reached me, and it made me feel so happy to know that you feel about me the way you do. I'm so dissatisfied with myself, and so often I am wondering if I am doing the right thing.

I have been in bed three days now with a cold. Dr. Mitchell has taken over again, and is watching very carefully, so I know I'm in good hands. Good. I had a bad sore throat without temperature - which was indeed fortunate since there are so many cases of "strep" throats going around. Yesterday it developed into a nasal congestion, and today it's in my chest. This is the last stage of it, and ought to be over it by tomorrow. I haven't been sick at anyone time

3 weeks. I wish daddy could come too, I love him so,
and miss him terribly! He's such a little old
darling - Give him many blumps and blups from
me.

Tuesday night, Jody, Philippa, and I
went to hear Lucy Brown in Brooklyn. I had
some flowers for Anne, and like a minny, I
left them in the taxi. I was so sorry about it
because she got no flowers that evening. The
concert was very interesting - The Eve Jesse Choir
collaborated. We just caught a glimpse of Ann, back
stage, and left. Yesterday, I phoned her, and had a
nice conversation with her. She spoke about her
St Paul concert, and of meeting Aunt Maude. She
liked her very much, and was so sorry she didn't
see you. She never received your note - What that too
bad! If you'd like to write her again, you might
address the note to Albert Moine - 119 West 57th Str.
Her management would see that she got it. Recently,
she gave a concert at Vassar College. Joann
Loudahl heard her, and met her afterwards I believe.
Ann plans to go to California in May - to Santa

and Los Angeles being in bed, but with all this - 2 -
infection in the air, I'd be foolish to be
up and around!

I had a letter from Alice on Saturday.
The Connecticut visit is definitely decided upon,
and I shall probably know more about it when
I see her in a couple of weeks. She's coming in
for her sister's concert at the Metropolitan on
April 11th. Perhaps you'd better come on, and
be here for the concert, so that you can talk
to her. I rather think though that the visit
will take place in May. That would be the
nicest time. Here is another plan I have in
mind. After I see Alice, and find out more,
I may come home for the rest of April to get
my summer things ready, and get a little rest.
I would plan to leave April 15th - getting home
April 17th and stay a month - leaving for N.Y.
May 15th and spending the month of June in N.Y.
You could leave with me, and spend the rest of
May with me. How do you like that idea?
That would give you a visit of a little over two

Are there any signs of spring yet? I
love Minnesota winters, but the springs are
so beautiful!

Thank you so much for sending me
the picture of Sarah. I don't have any left, it,
but if you'd want it back, you may have it,
darling!

Please write to me soon! I'm
so lonesome for you all.

With much love - I do love you
both so much!

Laura Jane

O O O O O O O = blops (lugs)
X X X X X X X = blumps (kisses)

March 19, 1948

Dearest "little young father":

Poor little fellow who hasn't gotten a
letter in such a long time, but darling, I
have thought of you so much, and oh!
how I have missed you and mother.

I have been in bed for three days, with a
terrible cold, but the doctor told me that this was
the last stage, and that I ought to be fine in
a day or so! I hope so, since I get so lonesome
being in bed by myself most of the time. Last
night, though, Esther, my Chinese friend,
paid a call on me, and brought me a lovely
bunch of Jonquils. We had a fine visit, and
it cheered me up considerably. She's so darling
and understanding. I think I'm very lucky to have
the kind of friends I do. Sometimes I wonder
why I ever allow myself to become depressed. I

3- I suppose you know about the death of J. P. Morgan. You know I wonder truly how many financiers deserve all the eulogies they get. It would seem that the only worth while people are the ones who have money, but I know that isn't true to a large extent. It depends on the individual.

I can hardly wait to get back to my little room & I told mother, I may be home in another month for a stay of a few weeks! What will we do to have a good time? Shall it be double dummy or a nice cozy walk if the weather permits? Perhaps this summer I can induce you to go swimming! Remember when you used to go in the water? Let's for one summer do what we used to do. turn back the clock a few years, shall we? I may even get on your lap, and have you "tell me a story of the tire" and "the bridge". I'm still a little girl despite my 26 years, and mother may even want to sing me to sleep some evening(?)

guess it's because I love you and mother so. And I've seen you so often unhappy with me because I guess at times I'm a bonehead, and not fit to have such wonderful parents as you. I wish I were like Mary - socially correct and acceptable to everyone, then you would be proud of me. I'm such a blundering, gawling sort of person! God must have had a sense of humor when he created me! Now I wish we could all be together, happy & contented for ever and ever, and never have to be separated! Death, when it hits near us, always terrifies me, and I don't think I could ever be reconciled or happy if anything happened to you or mother. You're the only people I have, and there isn't anyone else who really truly, cares about me! and I don't want to be a burden to anyone. so you and mother please keep well because I love you so, and I'll do my darndest to keep you as happy as possible!

