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5-14-1933

### Letter, Sinclair Lewis to Claude Lewis [May 14, 1933]

Sinclair Lewis

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#### Recommended Citation

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TWIN FARMS  
BARNARD, VERMONT

May 14, 1933

Dear Claude:

I have confirmation from my bank, and the check for twenty-five dollars will go regularly and automatically to Fred on the fifteenth of each month. Later it may be necessary to increase it somewhat, but meanwhile it will help a good deal. What a fine bunch of male trout Fred did help give birth to! Wouldn't you like to exchange Freeman for Donald or Edwin? I'm sure it can be arranged, if you insist on it.

Sorry the Roterts have to leave Sauk Center. They will probably be rather lonely. Yes, you wrote me about Bert Hansen. If I ever see Main Street S.C. again, it will be rather melancholy without him and Cash and Fay Sprague. Does Dr. Dubois Sr. still carry on? He must be pretty old.

Virginia has written to me that she longs to go to Europe this summer with a party conducted by Dean McCreery and including her friend Mary Spooner. Claude, do let her do it! It will probably cost about one hundred dollars more than the \$400.00 which is the official expense -- and that \$500 total cost will be worth more to her than any \$5000 -- or \$15000 -- she will ever have the rest of her life; it would be the finest and wisest thing you could ever do for her, and if you can't afford it, do it anyway, and recoup later.

First, she will get an enormous lot out of it. After all, Virginia hasn't, except for her brief trip to New York, seen much of anything outside of Minnesota; and who knows; she, like Freeman, may find her future life identified with some part of America far from Minnesota. This will give her, early, a notion of what the rest of the world is like which will be invaluable.

And now is the time <sup>for her</sup> to travel. As you know, I have travelled a good deal, and I assure you that out of my trips as a kid -- such as the Panama adventure and cattle-boat to Europe -- I got a hundred times as much as I could possibly get now, even were I to travel to the heart of China. A youngster is strong, flexible; he, or she, can stand discomfort, poor food, sitting up all night, with relish. And being fresh to the world, he or she sees so much more freshly and acutely, gets so much more kick, and so vastly many more new and valuable ideas. It's the

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only time to travel instead of, as most people do, waiting till they are middle-aged and prosperous and can afford it -- but also cannot really enjoy it.

Second, with the Dean in charge, and the immense regulation and safeguarding of travel that there is today, she would be as well taken care of and guarded on such a trip as if she were at home in St. Cloud.

It would be a great adventure; a gift that would never wear out or be broken, but last her all her life; and not only an adventure but an acquisition of new ideas, new knowledge about what the world really is like, which would be mentally invaluable. I know Europe pretty well. I advise, if I may do so without butting in, you most heartily to let her do this. Probably it will mean that some day you'll have to let Isabel go likewise, but at least that can be put off two or three years.....I wish to God Dad had let me do something like this instead of carefully saving his money and then leaving me fifteen thousand at a time when I didn't need it at all. Five hundred when I was 18 would have meant more than all he left me -- too late.

.....

I think I wrote you, