

Lydie Marland's Letters

To Grace Murray 1926 to 1945

Marriage, Infidelity, Poverty, and Caring for an Ill Husband

Gary Robert Pinnell

Disclaimer

This book is the result of extensive research and is written in good faith for educational and entertainment purposes. The interpretations and speculations regarding the lives of Lydie and E.W. Marland are based on collected historical data, personal letters, and secondary sources. While the utmost care has been taken to present this information as accurately as possible, the book may contain inadvertent errors or interpretations. This work is not intended to defame, purge, or malign any individuals, living or dead, and is simply an attempt to contribute to our understanding of historical figures and their impacts.

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E. W. MA
PONCA CITY, OKLAHOMA

This world be a
being quite impossible
Have been hope is

Chapter 1

In the Beginning

I was the editor of *The Seminole Producer* in 1992 when Governor David Walters invited reporters, photographers and editors aboard a bus. His goal was increased tourism. In Ponca City, mansion docents told us about the madness of E.W. and Lydie Marland. He made mad business decisions; her adoptive father-daughter marriage might have caused lifelong emotional and psychological problems.

Then E.W., fifty-four, proposed marriage to his daughter Lydie, twenty-eight, whom he had raised from age sixteen.

E.W. was one of the most prolific tycoons during the birth of Oklahoma's petroleum age. He negotiated an astonishing deal that allowed Marland Oil the exclusive right to drill for oil and gas in Canada's Hudson Bay and England's North Sea, and built a hundred million dollar company during the Roaring Twenties.

However, even the smartest guy in the room makes mistakes: E.W. borrowed money incessantly to keep up with his Oklahoma oil-baron peers: he built three lavish mansions, bought a palatial railroad car, and sailed on a luxurious yacht.

Corporate raider J.P. Morgan Jr. determined the world's most successful independent oil company was ripe for takeover, and set a trap in 1923. E.W. fell for it, accepted millions in loans, and sold tens of millions in Marland Oil stock. Five years later, Morgan persuaded Marland Oil's board of directors to merge with Conoco.



E.W. Marland



Lydie Marland

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Chapter 2

Early History

George Frederick Roberts peddled fruits and vegetables from a pushcart in Philadelphia, so his family struggled financially. George F. and Virginia's sister Margaret, who lived on Old Mill Road in rural Flourtown, had four children, George, Lyde, Marl and Gin.

By 1912, E.W. discovered dozens of oil and gas wells in north central Oklahoma, and leased thousands of acres of school lands.

Childless after nine years of marriage, E.W. and Virginia invited George, fifteen, and Lydie, twelve to Ponca City for four summers. In 1916, the Marlands offered to adopt the two oldest children. Margaret and George F. refused at first, but his sister died in 1913 and he took in three nieces.

According to one persistent rumor, the Marlands offered the Roberts fifty thousand dollars to allow the adoption. That account appeared to be factual after *The Daily Oklahoman* published a 1928 story detailing how the Roberts had bought a fashionable house with spacious lawns in Germantown.

Two details, however, suggested the rumor might be untrue: Lydie and E.W. married in July 1928 at her parent's home on Old Mill Road in Flourtown; and in a 1934 letter, Lydie wrote that her biological family could not pay their coal bills for four years.

Ironically, after Morgan ousted E.W. from Marland Oil in 1928 and he lost his \$30 million personal fortune in the stock market crash of 1929, the Marlands could not pay their own utilities at the mansion, and E.W. owed several months worth of drug and cleaning bills by 1931.

E.W. needed income so he ran for public office: despite his taboo marriage, he was elected to Congress in 1932, then was chosen Oklahoma's tenth governor in 1934.



Oklahoma's 10th Governor E.W. Marland on inaugural day

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Chapter 3

Who Was Grace?

Lydie addressed envelopes to Miss Grace Murray, 25 East Pleasant Street, Germantown, Pennsylvania. Grace collected about four dozen of Lydie's letters from 1926 to 1945.

Lydie left Flourtown in 1916, moved in with the Marlands in Ponca City, and only visited the Philadelphia suburb afterward. Germantown and Flourtown are now suburbs in north Philadelphia, four miles apart, so Grace was probably not a neighbor; she was likely to be a grammar or high school buddy.

Readers may presume from the tone of Lydie's letters that Lydie and Grace were intimate childhood friends – maybe best friends forever. They knew each other's families. They shared intimate details. They exchanged gifts at birthdays and holidays. Lydie frequently borrowed money from Grace.

Lydie's letters revealed Grace was unemployed several times. She also loved dogs, theatre, music, and was devoted to a popular singer of the day, Elsie Janis.



Lydie Marland, 1916



Grace Murray

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Chapter 4

First Postcard

Virginia died on June 6, 1926, reportedly from cancer. Six days later, *The Ponca City News* wrote that E.W. and Lyde (called Lydie) sailed to London. Political observers might have called that six-week international trip “bad optics,” the negative way an event is perceived. To friends and family, a European trip seemed an improper way to show grief.

In fact, E.W. met with Hudson’s Bay Company and negotiated two multi-million dollar business deals that allowed Marland Oil to explore for oil and gas in Canada and the North Sea.

Lydie mailed a 1½ cent postcard from London on July 10, 1926. It was the earliest from Lydie that Grace Murray saved. The picture side showed Round Tower and several blocks of Windsor Castle’s brick turrets and fences.

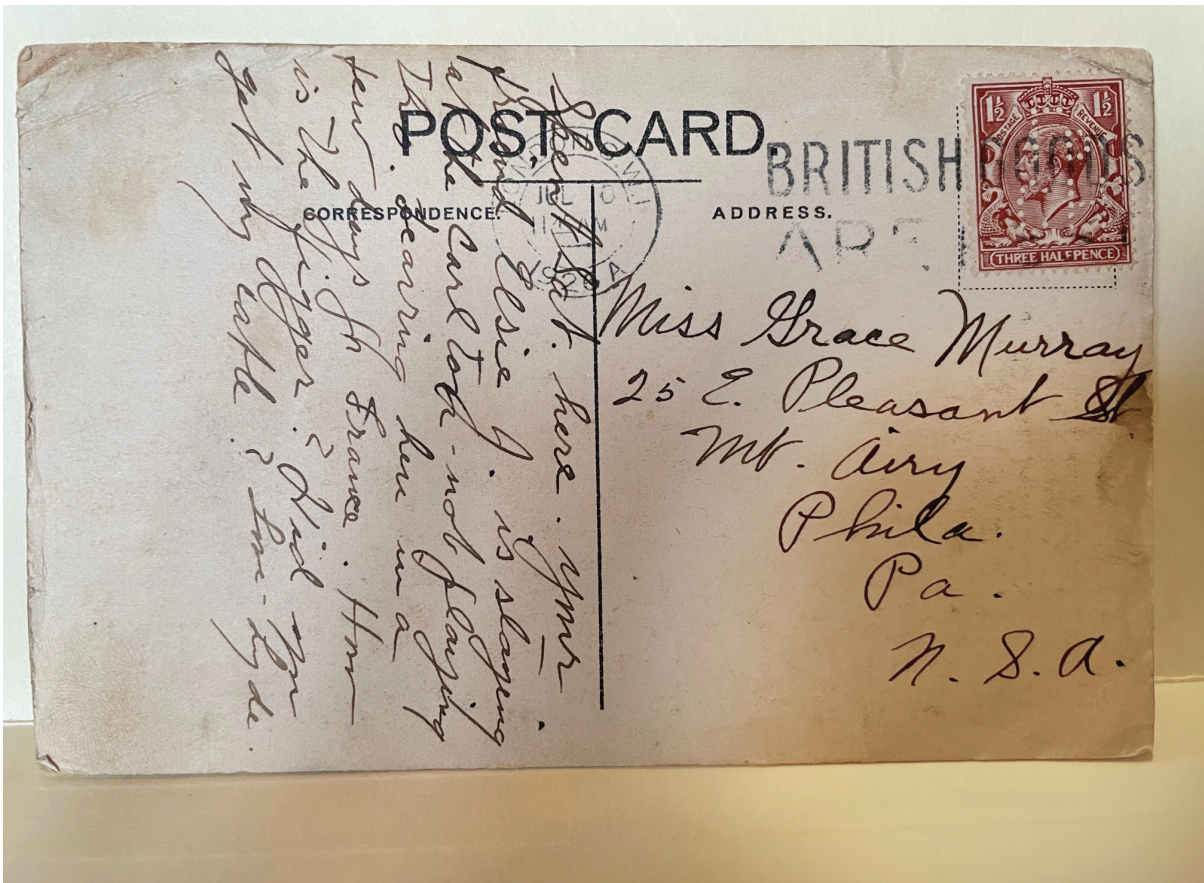
Elsie Janis was a singer and songwriter, stage and screen actress, screenwriter and radio announcer, comedian, a headliner on the vaudeville circuit as Little Elsie, and a Broadway and London star. She may have been the Lady Gaga of her time.

Lydie supported Grace’s lifelong diet efforts on this card and in subsequent letters. She scrawled this on the address side:

“Spent Saturday here.

*“Your friend Elsie J. is slaying at the Carlton – not playing tho.
Leaving here in a few days for France. How is the figger? Did you
get my cable?”*

“Love – Lyde.”



E. W. MA...
PONCA CITY, OKLAHOMA

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Chapter 5

mind
95
for

When Did It Begin?

The London postcard also records a speculative date: E.W. and Lydie reversed her adoption in January 1928, and they married in July. But when did their father-daughter relationship end, and exactly when did their romantic relationship begin?

Lydie was three years old when E.W. met and married Virginia in 1903; Lydie was eleven when E.W. struck oil in Ponca City in 1911. The Marlands adopted Lydie and George in 1916; Lydie was sixteen years old. Virginia died in 1926. When E.W. and Lydie spent six weeks together in London, Lydie was twenty-six. They married when Lydie was twenty-eight.

No one but E.W. and Lydie knew the genesis of their romance, but the July 10, 1926 postcard from London poses one possible date.



Mary Virginia Marland, first wife of E.W. Marland

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Chapter 6

Guess Who's Getting Married?

Seventeen months after Virginia died, Lydie became engaged to the world's most successful independent oil tycoon of the Roaring Twenties. Their taboo father-daughter romance became an international sensation, just as Woody Allen and Soon-Yi Previn did in 1997.

Lydie may not have been able to handle the dismay of family, friends, and neighbors, who learned of her love affair with E.W. in 1927.

Lydie Roberts Marland was an adopted daughter for twelve years, then was the second wife of Ernest Whitworth Marland for thirteen years, then was estranged from most of her family and friends for thirty-four years – the rest of her life.

Lydie and E.W. walked into a Philadelphia courtroom in January 1928 and cancelled her – and therefore George's – adoption. Until she became engaged to her adopted father, there was no opportunity to meet the press. Afterwards, Lydie occasionally posed for cameras and spoke a few words for newspaper stories.

E.W. had a warm relationship with the press and was interviewed regularly. However, his lifestyle, his political life, and his marriage to his adopted daughter made both infamous.

Three *New York Times* stories show Lydie was admitted to a hospital 1927, then to an Atlantic City sanitarium. She was released from both institutions in time to reverse her adoption in January 1928, then to marry six months later; she was twenty-eight and he was fifty-four. Public records also record their marriage license in Philadelphia in July 1928.

Either she did not write, or Grace did not keep letters from 1927 to 1929, which would have been about falling in love with, engagement to, and marriage to E.W. Lydie may also have written about admission to the New York City hospital and Atlantic City sanitarium for emotional problems in 1927-28, J.P. Morgan Jr. taking over Marland Oil, George Marland's



Newspaper clipping about E.W. and Lydie Marland's marriage

resignation as a senior vice president, and the loss of E.W.'s personal fortune in the stock market crash of 1929.

What Lydie's letters did reveal was a complicated personality: depression, infidelity, admiration for and devotion to her husband, E.W.'s illnesses and decline during his sixties, her constant encouragement of Grace's job search efforts, and Lydie's genteel manners and sense of humor.

Due to Morgan's takeover of Marland Oil, Conoco assumed those two giant leases in Hudson's Bay, Canada and the North Sea in England – one of E.W.'s greatest regrets. In October 1929, the stock market crashed, and E.W. reportedly lost his thirty million dollar personal fortune. He did not become penniless, as he claimed, but needed a job and so he ran for congress in 1932, then became Oklahoma's tenth governor during the Dust Bowl and the Great Depression, January 1935 to January 1939.



Marland Oil signs



The Marland Estate in Ponca City, Oklahoma where E.W. and Lydie lived during the height of their wealth and fame

E. W. MA...
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Chapter 7

Second Letter

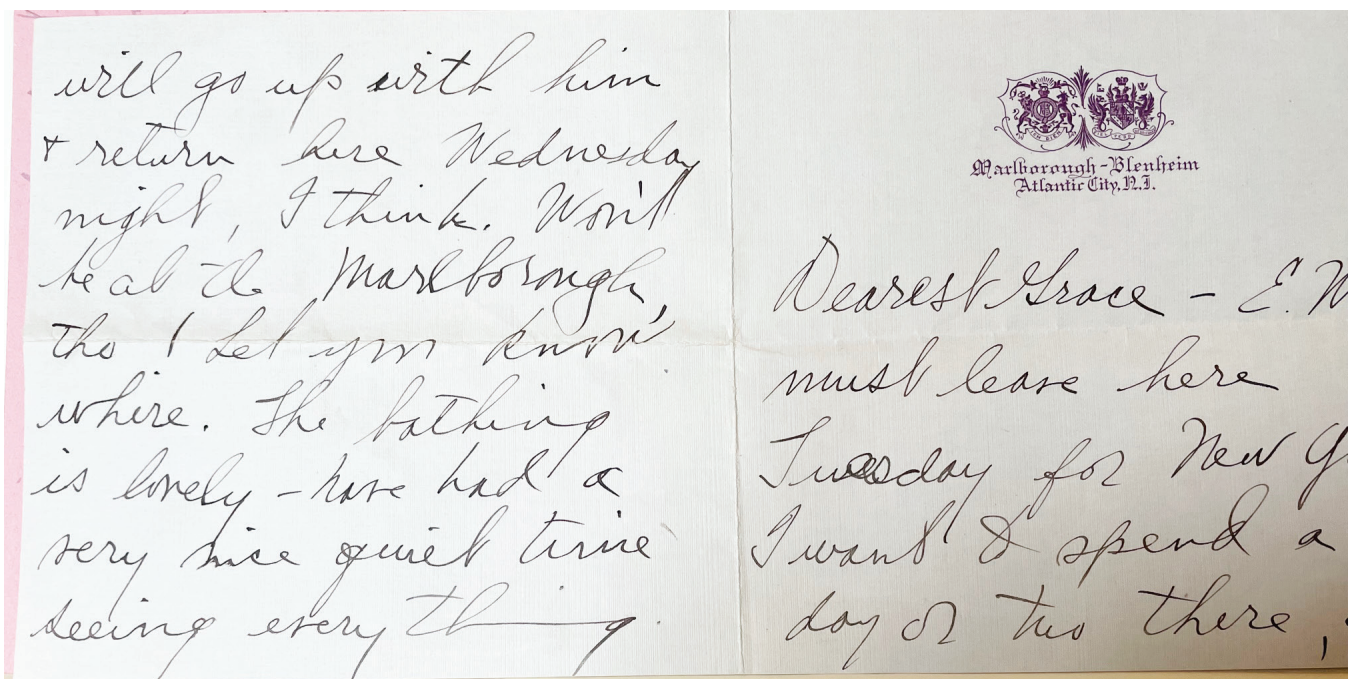
Two years after she married, Lydie wrote a note on embossed linen stationary featuring a crest and a pen-and-ink drawing of Marlborough House, a posh Atlantic City resort hotel.

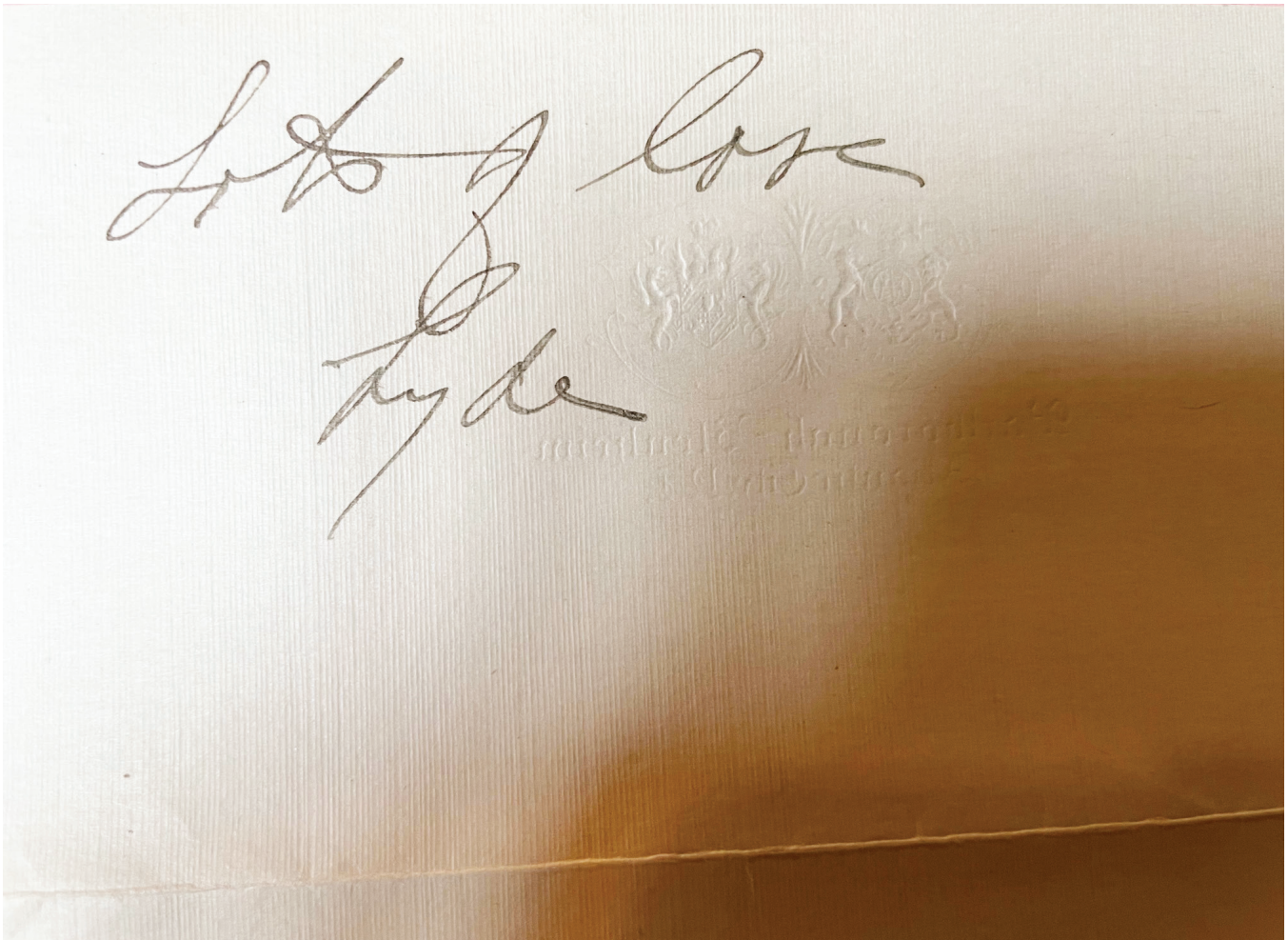
August 30, 1930

Dearest Grace – E.W. must leave here Tuesday for New York. I want to spend a day or two there, so will go up with him and return here Wednesday night, I think. Won't be at the Marlborough, tho! Let you know where. The bathing is lovely – have had a very nice quiet time seeing everything.

Lots of love,

Lydie





October 29, 1930

Dear Grace –

Here we are in Ponca for a week – E.W. speaking in the home district, for the Democratic ticket –

Have been busy since returning – have entertained more than a thousand guests in the mansion.

Am a little ashamed of all the bellyaching (beautiful expression) I did while on my vacation I found myself glad to return here – guess because my family problems seem more insurmountable than ever –

Feel grateful I have a good home, & a job too!

How are you doing?!

Are you going to be a good Democrat.

Hope your job lasts – because you seem to like it –

I am writing at my own desk – and E.W. has settled himself in the same room & is dictating a report or something to the legislature to one secretary & planning a speech – and I find myself in dizzy letter writing condition –

Well, this is only to get some word off to you – *anec beau* – *comp d'affection*.

Lyde

(over)

I returned here “first class” – It seems to have agreed with me better than traveling peasant style. I was rested & optimistic about things!!

L –

BOX SIX - PONCA CITY - OKLAHOMA

Dear Grace -

Here we are in
Ponca for a week - E.W.
speaking in the home
district for the Demo-
-cratic ticket -

Have been busy since
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Lydie wrote on stationary from a posh Atlantic City resort.

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BOX SIX

PONCA CITY

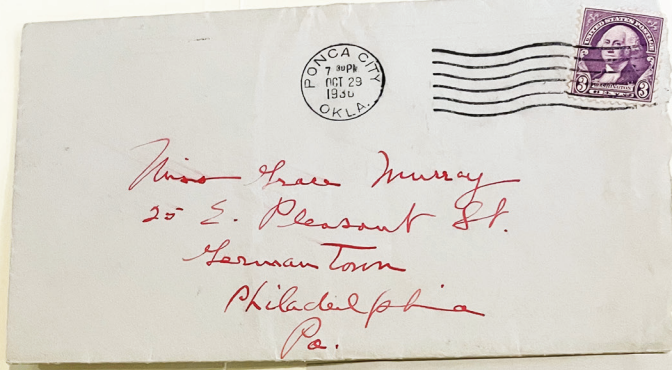
OKLAHOMA

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Well, this is only to get some
word off to you - - - - - with best
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I returned here "first class" -
It seems ^{I have} to agree with me
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L -



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PONCA CITY, OKLAHOMA

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Chapter 8

Biological Family

Little was written about their birth family, but previous books, newspapers and magazines reported that George and Lydie migrated from the Roberts household in Philadelphia to Ponca City because the Marlands offered formal educations and opportunities to meet marriage prospects.

Nevertheless, Lydie constantly yearned – and that’s the proper word – to return East at least once a year. In her letters, she revealed a lasting affection for her father, younger brother and sister, but painted a dysfunctional portrait of Margaret.

Lydie was at odds with the Collins, her mother’s family in Ponca City. She was also a bit of a Grinch about birthdays and holidays.

“In the clutches of the blue devils” is an archaic term for depression or melancholy.

12/6/30

Dearest Grace – I always enjoy your letters, no matter what you have to say. Sorry to hear, tho, you are in the clutches of the blue devils. I have been too for various reasons, not the least of which is our financial shape. Things have been & are looking very black for us. E.W. is slaving to save part of what we have. In our position, keeping up the place & appearances takes all there is at present & for three months I have only had what I promise at home. I was in Chicago with E.W. on business for three days. Did not have the carfare or time to go to Phila. & hated to leave him, too. To me the teddy looked just like you – hope it fit. I hate to admit how I hate coming birthdays! I am sending a year’s magazine subscription to a few people, instead of, or rather for Xmas presents. Outside of that & the babies in the family I am giving no Xmas presents. To a few people here E.W. & I will give a bottle of rum or wine from his “cellar”. Hope to come east during the holidays – if E.W.’s business takes him there or if I can get the carfare. Emptied two coin banks this morning and got \$19.52!! I have been so low at times & faithful Lizzie has been has been a life saver. She has given

*me things to read that helped me so much. Would pass them on if you I tho't you wouldn't take offence at some of them. George & LaVerne have a baby girl. Married 9 months & three weeks & have 3 children! How does your house seem with the improvements? Wish I could send you some things from here. But you might not like them. Well, must close, hope to see you soon. Always with love
Lyde*

Dearest Grace - I always
enjoy your letters no matter
what you have to say. Sorry
to hear, tho, you are so in the
clutches of the blue devils. I
have been, too, for various
reasons, not the least of which
is our financial shape. Things
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14/6/30
Pence
city

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 Wish I could send you some
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 Lde

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Chapter 9

Panic Attacks or Nervous Breakdowns?

Lydie couched her mental health in euphemisms. One example: “It was a mean way to leave, but I couldn’t help it – my resistance was at the breaking point. I was ill with worry and unsolved problems.”

A sense impending doom, which Lydie felt in this letter, might be a symptom of anxiety, depression, panic, or bipolar disorder, and it often precedes or accompanies a panic attack.

My mother’s panic attacks were episodes of fear or dread. Incidents were triggered by a phobia, usually occurred for no apparent reason, and were accompanied by a sense of unreality, an impending loss of control, increased heart rate, chest pain, dizziness, and shortness of breath.

Attacks typically subside within thirty minutes. However, according to Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania, some panic attacks last for years and are termed nervous breakdowns.

Lydie may have had seven panic attacks or nervous breakdowns: *The New York Times* reported she was admitted in 1927 to a New York hospital for “a nervous ailment”; she was admitted to a New Jersey asylum in 1928; when she felt under the Sword of Damocles in 1931; when she chased boyfriend Louis Cassel around Ponca City’s downtown streets in 1952 or 1953; when she paid Glen Gilchrist to destroy her statue “face first” in 1952 or 1953; and when she tossed Marland Mansion relics into the back of her 1948 Studebaker, stuffed ten thousand under the back seat, and drove away from Ponca City in 1953.

Lydie wrote about anxiety attacks on the bus home from Washington D.C. in 1975, and paranoidly complained hotel snoops watched her, that her sister-in-law or someone followed her around the country, and that the CIA spied on her.

In her 1930s letters, Lydie commented several times on Grace’s unemployment problems during the Great Depression. Even so, Grace often sent Lydie a purse, a scarf, a hankie, a slip, a kimono for birthdays or Christmas. “He has lost his stocks & the plantation” refer to the stock market crash of 1929, in which E.W. reportedly lost thirty million dollars, and his Mississippi plantation, which cost millions of dollars.

May 12, 1931

Grace! – I hardly know where to begin. I've put off writing for so long – and you probably will doubt it, maybe, when I say I love my “birthday present” and appreciate sending it so much. It is a lovely soft color & so unusual looking. I've carried it often. I wear lots of brown & tan, & having no tan purse, the green makes a beautiful combination of color, I discovered. It will also look lovely with any light summer shade of dress.