What have you been doing lately?



GRAND CENTRAL
ANNEX

UNITED STATES POSTAGE

Mrs. R. D. Musser
Little Falls
Minnesota

From Miss Laura J. Musser

90 The Hotel New Weston

50th Madison Ave.

New York City

N.Y.

1214

Barbara & Ellen bin wrote to tell me that an apartment had been found in Cleveland, and she & the Joneses will be there around July first, and are expecting me. I shall probably go July 9th as Mr. S. promises with me about that time - granted that Mr. Shue will take me privately. I've written him and hope to hear from him next week. A letter from Clyde A. states that Marian is home now - but terribly tired, so again the date has been changed. I wrote A. before I heard from Barbara - fixing July 10th as a tentative date but with the Cleveland venture in view, I wrote Marian today, explaining the situation and fixing the date around the first - 5th - saying that if this were not convenient we'd better call it off. I hate this state of indecision, and

if they want me badly enough they'll let me know, but I'm not going to change my plans any longer to suit their whims.

June 18, 1943

Write to me soon, darling, please.
Dearest mother, your loving little "blogger"
You haven't heard from me since you've gotten home, and I feel rather badly, because I always want you to receive an answer to your letters as soon as possible.
Now does it seem to be home after such a long trip. I know how pleased Daddy was to see you - also Nabe.

I was so happy we could have had that time together because it means so much to me to be with you. I enjoyed your letter about your stay with Mary so much.

but well. Tomorrow I shall be with
Esther again for Sat. & Sunday. Sunday
both of us are taking a boat trip up the
Hudson which I think will be loads of
fun! Last night the Schuylers invited
me to attend a stadium concert with
them, but it rained so the concert
was postponed until tonight. Philippa has
gotten so attractive and is such a
dear! She's about as tall as I am.

I had a letter from Margaret
Vaylon - surprise - a very nice one,
outlining her plans for the summer,
and saying how much she wanted
me to visit her but with crimson,
and week-end guests flooding the
campus, it was virtually impossible.
Very likely I'll see her when she
comes to New York. She's staying with Mary.

I had a letter from Mary to-day giving
her version of it. Sarah and Sam
must be just perfect, and I hope
I'll see them some time soon.

New York hasn't been too
unbearable, and my work with Mr.
Sicilianini is progressing favorably.
The week-end after you left I spent
Saturday and Sunday with Esther.
She let me cook the dessert, and -
you guessed it - Black Magic filled
with allspice instead of chocolate.
There "ain't no sect thing" in New York.
Last Tuesday, I went to visit Carl &
Edith in Connecticut. I had the usual
wonderful time with them, and
about the babies; I took some colored
snaps of them and hope they turn

a war against the slavery-master
Race Psychology of Hitler, and that
in order to do this successfully, we can't
have any half or quarter way measures in
this country, I think shall understand!

This afternoon I am going to Town
Hall with the Schuylers to hear a Child
Pianist. I wish Peggy could go - It's
a shame, Elizabeth has to be so arbitrary.

I haven't heard from Alope but
hope to this next week -

With much love to my dear
little "blopper" -

Love Jane.

P.S. Tell papa I'll write soon.

March 13, 1943

Dearest mother;

It was so wonderful talking
to you on the phone last Tuesday.
Your poor little "blopper" has been
so terribly, terribly down from her
"flu" germ that I was seriously considering
going to a hospital or "rest" home. I have
never been this way before, never, and
I was quite worried for a time. I am
better now, and things look a little
more cheerful. You and daddy are
dear to want me home, but I feel
as if I'm not quite the person for you
two. I guess I'm just different from
most people, coupled with a strong sense
of justice, and that all is not well in
this civilization of ours. There is something
decidedly rotten in our foundation some
where along the line, and not knowing quite

