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November 18, 1939

Converse, Charles. Letter to Family.

United States. Embassy (Great Britain)

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Saturday
Nov. 18, 1939

Dear Mother ^{and chicks,}

I am greatly thrilled by the reception of all of your interesting and enthusiastic letters and cards yesterday. Ed's letter from Helen had arrived the day before and I was beginning to fear that your letter had missed the boat but then it came about noon just when I had almost reconciled myself to awaiting the next mail.

I know that you all must have found New York thrilling, and I wish I could have seen the expression on your faces when you first looked down from the top of the Empire State Building. You must remember your first impression of New York, I do. I shall never forget the thrill I got out of the Museum of Natural History and part of Central Park.

I must say that you
must really be feeling very
nearly to go to the McAlpin and
spend \$12 less discount a day
for room. I imagine that the
last \$5 double rooms would
have been quite comfortable enough
for a few days. I have no cry-
ing, am spilt milk. The money
is spent and no amount of
talking can bring it back. I
used the per diem check that
I got for per diem up to 12 noon
the day you sailed to pay up
back bills. As you know I had
been unable to pay any to speak
of because so much cash was re-
quired for actual living while you
were evacuated. If I had not
done this it would have been
impossible to liquidate the bills
in under a year. That is and
to send you \$150 per month and
to pay \$15 per month to the bank.
You know, I am not living over
fair here. Then too there's that flat

rent besides my part of Ed's
Telephone electricity and gas.
I will send the money that
I get for per diem, chairs, etc.,
to you to use for Yemas money
and necessary purchases so send
me receipts and details as soon
as possible. I will have Bob
write the New York office to
send the December money to
you so that there will be no chance
of a delay. Then from January 1st on-
wards you will receive it from the
Department so that there will be
no reason for you to get into the
position you were in during 1934.
You will have a definite set monthly
income and you can budget
accordingly.

I am pleased that you
really had a good taste of dancing
and that Howard was such a
good partner, dinner and dancing.
If Tampa is still as I remember
it, you will certainly be able to
have your fill of dancing there too.

You must go to it and try and
make up for all that you have
missed since living in England.

Unfortunately weight counts
so much, kiddies, in airmail (by
the way, save place the envelopes)
that I can't write separate letters, I wish
so that my letters will have to be a
community affair and Mother will
read them to you. Your old
Pappy is a pretty dull letter
writer. I am afraid I am like
the negro who as soon as he
picked up pen or pencil
became paralyzed between the
ears. My thoughts don't
flow freely as they do when I
dictate but then a dictated
letter is so impersonal.

You must write home
and give me your impressions
of school. Remember, you have
lovely accents. Don't change them
and don't let anyone rag you.
They are only envious of your
accent and broad travel. Don't

forget that you have had opportunities
that your little friends have not had.
Don't let them. Charge you remain
the same. Let them copy you
and your manners. They will.
Courtesy and consideration are
the keystones of charm and
without them no one can
have any satisfactory measure
of success. Notice that I said
satisfactory, the amassing of
money alone is no measure
of success although most
poor misguided humans
set material wealth as their
standard. Don't do that. Develop
the cultural side. Look for
a worthwhile hobby. Often people
find that their hobby is really
the career they want. Believe
me, to be happy a person
must have a hobby. I have
none that I can follow now
other than reading. Now is
the time to decide, will it be writing
music, painting or what?

It is 3 pm and Ed and I are sitting before the fire. It is not a very pleasant day out. Ed felt fairly this morning so stayed home from the office. Bob left yesterday for the weekend with Halfords. They want us to go down there for James but I have no intention of going. I'll probably work Boxing Day. Ed is working on Thanksgiving.

This has been a very quiet week for us, as usual, with a great deal of work to be done at the office. Ed John Coyle and I had our pictures taken yesterday with Mr. Roberts. They said that it is for Life. I don't know and I had no idea that it will appear. However you will probably be buying Life each week so you might look out for it. Please don't forget my foreign Service Assoc. dues.

I have never seen anything
like this present so called war.
I wonder where it is all going to
end. Neither side seems to be
anxious to start, but I suppose
that before it is all over, the
few will start flying. The weather
here and I understand on the
Continent is getting to be so bad
that I suppose it will be
spring before anything starts
if it ever does. Tell Bonnie
that I have a nice steel
helmet. They were sent over by
the War Dept. and issued to
those of us who are staying
in London.

Mr. Doughton was
in this week and said
that I was still progressing
nicely and that he still
considered me to be a
miracle. I am trying different
foods now, and then but
still they of any highly
seasoned food, I tried some
bors d'oeuvres but no more.

"Vat vind" I did have. The same
thing happened when I had
some pea soup at Schmidt's.
No more! So gradually I learn
what I can and can't eat.
Onions are out.

I hope that you are
now safely over the horror of
having to find a place to live and
are safely settled. Please tell
"Jisser" to write to me and
give me the news of yourself
and family. Loads of love
to my little family and
please take good care of your
selves. Annie don't eat too
too many orange seeds, Annie
don't eat the peeling and
Laura what! Take the medicine,
and make Mother walk a
lot with you -

Devotedly,
John