

Wed. June 20, 1951

Bethesda

5-100  
P 1/2

Dear Folks,

Writing letters has become a rarely-enjoyed sport with me in the last few years, but in the last two months the game has become even more sporting: how far will I get before the girls start yelling? It really is an obstacle race, and I'm out-numbered.

I had to sell a pond I bought in Lagos and which was to have bought me a fur jacket after all these years. Instead it is buying me a practical nurse, and my pride will have to keep me warm on chilly evenings. Oops, there they go!....The practical nurse comes five days a week and has gradually restored my equilibrium. A little more sleep, a little less work, and a little mobility. Since I knew no one with whom I could leave two small babies, I was unable to go anywhere at all, and right now I have to do a lot of going in connection with the Big Move. Dentist, doctor, buying things in large quantities. Miss Roddy has saved my life, but lost me my fur coat.

We were wondering if the weekend of July 14 would suit you? If it does, I can ask Miss Roddy if she will stay that Sunday- she normally takes Wednesdays and Sundays off, so I have to ask her in advance. If she can, it will be just fine, because then I'll be able to do some sitting around and talkingx while you're here. My brother re-married last week, and he and his bride are coming down to visit us the weekend of the 7th, or else that would be a possibility. As for the weekend of the 30th of June, if that's the best time for you, say the word. We made a date to go to some friends' house for dinner that Saturday night, but I'm sure they would understand completely if I told them you were coming down for the first time ever. We have to be out of the house before August first, and the movers and packers come on July 25, it seems to me- can't remember exactly. In any case, the weekend before the packers come we will probably spend happily going crazy trying to tie up loose ends and generally finish things off.

Monday, June 25

Well, here I am again. I remind myself of that woman who writes for the Ladies Home Journal and calls her column "A Line A Day". We had the President of Ecuador from Wednesday on, and my wonderful friend Piet Caan made a flying weekend visit Sat. and went home yesterday afternoon. William and his colleagues were running around like mad while the President was in Washington, and we even got invited to Secretary Acheson's dinner for him- much excitement for us. I got to wear a gorgeous new black tulle evening dress I bought for Guatemala, and William got to bake in his tux. Senators all over the place, a dime a dozen- we never had seen so many exalted characters all at once. We worked hard doing our duty, speaking Spanish to those who could speak no English, etc.

The babies are coming along beautifully. They both started to smile much earlier than the books say babies do, and for a long time I couldn't believe they were really smiling.

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Laurence didn't start to smile till he was four months old or so, just as the books all say they don't. But these young ladies began at about six weeks, and for two weeks or so I kept telling William it was just the result of gas on the stomach- it says they often make faces resembling a smile when they have tummy aches. But my mother came to visit, and she was just as sure as William that they were giving us real smiles, so I'm thoroughly convinced. They have little jokes they smile at- they think it's amusing when they sneeze or cough, or when someone makes funny noises, or imitates what they themselves "say", or when they get their little bottoms rubbed hard with talcum powder. Helen has a certain noise she will make on request when she's in a good mood, and Laura honestly, believe it or not, will smile gratefully when Miss Roddy or I tell her "My, aren't you a beautiful girl!"- I didn't believe that one at first, either, but I suppose it's our tone of voice that pleases her. They are definitely different looking, even though the obstetrician told me they were biologically speaking identical twins, that is, they came from a single placenta. Be that as it may, Laura has lighter hair and seems to be developing blue or grey eyes, while Helen has darker and more hair and appears to be heading toward brown eyes. The shape of their faces is different, but really they look a great deal alike beyond that. Their hair has quite distinct touches of red, for which I'm very grateful. Unfortunately, they also have different sleeping habits. Laura wakes up first almost always, and is hungry sooner. Helen is a sociable sort of baby, and loves to stay awake and join the fun after her bottles. Laura goes promptly to sleep almost always.

The preparations for Guatemala are coming along slowly but surely- unfortunately there is little time left now, and we should be much readier than we are. We have to get more of those pretty glasses from Heisey's, and William asked me to type up the list we made one Sunday long ago, intending to send it right off as soon as possible. At last we are really forced into a spurt of action on that score, because time is passing fast. If only there weren't so many, many things to think about and attend to- apart from the twins! I'll include the list we made, if I may, and I suppose that's the right thing to do. I hope it's not a terrible nuisance to you.

The girls haven't been too hungry today because it's hot, but now young Laura is tuning up, so I suppose I'd better admit defeat and go up before she works herself into an outraged frenzy.

Tell us when you can come and we'll look up a nearby tourist home if you want to- we are ten miles from the center of town, it takes a half hour or so to get to and from Washington. But if you'd rather stay at a hotel just tell us and we'll make the kind of reservation you ask for.

We'll see you soon,

Affectionately,

List of glassware required to replace losses:

1 dozen wine glasses  
1 dozen cocktail glasses  
1 dozen water glasses (not the stem goblet type)  
1 dozen old fashioned glasses  
2 doz ~~liqueur~~ liqueur glasses  
2 doz. stemmed water glasses

I believe the pattern was already sent to you as a drawing or tracing. I shall trace it again for safety's sake.

We should also like, if available, three glass candlesticks in the "lariat" pattern. I saw some at Woodward and Lothrop. They are rather low and have two branches, I think. They will match exactly our coasters and hors d'oeuvres dishes. I ask for three in case one is broken in transit.

*This page was found following the 1951-06-20 letter but is clearly not written to the Campbell family. It is included here to give it a place in the approximate timeframe when it was written.*