wee current of antipathy in Elizabeth -
I have asked her two or three times to go
to concerts with me, and let Peggy go to
Children's concerts, and she's always refused.
I feel concerts are an education and Peggy
is at an age where they would mean
something to her. Elizabeth has always
been lovely, her manner is always gracious,
but I'm inclined to feel that maybe you
shouldn't have told her about my "cloud"
relationships. I think they stand in the way!
You remember I took Peggy to see Philippa.
Elizabeth was away at the time, but the
nurse let her go. When I've asked if Peggy
could go again, Elizabeth has always said,
"No". Perhaps if you could talk to
Elizabeth about this, and point out the
necessity that concert attendance is an
education, and thus, very necessary, also
that in a democracy all people are free
and equal, and that we are fighting

what it is, I'm trying my best to live
at peace with all mankind and am
finding it a monstrous sized job. It
seems when I do something for some
one I'm criticised, and my motives are
distorted or else I'm laughed at. Even as
I try to understand people, I want them
to try to understand me, and it seems
as if the ones I really wish would try, don't
want to, or can't, and that nearly breaks my
heart! I guess I'm too intense, but if
I just let things slide, people would say
"I'm not taking the situation seriously
enough, and after all we are at war. My
dear!"

I think I'm going to give up teaching
Peggy. Elizabeth doesn't seem to regard her
music seriously enough to warrant my
continuing the teaching. For a month now
Peggy has been ill off and on, and of
course can't do the work, and I feel a

because I haven't been doing
much of anything to speed up.
My work has fallen somewhat behind
so I have been working hard to get
caught up. I'm starting on a fugue
I have to do for graduation, and
it isn't easy one bit! In my piano
I am studying a Mozart Sonata
which I like very much.

Again, thank you so
much for your lovely valentines -

With much love,

Sara Jane.

I hope Aunt Laura is better -
Please give her my love, and
tell her I will write very soon.

Feb. 20, 1943

Dearest little "bopper" -

How grand it was to talk to
you and daddy the other night. It
really made me very happy, and I
considered it the nicest valentine
I have ever received!

You spoke of my not having
written to you - that was because I had
been in bed four or five days with a
cold. I'm fine now, and really was
glad of the opportunity to meet Doctor
Mitchell. I liked him very much!

Talked to Mr. Giannini and
Mr. Newstead about when I could
leave for home, and they told me around
the middle of April if all goes well.
Miss Anderson is giving a concert
some time that month, so I don't know
if she expects me to visit her then or

And my friends.

I'm so sorry you couldn't get down to Ann Brown's concert. I had a letter from Aunt Maude telling me all about it. She enjoyed it very much. She went backstage to speak to Anne - which surprised me very much. Aunt Maude thinks Anne has a beautiful voice, but I don't think it compares with Miss Anderson's. Dorothy Maynor is going to sing in a couple of weeks at Carnegie Hall. Their tickets for that but I wonder how I'll like her. I haven't heard her in two years, and they say she isn't as good as she used to be. I had a letter from Mrs. Schuyler saying she and Philippa would be back in New York by March first! They're on tour now.

There isn't much news to tell

most. Perhaps when Alice comes to N.Y. (she says she's going to -) I can ask her when she'd like us to come. You see I don't want to come home, and have the invitation fall during that time the way it did last year.

A long letter from Laura Brannen came this week in answer to a valentine I sent her - a potted plant, and a chance to see Miss Anderson at her Seattle concert. (I had written Miss A. about Laura, and how much I wanted to meet her) Laura said she was unable to get seats, but that she phoned Miss A. and had a nice visit with her. Miss A. (said I.) spoke very highly of you and me, and was so charming & gracious to I. trying to get her seats even - but not succeeding. She assured I, however, that she would see to it that I. would have a seat next year. I thought that was very sweet of her. Miss A. certainly has been lovely to me.

15, 16 & B, -

Miss Uptonson is going to hear
the opera "Aida" for the second time.
Mrs. Schuyler and Philippa are back
and Mrs. S. phoned me today. I wasn't
in, so I'm supposed to call her tomorrow.
Miss Anderson is singing next month
at the Metropolitan. I rather think
the invitation will come off the first part
of May, and if I understood aright will be
just for the day, so do you think it worth
your while to come on for that short time?
If I hear it will be for longer, I'll let you
know -

With much love,
Laura Jane

March 6, 1943

Dearest "Little Skipper";

You have no idea how much
your phone call meant to me the other
day, because I had been suffering so
bitterly from a terrible state of depression,
caused partly by my cold, and partly
because I felt I had lost your love
and respect for me. You see when
I'm home, you're too busy to be bothered
with me, and I feel like a nuisance - unwanted.
You have so much joy and happiness
with your friends that it seems that I
bring an air of discord every time I come
home. You are only really unhappy
when I'm around, and the fact that your
oft repeated phrase, "Do you think you're
making mother happy?" makes me feel this
way even more! I love you anyhow, and am

Have to turn to to help me solve my problems. To me it is sacred - not to be listened to, as one might tolerate a performance simply because it's customary! Well, all this has been rather crudely and bluntly stated but I hope you will take time to understand what I am trying to get across!