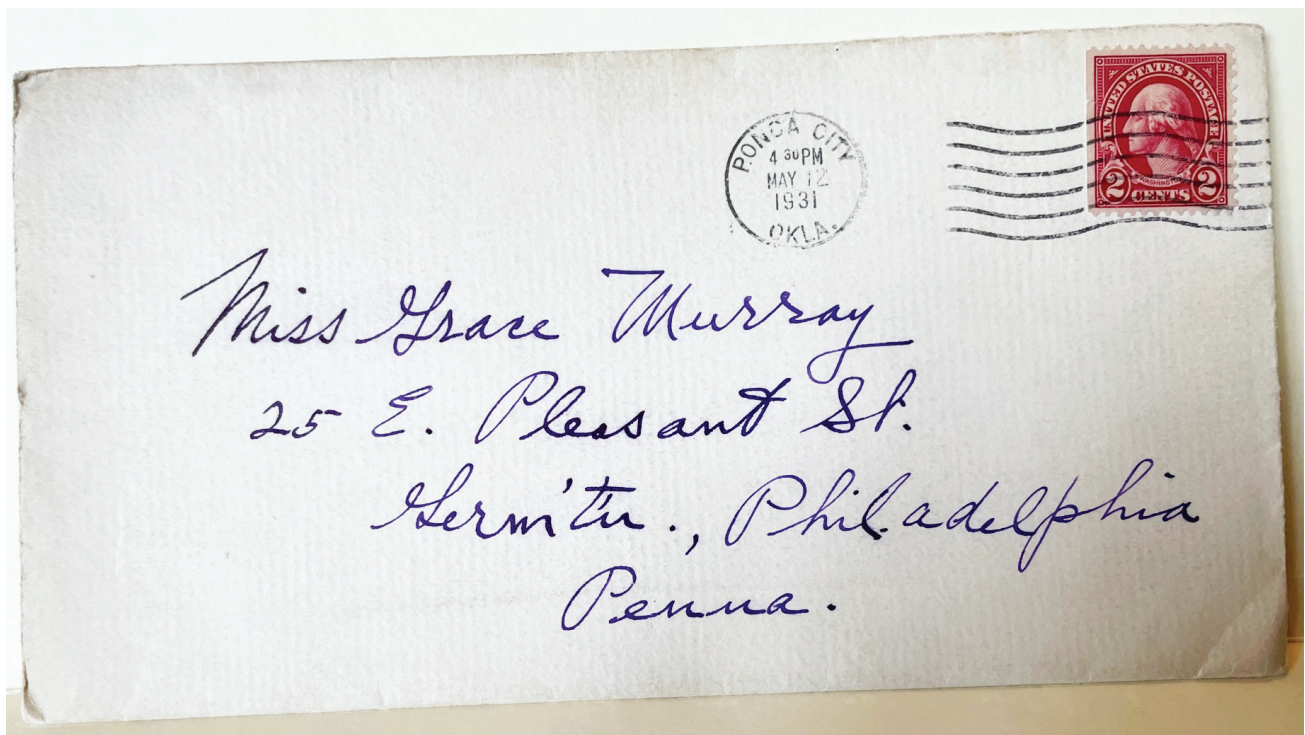
I really enjoyed both letters from you received after my sudden departure from Phila. last time. It was a mean way to leave, but I couldn't help it – my resistance was at the breaking point. I was ill with worry and unsolved problems. Do you remember Damocles? The man who was sitting under the sword, which was suspended by a hair – ? I have been him for 2/12 years but I didn't know it until about six months ago. If E.W. doesn't soon win his tax case against the gov't. (& it has been pending 12 years!) we are wiped out, everything. He is trying to hang on until then. We hope it is a question of months. I could tell you the details of what we have been reduced to – but why? For instance, our drug, cleaning & some other things have not been paid since Dec. and Jan. It doesn't seem possible but is too true. He has lost his stocks & the plantation will go any day now. Nothing left but rents here in Ponca. Lord only knows the outcome or our fate. I wonder how things are with you!? I never tho't for a moment of your little bit of money – in fact, I still owe you some & how I regret taking so long to pay you! Oh, I have learned such a lesson! – I wonder if my family has.

The situation here is so tense and difficult it takes most of my energy trying to keep my head & not be nervous, but I'm all broken out in bumps from nervousness. I've read the letter over!

Don't like it a peach!

Forgive me for not thanking you sooner for your thoughtfulness of my birthday & the lovely purse. I do appreciate it. I am always happy to hear from you

Lovingly yours – Lyde.



Grace! — I hardly know where to begin, I've put off writing so long — and you probably will doubt it, maybe, when I say I love my "birthday present" and appreciate you sending it so much. It is a lovely soft color & so unusual looking. I've carried it often. I wear lots of brown + tan, & having no tan purse, the green makes a beautiful combination of color, I discovered. It will also look lovely with any ^{light} summer shade of dress.

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The situation here is so tense & difficult it takes most of my energy trying to keep my head & not be nervous, but I'm all broken out in bumps from nervousness.

I've read the letter ~~over~~ ^{over}! Isn't it a peach! Forgive me for not thanking you sooner for your thoughtfulness of my birthday & the lovely purse. I do appreciate it. I am ~~up~~ always happy to hear from you
Surprise yours — Lydie.

Lydie asked Grace to mail theatre tickets to her younger brother and sister, Marl and Gin Roberts, to Elkins Park, six miles south of the Roberts family home in Flourtown. Lydie wanted a separate ticket for her father, George F., in Levitown. Like Germantown and Flourtown, Elkins Park and Levitown are Philadelphia suburbs near Flourtown.

Lydie married E.W. in 1928 in her parents' home on Old Mill Road. Did her mother and father move, or perhaps just George F? Was her family home now dysfunctional?

Postmarked Indianapolis

Sep. 28, 1931 Monday

En route

The American Pennsylvania Railroad

Grace!

I'll write to you later – train is so shaky –

Will you do me a great favor?

Get one seat down front center for “Everybody’s Welcome” for my Dad for Thursday or Friday night? Will mail you money from Ponca. Mail it to him Ambler R.D. # Levitown ets. At same time two for Sat. mat. for Marl & Gin. & do the same? Thanks so much – more later

Love Lyde

Thanks so much! ... Ticket money from Ponca to-morrow

Thursday or Friday
night? Will
mail you money
from Ponca. ~~and~~
Mail it to him
Amblers R. D. #1,
Leontown, etc. At
same time two for
Sat. mat. for Mark
& Lin, & do the
same? Thanks
so much - More later
Love Lydie

EN ROUTE
THE AMERICAN
PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD

Grace! I'll write to
you later - Train is
so shaky -

Will you do me
a great favor?

Get one seat down
front center for
"Every body is welcome"
for my dad for

Thanks so much!

E M Roberts

35-3 Church Rd.

Elkins Park

Ld. Melrose 1935 J.

Ticket money from

Pine to - now

Lydie marked the top left side of the envelope Air Mail, and affixed three two-cent George Washington stamps. The phrase, “I don’t weigh a hundred,” isn’t surprising. Lydie was five feet, four inches tall with a willowy build, as every photo and her statue demonstrate. Still, at age thirty-one, due to the depression she mentioned and “wearing myself out,” she may have been thinner than normal.

Lydie asked Grace to hock Lydie’s pearls and other items, but she also referred to the Ritz, an expensive and world-famous hotel. Even after E.W. lost his millions, Grace received several postcards from Lydie that showed the most elaborate hotels in New York, Atlantic City and Colorado Springs.

Lydie also disclosed to Grace that E.W. thought his wife was unfaithful. Lydie was anguished, but does not deny the accusation.

Sept. 30, 1931

Grace! I hope this is right for the tickets – thanks so much for your trouble! Am still recalling the show with pleasure.

I found a place that buys things – Morleys, between Chestnut & Walnut on 17th – but not until a day or so before I left – and altho I had the pearls with me & showed them & he told me I’d get from 175 to 200 for them – I didn’t leave them because the sale of jewelry wouldn’t come off for a month. This is what I’m getting as an answer

Candidly – you know I won’t take offense at your answer. If I send a few things to you, do you want to dispose of them there at a 5% commission – is that \$5 on a \$100? They take 15% if they sell them. I’ve got to do something to buy a few things over a couple of months – mother’s Ratics insurance, etc. I planned to telephone you before the 8.50 but was struggling with the trunk-from-the-Ritz-situation when the train arrived.

The less I say about my arrival here the better – except my husband won't live with me as a wife any more & thinks I had numerous men while away. Does it pay to play straight? My heart beats so fast – even milk gives me indigestion – but mums the word. I love him and admire him, but can I live with him & survive? Sorry to bother you with this painful subject. Wish me well. Will send the sheets. That will be a pleasure.

Love from

Lyde

Air Mail



Miss Grace Murray
25 E. Pleasant St.
Germantown
Phila. - Penna

Grace! I hope this is right
for the tickets - Thanks so
much for your trouble! Am
still recalling the show with
pleasure.

I found a place that buys
things - Morley's, between
Chestnut & Walnut on 17th -
- but not until a day or
so before I left - and altho
~~##~~ I had the pearls with
me & showed them & he told
me I'd get from 175 to 200
for them - I didn't leave them
because the sale of jewelry
wouldn't come off for a month.
This is what I'm getting at.
Answer candidly - you know
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I planned to telephone you before the 8.50 but was struggling with the trunk from the - Putz - situation when the train arrived.

The less I say about my arrival the better - except my husband won't live with me as a wife any more & that's I had numerous men while away. Does it pay to play straight? My heart beats so fast - even milk gives me indigestion - but mums the word. My heart & soul ache for E. W. I love him & admire him but can I live with him & survive? Sorry to bother you with this painful subject. Wish me well. Will send the sheets. That will be a pleasure. Love from
Lydie

June 25 1931

Grace –

I'm always so glad to hear from you – you wouldn't believe it, would you? I've been planning to write you for a long time, but have not felt too well & each day's problems seem to use me up. Also have been very busy moving out of, & closing the big house We are living in what we call the "Studio" (a small building on the place) with one colored man servant. He & I do everything. We have been tobogganing for a long time to comparative poverty. If E.W. wins his tax case against the government we will sit pretty again. If not we are ruined. I am (can't cure me!) wanting to see my family again. Am thinking of making the trip by bus – about \$55 round trip! Don't be surprised if you see me in August. Are you going to vacation this summer? It is beastly hot here. I don't weigh a hundred and "these are the times that try men's souls." It isn't lack of money so much but the effect on people – I mean the men in my family – George & E.W. – the terrible responsibilities are killing them. It is the strain of waiting on the tax decision. Well, enough of that! You aren't having a jolly time yourself. I always look forward to seeing you, but for so long back haven't had anything but problems to talk to you about. I have so many people around me who wear me down. Am wearing myself out trying to rise above so many situations here! Since last Feb. 1st have been saving every cent for a trip. Have \$200 now (& I owe you some, oh!) & don't know just what to do. Need clothes & need a change. Which?!

Lovingly always

Lyde

Grace - I'm always so glad to hear from you - you wouldn't believe it, would you? I've been planning to write you for a long time, but have not felt too well & each day's problems seem to use me up. Also have been very busy moving out of, & closing^{the} big house. We are living in what we call the "Studio" (a small building on the place) with one colored man servant. He & I do everything. We have been tobogganing for a long time to comparative poverty. If E. W. wins his tax case against the government we will sit pretty again. If not we are ruined. I am (can't cure me!)

wanting to see my family again. Am thinking of making the trip by bus - about \$55 round trip! Don't be surprised if you see me in August. Are you going to vacation this summer? It is beastly hot here. I don't weigh a hundred and "these are times that try men's souls". It isn't lack of money so much but the effect on people - I mean the men in the family - George & E.W. - their terrible responsibilities are killing them. It is the ^{strain of} waiting on the top decision. Well, enough of that! You aren't having a jolly time yourself. I always look forward to seeing you, but for so long back haven't had any thing but problems to talk to you about. I have to hear so many people around me who wear me down. Am wearing myself out trying to rise above so many situations here. Since last Feb. 1st have been saving every cent for a trip. Have \$200 now (& I owe you some, oh!) + don't know just what to do. Need clothes & need a change. Which?! Lovingly always
Lyda

E. W. MA
PONCA CITY, OKLAHOMA

This world be a
being quite impossible
Have been hope is

Chapter 10

Public Life

This letter on Hotel Youngblood stationary featured a pen-and-ink of a three-hundred-room inn that was among the most elaborate, and likely provided the best rooms in Enid.

While Lydie scrounged for cash, E.W. always booked the finest rooms. In several letters, Lydie admonished herself for owing but failing to repay what she borrowed. Grace was a bookkeeper at a hardware store near Philadelphia, so loans had to be just a few dollars.

E.W.'s opponent was incumbent congressman Milton Garber, whose campaign brought up Lydie's taboo marriage to her adopted father. Lydie was: "drawn involuntarily into the whirl of it all. I guess as long as I live with E.W. I'll be carried along, a passive actor, in the swift current." Opponents were unsuccessful with the congressional campaign issue; E.W. won easily.

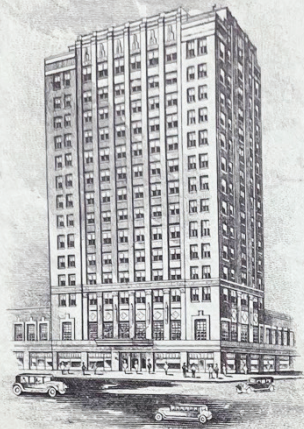
11/5/32

Dear Grace –The campaign is raging – and I found, some time ago, I was being drawn involuntarily into the whirl of it all. I guess as long as I live with E.W. I'll be carried along, a passive actor, in the swift current of his active & so positive & forceful life. It looks as if he is going to win. If you should ever go up to Mother's get her to show you the literature I sent her – Whether he wins or not I hope to see you soon – We are poorer ever but things are looking up – I wanted to telegraph you when you wrote me about being off on another reducing regime – but am foregoing any offenses of the kind – It takes courage – intestinal fortitude – hope you can hold out – & at the same time do yourself no damage –

Please vote for Roosevelt, unless you have ideas of your own – Must close, pack & be off to the next town – Hoping things are better than usual for you –

Lovingly –

Lyde



THREE HUNDRED ROOMS EACH WITH BATH

Hotel
Youngblood

ENID, OKLA.

11/3/32

Near Grace — The campaign is raging — and I found, some time ago, I was being drawn involuntarily into the whirl of it all. I guess as long as I live with E. W. I'll be carried along, a passive actor, in the swift current of his active & so positive & forceful life. It looks as if he is going to win. If you should ever go up to Mother's

get her to show you the literature
I send her - Whether he visits
or not I hope to see you
soon - We are poorer than
ever but things are looking
up - I wanted to telegraph
you when you wrote about
being off on another reducing
regime ^{but only regarding any expenses of the kind -} It takes courage -
intestinal fortitude - hope
you can hold out - & at
the same time to yourself
no damage -

Please vote for Roosevelt,
unless you have ideas of
your own - Must close, Pack,
& be off to the next town - Hoping
things are better than usual for
you - Lovingly - Lydie

This letter was written on stationary embossed with tall, elongated navy-blue capital letters, LRM. After he was elected, E.W. used Shoreham Hotel as his congressional residence.

December 31, 1932

Grace – That is a lovely gown you sent me –

I believe it is customary to thank people for presents, but I always want to give you the very devil for the things you send me – your extravagance, I mean. I wish you wouldn't. Of course, the nightie is really very welcome – if you & Aunt Bess had not sent them, I would be sleeping in old petticoats. I use a coat for a kimono. But we eat well.

An unusual Christmas best describes our celebration here – no gifts, except toys to the three children & 2 Collins girls. A little cash to the three, east – and of course my gift to you – which is considered so unusual – Xmas eve, an excruciatingly boring drinking contest, four guests for dinner, which I cooked all morning and partly on Saturday – guests remaining two days with a youngster – I'm glad it is over. I hope to sleep the new year in. This is the first holiday season in my life. I have been unable to feel. I am numb about Xmas – it must be the beginning of the end

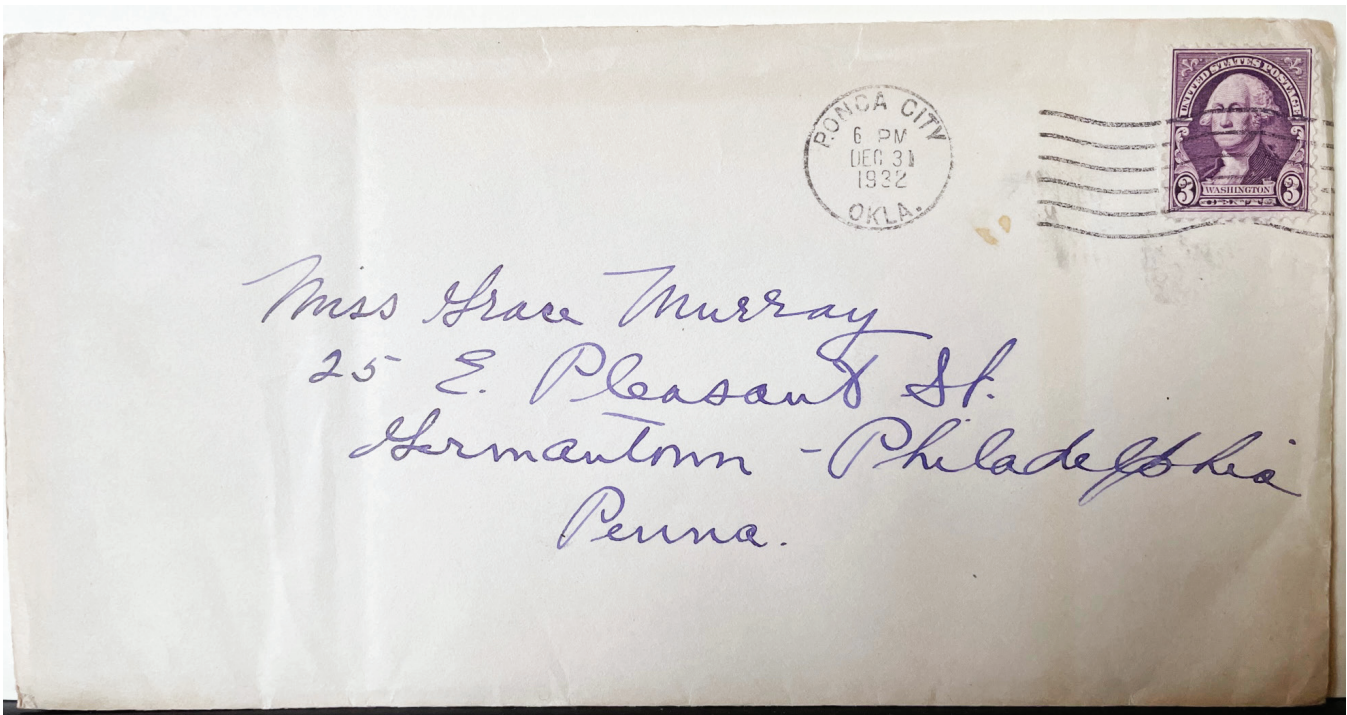
–

I don't know if you have a new job or the same one yet – from your letter I gathered you were just sort of riding along –. Don't give up the ~~gradual~~ reducing – altho it does require super human courage & ~~will~~ it ~~will~~ be worth it.

Always lovingly,

Lyde –

And again – thank you for the pretty gown!



Grace - That is a lovely gown you sent me —

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job or the same one yet - from your
last letter I gathered you were just sort
of riding along - Don't give up the
gradual reducing - altho it does
require super human courage & will -
- it will be worth it ———

Always lovingly,
Lydie -

And again - Thank you for the
pretty gown!

While E.W. served in Congress, he and Lydie stayed at Shoreham Hotel. The Shoreham was one of Washington, D.C.'s fine inns. The modern Shoreham is situated in Woodley Park, outside the heart of the city. It was chosen in March 1933 for President Franklin D. Roosevelt's first inaugural ball, and has hosted inaugural balls for every subsequent president of the 20th century. President Bill Clinton played the saxophone there at his inaugural ball.

John, below, is probably E.W.'s personal secretary, John Hale.

From this and other letters, the reader can gather that the Roberts family may have been dysfunctional. According to Lydie, other family members considered Mother Margaret a pill, and George F. was remote. Did Lydie inherit qualities from both?

Finally, Lydie was thrilled over Grace and Uncle Bernie's new jobs, which were hard to find in the Great Depression.

March 9, 1934

Grace,

I enjoyed your nice letter, altho I have waited so long to answer. And am really thrilled over your new job. Uncle Bernie got one, too.

(E.W. is "in" with a cold, and John is taking dictation & I am having a hard time to concentrate)

I don't believe so much in the enclosed, but sent it anyway. Found it in a drug store. Are you still losing weight? I thoroughly appreciate the effort and willpower it requires to reduce. The same kind of guts & courage and sustained willpower is required for so many other things in life. I am working at "keeping it off."

Maybe it is the climate here, maybe my inferior stamina, or the "wrong point of view". Whatever, the going seems all up grade. Have joined a gym class in the hotel and swim often. E.W. and I have had one cold for nearly three months.

I think I would have been up to Phila. before this, but there has been trouble in the clan and I don't believe my unsteady emotions could stand it and too, it's too cold to drive and the trip costs \$15 – and my monthly allowance is \$50!

The eyes are not doing right, the doctor still experimenting with specs, dark glasses, & different drops –

E.W. is going to Okla. for about three weeks. I then hope to have a guest or two. Could you come down for a day & night. A weekday would be better if you were interested in seeing the House & Senate in action. If not the weekend. Would love to have you again, so just let me know.

I know you were pleased about the Valentine even if you did have to pay for it. I often think of my god child I've never seen. Tragedy is still stalking in Marie S.'s family I have had two letters from her written by her nurse and I am afraid she is complete off balance.

I am distinctly off sissy dishes. Since that I have haven't had a vegetable luncheon & will never have the courage again.

Am sending two photy graphs. If you don't like them, that's all right too. I don't much. Don't flatter me enough.

Must close now & see what the maid is doing with the fish & rub E.W.'s chest with Vick's –

Always with love, Lyde.

Saw Ina Claire here & the Russian ballet – both very good, I thought.



Miss Grace Murray
25 E. Pleasant St.
Hermantown
Phila - Pa.

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Since that day, I haven't had a vegetable
luncheon & will never have the courage
again.

Am sending two photographs.
If you don't like them, that's all
right, too. I don't much. Dad
pleas me enough.

Must close now & see what
the maid is doing with the
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ricks -

Always with love,
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Saw Ine Claire here & the
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THE SHOREHAM - WASHINGTON, D. C.

Grace - I enjoyed your
nice letter, altho I have
waited so long to answer.
And am really thrilled over
your new job. Uncle Bernie
got one, too.

(E.W. is "in" with a cold, and
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Are you still losing weight?

I thoroughly appreciate the effort
and will power it requires
to reduce. The same kind of
guts & courage & sustained
will power is required for so
many other things in life.
I am working at "keeping up".
Maybe it is the climate here,
maybe my inferior stamina,
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class in the hotel & swim after.
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The eyes are not doing right, the
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child I've never seen. Tragedy is
still stalking in Marie S.'s family.
I have had two letters from her written
by her nurse & I am afraid she
is completely off balance.

Philadelphia to Baltimore is 178 miles, Baltimore to Washington is another 40 miles.

March 23, 1934 *Friday*

Dear Grace –

Thanks so much for the socks –

I wonder if you can come down on Saturday, April seventh, as well as Easter week-end. E.W. doesn't leave until to-morrow a week – and I think it will fit in better – in every way – if you can't come that week-end, let me know immediately so I can rearrange my plans a little. I (am) told the cherry blossoms will be out then, & things here festive.

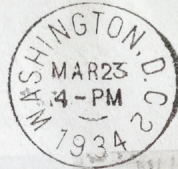
If you would save much money, getting a round trip to Baltimore & back, I'll drive up there to meet you and drive you back to B.

Just found out it is \$4.35 as against \$6.15. What do you think? It is nearly two – or would you prefer that extra hour & a half each way here.?

Love –

Hastily, Lyde

The SHOREHAM
Resort Hotel in the Nation's Capital
Washington, D. C.



ADDRESS
YOUR MAIL
TO
STREET/
NUMBER



Miss Grace Murray
25 E. Pleasant St.
Germantown
Phila - Pa.



The SHOREHAM *Friday*
Resort Hotel in the Nation's Capital
Washington, D.C.

Dear Grace - Thanks so much
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down on Saturday, April
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Classes will be on then,
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If you would save much
 money, getting a round trip
 to Baltimore & back, I'll drive
 up there & meet you & drive
 you back to B. (Just found
 out it is \$4.35⁰⁰ against \$6.15⁰⁰.
 What do you think? It is nearly
 two — or would you prefer
 that extra hour & a half each
 way here.?)

Love —
 Hastily. Hyde

April 25, 1934

Shoreham stationary

Dear Grace – The bag was most welcome – I was on the verge of having to buy a new one – they are so useful for traveling. I've used them for years!

I enjoyed having you for the week-end. Only wish it could have been more exciting.

E.W. leaves Friday – and I very soon after. Will come up to say good-bye to Mother & will see you.

Have some more dieting dope to tell you.

I wish you wouldn't splurge your money on me, but if you must, I do appreciate and always enjoy what you give me.



The SHOREHAM
Resort Hotel in the Nation's Capital
Washington, D. C.

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Have some more dieting
dope to tell you.

Just wish you wouldn't splurge
your money on me but
if you must, I do appreciate
it and always enjoy what
you give me.

Lydie's mother can't pay a coal bill, and asked her brother for money. Lydie could have brought her mother home, but facetiously comments, "but the pleasure of it is so mixed."

5/17/34 Wednesday

Ponca City

Dear Grace –

I enjoyed the fire hugely! – sorry about it, of course, but it makes it a hilarious tale–

I remained in Flourtown some time after I saw you. Had a couple of very unhappy experiences with my mother over the part she plays in Marl & Gins affair.


She is a wreck & I was, too. Mother left for a couple of days & then I went to N.Y. Expected to visit the Davidsons & did, but didn't see them much, as Mrs. D. had a stroke as they were about to leave N.Y. She died last Sunday. Have felt so blue ever since – was really her serious admirer. Flew from Newark to Tulsa – 12 hours – thrilling experience – loved it. Now I am here – E.W. off campaigning – home Sundays. What with my political duties & domestic I shall keep occupied. Have no car – left it in Flourtown – so walked to see all relatives yesterday. At Collins Jr., uncle S. had just heard from Mother asking him to pay a 4 year old coal bill & that she was not getting enough to eat. I might have brought her here with me, but the pleasure of it is so mixed – she is a responsibility in so many ways & I couldn't buy her clothes. Enough! of that for you.

5/17/34

Wednesday
Ponca City

Dear Grace - I enjoyed the fire
hugely! - sorry about it of course,
but it makes a hilarious tale -

I remained in Flourtown some
time after I saw you. Had a
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She is a wreck + I was, too.
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This stationary features a pen-and-ink drawing of a stone path over a bridge and through shrubs, trees and a four-story birdhouse. The heading is embossed: E.W. Marland Ponca City, Okla. Marland Garden may have been one of E.W.'s original names for his estate. Lydie left no clues as to which condemned prisoner she writing about.

December 27, 1934

Dear Grace – I will write again to tell you how very much I like your gift and appreciate your sending it – also, that I have had no excuse for not writing for so long – just mismanagement of my time –

The enclosed – With his letter to me he enclosed part of some court testimony & a newspaper clipping – After vainly trying to think how to about the mater myself without bothering any of E.W.'s staff, I finally turned it over to John Hale. The letters accompanying John's will explain what he did. I have just talked to him asking if there is anything else we can do. He said "no".

I feel somehow that you are really not well acquainted with his wife or very interested in the case – so I have taken no pains on your account – had only in the interest in the poor condemned! man himself. It has given me a bad case of jitters, because he addresses me directly, I know his name & date of execution. Has brought the horrible uncertain feeling – "is he guilty?" I feel there must be something else to do – but what? – Would his attorney leave any stones unturned? – or do condemned men with no money and no influence get a raw deal?

