

Saturday noon

Dearest Family,

I will finally start this letter in hopes of finishing it today, as we have neglected so long now to write you---we got your letter Monday. Thank you very much for sending the check along---Fritz had just remarked that if we didn't hear from you Monday he would eat his hat, and I said he would probably have to.

I enclose the first bill from Higgins Lumber. So far we seem to be doing a good job of saving money on the new building. Fritz has completely wrecked and torn apart the second hand building which we got from the Roses last fall, and which was moved over in sections, and we find that we have a great deal of second hand lumber out of that. More than we expected. Surely a \$100 worth, what we paid. He has sorted it all as to size and so it was not hard for Tony to go ahead and figure out what new lumber we'll have to have which seems to be quite a small amount.

After Tony's absence of a week, the work again got under way May 3, and has been continuing very well since, outside of one rainy day, and another rainy half day, which of course will happen here. However the cement block work is all finished. Six blocks high all around the studio. They are starting today on the lumber work, so things are moving as you can see. *Tony is sending you the plans.*

The garden too is coming along nicely---I can't imagine planting so late but its indeed a good thing that we took local advice and waited, as we had a bad storm the other nite with a freezing driving rain. Well the garden has been plowed, sod removed, (some job)--then I spread on two loads of manure, next day turned it all over with a fork, yesterday raked it all again. Today I will spread 100 pounds of fertilizer and wet it down good, then we should be able to plant early next week.

Fritz says the garden is my responsibility, so I got squeamish about making it so darn big, now I think I am going to get some help out of him. Anyway later on when the studio is done.

We are still without hot water heater, and none is sight---Muried has been kind enough to comb New York for one, as we are without a bath since April 1st, however are finding the large washtub a good substitute, on Saturday night---it is big enough to get well into.

Our weather has been steadily cool and cold, and many of the trees are not even yet in bud. They say that the terrific force of the salt spray during the hurricane may have damaged a good many.

Regarding other expenses involved in the building. I keep track to the penny of everything in my cash book, likewise a separate account for Tony. As I mentioned to start with, Tony owed us money, the \$75.00 clothes at Brooks Bros. in N.Y., expenses up here, various incidentals, and his share of the meals as we go along, by the week. In turn we owe him one dollar an hour for labor. Now as we stand to date, we are just about even, it is approx. \$150.00 on both sides the ledger, so you see that cancels out a good deal of expense for labor. They work 8 hours a day, weather permitting, Fritz's labor you don't pay for. So pretty soon I guess we will owe Tony. He doesn't need much money up here, but probably has to send his wife some, so either you can send him a check or it can go into our bank account here, and we pay him according to what we owe. Anything is agreeable to Tony.

We had a bill at the hardware store for necessary tools etc., which I will not send, as I already paid it for this reason. We had a hard time establishing credit there, as they didn't know us at all, and hesitated at first, but I finally was able to get a chg. account, as we just had to have it for the tools then. So I thought it would be a good policy to pay up at once, so as to reassure them of our credit--once it is established, then there's not such a hurry. So I paid it out

of the monthly check you sent, likewise the plowing for the garden, the manure, the milk and grocery bills---Fritz likes to be all paid up with everything--makes him feel better. Maybe if he were a business man he wouldn't be in such a hurry.

Well, we are finding the only difficult thing to cope with is the meat shortage--we have the points, but no meat in town--there are a variety of substitutes of course but after two weeks without a bite, you'd practically give anything for even an old weenie.

Glad you are as pleased and happy as we are about the baby on the way. It seems like we have every single thing anyone could possibly have for happiness, and yet we get even more--surely we have a great deal to be thankful for, don't we? But please don't think that Fritz and I need this, to cement our marriage, to make it more long-lasting, to bring us closer together, as such is not so, as surely no two people could ever realize a more perfect marriage than ours, in every way. We have not told our friends here yet, seems nice to keep it a secret. Fritz already has it figured for a girl, but neither of us are the least bit particular, and will sure take what we get,

Guess I better get this off and get into the garden, as there's work to be done. So I will close with much love to you both, and Fritz joins me in the distance--(he sure looks like a farmer,) to send you both his love too.

Jeanne

5/12/45