I am glad Alice is coming to see you, and I think the visit will do both of you a lot of good! Will Sarah be put in your care while Mary is in the Hospital?

It is a blizzard day out today, and I wish I could be in front of our nice warm fire place. Had my Theory lesson with Mr. Giannini, and am working on my fugue for examination. He was quite pleased with what I did for this week. The fugue is Chromatic, and Mr. G. was quite delighted at the "modern" effects I achieved.

In piano, I am studying the Mozart D Major Sonata, and Chopin's Etudes No.

thinking of you very often. trying to discover ways and means to keep you happy - Perhaps separation is the best, I don't expect me home for some time to come. Altho' I love my home and folks I'm making this sacrifice for your happiness. Perhaps it also would be better if you didn't plan to come on this spring to be with me, because I can't stand your upsets any more than you can. I'm sorry if I'm the disturbing element, but please remember I have feelings too! Opinions etc. I have to learn & react to life even as you did. I'm something other than a machine to sit & play at your beck and call. If you love my music, why don't you sit with me and enjoy it with me - like you & Aunt Laura did that night - I loved playing for you then because I knew you loved to hear me. Music is the one thing I

would possible handicaps to a pianist. Mr. Friedberg at the Juilliard - one of the most eminent pianists living, told me I never should have been a pianist. Mrs. Fredericks, you recollect told me the same thing.

That's why I get so discouraged when you and dad say "I'll be a great somebody - some day" or "One of these days you'll blossom forth," or "You can never hope to amount to anything unless you overcome this and so" or "Why can't you learn this the way Mary has?" I am just myself - that's all - I can't be like Mary or anyone else - my perspective is my own - I see out of my own eyes not anyone else's, and I have my own individual reactions. Mrs. Billis is right when she says "I have to learn things by myself - even things that others have experienced I have to experience in my own way - particularly abstract and mental or emotional experiences - I do not accept others

frankly, and I try to tell you. If this makes you unhappy, please believe the very best of me, and realize that I am sincere in my efforts to try and do what is right. With so much love,
Dear mother; Your devoted daughter.

Your letter somewhat comforted me. Perhaps I am "intense" and "over sensitive", and although I try to direct these traits into correct channels, I fail to exert the right amount of control at times. No one knows better than I do the faults and terrific handicaps I have to overcome. Some things like making friends with the right kind of people are easy for me, but things like gaining fame and honor as a student of music for instance come hard. Any musician with the years of training I have received would have made something of himself a long time ago. Music is so much apart of me that it almost kills me when I think I'm no further along

2-
time and money so I think after this month I'll stop, and continue with Mr. Fenyves when I come home. He at least is very much concerned with how I do a thing, and his understanding of my problems has helped me no end!

I agree with you that one's mind has a great deal to do with one's state of being. It sounds very pretty to say that, but the trouble is this world is too coldly practical! I have had too many hard thumps to be the kind to say "as I think so shall I be." It is an excited statement calculated to raise one's spirit to the very heights of self-satisfaction but if you haven't the right tools to bring this about, you might just as well give up. I do think that one should make the most of what one has, and be happy, but one cannot surpass oneself if one hasn't the physical help. i.e. a small inflexible hand such as I have is the

than I was when I first began studying²⁻ with Miss Johnson. The other day when I had my lesson with Mr. Newstead, I told him that I didn't want to have so many pieces to study - rather I wanted to get those I already knew - perfect. I frankly told him that Mr. Fenyves' criticism of my New York work attacked the apparent lack of technique ~~in my work~~ ^{it showed}, and I went on to tell him that if only he would sit down and show me how to practice a passage to perfection, it would truly help me. All he does is assign me technique exercises and plug them over with me on another piano where he can't observe my method. Naturally I make the same mistakes without knowing why I make them. When I tell him to please work a passage out with me, he says there isn't time. This makes me feel I'm wasting

and patience. With my nervousness, I feel like committing suicide. It would help me so much if you would encourage me in the sense of making me feel that I have arrived. Of course I know there is so much for me to learn, but with each new hurdle overcome, I'm conceited enough to want you and dad to appreciate it too - to show an interest in what I'm trying to do, because I am so interested in you both (like the hen who lays an egg, you know). I love to do things with you too! walking, bridge (but not to excess), talking, nature, company (but not to excess), knitting, movies, etc., and I love nothing better than to have you do things with me too!