It is all rather terrible & morbid – sorry to bother you with it – but have decided to ask you if you really know his wife, or anything at all about the case.

Hurriedly with love

Lyde



MARLAND GARDEN

E. W. MARLAND

PONCA CITY, OKLA.

1/27/34

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or anything at all about the case

Hurriedly & with love
Eyle

E. W. MA
PONCA CITY, OKLAHOMA

This world be a
being quite impossible
Have been hope is

Chapter 11

The Stuff of Legends

Governor Marland's first lady was his opposite: Lydie avoided cameras and allowed infrequent interviews. Did she wear sunglasses to hide her identity at the Capitol or, as one letter revealed, because she was diagnosed with eye problems? Either way, *The Oklahoman's* Lydie Marland photo file was twice as large as any other first lady, perhaps because she was so lovely and photogenic.

Previous authors have written that after E.W. died in 1941, Lydie effectively secluded herself and was little seen around Ponca City. Her letters dispute that. World War II began two months after her husband passed, gasoline rationing began, she walked two miles to downtown Ponca City, volunteered for the Red Cross, and had a boyfriend who was a Navy flier.



Lydie Marland, Oklahoma's First Lady, descends the staircase of the governor's mansion in her inaugural ball gown. She told a reporter earlier that day, "I have just discovered that I haven't a thing to wear. I'll probably buy a dress this afternoon, if I ever get away. But I haven't any idea what kind or what color."

Governor's mansion stationary

May 22, 1935

My dear Grace –

I am ashamed of myself allowing so much time to pass by before thanking your thoughtfulness on my birthday. Of course I loved the hanky – it was so pretty. And also your letters, which I always enjoy. I was very interested in your visit to Elsie Janis. You had never really told me that you were quite as friendly with her, as I suddenly realized when you described your visit. I am glad for you

because I believe she is quite a person and very human and full of courage.

Well you have perhaps changed your business address again? Are you earning or starving – and still dieting – if you haven't already read Sylvia of Hollywoods' "No More Alibis", I'll send it to you. It's good.

I had expected to see Philadelphia and you before this. But while we have much prestige, we have surprisingly little cash – and I'll be lucky if I see my folks before nine months have passed since my last visit. The past six months have been strenuous. Living up to my husbands position is just about all I can do. The campaign, the guests (they must always be important ones, it seems) for all the holidays, the election, morning, closing houses, opening houses, redecorating run down governors' mansions, people, newspapers, living with a man who is wrestling with an unsympathetic state legislature, people, being beautiful, tactful, intelligent, a wife, my own secretary, a housekeeper, a hostess, sending presents to babies whose parents name them for the governor, trying to explain to ignorant people by mail, why the government is allowing them to starve, seeing the governor off at 8 – tired, greeting him at six – more tired – Well, as usual, this is all about me – sorry, but hardly but I hardly have time to think of other peoples lives –

Do let me know how near ruin you are from your tussle with ol' devil fat –

Always lovingly yours,

Lyde





Governor's Mansion
Oklahoma City

My dear Grace - I am ashamed of myself allowing so much time to pass by before thanking you for your thoughtfulness on my birthday. Of course I loved the party - it was so pretty. And also your letters, which I always enjoy. I was very interested in your visit to Elsie Janis. You had never really told me that you were quite as friendly with her, as I suddenly realized when you described your visit. I am glad for you because I believe she is quite a person and very human and full of courage.

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be important ones, it seems) for all the
holidays, the election, moving, closing
houses, opening houses, redecorating
run down governors' mansions, people,
newspapers, living with a man who is
wrestling with an unsympathetic state
legislature, people, being beautiful,
tactful, intelligent, a wife, my own
secretary, a housekeeper, a hostess, sending
presents & taking whose parents name
them for the governor, trying to explain
by mail, why the government

to Lydie
people

is all owing them to starve,
seeing the governor of at 8 -
tired, greeting him at six -
more tired — Well, as usual
This is all about me - sorry,
but I hardly have time to
think of other peoples
lives —
Do let me know how

near ruin you are from
your tussle with ol' devil
fat —

Always lovingly yours,
Lydie.

Ten months after Governor Marland took office

October 24, 1935

Dear Grace – I haven't heard anything from you for so long, I'm wondering how you are.

I am straining to make the grade, officially and personally.

I'm still hoping for my visit to Philadelphia, and believe before winter is over, I'll get there.

Just a line to say I hope you are O.K.

Lovingly

Lyde

THE GOVERNORS MANSION

OKLAHOMA CITY

OKLAHOMA

Dear Grace - I haven't
heard any thing from
you for so long, I'm
wondering how you are.

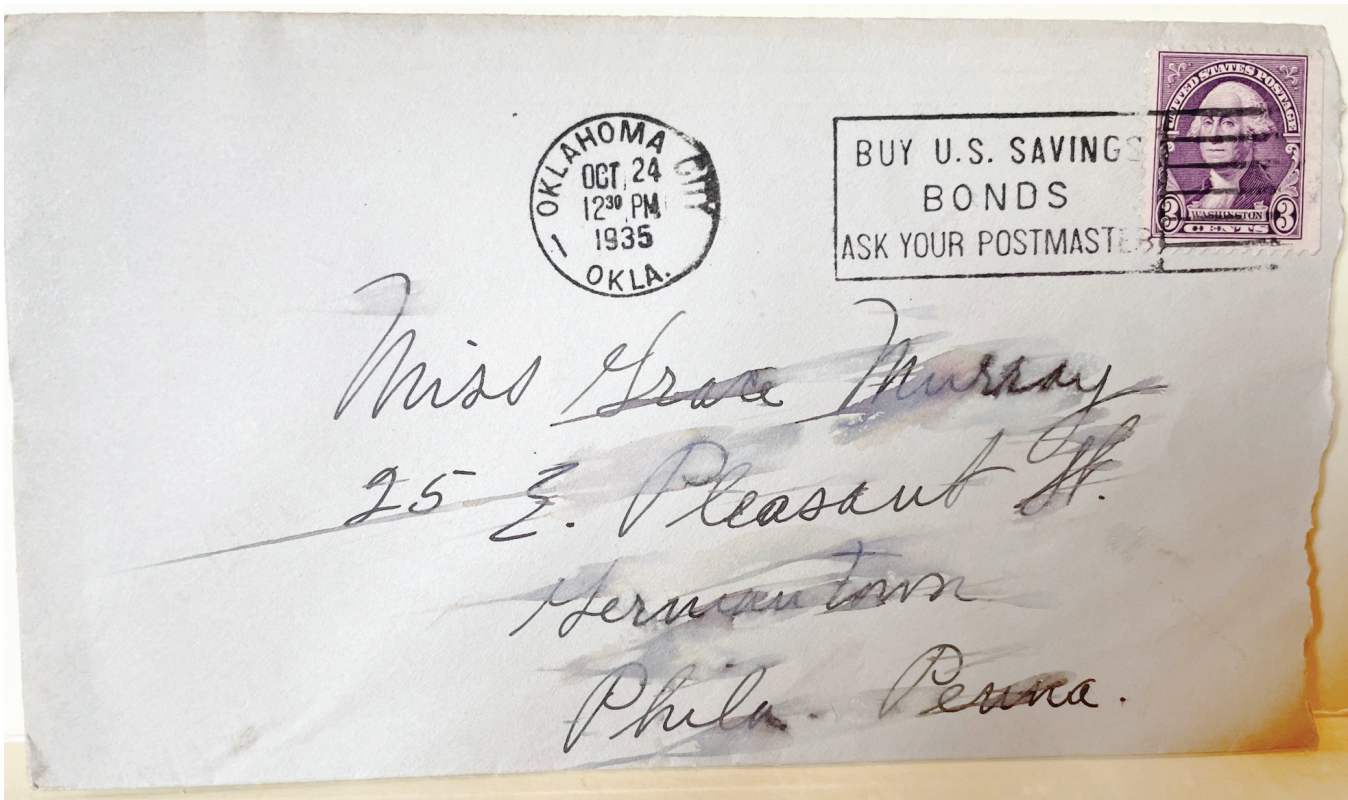
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and personally.

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my visit to Philadelphia,
and believe before the
winter is over, I'll get
there.

Just a line to say
I hope you are O. K.

Lovingly
Hyde —



Ponca City was near the epicenter of the Dust Bowl and the Great Depression in 1935. Bryant Baker sculpted Pioneer Woman, E.W.'s tribute to the women who helped found and tame the Great Plains. The seventeen feet tall, twelve thousand pound statue stands atop a quarry stone base, one block southwest of the Marland Mansion. The Bryant Baker Gallery is inside the Artist Studio, on the Mansion grounds.

December 31, 1935

Dearest Grace –

You always remember me – and I have been neglecting you. I think the little pocket vanity is sweet, & I'll use it with much pleasure – and especially appreciation, for your ever thoughtful remembrance of me. We are having a week in Ponca. Had six for Xmas dinner, including B. Baker, sculptor, who is paying us a visit. Xmas day was given to the usual exchange of greetings, calls & callers, eggnog & wine. I thought of you and wondered what you doing, etc. In a couple of weeks, we will hie us back to the capitol and the grind – especially the first lady, who is about to break in a new cook & house-keeper, which is no fun for the first lady –

As my people in Flourtown have no coal, I have decided to postpone my trip east for a couple of months, when it will be warmer there, & the Spring dust storms begin here.

I have been thinking of your Mother – Hope she isn't feeling too miserably –

It sounds trite, but I am wishing for your happiness and all good things for you in this coming year –

Life goes on – I am different this year. Marriage did not quiet me down, but a year as the first lady, quite definitely has – My feet are weighted – Oh, well, –

Have you read a new book called "A Woman's Best Years?" If not

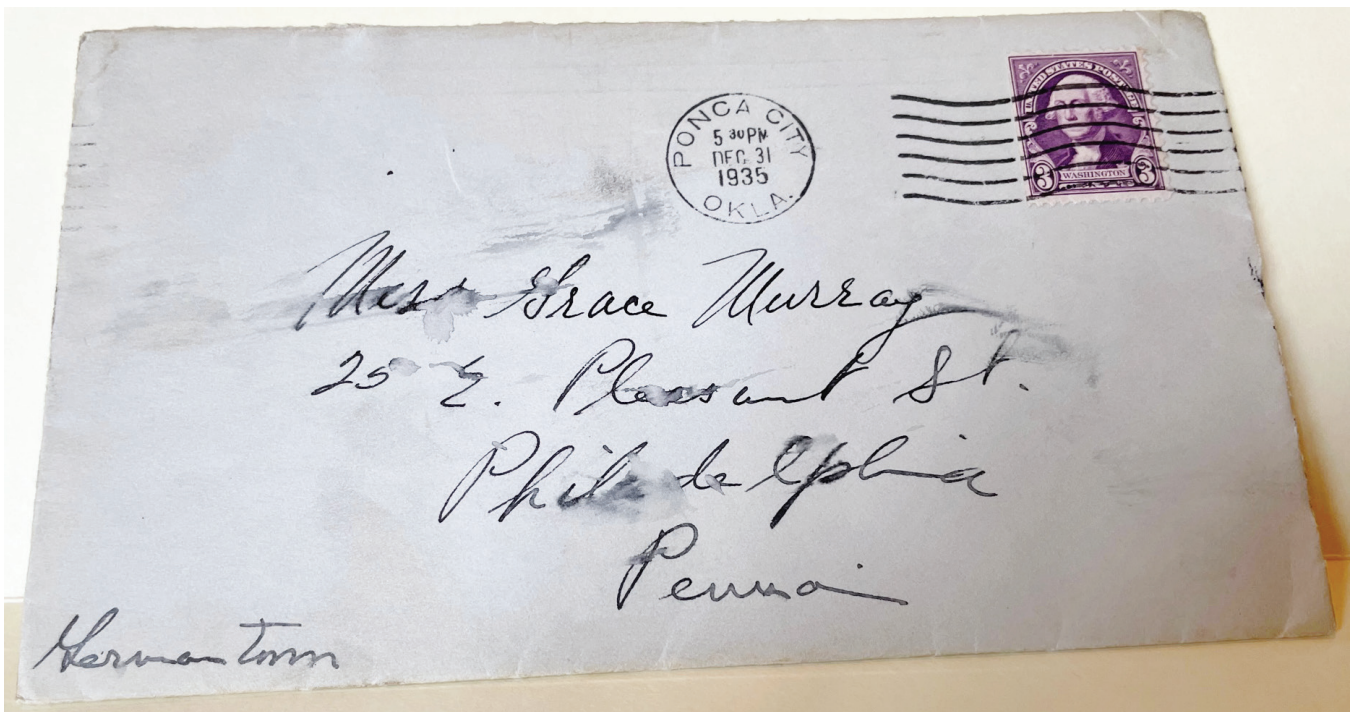
Letters from Lydie Marland to Grace Murray

I'll send it.

Signing off –

Yours with love,

Lyde



BOX SIX

PONCA CITY

OKLAHOMA

Dearest Grace —

You always remember me — and I have been neglecting you. I think the little pocket vanity is sweet, & I'll use it with much pleasure — and especially appreciation, for your ever thoughtful remembrance of me.

We are having a week —

Ponca. Had sit for Xmas dinner,
including B. Baker ^{sculptor} who is
paying us a visit. Xmas day
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doing, etc. In a couple of days
we will be us back to the
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the first lady, who is about to
break in a new coat & horse-keeper,
which is no fun for the first
lady —

BOX SIX

PONCA CITY

OKLAHOMA

As my people in Elmer town have no coal, I have decided to postpone my trip east for a couple of months, when it will be warmer there, & the spring dust storms begin here.

I have been thinking of your Mother - Hope she isn't feeling too miserably -

It sounds trite, but I am wishing for your happiness and all good things for you in this

Evening year -

Life goes on - I am different
this year. Marriage did not quiet
me down, but a year as the first
lady, quite definitely has -

My feet are weighted - Oh, well -
Have you read a new book called
"A Woman's Best Years"? If not I'll
send it.

Signing off -

Yours with love,

Lydie

April 13, 1936

Grace!

I have had many smiles and chuckles at this silly pink bunny – He is quite the most foolish looking and more adorable bunny I have ever seen! Thank you for thinking of me!! Have thought a lot of you lately. Still planning my trip! E.W. heads the Demo state delegation to the convention. In case he is too busy campaigning the committee named me his alternate. Can you picture me as a delegate to the Nat. Con.?

But I would like to have a visit home before then & am thinking of getting off soon. (Have I told you E.W. is in the Senate race? Primary elections early in July – second, late in July, & election of course in Nov.)

We had all children on relief role for Easter egg hunt at the mansion yesterday. A mob all day.

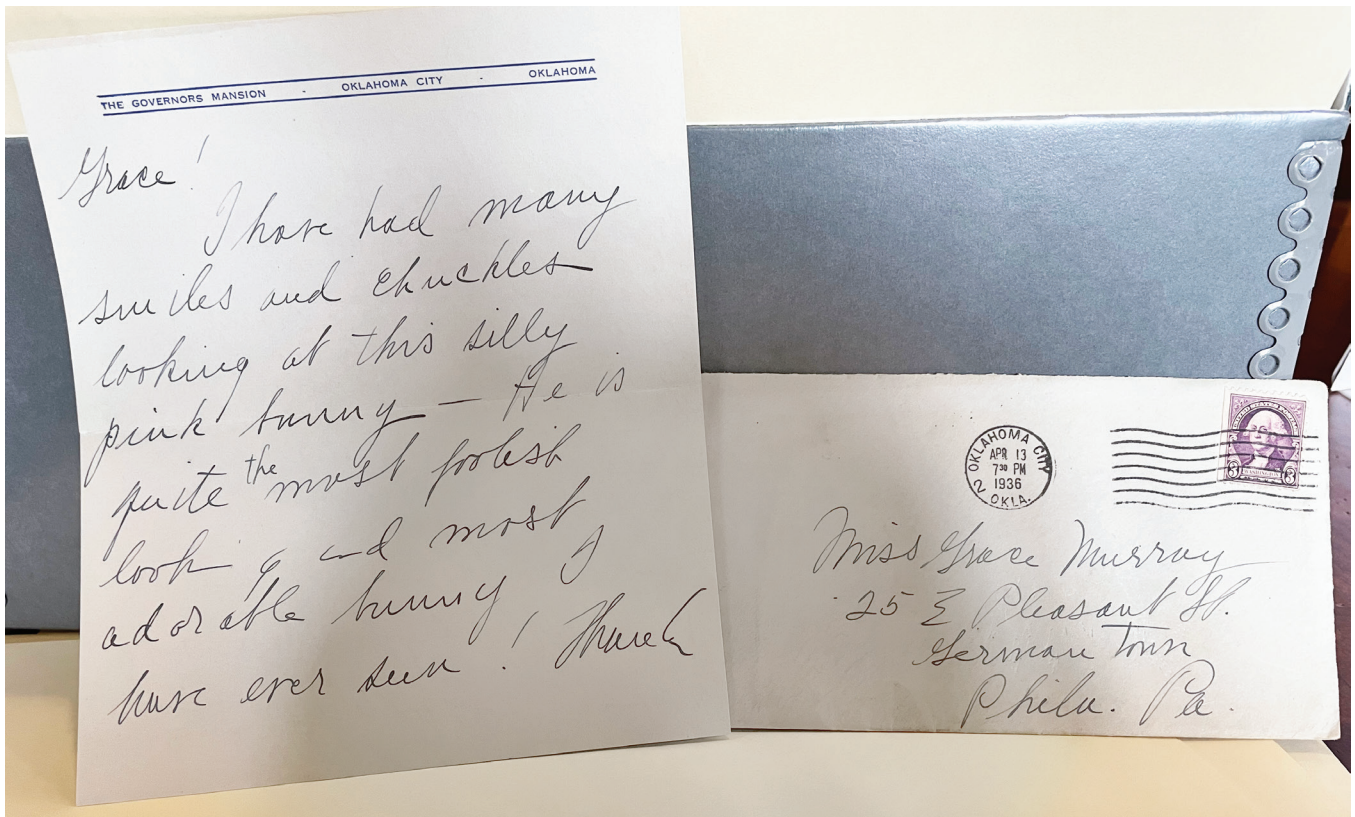
I hope your feeling O.K. and will let you know if & when I get started eastward.

In the meantime I remain

Devotedly yours

Lyde

Letters from Lydie Marland to Grace Murray



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 trip. G. P. heads the Demo.
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THE GOVERNORS MANSION

OKLAHOMA CITY

OKLAHOMA

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late in July + election of
emerge in W.V.)

We had all children on
relief role for Easter egg
hunt at the mansion
yesterday. I not all day.

I hope you feeling
D.K. and will let

August 24, 1936

Postmarked Atlantic City

Dear Grace –

*Have brought Mother down here for a week – she is nearly well –
& will remain mostly in bed, I think.*

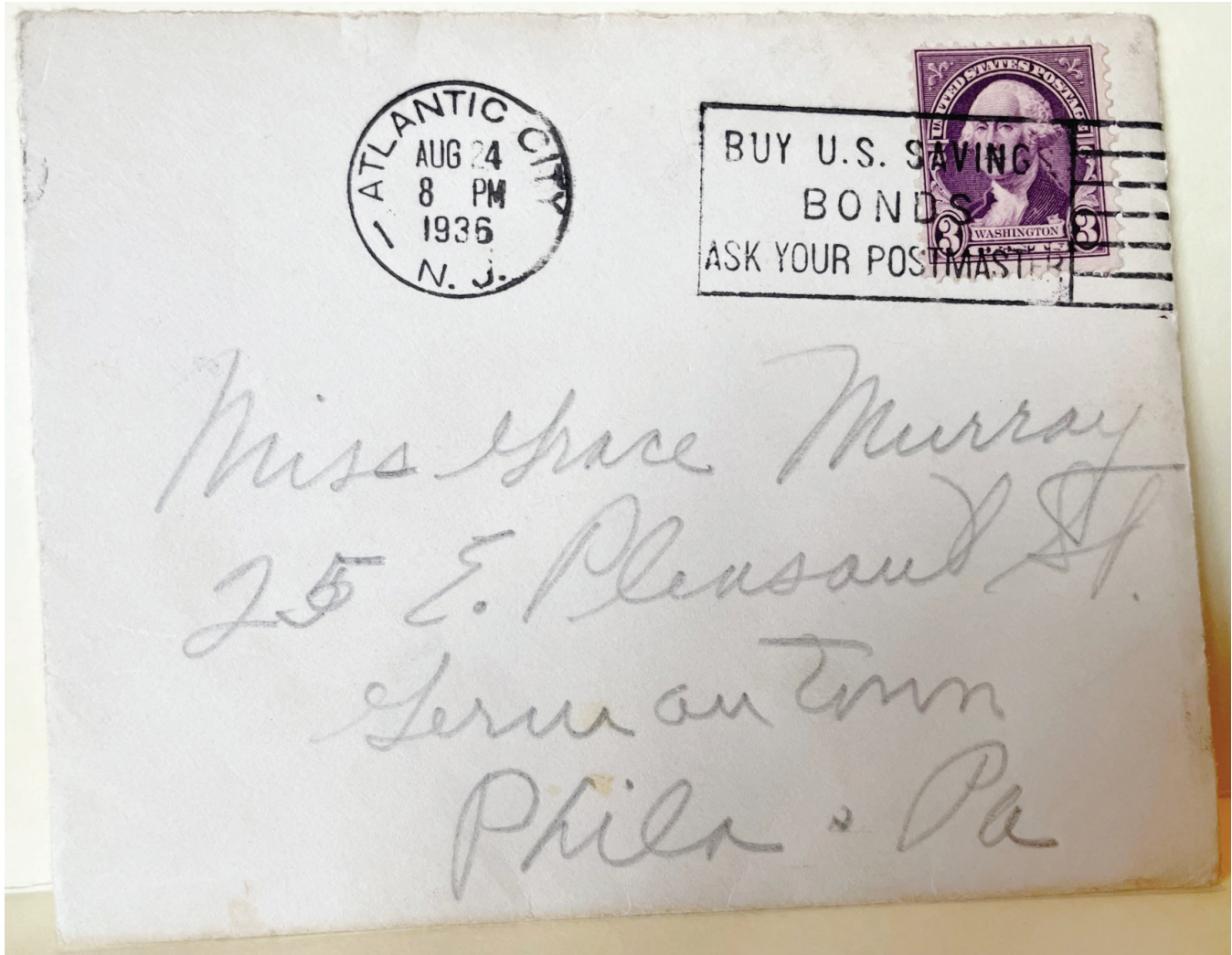
*Staying in a funny place – but it could be fun under certain
circumstances.*

*Tried to telephone you several times – finally talked to your mother
to learn you were in A.C. for the day –*

Will return to Phila. end of week & she about for a short time.

Lovingly yours,

Lyde



you several times -
 finally talked to your
 mother to learn if
 you were in A. C. for
 the day -
 Will return to Phil
 end of week +
 be about for a
 short time.
 See you soon
 Longly yours,
 Hyde

Dear Grace -
 Hope
 brought Mother down
 here for a week -
 - she is nearly
 all in + will return
 mostly in bed, I
 think.
 Staying in a
 funny place - but
 it could be fun ~~under~~
 under certain
 circumstances.
 Tried to telephone

January 1, 1937

Dear Grace,

Thank you for the very pretty Christmas gift. I have already put many odds & ends of addresses, reminders, etc., in it, and have it right here on the big desk in the study—

Well, we are back here once again, hard at work, after only a three day vacation in Ponca – and a very quiet Xmas – dinner alone – a few callers in the afternoon. The next three months will find us pretty much at the Governor’s Mansion – E.W. with the legislature in session, and yours truly entertaining all the ladies clubs!

To-night is New Years’ eve – 7 P.M. – the Governor still at the capitol.

A light supper, and so to bed don’t mind much – really don’t feel like “whooping it up” –

I suppose you are having a hilarious evening – probably “a light supper and so to bed evening” –

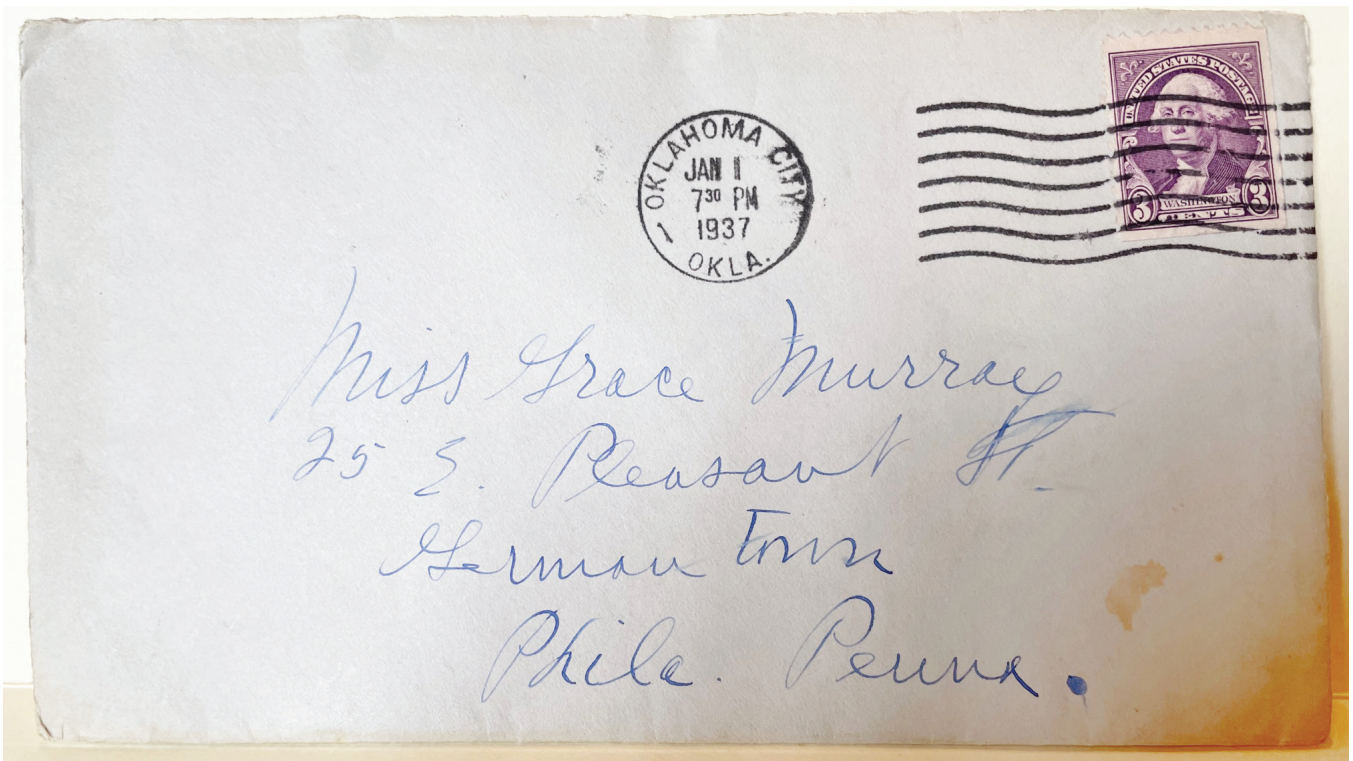
The Governor has just come in, looking rather fagged – the legislative wrangling over a homestead tax exemption bill, not being able to come to any decision, suddenly – and angrily inform ‘till Saturday. Such is life here –

What there? Well, a happy New Year to you

Faithfully Faithfully

Excuse the scribble am all dressed up with sleeves so tight it is hard to write –

L –



and angrily adjourn 'till Saturday -
Such is life here -

What there? - Well, a happy
New Year to you -

~~Truly~~ Faithfully
I can scribble - am all dressed
up with slippers & tight it is
hard to write -

L -

THE GOVERNORS MANSION - OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA

Dear Grace,
Thank you for the
very pretty Christmas
gift. I have already put
many odds & ends of
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Study -

Well, we are back here
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looking rather fagged - the legislature
wrestling over "homestead tax
exemption bill, not being able
to come to any decision, suddenly

E. W. MA
PONCA CITY, OKLAHOMA

This world be a
being quite impossible
Have been hope is

Chapter 12

Casanova

More than five years after Lydie confessed “my husband won’t live with me as a wife,” she ditched Grace for – yep – a boyfriend. What in the name of Chick and Millie’s Blue Moon Restaurant was she thinking? Read on.

April 13, 1936

Dear Grace,

I don’t blame you if you don’t like me any more. I said I’d call and I didn’t.

After we put you off the street car, Casanova and I went and drank several glasses of beer – and I rec’d another poem –

Spent a couple of days in New York. Bought two pieces of luggage, shoes and odds and ends of small personal things – and so to Oklahoma –

Today we go to Ponca City for the week-end – back here next week to “officially” open the house – and then busy season is on –

I had no urge to see one of the new plays opening in N.Y. – But saw all the Fall window display –

– very beautiful –

Found E.W. looking better – my vacation did him good –

Well, have as good a winter as you possibly can – and I’ll be seeing you –

Lovingly,

Lyde

Friday

Grace, if you think there is anything I could do thru E.W. on your

job problem, don't hesitate to ask me – What I can't do I'll help in any way I can – be candid about, & think you'll understand, but maybe I could help you – L.



Miss Grace Murray
25 E Pleasant St.
German Town
Phila. Pa.

THE GOVERNORS MANSION - OKLAHOMA CITY - OKLAHOMA

Dear Grace,

I don't blame
you if you don't like
me any more - I said
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After we put you
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pieces of luggage, shoes
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personal things - and
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To-day we go to Ponce
for the week-end - back

THE GOVERNORS MANSION

OKLAHOMA CITY

OKLAHOMA

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open the house - and the
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I had no urge to see
one of the new plays opening
in N.Y. - But saw all
the fall window display -
- very beautiful —

Found E.W. look a
bit better - my vacation did
him good —

Well, how as good a
writer as you possibly
can — and I'll be
seeing you —

Sincerely
Lydie

Friday

be candid
about, & that you'll
understand, but
maybe I can't help
you — L.

Grace, if you think there is any-
thing I could do thru E. W. in
your job problem, don't hesitate
to ask me — What I can't do, I'll

May 24, 1937

Dear Grace,

I have no excuse to offer for neglecting so long to thank you for remembering me on my birthday – and also for the little shell comb – except very bad manners

My obligations and duties ‘use me up’ some-what, so that I take of advantage of those whose understanding & friendship I feel so sure of – and neglect them – Being more or less constantly “on parade” is a devil of a strain & takes it out of one – So much for that –

So nice to hear 4 Elsie Janice – hope to see her sometime –

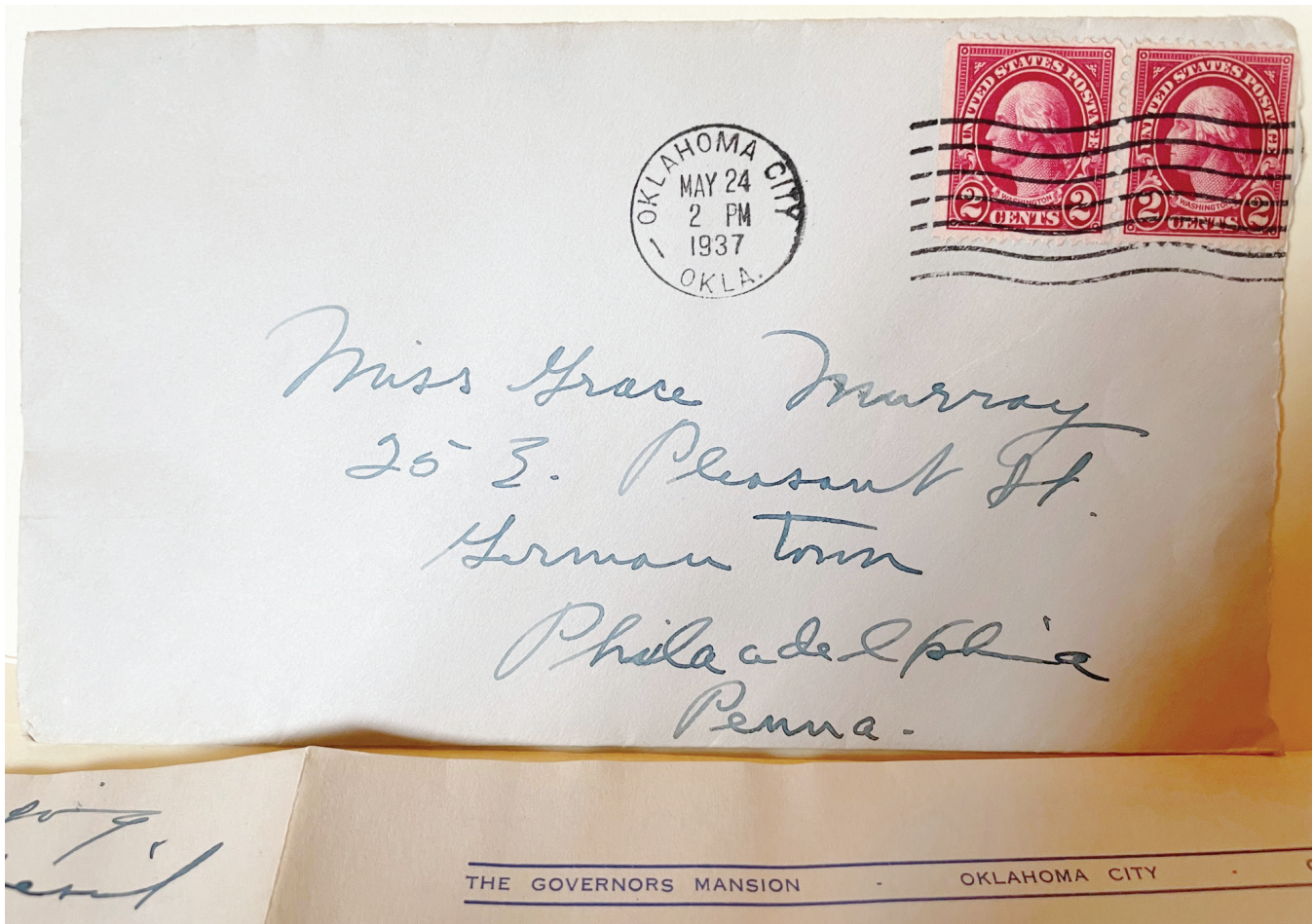
And your personal problems – always with us – hope you get things worked out with the pension business – a good institution –

My mother writes me reminding me it is time to visit there – and I’m beginning to have a hankering to see all there – s’pose I’ll get off from here when it gets a little hotter – Mother seems to be going down a bit & seeing her doesn’t make me feel so gay –

Along the line of duty during the winter, was a party given to honor girls from a state school for juvenile delinquents. The head of the school took a ‘fancy’ to me, thinks I have a talent for understanding delinquents (!) – wants me to go east with her this summer to a sort of nat’l. Don’t know yet if I want to. Have no other plans for summer. E.W. will be busy. Have an invitation to go abroad, but can’t for money reasons. So am deliberating, as usual.

That hanky was exquisite – I love lovely hankys. Thank you, Grace so much & until I see you

Lovingly – Lyde –



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down a bit, & seeing her doesn't
make me feel so gay -

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winter, was a party given to honor girls
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The head of the school took a fancy to me,
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meet of heads & directors of such institutions.
Don't know yet if I want to. Have
no other plans for summer. I'd
write to her; have a invitation to go
abroad, but can't for many reasons. So,
am deliberating, as usual.

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lovely Hanky - Thank you, Grace so
much & what I love you
for - hda

THE GOVERNORS MANSION - OKLAHOMA CITY - OKLAHOMA

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neglecting so long to
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understanding & friendship
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strain & takes it out of

When E.W. ran for congress in 1932 and governor in 1934, he received more votes than any politician in Oklahoma. Governor Marland thought he received a mandate in 1934 to pass an old age pension, a homestead exemption, and to help homeless people build houses. However, Speaker Red Phillips and the 1935 Legislature defied the new governor, and won on tax increase issues. E.W. didn't want to be governor any more, and finished second in the 1936 U.S. senate race; he polled a poor third in the 1938 senate race. Out of a job, he had no source for cash other than selling treasures he had collected a decade earlier for the mansion. During the Great Depression, however, paintings, tapestries and antiques went for dimes on the dollar.

December 23, 1937

Since I get only two or three presents, I belong to the I-can't-wait-till-Xmas school of thought and open mine as soon as I receive them. Who told you I love long sleeve nighties? Well, I do, and this is a very lovely one – I am delighted. Thank you, for always thinking of me.

Today, we drive to Ponca – Will spend a quiet Christmas day and return here Monday as E.W. is too busy to take a longer holiday. He is getting his political fences repaired for the Senate race, so pretty soon we will be in the “thick” of it –

I've been thinking a lot of you lately, wondering how everything is for you – your job, etc. E.W. is terribly in earnest on his senate race, as it means a job for him, and without a job, we're in a fix – no income –

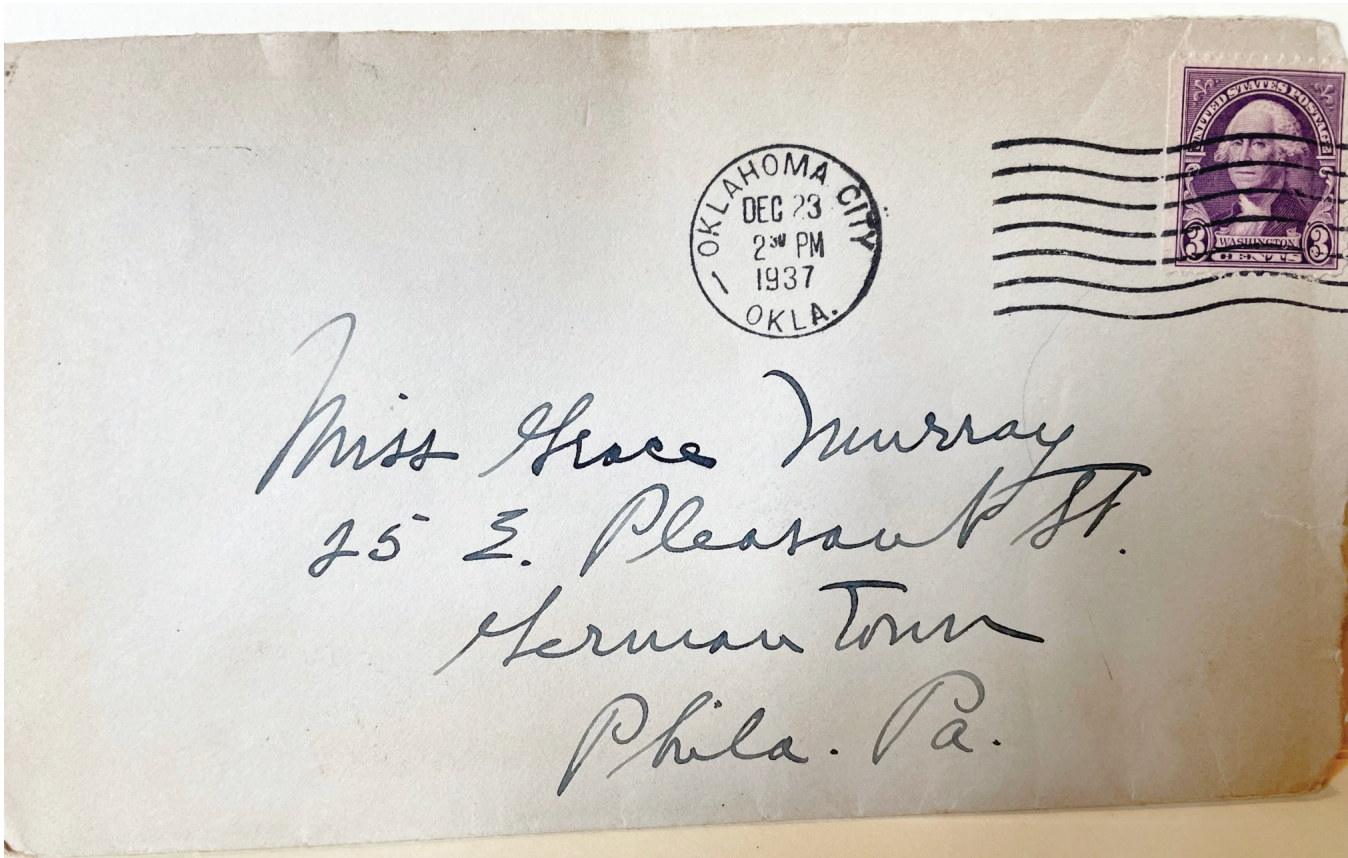
I really don't enjoy Xmas any more. Every Xmas eve, we have to go to Uncle Sam's, and have an awful time. I am always emotional & inspired or something on Xmas even and spending such rapture at my uncle's house is nothing short of a very painful experience –

So much for me & my complaints –

E.W. has just come in, & I can't think when he is near, so I'll sign off for this time. I do wish you happiness for the holiday and the year to come. And thanks for the nightie –

Love –

Lydie



THE GOVERNORS MANSION

OKLAHOMA CITY

OKLAHOMA

Friday

Dear Grace,

Since I get only
 two or three presents, I
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 -till-Christmas school of thought,
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 you I have long sleeve
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THE GOVERNORS MANSION

OKLAHOMA CITY

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So much for me & my
complaints —

E. W. has just come in, & I
can't think when he is near, so
I'll sign off for this time. I
do wish you happiness for the
holiday the year to come. And
Thanks for nightie. Love - Lydie

Grace's mother died.

Western Union

February 7, 1938

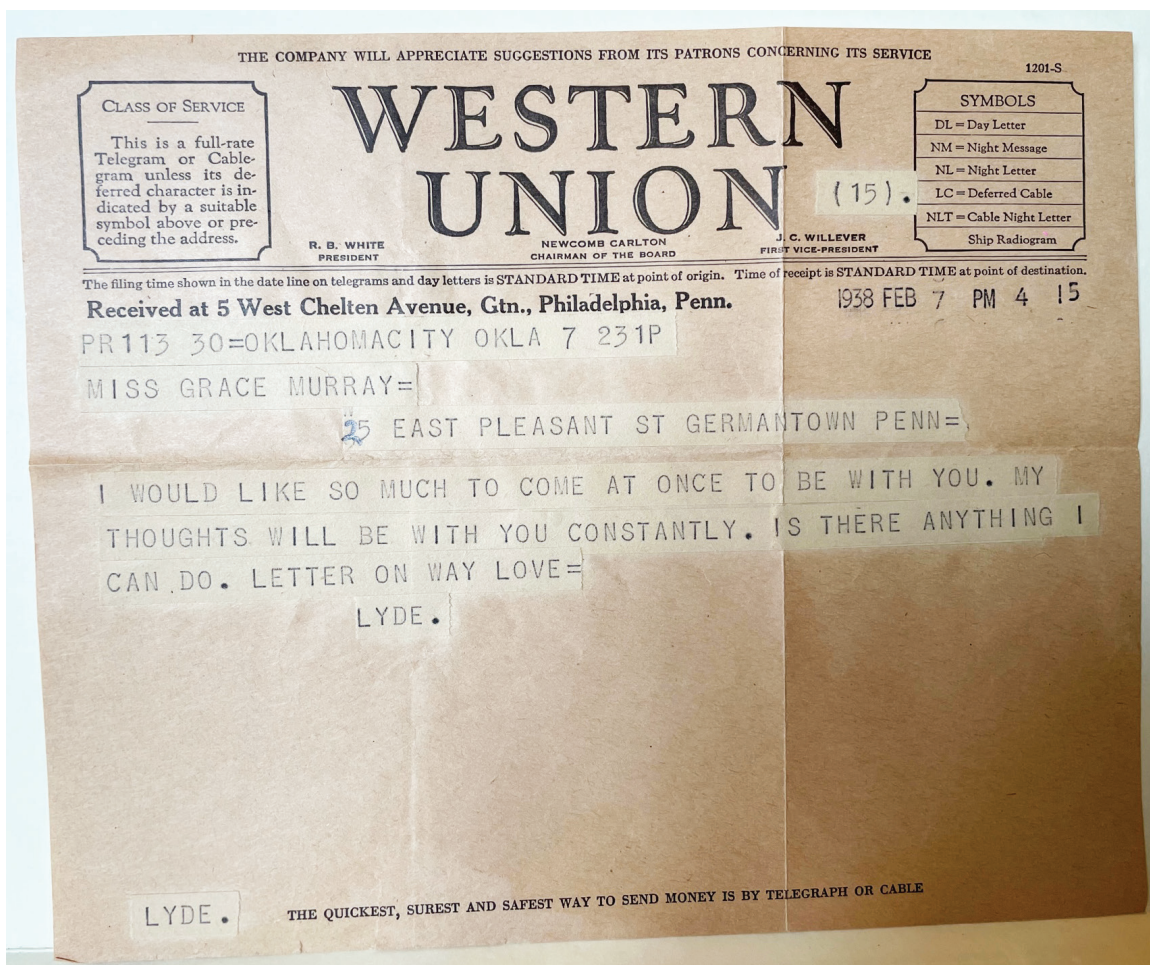
Oklahoma City Okla. 7 231p

Miss Grace Murray=

25 East Pleasant St Germantown Penn=

I would like so much to come at once to be with you. My thoughts will be with you constantly Is there anything I can do. Letter on way Love=

Lyde.



In the file folder with Lydie's letters at OU's Western History Collection was a cemetery deed was for Catherine E. Murray, 1938; likely to be Grace's mother.

Lydie wrote a sympathy card and pinned it to the letter.

2/7/38

The Governors Mansion

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Grace –

I don't know what to say to you –

I wish I could take the next train east and be with you at this time – but I can only send my love to you & deep and sympathetic understanding –

If I can help you now or later in any way you know you can call on me –

I'll write you in a day or two again –

Lovingly,

Lyde –

THE GOVERNORS MANSION
OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA.

4/7/38

Grace

I don't know what
to say to you — I
wish I could take the
next train east and
be with you at this
time — but I can
only send my

Sympathy
of

Lyde

Letters from Lydie Marland to Grace Murray

February 12, 1938

Dear Grace,

I am thinking of you so much –

I know how heavy your heart is these days, and while I can't think of any-thing very helpful help in any way I can –

Lovingly,

Lyde

Thursday

THE GOVERNORS MANSION
OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA.

Grace, I am thinking
of you so much —
— I know how
heavy your heart is
these days, and while
I can't think of any —
— the guaranty helpful

help in any way
 I can —
 Lovingly,
 Lydie

I will say
 —
 and hope
 that I would like to

Feb. 23, 1938

Dear Grace,

I was glad to get your nice letter – It seems to be you are doing just the right thing – to see your hard times thru. It takes courage, I know, but it is the best way.

I hope your job problem gets straightened out.

At times like these you need practical help, like money, and if you find yourself starving or something, I can help you – in a miserable way. I'm always good for twenty-five dollars or so. If my family didn't need so much, I'd offer you a handsomer sum. I had planned a trip east this March or April, but it is all off now, because of no winter jobs, hospital, doctor & coal bills in Flourtown –

I'm reaching the bolting stage. We are hard at campaigning – the July 12th election determines our future – whether E.W. as a job or not. The alternative being eating more oil paintings, rugs & various objects d'art!!

I have been in the throes for some time now of a decision about my Flourtown troubles. With that on my mind so much plus the job on hand here, I feel limp & rather drained of energy – Otherwise, I would write to you a very learned & interesting letter about things out here, the political picture mostly, as that is what we are living and breathing these days – but I am too tired! So you will get the usual dumb letter –

Well, have a care, and let me hear about you –

Lovingly yours,

Lyde

Tuesday

THE GOVERNORS MANSION - OKLAHOMA CITY - OKLAHOMA

Dear Grace,

I was glad to get your nice letter — It seems to me you are doing just the right thing — To see your hard time thru. It takes courage, I know, but guess it is the best way.

I hope your job problem gets straightened out.

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 So you will get the usual
 dumb letter —

Well, have a care, and
 let me hear about you —

for your
 friend,

Sunday

John

E. W. MA
PONCA CITY, OKLAHOMA

This world be a
being quite impossible
Have been hope is

Chapter 13

Periods of Complete Remoteness

When Lydie commented about her father, she may have offered a clue about her own personality. She also explained, “Once here I am again inarticulate,” obviously a remark she had made in the past. She did write an articulate letter, so what was she saying?

Some schizophrenics also have alogia, which come before a more serious psychotic break. They can’t carry on a conversation, and may withdraw from friends and family. Those with other forms of alogia may pause for a long time between words, five short or one-word responses, answer only what is asked, have a flat-toned voice and dull facial expressions, and sign with gestures. Did Lydie offer a clue about what would happen in 1953, when she disappeared for twenty-two years, and didn’t speak to many friends and family members?

July 10, 1938

Sunday morning

Dear Grace,

Thanks so much for your very nice letter, which I found here on my return –

Once here I am again inarticulate, so forgive me if I don’t seem to make sense –

I did not leave Phila. until Tuesday. Sunday morning I had Marl’s ivy poisoning on face & neck & eyes – one eye closed. Went to doctor in town & Sunday night & Monday felt horribly ill & uncomfortable & looked like Lon Chaney – was confined to my birth all the way home & just begining to look to look human!

The president has come & gone & we are all of a twitter now till Tuesday.

I don’t deserve friends, but I am grateful to you for your friendship. I’m like my father I guess – periods of complete remoteness from every one –

Well, "let us be gay" from here on out – what do you say?

Until later –

Lovingly yours

Lyde



GOVERNORS MANSION
OKLAHOMA CITY

Lydie Marland

Dear Grace

Thanks so much for
your very nice letter,
which I find here
on my return —

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am again inarticulate,
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don't seem to make
sense —

I did not have

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I don't deserve friends,
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like my father I guess -
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remoteness from
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Will "let us be gay"
from here out - what
do you say? -

until later -

lovingly yours
L. J. De -

P. H. L. until Tuesday.
Sunday morning I had
mild "silly" passing
on face & neck & eyes
- one eye closed. Went
to doctor in town +
Sunday night & Monday
felt terrible ill +
uncomfortable & looked
like an elderly - Was
confined to my bed all
the way home +
just trying to look
human -

The president has

This postcard features the Broadmoor, near Colorado Springs.

The caption in the return address line read:

World famous as the finest scenic resort in America, open all year, Fireproof, Social and Sport Center of the West, 150 miles of Mountain Bridle Trails, Motoring, Golf, Polo, Tennis, Boating, Fishing, Indoor Swimming Pool, Health Baths, Little Theatre, Stock Exchange, Garage and Saddle Stables, Winter Climate 90% sunshine.

Here, E.W. created the Interstate Oil Compact, in which six oil-producing states agreed to practice conservation and establish a fair price for petroleum. He was elected to serve as the first president.

July 31, 1938

Here few days while E.W. represents Okla. at Oil States Compact Annual Meeting – Lovely and cool –

Love Lyde





The reverse side of the envelope has this postscript: Bought the pin and ring in Mexico.

Dec. 21, 1938

Dear Grace:

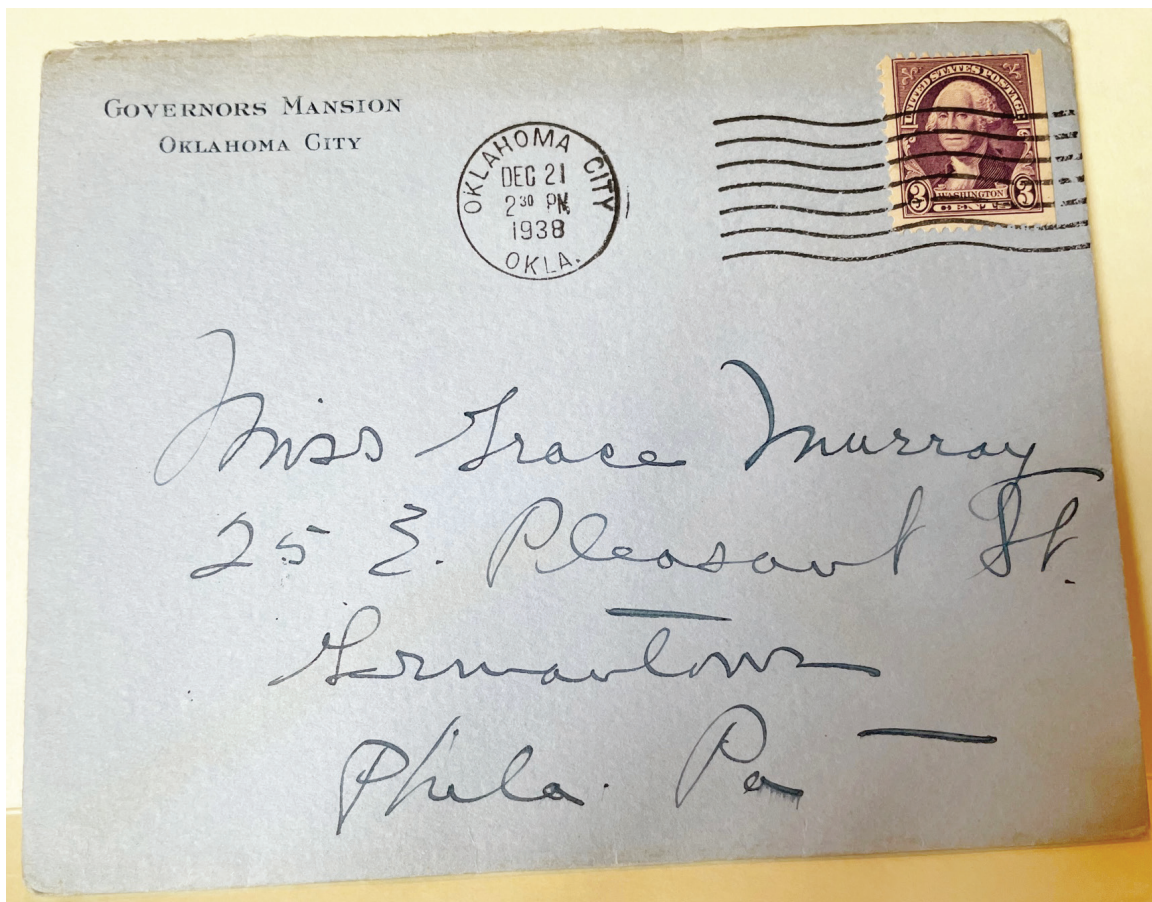
I have sent you several Christmas presents – all ugly and use ful!

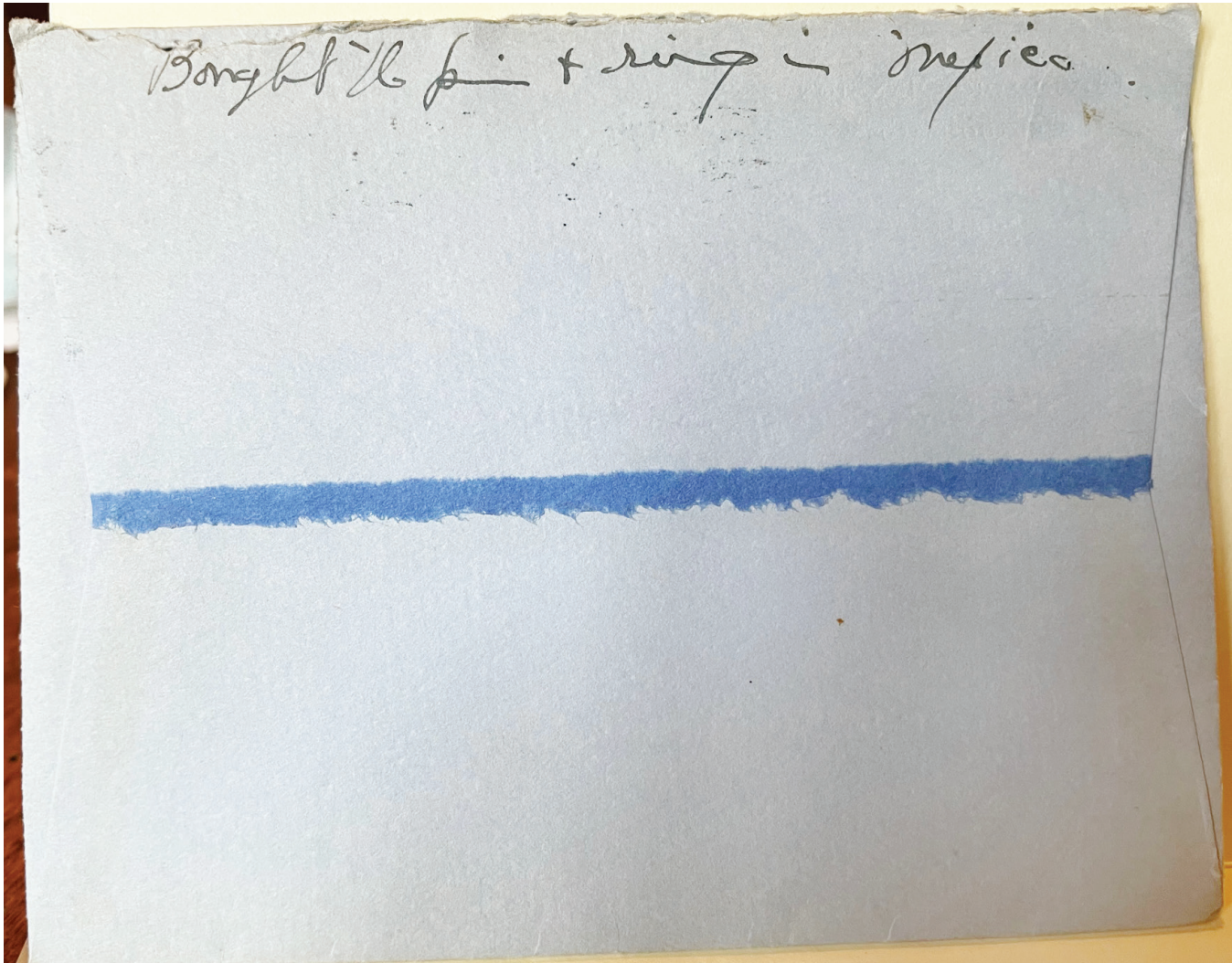
Sometime I'll send you a pretty present.

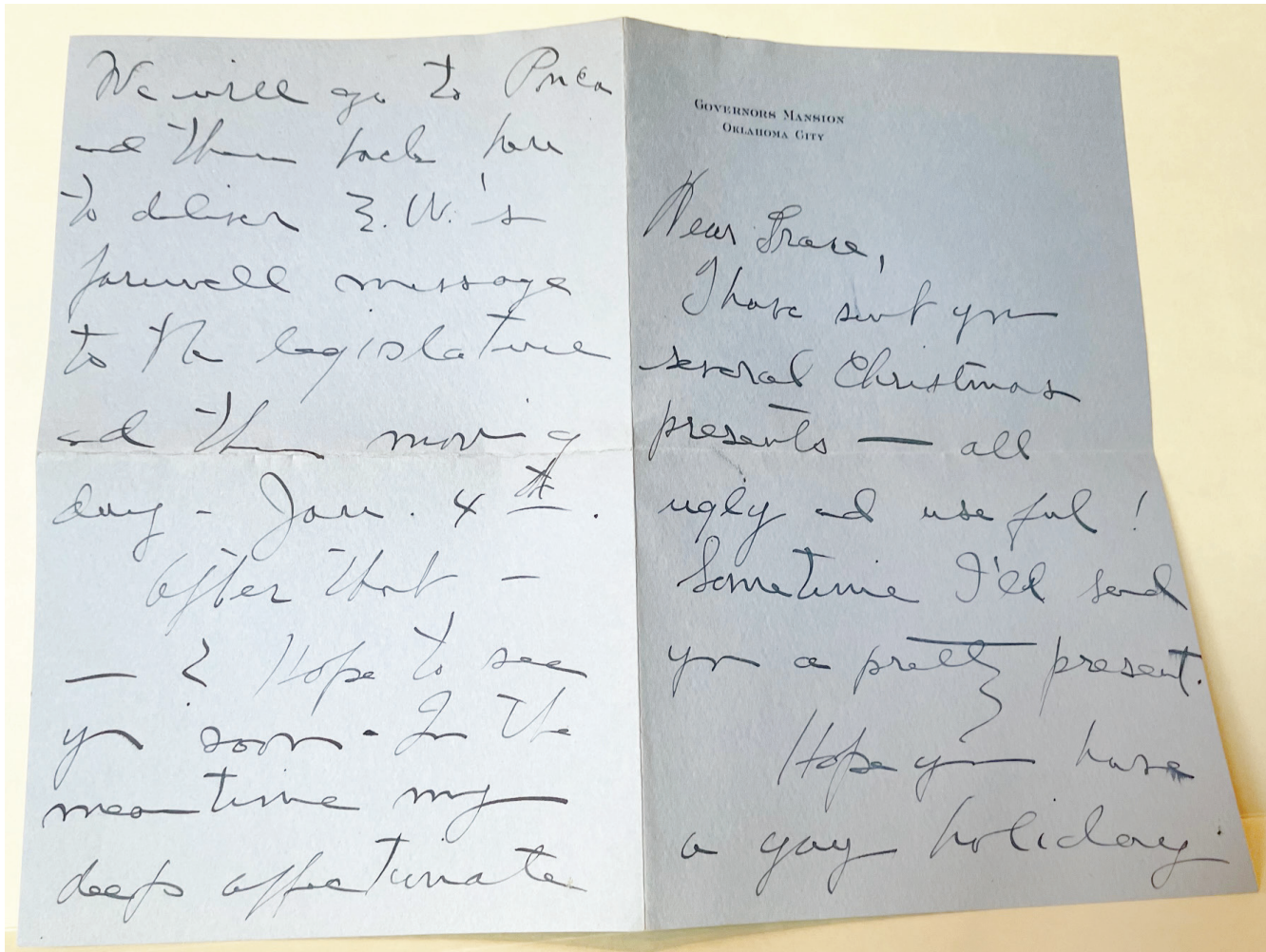
Hope you have a gay holiday.

We will go to Ponca and there back here to deliver E.W.'s farewell message to the legislature and then morning day Jan. 4th. After that – ? Hope to see you soon – in the meantime, my deep affectionate regards ever –

Lyde







From the Western History Collection 1938 file

Dear Grace –

Well, here I am still in Oklahoma, having lived through, or rather drooped thru the summer. Have hoped for two months for a trip east. Am still hoping – and maybe I'll get away a few weeks this month. My problem is financial one, pure & simple. Just when it looks possible, E.W. begins to feel badly (working too hard – his heart – he's not serious) and my beloved Trotsky dog gets paralysis. But the first of the month is here again, & if after the bills are paid & various dependents taking care of anything is left, I get it.

I wonder if you took your vacation – I'm getting a little homesick to see “my people” and Penn's woods – to say nothing of getting “out from under” for awhile. I feel oppressed mostly, but want to make the most of this experience, and do my part. So, I keep quite busy with the things incident to life in the “mansion.” Planning to start a “complete Oklahoma” for the library in the house. A fine artist, one living in this state, is making a bookplate (ex libris) so am getting off to a fine start. Have to do something, as I'm such a hopeless – failure in the public & large gatherings where I have asked to say a few words (!)

Well, maybe I'll be seeing you – anyhow

Love to you

from Lyde

THE GOVERNORS MANSION

OKLAHOMA CITY

OKLAHOMA

Dear Grace -

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THE GOVERNORS MANSION

OKLAHOMA CITY

OKLAHOMA

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 to a fine start. Have to do
 something, as I'm such a
 hopeless failure in public &
 large gatherings where I've
 asked to say a few words(!)

Well, maybe I'll be seeing
 you —
 my love
 love to you
 from the

E. W. MA...
PONCA CITY, OKLAHOMA

This world be a
being quite impossible
Have been hope is

Chapter 14

Life With E.W.

Governor Marland didn't receive much credit at the time, but he guided Oklahoma through the Great Depression, created an old age pension program, passed a homestead exemption, and established the Oklahoma Highway Patrol and an intrastate crime agency that would become the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation.

In 1939, near the end of the Great Depression and the Dust Bowl, John Steinbeck published the quintessential American realist novel, *The Grapes of Wrath*. The plight of Okies won the National Book Award and Pulitzer Prize for fiction, and was cited when Steinbeck was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1962.

Governor Marland was a relatively healthy man in his sixties when he took office in January 1935; he left Oklahoma City four years later, a sick, tired, old man.

Jan. 2, 1939

Dear Grace,

I've been a long time acknowledging your very sweet & Christmas gift to me. I looked at the box quite a while before I tore it open because it was done up so attractively. The slip is so pretty and dainty. Thank you, dear, for thinking of me, and always so beautifully

We went to Ponca for a few days and then returned here to spend New Years eve and day – very quietly – in fact we were asleep when he arrived – and now we do our last packing before the inaugural ceremonies next Monday, after which we will drive away to Ponca.

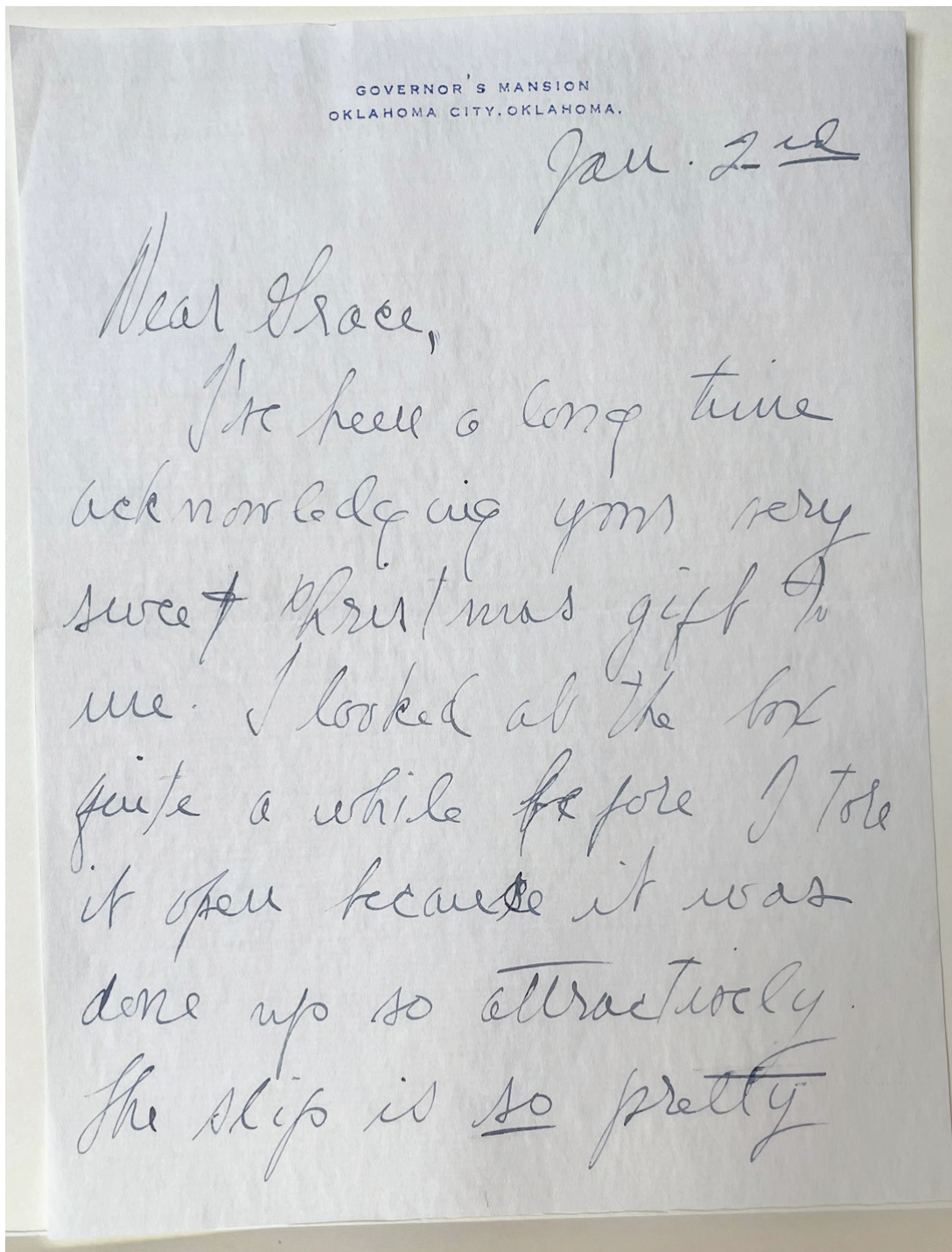
There is a chance I might go east in January, but it depends on whether my husband feels that in the short time he has to be in Washington he can include me in the trip –

Hope you had a happy holiday, and are feeling O.K. these days –

Thank you again for the petticoat!

Lovingly,

Lyde



GOVERNOR'S MANSION
OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA.

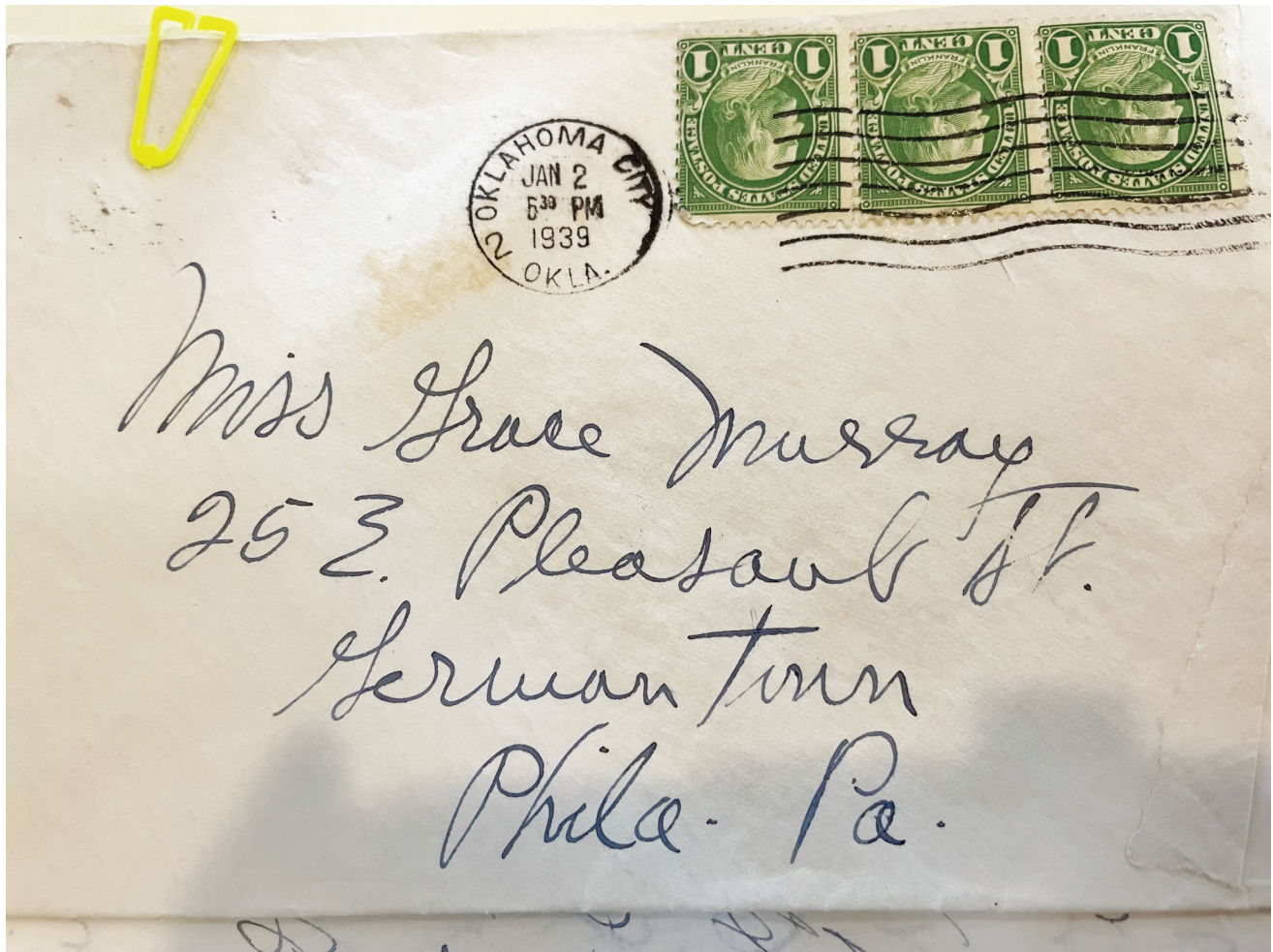
and faintly. Thank you,
dear, for thinking of me,
and always so beautifully.
We went to Ponca for
a few days and then
returned here to spend
New Year's eve - a day -
very quietly - in fact we
were asleep when he
arrived - and now we
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the inaugural ceremonies

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we will drive away to Ponca.

There is a chance I might
go east in January, but
depends on whether my
husband ^{feels} that in the short
time he has to be in Washington
he can afford to include
me in the trip —

Hope you had a happy
holiday, and are feeling
O.K. these days —

Thank you again for the
petticoat!
Love,
E.W.



This letter was written in red ink, which Lydie sometimes used, with lines crossing out Governor's Mansion because E.W. left office a month earlier.

Lydie wrote that she had teeth and ear trouble. Doctors in 1934 had worked experimentally with her eyes, but did not find a cure. At age seventy-five, she returned after twenty-two years on the road with only two or three teeth; one was black.

At age seventy-five, she returned after twenty-two years on the road with only two or three teeth; one was black.

E.W. was now chronically ill, and would not get better. He had no money, couldn't pay their bills, and had run out of options.

February 11, 1939

Dear Grace,

I have neglected answering your letter – thought I might be coming east with E.W., but his plans in going to Washington have not materialized yet and he is waiting for a comp - other things to developed. We hear the weather there is so bad anyhow, I'd rather wait a little – would enjoy coming around April first –

So sorry about your note – I can imagine how it makes you feel – I'm having teeth & ear trouble!!

E.W. has a chronic cold, and something the matter with his nose, too –

I think it is fine that Elsie Janis is making such a hit – read about her in Alice Hugh's column.

Our lives out here seem so “up in the air.” Everybody is waiting on E.W. to see what he is going to do – and E.W. not knowing what he wants to do. I know there are times when he wants to throw up his hands, let the interest payments on the mortgages go, and say “to hell with all of you” – “good bye” – “shift for yourselves.” I don't blame him in one way.

Seems as if I only have problems to write to you about – Maybe in a few weeks, things will adjust themselves for us – I understand better than you imagine how you feel about your uncertainties and not feeling well –

Well, I'll write soon – soon as some thing happens.

Lovingly – Lyde



~~GOVERNOR'S MANSION~~
~~OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA.~~

Dear Grace,

I have neglected answering
your letter — thought I might
be coming east with E. W.,
but his plans for going to
Washington have not material-
-ized yet and he is waiting
for a couple of other things
to develop. We hear the weather
there is so bad anyhow, I'd
rather wait a little — would
enjoy coming around.

April first —

So sorry about your note
— I can imagine how it
makes you feel. — I'm
having teeth & ear trouble!!
S.W. has a chronic cold and
something the matter with
his note, too —

I think it is fine
that Elsie James is
making such a hit —
— read about her in Alice
Hugh's column.

GOVERNOR'S MANSION
OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA.

Our lives out here seem so "up in the air." Everybody waiting on E.W. to see what he is going to do - ~~and~~ E.W. just knows what he wants to do. I know there are times when he wants to throw up his hands, let the interest payments on the mortgages go, and say "hell with all of you" - "good bye" -

"Shift in yourselves" I don't
blame him — one way.
Seems as if I only have
problems to write you
about — Maybe in a
few weeks things will
adjust themselves for
us — I understand better
than you imagine how
you feel about your un-
-certainties and not feeling
well —
Well, I'll write soon —
- soon as some thing happens.
Love
Lydie

The letter was postmarked Ponca City and addressed to the lieutenant governor's wife, so apparently she kept it, and it was subsequently donated to the Oklahoma History Collection. Since 1928, the Oklahoma City Gridiron Foundation has staged shows spoofing politicians, in the same manner as Capitol Steps or Saturday Night Live. The money raised funded journalism scholarships in the state.

Feb. 11, 1939

Mrs. James E. Berry

Duck Street

Stillwater, Oklahoma

Dear Mrs. Berry,

I enjoyed your nice letter so much. – sorry I've neglected so long to answer, but a few minor personal, domestic and house hold problems have kept me completely out of the letter writing mood.

–

Congratulations! on the arrival of that very large grand son. – I don't know how you keep two careers going – family and politics

–

I looked in the papers after the Gridiron to see if you had struck Mr. Harrison and finding nothing, decided you remained the lady – !

Life goes on at the Studio – slightly un-settled (E.W. feeling on the verge of going away) but withal pleasant. We've We've been on a reading jag – haven't read much for a few years – seems like dissipation.

Hope you can come over her to see us sometime – may with the Hilles –

Remember me to Olive, please – and our kindest regards to yourself and Jim –

Lyde Marland

~~GOVERNOR'S MANSION
OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA.~~

Dear Mrs. Perry,

I enjoyed your nice letter so much. — sorry I've neglected so long to answer, but a few minor personal, domestic & household problems have kept me completely out of the letter writing mood. —

~~GOVERNOR'S MANSTON~~
~~OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA.~~

Congratulations! on the arrival of that very large grand son. — I don't know how you keep two careers going — family and politics —

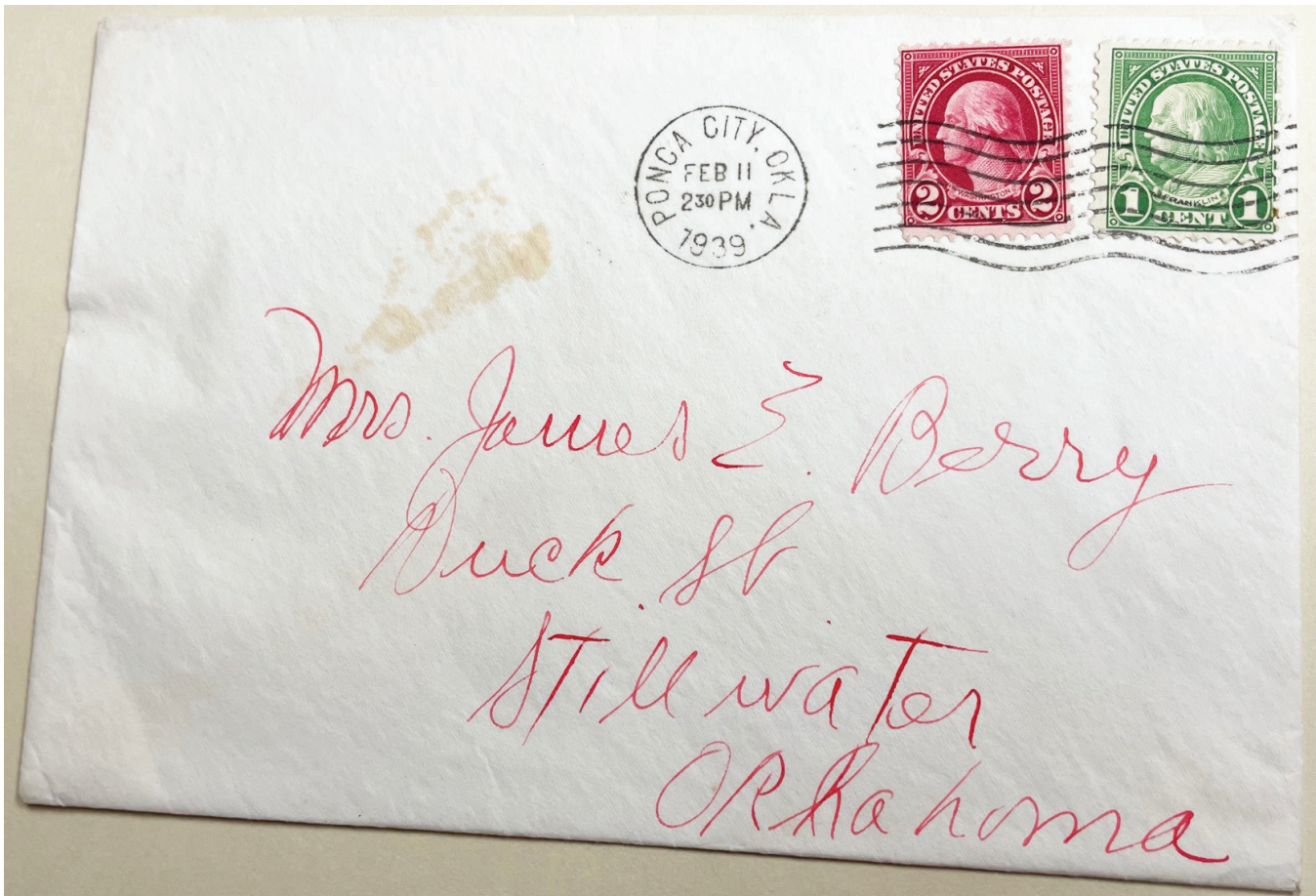
I looked in the papers after the election to see if you had struck Mr. Garrison and finding nothing, decided you remained the lady —
 Life goes on at the studio — slightly un-

GOVERNOR'S MANSION
OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA.

Settled (30th. being on the verge
of going away) but withal
pleasant. We be seen on
a reading jag - have not
read much for a few
years - seems like disipation.

Hope you can come over
here to see us some time -
- maybe with the Hills - ?

Remembers me to Dixie,
please - And my kindest
regards to yourself & all
Gin - Lydie Marland



June 6, 1939

Dear Grace,

When I arrived here I found E.W. not so well, the housekeeper so bogged down with work in the big house, that I “set in” with a vengeance, and have not been up for air long enough to write a letter to you. I cook, market, plan things for E.W. ‘I think’ will keep him going, make beds, and just sit with him when he’s tired, or read to him – & time slips by –

Have been thinking of you, & wondering if things for you are almost the same – also if the people next door have been ejected, or not –

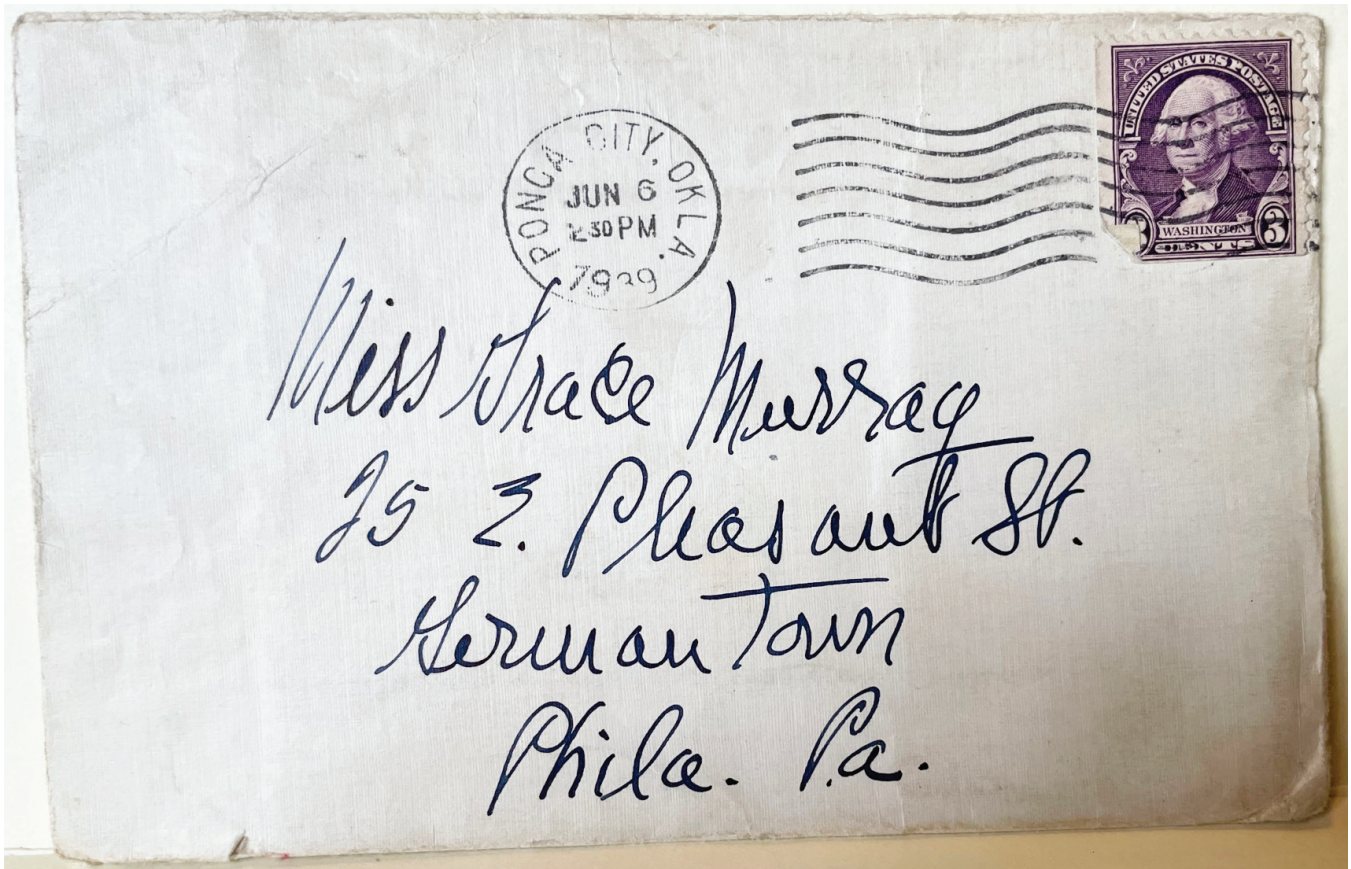
I spent the day in Chicago, en route, entirely in Marshall Fields, & “did” the store.

Have been invited to go to Drescher, Germany (I think) this summer, with a group of doucers, but I guess its’ not possible – hate to leave E.W. at this time, when so much is at stake –

Well, I’ll sign off now – hoping you are alright in every way –

Lovingly

Lyde



BOX SIX

PONCA CITY

OKLAHOMA

My dear Grace,

When I arrived here I found E.W. not so well, the housekeeper so bogged down with work in the big house, that I "set in" with a vengeance, and have not been up for air long enough to write a letter to you. I cook, market, plan things for E.W. I think will keep him going, make beds, & just sit with him

when he's tired, or read to
 him — & time slips by —
 Have been thinking of you, &
 wondering if things for you
 are about the same — also if
 the people next door have
 been ejected, or not —

I spent the day in Chicago, en
 route, entirely in Marshall Field's,
 & "did" the store.

Have been invited to go to
 Dresden, Germany (I think)

BOX SIX

PONCA CITY

OKLAHOMA

This summer, with a group
of dancers, but I guess it's
not possible — hate to leave
3:00. at this time, when so
much is at stake —

Well, I'll sign off now —
— hoping you are alright
in every way —

Love
Lydie

July 10, 1939

My dear Grace,

Have been thinking of you and intending to write – but am lazy & the heat makes me lazier, so I neglected writing everybody in the east –

The daily routine here makes time fly by.!

E.W. works so hard but some times I'm afraid he lacks real inspiration and so his health (she crossed out the word "requires" eight times) isn't good which makes the situation hectic at times –

We've been having help problems out here, a big place is a burden for the most part –

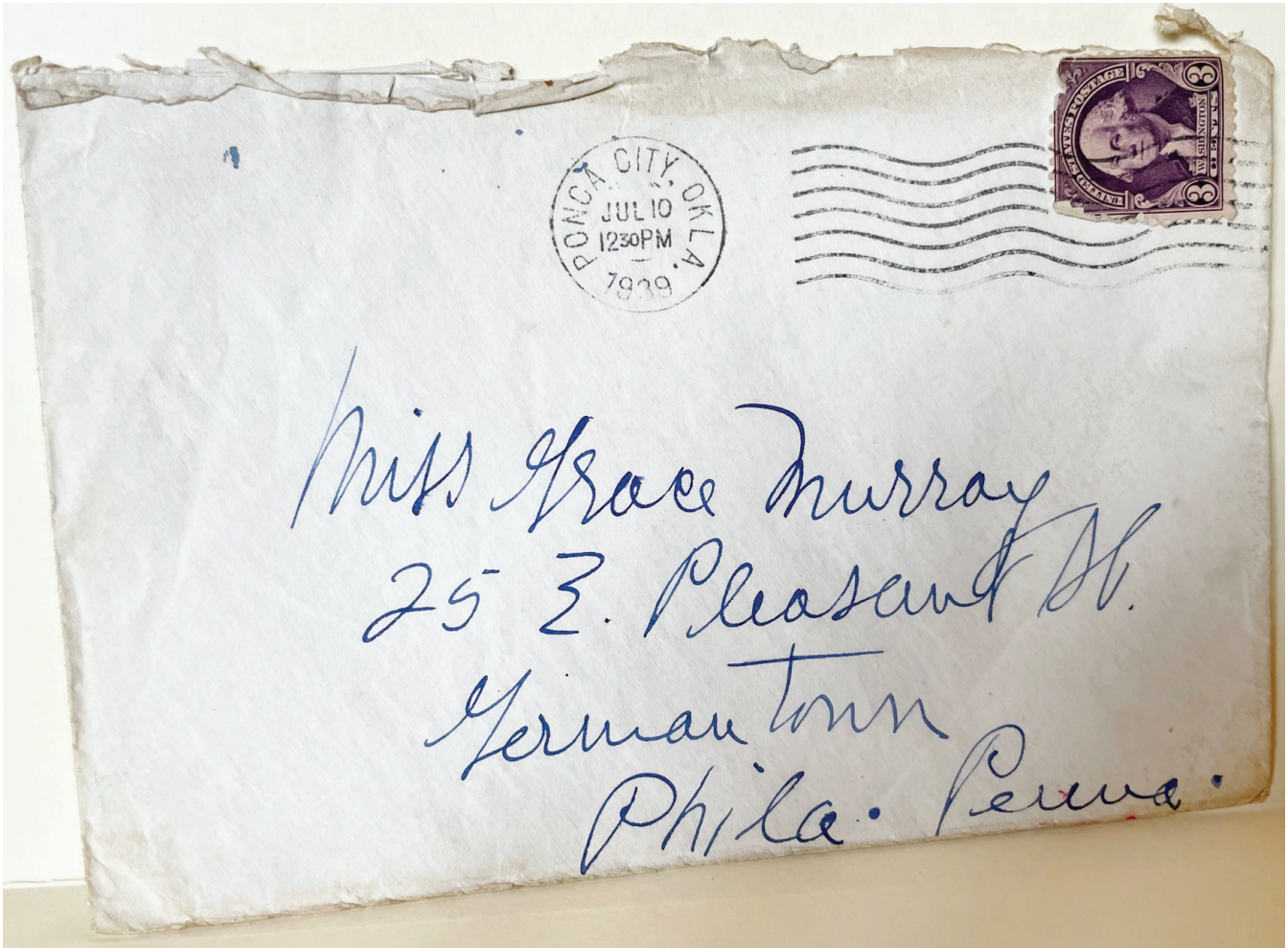
The day after I rec'd your last letter, I had a night mare about you – You wrote me on white linen in solid gold letters, threatening to end it all!! Letter writing seems a task too great to my waning (~~was~~ boasting) mental powers – else I'd write at great length on this loneliness business, but I'd be exhausted & have to go to bed – & and don't get the dinners fixed or the lawn watered!!

Afraid I'll have to postpone my trip east a few weeks – but I'd love to be in Atlantic City to-day.

Well, I'll sign off now hoping you are cheer fuller than was – Be a good girl and don't get the blues – Has the mouse put in an appearance yet?

Lovingly,

Lyde



My dear Grace
 I have been thinking of
 you and intending to
 write - but am lazy
 & the heat makes me lazier,
 so I neglect ^{writing} every body
 in the east -

The daily routine here
 makes time fly by!
 E. W. works so hard, but
 some times I'm afraid

he lacks real inspiration,
and so his health ~~requires~~
isn't good which makes
the situation hectic at
times —

We've been having help
problems and here, a big
place is a burden for
the most part —

The day after I rec'd
your last letter, I
had a night mare
and you - you wrote

me on snow white linen
in solid gold letters,
threatening to end indeed
all letter writing
seems a task too great
in my waning (~~fast~~ ^{boasting})
mental powers - else I'd
write at great length
on this lowliness business,
but I'd be exhausted + have
to go to bed - I won't
get the dinner fire of
the lawn watered !!

I paid I'll have to pass
- some my trip east - a
few weeks - but I'd love
to be in Waltham etc to day.

Well, I'll hope of you
hoping you are cheerfuller
than was — Be a
good girl + don't get
The Blues — Has the ~~mouse~~
mouse put in an appearance
yet?

Love,
Lydie

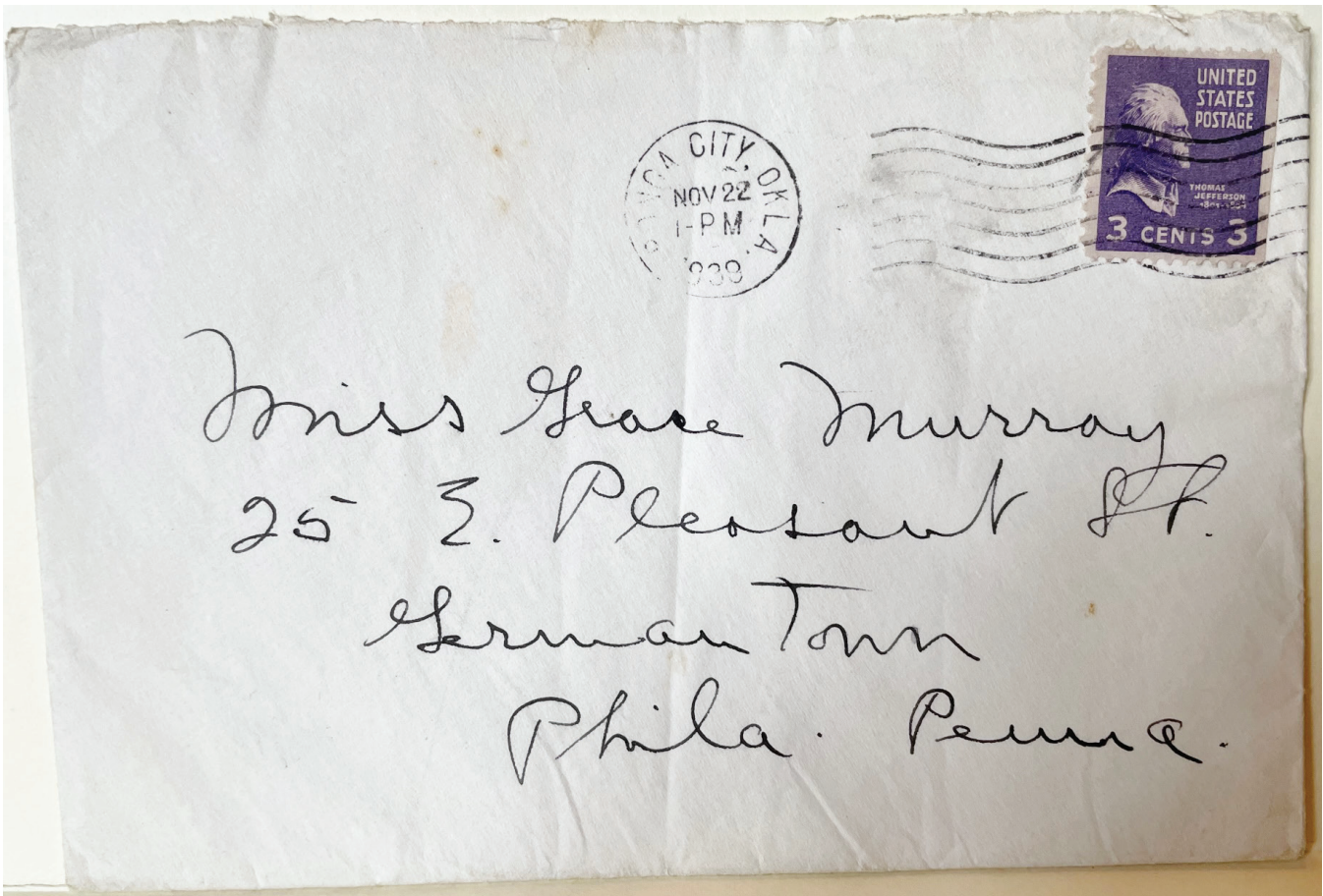
November 22, 1939

Dear Grace – Have intended writing you since my return but E.W. has been in bed & quite sick most of the time. Our doctor here drove me to a specialist at the crack of dawn Monday & after a hectic day, we returned, but E.W. in bed for a month with an ulcer in his stomach. Has to have absolute rest & quiet & nourishment every hour. I am the nurse & I felt last night that I wasn't going to last long!! It isn't the labor – because its' a labor of affection & devotion – but its the terror & the fear. I want him to be well & strong, more than anything else, believe it or not –

And how are you?! I hope you have an occasional day or hour that makes all the rest worth while –

It is time for E.W.'s med & I'll cut this short – Know you were interested, so tho't I'd let you know about us.

Love, Lyde



Dear Grace - Have intended
writing you since my
return but E.W. has
been in bed & quite
sick most of the time.
Our doctor here does not
be a specialist at the
crack of dawn Monday
& after a hectic day, we
returned, put E.W. in
bed for a while with
an ulcer in his
stomach. Has to have

absolute rest & quiet
& nourishment every
hour. I am the nurse
& I felt last night
that I wasn't going
to last long!! It isn't
the labor - because it's all
labor of affection & devotion
- but it's the terror &
the fear. I want him
to be well & strong, &
more than anything
else, believe it or
not -

And how are you?!
 I hope you have an
 occasional day or hour
 that makes all the
 rest worth while —

It is time for E.W.'s
 much & I'd cut this
 short — know you
 were interested, so
 that I'd let you
 know about us
 Love Ede

January 3, 1940

My dear Grace,

Well, the holidays are over again – I wonder if you had a nice winter’s nap from Xmas till New Years? We have had a very quiet time of course (rice & prunes for Xmas dinner) I’ve been off the place only once in six weeks. E.W. is getting along pretty well, but some days is very miserable, & all days blue & sad & lonely. Is having worries with his new company & I’m afraid that will hold him back.

When you send me a present, I’m always torn between opening it & not – it always looks so pretty on the outside & I always am wondering about the insides too! I love the gown – even E.W. noticed it & thought it was lovely. It is, and cozy and warm too. I think you are very nice to me, sending me a lovely present. I wonder if you know how much I appreciate it? – Well, I do. & here & now I’ll say, “thank you m’am.”

Is awfully cold out here. 15 above – & there almts. Did you happen to read Helen Hayes’ mother’s story in the Saturday Eve. Post running for several weeks past? – Very cute – and especially I should think to one interested in theatre folk. I enjoyed so much.

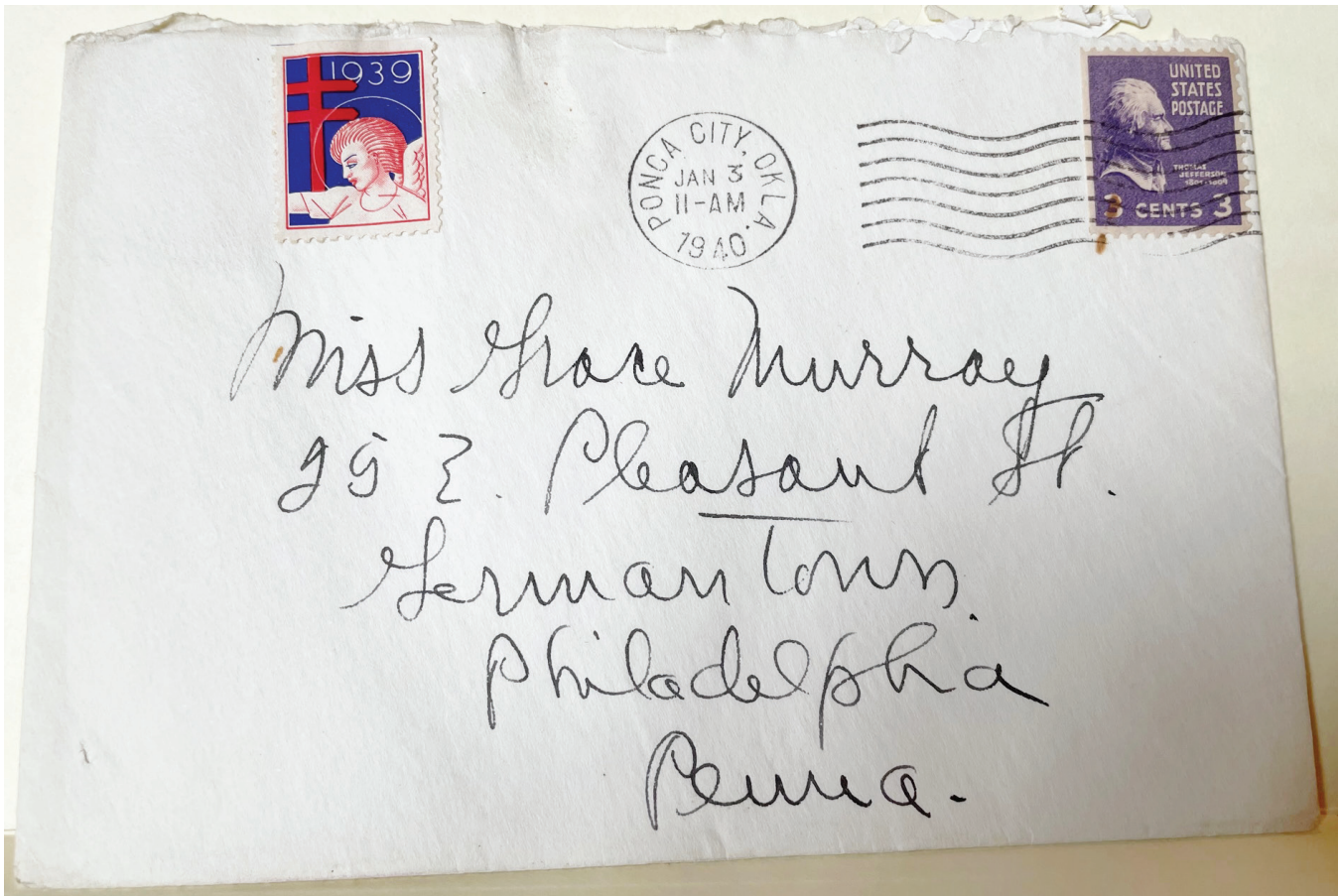
As we are in bed by eight – I read myself to sleep – nothing that requires any mental effort tho. Afraid something up there would snap! –

Have you made any New Years’ resolutions? –

Well, I’ll sign off now. Thank you again for remembering me with such a nice gift –

Lovingly yours

Lydie –



My dear Grace, you - 2 -

Well, the holidays are over again - I wonder if you had a nice winter's nap from Xmas till New Years? We have had a very quiet time of course (rice & prunes for Xmas dinner) I've been off the place only once in about six weeks. E.A. is getting along pretty well, but some days is very miserable, & all days there & sad & lorn. Is he worried with his

new company & I'm afraid
that will hold him back.

When you send me a
present, I'm always torn
between opening it & not -
- it always looks so pretty
on the outside & I always
am wondering about the
inside too! I love the gown
- even E.W. noticed it &
thought it was lovely. It is,
and cozy & warm too. It
sounds trite, but I think
you are very nice to me
send - of me a lovely

present. I wonder if you
know how much I
appreciate it? — Well,
I do, & here & now I'll say
"thank you m'arr" —

Awfully cold out here —
15 above — & thereabouts.
Did you happen to read Helen
Hayes' mother's story in the
Sat. Eve. Post some of the
several weeks past? —
Very cute — & especially I
shared it to one
interested — Theatre folk.
Devoted it so much.

As we are indeedly right -
- I read myself to sleep -
- nothing that requires any
mental effort tho. "I said
something up there would
snap!"

Have you made any New
Years' resolutions?

Well, I'll sign it
now. She has you ago
for sending me with
such a nice gift

Truly yours
E. W.

After his term ended as governor in 1939, the most successful independent oilman of the Roaring Twenties tried and failed a fourth time to gather investors for another Marland Oil. He needed income, so he put his name on the ballot for Congress, even though Lydie knew he couldn't win. This would be his fifth race.

April 29, 1940

You have too much rain – We have none – the drought is on here.

Dear Grace,

If you are still my friend, I am surprised –

I certainly don't deserve friends. Your letter about Mother made me feel better. It was so nice to get the lowdown on every thing there. It is rather ironical that you, who are sad yourself, should go about making others glad. Funny – you can't make you glad, but can others –

I really should go east, but what to do. We still live on what E.W. sells of pictures, sculptures, etc. (The news stories notwithstanding.) And I can't do anything financially. Besides, E.W. really is in need of me. He scares me to death his lack of strength & help & bull headed drive –

And now I thank you for that mist linen hanky.

Pretty hankys are one of my weaknesses when I need rich. The swellest one I have now – thanks so much for thinking of me. I really was touched when I opened the letter – and then that girl's hat!

It takes loads of friends to help put you over in a campaign, & since we go nowhere, see hardly any one and keep so to ourselves, our former friends are murmuring & I am wondering if E.W. is going to have any support at all in his coming campaign. People are just not in the mood for it this time. Well – I really had to laugh when you said nothing was making mush! It sounds so crude & homely & lonely –

I'm sorry you are not well. I have a feeling I will go all to pieces when I let down – & like humpty wumply – they couldn't put it together again. But you will live – because a scotch something I read the other day says to live long you should always ail a bit. But I guess you think it is not ailing you are, but a damned sick woman –

Well, thanks for that nice letter – and too for the lovely, lovely present. I can never wipe my nose with it. A shower –

Lovingly, Lyde.

*I live right anyhow – to bed at 8 – up at six – nose at grindstone –
You too.*

Funny, life –

You have too much rain -
My dear Grace, ^{We have more than} snow is on here.
If you are still my
friend I am surprised -
- I certainly don't do-
- sense friends. Your
letter about mother
made me feel better
It was so nice to get
the low down on every
thing there. It is rather
ironical that you, who

are sad yourself, should
 go about making others
 glad. Jimmy - you can't
 make you glad, but can
 others —

I really should go east
 - but what to do. We still
 live on what E. W. sells
 of pictures, sculptures
 etc. (The new stones not
 with-standing) and I can't
 do any thing financially.
 Besides, E. W. really is

to help pull you over in a
campaign, & since we can
go no where, see hardly any
one & keep so to ourselves,
our former friends are
murmuring & I am
wondering if E. W. is
going to have any support
at all in this coming
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in need of me. He scares
me to death with his lack
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and now to thank you
for that most lovely
hanky. The sweetest
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you will live - because a
scotch some time I read
the other day, says to
live long you should
always ail a ~~bit~~ bit. But
I guess you if it is not

along you are, but a damn
damned sick man -

Well, thanks for that
nice letter - and too
for the lovely lovely
present. I can never
write my most with
it in a shower -

Lovingly,
E.W.

I live right ^(anyhow) -
- up at six - nose at
granite - you, too.
funny, life -

July 12, 1940

Dear Grace –

How good you are to write to me. I always enjoy your letters so much. Sitting down and writing a newsy letter seems to be utterly impossible for sure! Our unsettled condition out here makes me feel suspended – mid air & any moment something will snap & there will be a thud –

E.W. has had offers for the place, but none satisfactory. I have no idea what our future will be. Hope to have a visit with you when I come east

Impossible at this writing to say when –

World events seem to toss us almost like a small cork on the ocean's swell – or something!

Anyhow, lots of love to you –

Lyde

Dear Grace - How good
you are to write to
me. I always enjoy
your letters so
much. Sitting down
to writing a newsy
letter seems to
be utterly impossible
to me. Our unsettled
condition and here
makes me feel
suspended -

mid air of any
moment some thing
will appear there
will be a third — some
E.W. has had offers for
the place, but none
satisfactory. I have
no idea what our
future will be. I
hope to have a visit
with you when
I come east

Impossible at this
writing to say
when —

World events
seem to toss us
about like ~~to~~ a
small cork on
the ocean's swell —
— or something!

