

Hawthorn Hill
Oakwood
Dayton Ohio

Sunday evening – February 14, 1926.

The flowers have been so lovely, dear. They came out so fresh and nice this morning. I have just put them to bed again in a nice cool place with lots for water. We'll keep them a good many days. I hope, dear. Milten and Anne and the children have been here. The children made valentines for us and were so interested in them. We had little special boxes of candy for them.

You'll have another s'prise Tuesday, dear, for I got off a letter today. When it isn't stormy I can nearly always get down to a box. I always will get the letter off when I can, dear. When you don't get one you may be sure I couldn't help it. I don't like to disappoint you, dear, I do love you a good deal and I can't bear to disappoint you. But I will disappoint you many times, I am afraid, dear, in all sorts of ways, but I'll try not to do it any more than I can't help. (Ought that to be "can't" or "can"? I'm too muddle-headed to figure it out!) You are so affectionate and so generous with me, dear. I'm counting on that. It is so sweet, dear, for you to be always telling me that you'd like to go shopping with me. I'll love to go with you, dear. I want you to have opinions and disagree with me as often as you please. I want you to like everything we get, dear. I'm not specially fitted in designing arrangements for rooms and so on. But we'll make out together and we'll get some pretty things, I'm sure. You mustn't even hesitate to say it if you think this thing or that is too expensive for what we'll get out of it. That won't hurt my feelings a bit, dear. Sometimes I think we oughtn't to spend very much on the house if you think it isn't a very permanent thing for us. But we can talk all that over before we buy any thing. I do think an oriental rug is a pretty safe thing to buy. We can always use it in any kind of a place where we will live. You can always fill out with odd rugs if it is too small. A rug for the study will be a medium size and can always be used, I think. Yes, rugs do cost a lot, dear, and so much more than when we furnished this house – almost 2 ½ or 3 time as much, actually. The last rug we bought – for Father's room, in 1917, cost a good 2 ½ times as much per square yard as those we got of exactly the same quality in 1913-1914. They were made in Donegal and there was an enormous duty on them. I think the duty is a little less now but the price in general is higher, I am afraid. I think but am not sure, that all over rugs cost almost \$3000.00 and all the down stairs rugs and one upstairs are hand-tufted Donegals. They were the same price as a very good quality of Oriental rugs. We thought some of ordering Orientals made to size but decided against them chiefly because they so often slip and roll up, being thin, and we were afraid Father might slip and fall. It took us six months to get ours from Ireland. We couldn't touch such rugs now. They would cost eight or ten thousand dollars. We have nice furniture, too – which we couldn't afford to buy now. Our dining room stuff is the most expensive and the loveliest, too. I just love it. I enjoy it all the time. We found when we thought of getting a big table for the library – something like the one in the living room – that the price in 1917 was twice what it was in 1913-1914 when we got all our first stuff. Well, the way to deal with the situation is the transfer one's interests from costly things to simple, appropriate things which can be just as interesting. I love fine things when you can have them easily and comfortable but I certainly don't need them to be happy. Since prices have been so high I have lost interest in buying things. They aren't worth what they cost and it seems stupid and uninteresting to be buying just what every body else is buying – anyway. There is such a silly competition about it. I have no interest in trying to keep up with the neighbors. My father and mother set an example on that that I shall never forget nor cease to admire. But, if I could help make as interesting a home for you and Henry and Orv as Father and Mother made for each other and us, I'd be more than satisfied. I think it is natural to have a wish for something very nice now and then – but it doesn't mean anything but a

fleeting thought. We know how much more we value love and sympathy and understanding and good character and good work, and nice tastes and fine interests and we'll go in for those things as our specialty! We'll see how lovely a home we can make for each other by taking the greatest care in all the things that don't cost a penny and then we will be able to have enough nice, fine things to add a little "velvet" to what is already lovely and sweet. We are lucky to have enough to gratify our simple tastes. So you see, dear, the rugs and the furniture won't worry us. We can get what will suit us, any way. Maybe it is easier to be philosophical about it when we know we don't have to skimp too much on material things. It isn't hard to go without things when you know you could have them if they were really important to you. I have found that out, for sure, by experience. But anyway, I vote for an independent home – where we can put our time and money and interest into what appeals to us as interesting and important. It all rests with us, dear. We can have a beautiful home and we will have. I know you'll love me, dear, and I'll love you ~~more~~ so and we'll be so considerate and ~~more~~ so careful to keep our love for each other sweet – sweeter than it is now – maybe I don't know. It's pretty sweet now, isn't it, my darling boy?

Oh, it's almost a quarter of twelve. I've been sitting here two hours writing this letter, dear. Goodnight, dear. I love you, dear, and here's a good night kiss.

Your
Katharine