You both are the most wonderful people I know, and at times I feel so undeserving of you. It makes me feel so down to see you upset with me. I know it's my fault, and yet it may be a part of my make-up you don't understand. When you don't understand, I wish you'd please ask me

explanations of abstract things - i.e. Religion, educational facts, political facts etc. For instance, some one might say about a person or a group of people; "The Japs are evil; Avoid him, he's a Jew, Negro, Communist, Nazi, poor, rich, snobbish etc. I do not agree. I find out whether he or she will be congenial and loving in spirit or not - other people's judgement unless it's obvious cannot be my judgement unless I see the same things they see. Now much as I hate to be a doubting Thomas, and an individualist, I hate even worse to be narrow-minded, affected, and deceitful or hypocritical, and I do not like other people to make up my mind for me. Of course, I want to see their side - why they think as they do. That's why, mother, I want to talk things over with you - life (sex), philosophy, politics, Religion, Race etc. I want you to be frank with me - Tell me why you approve or disapprove of

social whirl. There's little or no time for the
finer things in life such as you and daddy
stand for - Religion is practically out of things.
God is a name like Santa Clause - a thing to be
bandied around where it suits one's own ends.
You'd be surprised at the number of University
and College people who laugh at the name of God.
Religion has become a thing in name only -
secretly, it's being used as in Europe as a
political weapon to decide which side is right -
ago - if you win the war God is with you -
if you lose the war you are damned! I see
this every day in this big city, so no wonder
I have come to depend on you and my home
as a sanctuary of peace in the midst of a
world going insane. That's why, when I first
come home I'm in a mental turmoil and need
to rest and renew my spiritual strength to
face life. When I don't find this understanding

my theories, and give your reasons lucidly -
not "that you don't like a thing because you
just don't". I want you please to tell me what
there is about it you don't like. Knowledge and
common sense are based on knowing both sides
of a situation, don't you think? You might
call this sort of thing an argument: I call it
a discussion. I value yours and daddy's
advice and good opinion wholeheartedly. That's why
I get so nervous and upset when you oppose
me, and don't show me clearly and lucidly where
I'm wrong. I need your companionship more
than ever, because I'm going through a very
difficult time or have been for the past ten years.
Life isn't the simple thing it was for you and
daddy. The pace is too terrific to allow one to
think sensibly once he's caught in the maelstrom.
Life has become too impersonal - and has centered
mainly around money-making, politics, and



Mrs. R. D. Musser
Linden Hill
Little Falls
Minnesota

From The Hotel New

50th & Madison

N. Y.

1214

March 26, 1943

apologizing to Jody - Jody was rather ruffled about it, as I know I would be in her place, but I guess thoughtlessness, and selfishness are parts of the general puzzle called "human nature". I know how very much I fall short of being considerate at all times.

When are you planning to come on this spring? Will you please let me know, because then I won't plan to come home until the last of May. In two weeks I ought to know more definitely about the Anderson invitation, so will keep you posted.

Keep well, darling -

With oodles of blumps & blops -
to say nothing of "shucks!"

Laura Jane

M. Newstead was delighted with my lesson last week!

Dearest little "blogger";

I haven't heard from you for such a long time that I am beginning to get a little worried! I did have such a lovely letter from daddy - telling me that you were down in Minneapolis taking treatments of Doctor Zettel. I do hope that "trouble" is much better, and that you're still seeing Dr. Stachurski so that it won't get out of control.

I have just recovered from a moderate attack of Grippe. There's a rather severe epidemic of it in New York, and everyone more or less has succumbed to it.

Unlike the "flu", the grippe did not leave me depressed, and although I was in bed ten days, I feel very fine and full of pep. The weather has been beautiful lately -

Send my spring coats and hats and
dresses on as soon as you get this letter.
If my dresses seem too summery, I'll get
a spring ensemble here. Also send my
rational book so that I may get a good looking
pair of spring shoes - No. 17 I think, is the
stamp.