Anyhow lots of
love to you —
E.W.

Ponca City, Oklahoma

9/28/40

Dear Grace –

This won't be a letter –

The effort being quite impossible at this point. Have been hoping to come east for some time, but things here have made that impossible. But I do think about you, and thought I'd send you a picture postcard if I had one, but I haven't –

So I hope this finds you up and at 'em – and if I can bring myself to leave E.W. – I hope to visit Flourtown 'ere long – hope you are fine.

Lovingly –

Lyde

E. W. MARLAND
PONCA CITY, OKLAHOMA

9/28/48

Dear Grace - This would be a letter -
- the effort being quite impossible at
this point. Have been hoping to
come east in some time, but
things here have made that
impossible. But I do think
about you, and thought I'd
send you a picture post card
if I had one, but I haven't -
So I hope this finds you
up and at 'em - and if I can
bring myself to leave E. O. -
~~and~~ I hope to visit Elmton
in long - hope you are fine -
Sincerely - E.W.

January 4, 1941

Saturday

My dear Grace,

I thought I was incapable of getting a kick out of a present – but I certainly did out of yours to me – I love the gown, of course, and certainly needed one, but I was simply enchanted with the wrappings! That is the prettiest paper I ever saw! After I finally undid it – I wore the bells in my hair, & the tape on my wrist, and cut some of the diamonds out to wear some how, some time. The remaining paper I am keeping for something or other. I like just to look at it. I must like things that glitter – Well, thank you for remembering me, and with such a lovely gift.

E.W. has been back in bed for many weeks, but is improving. Our Xmas was very quiet – just a few callers.

I hope to come east soon. Have been very all in & must get away from E.W. or go batty – You are reducing again – well, that takes character. Ordinarily ones can do things with inspiration, but it takes the extraordinary ones to keep on without any –

Lots of love to you – and thank you for that present – and I hope to see you quite soon

Faithfully

Lyde



BOX SIX

PONCA CITY

OKLAHOMA

Saturday

My dear Grace —

I thought I was in-
-capable of getting a
Rick out of a present
-but I certainly did
out of yours to me —

I love the gown, of course,
and certainly needed
one, but I was simply

enchanted with the
wrappings! That is the
prettiest paper I ever
saw! After I finally man-
-aged it, I wore the bells
in my hair on Christmas,
the tape on my wrist, and
cut some of the diamonds
out to wear some how, some
time. The remaining paper
I am keeping for some-
-thing or other. I like
just to look at it. I
must like things

BOX SIX

PONCA CITY

OKLAHOMA

that glitter - Well, thank
you, dear for remembering
me, and with such a
lovely gift -

E.W. has been back in
bed for many weeks, but
is improving. Our Xmas was
very quiet - just a few
calls -

I hope to come east
soon. Have been very all
in & must get away for
E.W. for awhile or go
lately -

You are reducing again -
- Well, that takes character -
Ordinary ones can do things
with inspiration, but it
takes the extra ordinary ones
to keep on without any -
lots of love to you -
and thank you for that
present - and I hope
to see you quite
soon
faithfully
E.W.

April 15, 1941

Dear Grace,

Been thinking about you a lot lately, & how I've neglected to write you since my return –

Our situation here is sort of working it's way slowly but surely to a climax, we're being sued by all sides. Think this place will be sold soon – ! and the waiting and the attending tasks, don't put me in letter writing or chatting mood, at all –

How's the reducing regimen?

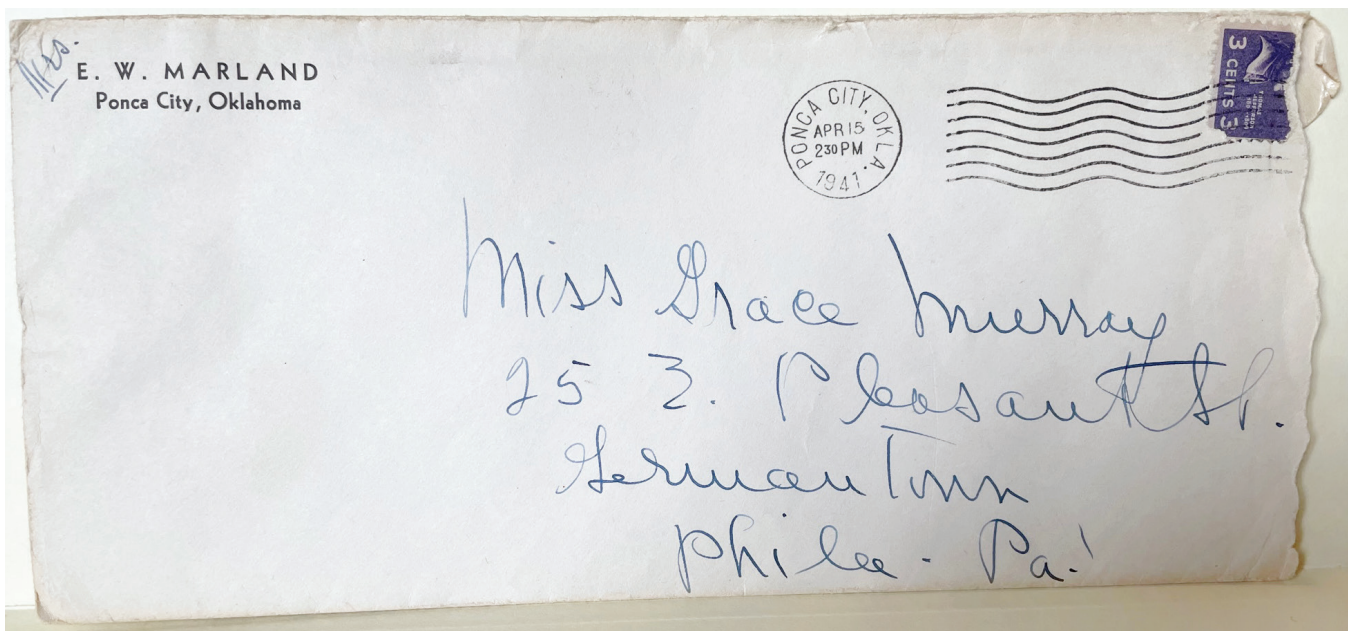
E.W.'s been vomiting and things like that lately – Hoping when the weather is nice & settled he'll be better, getting some sun and air –

Hope this excuse for a letter finds you O.K. and able to enjoy the inspiration of the spring time –

Lots of love,

Lyde

Monday



E. W. MARLAND

PONCA CITY, OKLAHOMA

Dear Grace - Been thinking
about you a lot lately, &
how I've neglected to
write you since my
return -

Our situation here is sort
of working its way slowly
but sure to a climax,
and the waiting and
attending tasks, don't put
me in a letter writing or
chatting mood, at all -
How's the reducing regimen?

E.W. has been vomiting and
things like that lately -
Hoping when the weather
is nice & settled he'll be
better, getting some sun &
air -

Hope this excuse for a
letter finds you O.K. and
able to enjoy the inspiration
of the spring time -

Lots of love,
Lydie

Monday

3011
MAR 21 1941
E. W. MURPHY

E. W. MA
PONCA CITY, OKLAHOMA

This world be a
being quite impossible
Have been hope is

Chapter 15

The Death of E.W. Marland

Lydie wrote this letter three weeks after E.W. died on October 3, 1941.

October 25, 1941

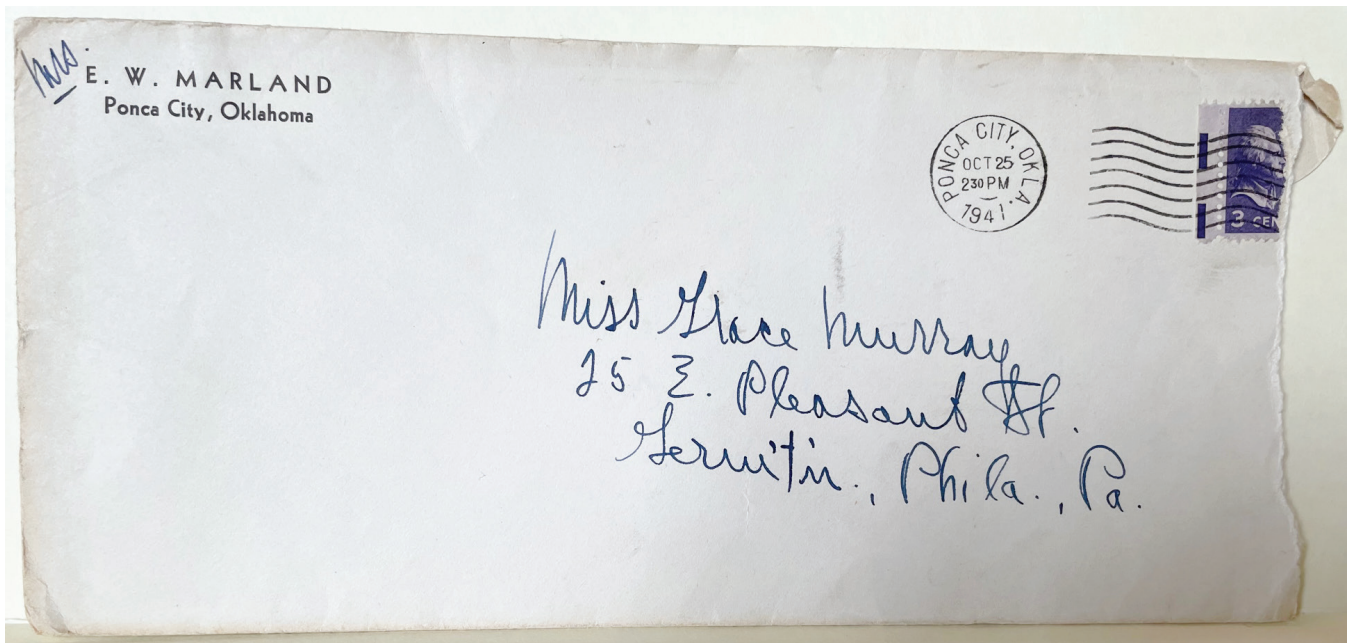
Dear Grace – your letters have been so nice – and I’ve appreciated your writing, when I didn’t –

*And now, I want to say something, and there’s nothing to say –
Will you understand?*

*I hope to come east soon, as soon as I do what has to be done
here– so much – and I’ll see you then & visit with –*

Lovingly,

Lydie –



E. W. MARLAND
PONCA CITY, OKLAHOMA

Dear Grace - Your letters have been
so nice — and I'm appreciated
your writing, when I didn't —

—
And now, I want to say some-
thing, and there's nothing to
say — Will you understand?

I hope to come east soon, as
soon as I do what has to be
done here - so much — and
I'll see you then to visit with -

Truly,
E. W.

June 22, 1942

Dear Grace –

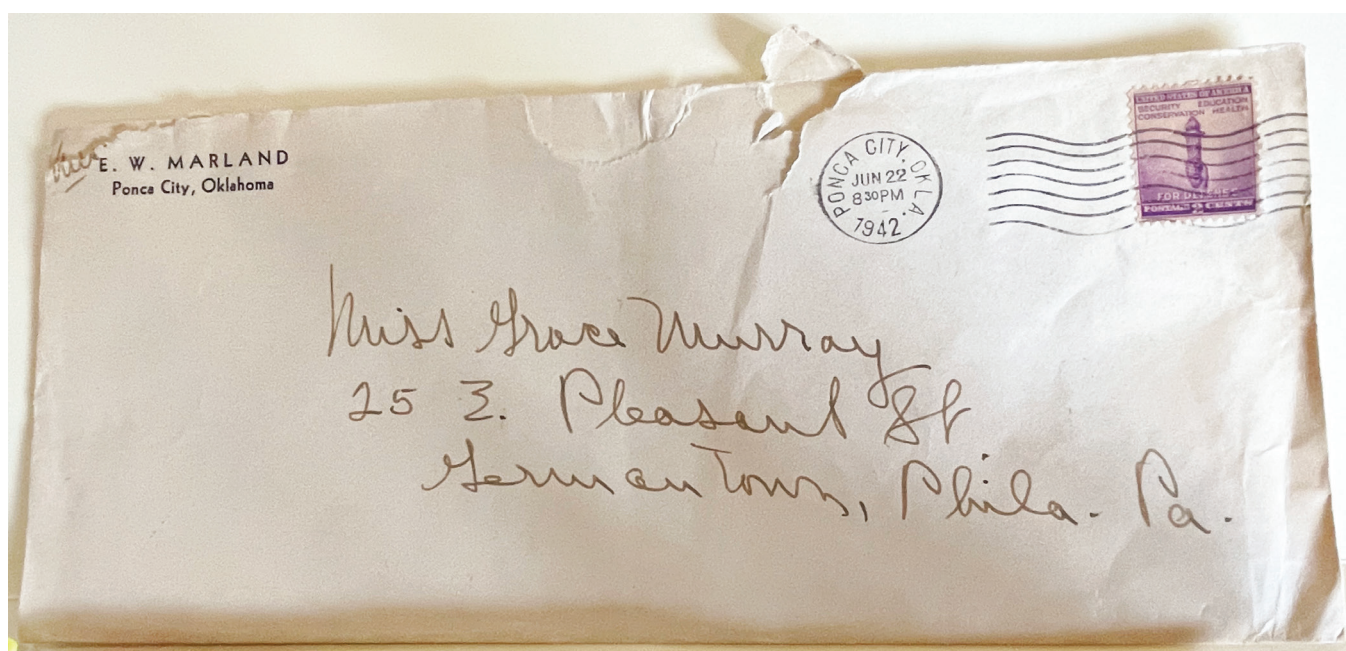
Don't shoot – I can explain everything! – Really, I have several alibis for not writing, but not one good enough. How I do loathe writing letters. I've been awfully busy, but if I would attempt to tell you all about it, I'd be simply exhausted. I do want to get a few lines off to you, tho, because I do think of you often. Wonder if your job is working out O.K. how your god daughter is, how the pussy cat is, and how you are – I try to persuade myself that everything will work out for the best, but I miss E.W. more and more, and I need him so.

I plan to spend a little time around Philadelphia later in the summer. Would like the seashore as usual. The attorney for the estate has kept me right here. The endless details are working to a conclusion, and in twenty days, the final decree closing the estate will be signed.

Well, this a poor excuse for a letter, but here she goes – and I hope this finds you happy and well –

Love from

Lyde



E. W. MARLAND
PONCA CITY, OKLAHOMA

Dear Grace - Don't shoot. I can ex-
-plain everything! - Really, I have
several alibi's for not writing,
but not one good enough. How I do
loathe writing letters. I've been
awfully busy, but if I would
attempt to tell you all about it, I
be simply exhausted. I do want
to get a few lines off to you, tho
because I do think of you
often. Wonder if your job is
working out O.K., how your god
daughter is, how the pussy cat is,
and how you are - I try to
persuade myself that everything
will work out for the best,

I miss E.W. more and more, and
need him so —

I plan to spend a little time
around Phila. later in the
summer. Would like the sea shore
as usual. The attorney for the
estate has kept me right here.
The endless details are working
to a conclusion, and in twenty
days, the final decree, closing
the estate will be signed.

Well, this is a good excuse
for a letter, and here she goes —
— And I hope this finds
you happy and well —

Love from
E.W.

E. W. MA
PONCA CITY, OKLAHOMA

This world be a
being quite impossible
Have been hope

Chapter 16

My Friend Paul

Lydie was forty-one and still a young, beautiful widow in the WWII years. Since this letter is about the vicissitudes of war, “have you fell back to 1918” may refer to the last days of World War I.

October 7, 1942

My last day in Phila was perfectly hectic what, with house calls from my friend, Paul, and trying to make my self presentable to stop off at the Hamiltons which I did – Only had a minute before the train to call Ginny Welsh.

We will have gas rationing soon (4 gals wk.) and in many ways the war is going to make life quite inconvenient, not to say grim, here. There much to do and shall commence forthwith – must get a note off to my mommy –

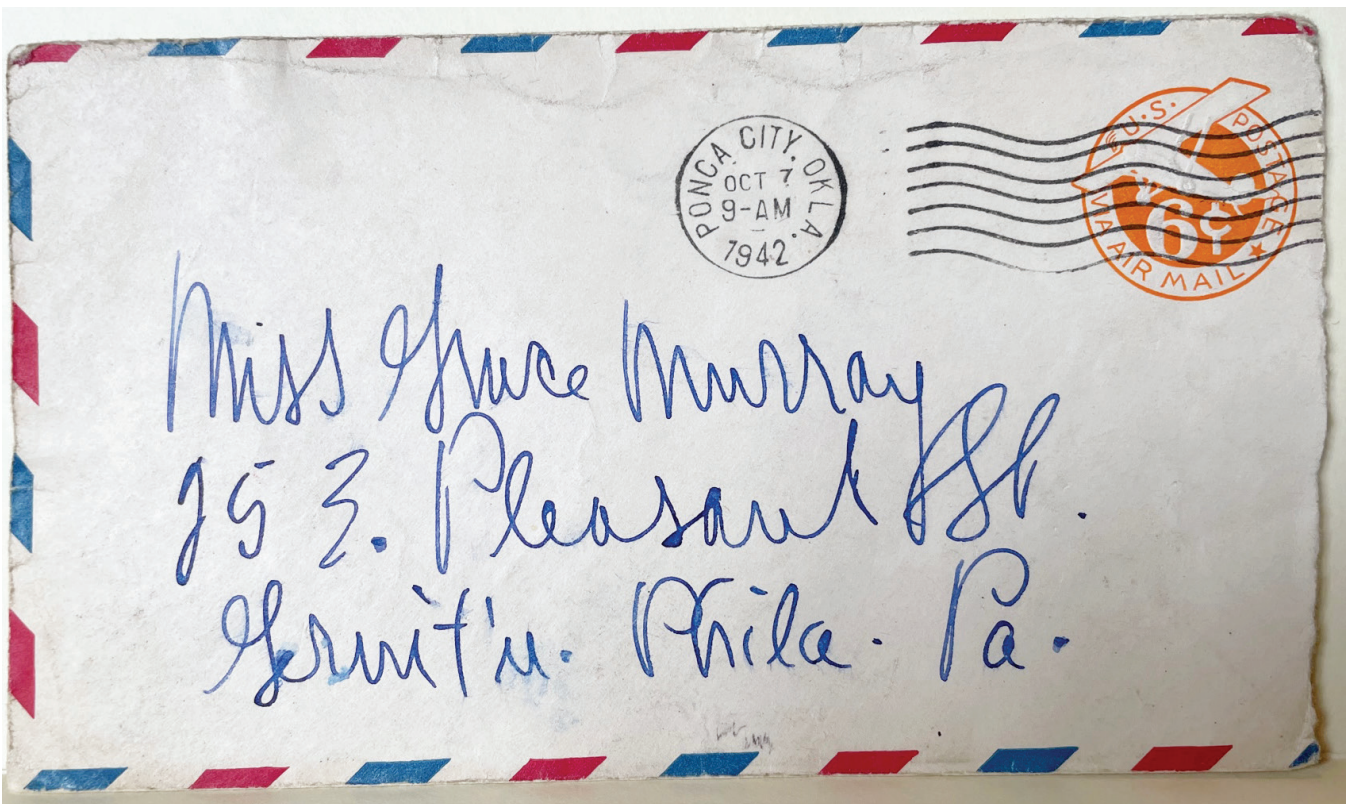
I was sorry not to see again before leaving –

Have you fell back to 1918?

Well, here's luck – and a short war.

With love –

Lyde



Dear Grace - My last day
in Phila. was perfect &
hctic, what with frantic
calls from my friend Paul,
and trying to make my
self presentable to stop
off at the Hamiltons, which
I did - Only had a minute
before the train to call
Jimmy Bush -
We will have gas rationing
here soon (4 gals. wk.) and
in many ways the war

is going to make life quite
undermined, not to say
grim here. I have much
to do, and shall commence
forth with - I must get a
note off to my mommy -

I was sorry not to
see you again before leaving -
Have you been back to
1918?

Well, here's luck
and a short war -
With love

Nov. 15, 1942

Dear Grace,

These past six weeks here simply flown by. I've been so busy. Have intended writing you for weeks.

Paul Hamilton flew down for a day, is in the navy, and off soon to S. Carolina.

I am doing Red Cross work, looking after my place, refused some possible tenants, because they have a big dog & are going to have a baby.

Am getting ready for gas rationing & practicing walking to town – some jaunt! –

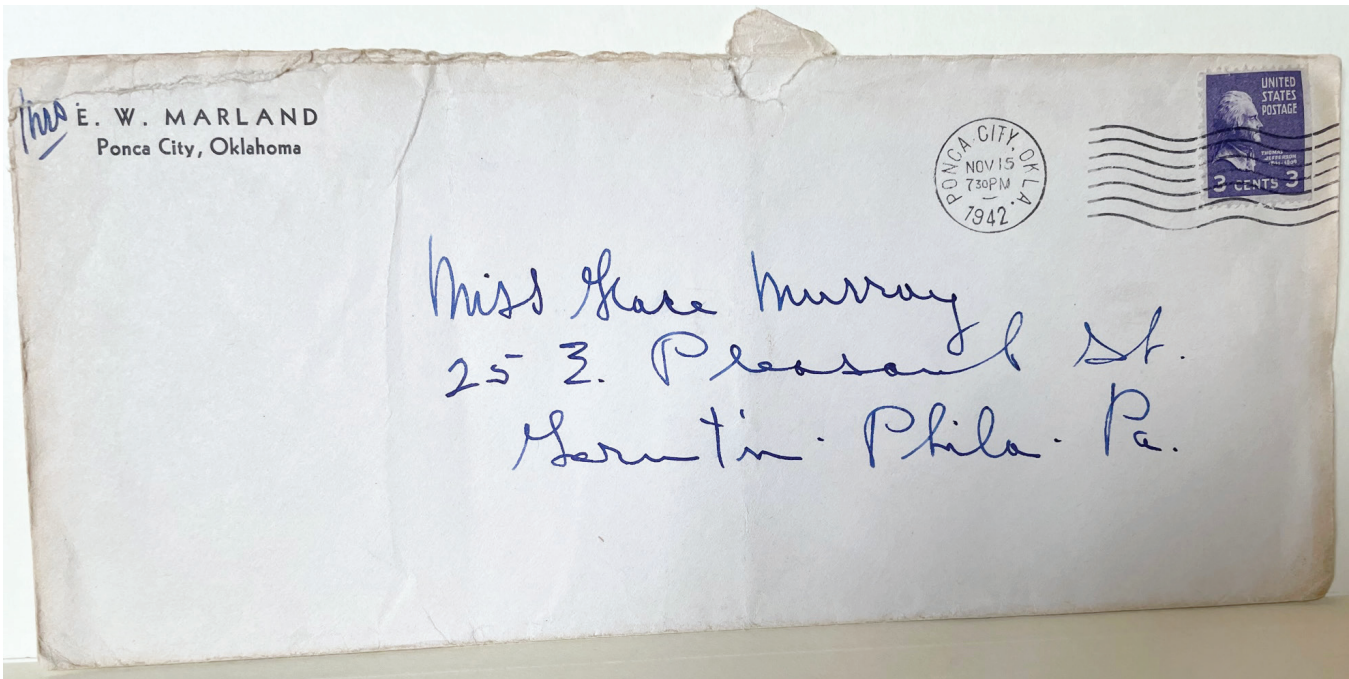
Mother seems fine – had a letter from her a few days ago –

Wonder how everything is with you –

I am off to the P.O. and want to mail this elegant epistle in pencil so will close –

With love

Lyde



E. W. MARLAND
PONCA CITY, OKLAHOMA

Dear Grace. These past six weeks
have simply flown by, I've
been so busy. Have intended
writing you for weeks.

Paul Hamilton has just down for
a day, is in the navy, & off
soon to S. Carolina.

I am doing Red Cross
work, looking after my
place, repeated ^{possible} saved tenants
because they have a big dog
& are going to have a baby.

Am getting ready for gas
rationing & practicing
walking to town - some

parent!

Mother seems fine.
Had a letter from her a
few days ago -

Wonder how everything is
with you

Go off to the P.O. &
want to post this
elegant epistle in pencil
so nice done

With love

Myra

January 7, 1943

Dear Grace,

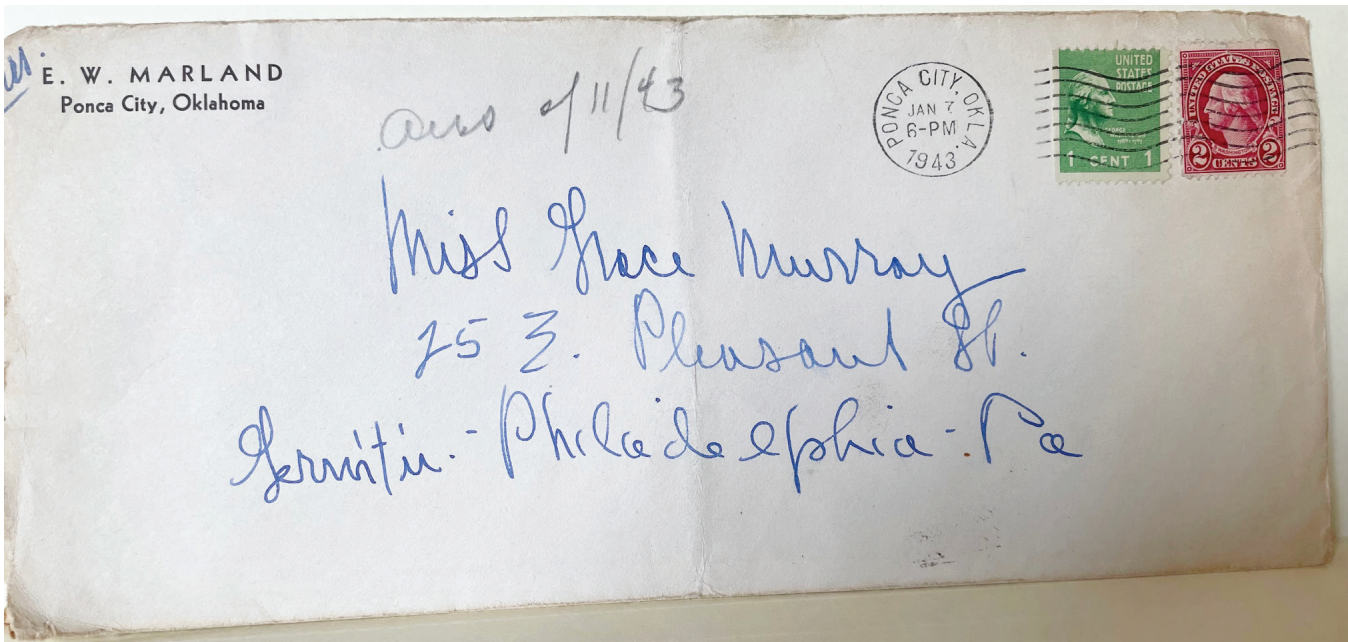
It was very bad manners on my part to neglect paying you back in the cash you so generously loaned me. Is this fine O.K. and all of it? I think it is – Please let me know if it isn't.

Was hours late into Chicago. Missed connections and had to take a slow train down here – it was an endless ride almost. Arrived midnight last night, practically dead. My mom sat the bottoms of two chairs in two weeks. Not complaining, just puzzled! Lots of love to you. Have lots to see here.

