

12 The Orchard
Montpelier Road
London W. 5
May 21, 1956

Dear Tommie,

Thank you for sending me the slips. The package was waiting when we got back from our trip last Monday. Thank you very much also for the postcards of the Imperial Hotel. How much longer will you be there in Japan? How is Jan enjoying it?

We had a wonderful trip, of course it was much too short, but we are glad we had the chance to see so many places. We went to Holland first - it was really lovely. For miles and miles it was nothing but flowers. The people were very friendly and nice. The working people still wear wooden shoes. Amsterdam is a very nice city and not too large to be discouraging to the tourists like us. Things were very reasonable and the shops were full of beautiful things. We plan to go back in the fall on our way to Sweden so we can pick up a few things then. We were limited as for baggage since we flew most of the way to save time. We stayed with some Dutch people. The breakfasts were interesting and different. They eat cheese on bread for breakfast and it was delicious. We went next to Germany, the Bavarian section near Austria. Munich was the city we arrived at by Dutch Air lines. There were thousands of people at the air port sitting in the stands just watching

the planes coming in and out. There were many modern buildings and the things in the shops were beautiful. We were tempted to buy so many things we saw but again we were forced to resist them. We did get a nice silver fruit bowl for less than \$10. - The stainless steel ware are very nice and most reasonable. Gordon Fraser certainly made a nice profit on his imports. We also bought a few knives - they have the world's best, and very reasonable. We rented a car and drove into Austria. Will went to the places he was exactly 11 years before during the war and showed me the place where he was ~~wounded~~ wounded. We had the best sausage at a little restaurant there. We stopped every few minutes to take pictures so our progress was very slow.

From Munich we flew by Italian Air Lines to Rome. It was already very warm there. We did the sights by bus and by foot. We try to take public transportation whenever we can. It is usually crowded and rather bewildering but it's much cheaper than taxi cabs and it's a real experience. On our trip we rode every mode of transportation available. In Italy, the tourist is easily trapped because it seemed that everything was set up for it but we tried hard to avoid the traps as much as possible. Food in hotels and well known restaurants are usually

expensive and not as good as the little family style places where Italians eat. We found them in inconspicuous places and had wonderful food for as little as 50¢ or 75¢. We learned a few words and used them over and over and they seemed to appreciate it and was very friendly. Everyone stared at us without any inhibition. I felt like a freak all over Italy. They especially looked at my shoes (good American shoes) because they looked so clumsy compared to the graceful pointed, slim heeled Italian ones. It made me recall the time I was in Japan over 20 years ago and everyone stared at us, remember? I finally couldn't stand it any longer and bought a pair of slim heeled shoes. That was quite a job since most sales people couldn't speak English. There were so many nice clothes, leather goods, sweaters, etc. in Italy, it was heartbreaking not to be able to get everything we saw. I bought a couple of hand bags. One is monstrously huge but I found it absolutely necessary to get it during the trip. I also got a large leather satchel for my various purchases. I also got a Borsalino hat - they are the famous ones you can fold up without hurting them. Florence was the place where it is so much fun to shop. They are great bargainers and not entirely honest so if one just wants to have fun, it is quite an experience to haggle with them.

Venice is by far the most unusual city we have ever seen. There are no cars or other vehicles in the city at all. All transportation within the city is by water. Gondolas, we discovered, were strictly for tourists. Rich people own motor boats but most people use the boat buses. It's a delightful place and we could easily have spent several weeks there. We visited many other places too but we can show you pictures of them and talk about it when we see you at home.

Next we went to Switzerland by T.W.A. Food & service was best on T.W.A. We landed in Zurich and took the nice Swiss trains to various places. I think Switzerland is even more beautiful than Japan in many ways. It is clean and sparkling. We noticed even the sheets in the hotels were whiter than any place we've been in outside the U. S. We stopped briefly in Paris and saw some friends there before returning to London.

We plan to go to Sweden and Denmark in September, if all goes well.

I tried to send the children cards from every country we visited. I hope they appreciate the fact that it is often quite difficult to do that and save them. I'll write again. Hope you are well and accomplishing lots.

Love, Trisha