Tomorrow, Joann & her sister, Barbara,
are coming to New York. I had asked Joann
to be my guest some time ago, but her friends
on furlough, and it's more important that she
be his guest. I had planned on taking Joann
to see Philippa since she wanted to very
much, and went through all the trouble of
getting her an invitation only to find that her
friend had made other plans for her - This
rather confused thing - since Jody went to
the trouble of getting things ready for them.
Of course, Joann didn't let me know 'til the
last minute, so I had to do some convincing

lovely and balmy. Pretty soon I shall
be sending my spring coats and hats.
My fur coat today showed its fatigue
by making a clean rip clear down one
side - As a matter of fact, the fur
has ripped away in several places which
makes me suspect that Schlamps passed
off another fur coat on me. Somehow,
my coat seemed shorter, of better quality
fur, and much better fitting. One of my
friends remarked that the coat I now have
did not look like the one I had originally.
She claimed the present one made me look
dumpy, because it did not fit well. Tell
Schlamps that my sleeve edges had no
trimming - the silk lining was sewed right
into the sleeve edges untrimmed, and this
coat has trimmed sleeve edges - also that my
coat was between sizes - 12-14 - this one is really
between 14-16. By the way, you might



HOTEL NEW WESTON
MADISON AVENUE AT 50TH STREET
NEW YORK, N. Y.

Rm. 1214



*Mrs. R. D. Musser
Linden Hill
Little Falls
Minnesota*

Feb. 1st 1943

Dearest mother;

Your letter came today, and I was so happy to get it, but sorry to learn that you had such a scare about that cyst. While often times things like that prove harmless, it's always well to "nip them in the bud" so that serious consequences may not happen. Perhaps that was why you were so nervous when I was home. I hope Dr. Zittel knows what he's doing. It might be well later on to take X-ray treatments to see if it can't be checked for good & all. Have a good rest and don't be too active for a while. Aunt Laura will be good company for you.

Alice is expected to arrive today, but I have no idea what time. I have reserved a room for her, and hope she'll like it.

Mrs. Burton left a week ago today

for Florida. We did have such grand times together. I'm sorry she couldn't have stayed longer. Marion Nellumoe was also here a few days. The only time we really had together was Friday evening when we went to see "The Three Sisters". She also left yesterday.

We've had a couple of bad snow storms recently - the most snow N. Y. has had since 1934. Today and yesterday almost cleaned it up, however. The weather has done more jumping around than is usually customary here. It isn't particularly pleasant to be out in all this slush. I regret to say that I have done very little outdoor activity. If I were home, I would be probably making good use of our hill & skating pond. Speaking of home, I don't just know when I will be coming home. Jody told me that Anne was not planning to remain in St. Paul more than just overnight. Her tour and concert activities don't allow her any time. That's also the reason why

she's not starring in "Porgy & Bess" - I think her recent union with the Albert Morini management means that she has left the legitimate stage for some time, perhaps for good. Jody said that Hollywood was very anxious to get hold of Anne to play in its screen version of "Porgy & Bess". I think her tone will take in Hollywood. Etta Moten is supposed to be pretty good, though she isn't the voice that Anne has. The music is always good, however, and perhaps some of the Little Falls music lovers would consider it well worth their while. Anne will be in St. Paul the last of February. Why don't you plan on going to her concert? You can tell her for me that I was terribly sorry she couldn't stop over.

A week ago Sunday Nellie invited me over for dinner, and Tuesday Esther asked me to take dinner with her in China town. The restaurant No. 21 was a most unimpressive looking place and I'm afraid if you had seen it, that your

maternal Arm would have collared me and
washed me off. The cooking was delicious!
I am very fond of Chinese cooking. We had
fish that tasted like some very delicious pike;
pao-pods & all - very tender and of delicate flavor;
Chinese broccoli and a meat dish that looked like
pig knuckles; and for dessert - preserved fruit.
Of course there was the inevitable tea & rice. One
of these days, I'm going to buy some boxes of Chinese
tea and send it home to you. That's real tea! Let
me tell you! Afterwards we did some window
shopping and visited some friends of Esther's who
own a Chinese temple.

Saturday Mary Taylor called me up
to say she'd like me to take dinner with her &
some of her friends, so at 6 I went to the Vassar
Club where Mary met me in a curiously excited
manner. After we had visited about 10 minutes
Margaret Taylor joined us. I was quite surprised
to see her as I didn't know she was in town. She
too looked curiously excited. We had just settled