Hastily –

Lyde

Thanks!



E. W. MARLAND

PONCA CITY, OKLAHOMA

Dear Grace - It was very bad manners
on my part to neglect paying
you back in the cash you so
generously loaned me. Is this
fine O.K. and all of it? I think
it is - Please let me know if it isn't.

Was four hours late in to Chicago.
Missed connections and had to take a
slow train down here - it was
an endless ride almost. Arrived
midnight last night, practically
dead. My man sat the bottom out of two
chairs in two weeks. Not complaining, I'm
just puzzled! Lots of love to you. Have
lots to see to here. Hastily - See Thanks!

The next envelope was postmarked two years after E.W. died. Lydie and E.W. had remodeled the Artist's Cottage and lived there since 1931. Before he left the governor's office in 1939, they remodeled the chauffer's quarters and moved into what we now call Lydie's Cottage.

Nov. 25, 1943

Dear Grace –

Time seemed to fly by!

I intended writing to you weeks ago. Was so sorry to hear about your Uncle John's illness. It is very hard on some people when retirement is forced on them. I hope he is feeling lots better by now.

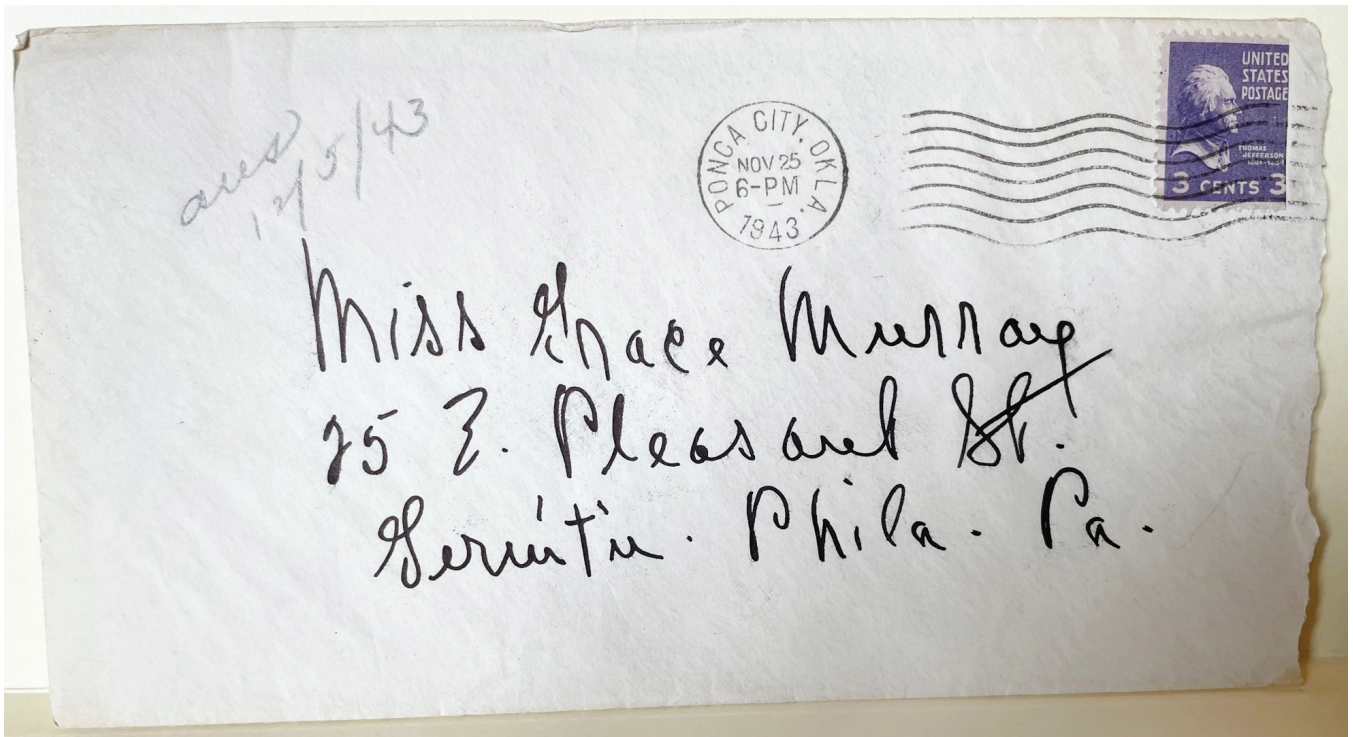
I keep quite busy. Do some Red Cross work and the place here is always good for a couple of new problems a week.

I'm kinda home sick to see my folks, but just don't get started. Travelling is so awful, and after I get there, I haven't much to do but fret things about things there, that I would like to improve with money. Gosh, I used to enjoy spending money.

I heard Elsie Janis on the radio this afternoon. Sorry I couldn't see her – she was nice to look at –

Well, I hope this note finds you O.K. and getting a lot of a kick out of everything in general.

Lovingly – Lydie



Dear Grace -

Time seems to fly by!
I intended writing to you weeks ago. Was so sorry to hear about your Uncle John's illness. It is very hard on some people when retirement is forced on them. I hope he is feeling lots better by now.

Keep quite busy. No some Red Cross work and the place here is always good for a couple of new problems a week.

I'm kinda homesick to see my folks, but just don't get started. Traveling is so awful, and after I get there I haven't much to do but fret about things there, that I would like to improve with money. Gosh, I used to enjoy spending money.

I heard Elsie Jarvis on the radio this afternoon. Song I couldn't see her - she was nice to look at -

Well, I hope this note finds you O.K. and getting a bit of a kick out of everything in general.
 Lovingly - *Lydia*

Dec. 21, 1943

Dear Grace – Today I've enjoyed my usual experience where I receive my Christmas present from you – First I admire the outside – it always looks so pretty – and then the inside! I love the belt and will enjoy wearing it very much. I have two black dresses and a black coat it will look well on, & “dress up” considerably. Thank you for thinking of me so footifully.

I decided a while back to sell my car – can get more for it now than later. Had several bids, but worked around for many weeks until I got a bigger bid, and yesterday got it sold. It's inconvenient without it, but it was the best time to sell.

I am working on selling a dining room – have three sets of photos out – in Texas, here, and Tulsa. I'd like to be east in the holidays, but want to get cleaned up out here so I won't have to come back here until I want to.

Have an invitation to visit friends of E.W.'s in Va. To stay awhile – my do it in the Spring.

I haven't heard from my folks for weeks – hope all is o.k.

So glad to hear your Uncle John is better. I'm going to spend Xmas day in Tulsa with George and Laverne. I wonder what you will be doing – ? I don't like Christmas. Haven't even sent a card – only checks to all nine nieces and nephews.

You are the only one who gives me a present! It's my whole Christmas. I'll think of you Christmas day – and wonder how you are “doin’”. Love to you and thanks again – Lyde

Tuesday

Dear Grace -

To day I've enjoyed my
unusual experience when I re-
ceive my CHRISTMAS present
from you ——— First I
ad mine the outside — it always
looks so pretty — and then the
inside! I love the felt and
will enjoy wearing it very
much. I have two black dresses
and a black coat it will look
well on, and "dress up"

considerably. Thank you for
thinking of me so thoughtfully.
I decided a while ^{ago} to sell my
car - can get more for it now
than later. Had several bids, but
worked around for many weeks
until I got a bigger bid, and
yesterday got it sold. It's in-
convenient without it, but it was the
best time to sell.

I am working on selling a dining
room - have three sets of photos
out - in Texas, here, and Tulsa.
I'd like to be east for the holidays,
but want to get cleaned up
out here, so I won't have to come
back here until I want to.

Have an invitation to visit friends
 of 3. W's in Va. to stay awhile - may
 do it in the Spring.

Have not heard from my folks for
 weeks - hope all is O.K.

So glad to hear your Uncle John
 is better. I'm going to spend Xmas
 day in Tulsa with George &
 have me. Wonder what
 you will be doing.

Don't like Christmas. Haven't even
 sent a card - only checks to
 all nine nieces & nephews.

You are the only one who gives
 me a present! - it's my whole
 Christmas! I'll think of you
 Christmas day - & wonder how
 you are "doing". Love to you and
 thanks again -
 L. J.

E. W. MA
PONCA CITY, OKLAHOMA

This world be a
being quite impossible
Have been hope is

Chapter 17

The Last Letter

Margaret Reynolds Collins Roberts died in either 1945 or 1947. Born in 1873, Lydie's mother lived about sixty-eight years, and outlived her husband by about seven years.

This was the last time Lydie wrote to her friend, or perhaps it's the last letter Grace saved.

Carolina Crest Hotel

Atlantic City, N.J.

Jan 2, 1945

Dear Gracie, I was so sorry to hear the sad news about Wuss— but was highly entertained and amused at your letter to me about it. I looked about for a card or something to express my sorrow but could find nothing that exactly expressed my true feelings. I hope he is all better.

Thanks for the nighty! But you shouldn't have done it, as they say. As always, the package looked so beguiling.

I've been away from here for eight days. Went to New York and had a gay and stimulating time – glimpsed the great world of talent, beauty, wealth and brains and just everything one wants. I feel a little like Cinderella to-night.

I may move up the street to the Colonial Hotel – it's cheaper.

Plan to come up Phila. Soon, but will return to A.C. if I don't go some where else.

So I'll see you soon – hope all is well with you.

Lovingly, Lydie.

Thanks again for that nighty –

but could find nothing
that exactly expressed
my true feelings. I
hope he is all better.

Thanks for the mighty!
But you should not have
done it, as they say.
As always, the package
~~is~~ looked so beautiful -

I've been away from
here for 8 days.

Went to New York and
had a good time.

CAROLINA CREST HOTEL
NORTH CAROLINA AVENUE NEAR BOARDWALK
ATLANTIC CITY, N. J.

Dear Grace -

I was so sorry to
hear the sad news
about Wess - but was
highly entertained
and amused at your
letter to me about it.
I looked about for a
card of some thing to
express my sorrow

relating time - glimpsed the great world of
talent, beauty, wealth & brains, & just
everything one wants - I feel a little like
Cinderella to-night.

I may move up the street to the Colonial
Hotel - it's cheaper.

Plan to come up to Phila. soon, but will
return to N. C. if I don't go some where
else.

So I'll see you soon - Hope all is
well with you -

Sincerely,
Lydie.

Thanks again
for that night -

E. W. MA
PONCA CITY, OKLAHOMA

This world be a
being quite impossible
Have been hope is

Chapter 18

The Lady Vanishes

Between 1945 and 1953 Lydie either stopped writing to Grace, or Grace stopped collecting letters. After E.W.'s estate was settled, Lydie spent more time in Flourtown and Atlantic City, because she preferred to vacation in the East.

Lydie probably did go into seclusion; she started dating ne'er do well Louis Cassel; she famously chased him around downtown Ponca City after he broke off their relationship, and she hired a cemetery worker to smash a statue of her into more than a hundred pieces.

In 1953, perhaps tired of being pointed out and gawked at, Lydie loaded Marland Mansion paintings, tapestries and antiques into her 1948 Studebaker convertible and drove away from Ponca City. A few family and friends knew where she went, but her whereabouts remained a national mystery for twenty-two years. Even though the FBI and local law enforcement hunted for her at the request of brother George Marland, they turned up no clues.

The Kansas City Star reported in 1954 that she lived for months at a family-owned motel in Independence, Missouri, where she helped clean rooms because she wanted to try working – something she had never done. A seven-page *Saturday Evening Post* feature did not flush out her location in 1958.

Later, she was reportedly recognized in a soup line in New York City. In 1967, she was rumored to have marched at an anti-Vietnam War rally in Washington, D.C., and next was identified in San Francisco, where she reportedly stayed with a priest.

E. W. MA
PONCA CITY, OKLAHOMA

This world be a
being quite impossible
Have been hope is

Chapter 19

What Happened to Lydie?

While Lydie was gone twenty-two years, Lydie's Cottage became the target of vandals. It became so dilapidated that a Marland mansion gatehouse neighbor complained to Lydie's lawyer in 1974: "You're a lawyer, find her."

Ponca City attorney C.D. Northcutt realized Lydie must be paying taxes on the cottage, therefore she must be alive. He visited the Kay County tax office, found a letter with a return address, located Lydie in Washington, D.C., and financed her trip back to Ponca City in 1975.

In poor health, and with nowhere else to turn, Lydie was ready to come home. She moved back into the chauffeur's cottage. Although intensely reclusive, she and other local supporters asked voters to authorize Ponca City to purchase the Marland Mansion when the Felician Sisters put up for sale. The city turned the mansion into an historic house museum; the Grand Avenue manor – Marland's first Ponca City house – also was converted into a tourist attraction.



E. W. MA
PONCA CITY, OKLAHOMA

This world be a
being quite impossible
Have been hope is

Chapter 20

What Happened to Grace

Grace Murray's life and death is detailed in two letters dated twenty-four years later.

Her employer wrote to a cousin, Sidney Murray Matheson. The cemetery deeds for Donald A. Matheson and Elizabeth N. Matheson, who died in 1890 and 1896, respectively, are found among Grace's effects, and were purchased by the O.U. Western History Collection.

Sidney Matheson's face and biography appear several times on World Wide Web as Murray Matheson. Not well-known by Hollywood standards, he was a busy U.S.-based Australian actor who appeared on stage, in films, and on television programs until 1983. He died in 1985 at age 73.

Lydie would have turned seventy-nine the year Grace died. It is unknown whether Lydie found out. Lydie continued to live in Lydie's Cottage until July 25, 1987, when she died after contracting pneumonia.

6837-9 Germantown Avenue

Philadelphia, Penna 19119

Feb. 5, 1979

Dear Mr. Mathesen:

John Jordan asked me to mail this check for \$500.00 directly to you as the legacy due you under the will of your cousin, Grace K. Murray.

Gracie kept the books for me at my hardware store near her home for quite a few years. She was a great gal and we loved her.

When the bookkeeping got to be too much for her, she retired and I didn't see much of her for a few years.

When she could no longer attend to her affairs herself, she asked me to take over and then be her executor after her death. It was good that we did this for a few cogs in her head began to slip.

I suggested a home. "NO WAY" she said. "I'm going to die in my

own house.”

The gals I got to take care of her, she threw out of the house.

We drifted for a while. Finally after a slight accident the doctors at the hospital forced her to go to nursing home.

Even though she fought tooth and nail, breaking up couple of wheel-chairs in the process, I feel that she finally accepted it as inevitable.

There she died on the night before I left for London for a few weeks.

We had a funeral for her after I returned and she is beside her mother in the family plot, along with her Aunt Mary and Uncle Job Matheson.

Grace loved children and people and dogs. She was enchanted by everything about the theatre. Among her things I found these poems she had written as a young girl and later. Perhaps they will help of little in understanding her. I enclose some photos, including one of Grace as a girl and her mother. Also some newspaper stories about some of your shows that she had kept. (There are more that I'd be happy to send you if you are interested, but I don't want to burden you.)

I feel that my life has been fuller and richer and that I have gained understanding by my having known your cousin, Grace.

Sincerely yours,

Charles W. Gable

6837-9 Germantown Ave
Philadelphia Penna 19119
February 5 1979

Dear Mr. Matheson:

John Jordan asked me to mail this check for \$500.00 directly to you as the legacy due you under the will of your cousin, Grace K Murray.

Gracie kept the books for me at my hardware store near her home for quite a few years. She was a great gal and we loved her. When the bookkeeping got to be too much for her, she retired and I didn't see much of her for a few years. When she could no longer attend to her affairs herself, she asked me to take over and then be her executer after her death. It was good that we did this for a few cogs in her head began to slip. I suggested a home. "NO WAY" she said "I'm going to die in my own house." The gals I got to take care of her she threw out of the house. We drifted for a while. Finally after a slight accident the doctors at the hospital forced her to go to a nursing home. Even though she fought tooth and nail, breaking up a couple of wheel-chairs in the process, I feel that she finally accepted it as inevitable. There she died on the night before I left for London for a few weeks. We had a funeral for her after I returned and she is beside her mother in the family plot, along with her Aunt Mary and Uncle John Matheson.

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I feel that my life has been fuller and richer and that I have gained understanding by my having known your cousin, Grace.

Sincerely yours,

Charles W. Gille

Murray Matheson letterhead

PO Box 5758

Santa Monica, Cal. 90405

Handwritten letter

9th Feb 79

Dear Charles Gable

Thank you so much for you very refreshing letter -

You filled in so many gaps in my knowledge of Grace – I do wish I'd seen more of her – but our only meetings seem to have been when I was playing at the Bucks County Playhouse, & there was never enough time to really probe! However, we have corresponded until a few years ago and got to know each other & our family hers that way! She was a very special person & had so many Mathewson Characteristics (including a slight lading!) that I always felt her here brother and sister!!

Again my thanks for everything – including the legacy cheque – really brought a lump to my throat – yes, I would enjoy the whey cuttings or things to do with us That would never be a burden.

With my very best wishes,

Sincerely Murray Matheson

MURRAY MATHESON
P. O. BOX 5758
SANTA MONICA, CAL. 90405

9th Feb 79

Dear Charles Gable

Thank you so much for your very interesting letter. You filled in so many gaps in my knowledge of Grace - I do wish I'd seen more of her - but our only meetings seem to have been when I was playing at the Bucks County Playhouse & there was never enough time to really probe, however we did correspond regularly until a few years ago & got to know each other & our family ties that way. She was a very special person & had so many Matheson characteristics (including a slight hunch) that I always felt we were brother & sister!!

Again my thanks for everything - including the letters, cheque - that really brought a heap to my throat - I'd I would enjoy any other things or things to do with us that would never be a burden.

With my best wishes
Sincerely
Murray Matheson

E. W. MA...
PONCA CITY, OKLAHOMA

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Chapter 21

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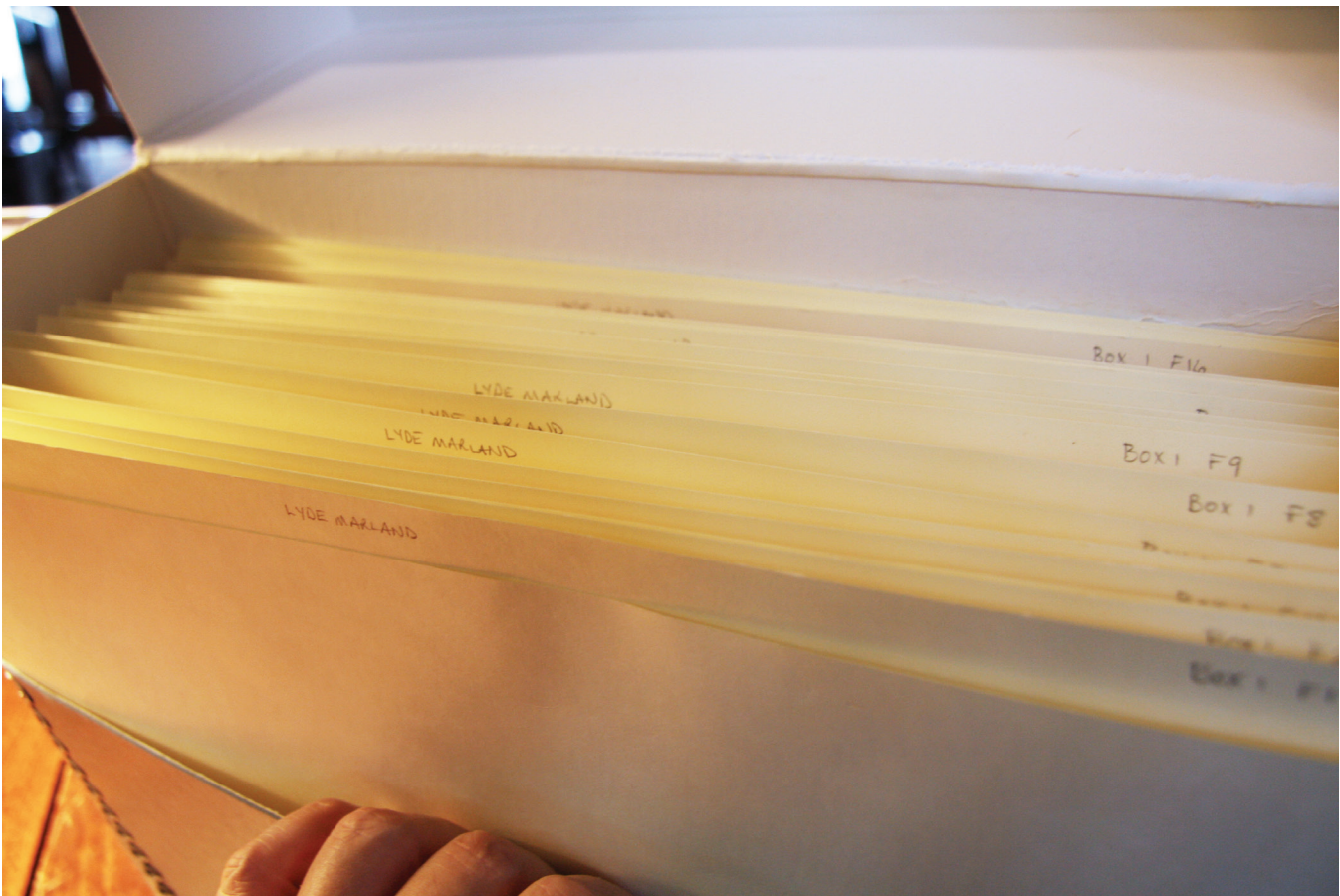
Lydie Marland's Letters to Grace

In 2007, the University of Oklahoma's Western History Collection purchased fifty letters from Between the Covers Rare Books, a Gloucester City, New Jersey collector twenty-three miles from Flourtown.

That's where these letters came from.

Lydie's letters and postcards are contained in a gray file with two dozen folders, each dedicated to one year's letters, some years with only one envelope, some with several. Most letters are contained in envelopes, so the postmark verifies the date. A few letters are without envelopes, and are therefore undated.

One folder contains deeds to the graves of Grace's family, another holds photos of Grace and her dogs. One folder is reserved for deeds to cemetery plots, including the grave of Catherine E. Murray, who was apparently Grace's mother.



According to an April 10, 1901 letter from her great aunt, Grace was about seven in 1902, maybe five years older than Lydie, who was born in 1900.

It isn't known whether Lydie kept Grace's letters. She seems to have horrified of snoops prying into her personal life so, shortly before her death, Lydie burned two suitcases of personal effects, which may have included historic journals, intimate letters, and photos.

Lydie Marland's letters from 1926 to 1945 were addressed to Miss Grace Murray, 25 E. Pleasant St. Germantown, Pa. There was no ZIP code, because the postal service did not adopt that system until 1963.

Lydie was educated at three Eastern finishing schools, but apparently she did not excel at penmanship. As readers can see, Lydie's cursive is sometimes unreadable. Punctuation is – well – creative. Nevertheless, this writer faithfully transcribed her letters, down to Lydie's long dashes, which she frequently used instead of periods when changing thoughts. She misspelled some words, which remain uncorrected.

“The vendor did not provide additional information regarding the history of the collection,” wrote Western History Collections Librarian Jackie Reese in 2022. “I am assuming these were listed in one of their catalogs as a lot to purchase... The vendor has catalogs they regularly distribute to their mailing list. We are on their list, as are hundreds, if not thousands, of other entities and individuals... We do not have documentation discussing why this collection was purchased.”

So that readers may see the original letters, webmaster and bookbuilder Lisa Li and I have assembled this ebook, *Lydie Marland's Letters*. You can buy it at garyrobertpinnell.com

If E.W., Lydie or George kept a diaries, they have not been found. E.W.'s biography was published in 1953 as *Life and Death of an Oilman: The Career of E. W. Marland*. Fiction and nonfiction books, stageplays, and a documentary have been written.

In 2012, the Weinstein Company bought the rights to *The Broken Statue* and announced it would shoot a romantic drama, *Ends of the Earth*, directed by Academy Award-nominee David O. Russell and starring Academy Award-winning actress Jennifer Lawrence as Lydie Marland. However, Harvey Weinstein went to prison.

E. W. MA...
PONCA CITY, OKLAHOMA

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About the Author

1953
Miss
John

Gary Robert Pinnell



My book manuscript, *THE MADNESS OF E.W. AND LYDIE MARLAND*, is with an editor in New York. When his and my revisions are done, three agents have asked to read it. I expect it to be published next year. Please go to LydieMarland.com and sign up for the mailing list. You will be notified when my book appears on bookstore shelves.

About Gary Robert Pinnell

Gary Robert Pinnell is a retired reporter, photographer and editor who worked with *The Duncan Banner*, *The Lawton Constitution*, *The Seminole Producer*, and ten other newspapers in Texas, Nebraska, Louisiana, Pennsylvania, Virginia and Florida. He is writing a nonfiction biography tentatively titled, “*The Madness of E.W. and Lydie Marland*.”

Learn more about the author at GaryRobertPinnell.com, and follow facebook.com/garyrobertpinnell.

The Madness of E.W. and Lydie Marland

In Gary Robert Pinnell’s compelling, soon-to-be-published book, *The Madness of E.W. and Lydie Marland*, their captivating saga is recounted with a previously unseen level of detail and intimacy. Drawing from a treasure trove of newly discovered, unpublished letters, Pinnell delves into the turbulent undercurrents of the Marlands’ lives, offering fresh insights into their notorious relationship, their dramatic rise and fall, and their tumultuous navigation through the 1929 stock market crash.

But more than just an historical recounting, this nonfiction biography journeys into

desire, and the tragic consequences of broken taboos. The Marland saga unravels the impact of societal norms and pressures, examines the price of unbridled ambition, and follows the heartbreaking decisions of Oklahoma's beautiful first lady, who declines into a destitute street person. As readers traverse the emotional landscapes of E.W. and Lydie Marland's lives, they witness the seismic shifts between the liberal 1920s and the brutally stigmatized and misunderstood mental health climate.

The Madness of E.W. and Lydie Marland explores a period of the 20th century that still resonates today and leaves readers spellbound. It is a captivating read for history aficionados, biography lovers, and readers of intriguing tales well told.

Sign up at LydieMarland.com to receive updates about the book and exclusive content about the E.W. and Lydie Marland.

E. W. MA...
PONCA CITY, OKLAHOMA

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About the Designer

1953
Miss
for

Melissa (Lisa) Li



Melissa Li, known professionally as Lisa Li, is the creative force behind the design of *“Letters from Lydie Marland to Grace Murray.”* Lisa graduated with a Bachelor’s degree in Computer Science from Southeastern Oklahoma State University in December 2023. She is the founder of Making The Impact LLC, a Norman, Oklahoma-based company that specializes in graphic design and web development for small businesses, non-profits, and churches.

For this ebook, Lisa meticulously crafted the cover and designed the layout, ensuring that each page visually complements the enriching content it carries. Her work demonstrates a keen dedication to enhancing the reader’s experience through thoughtful and aesthetically pleasing design. Learn more about Lisa Li at MakingTheImpact.com.

In loving memory of

Lydie Roberts Marland

Do you have a suggestion or correction?

Email: gary@garyrobertpinnell.com

Thanks for your feedback.

Gary Robert Pinnell and Lisa Li

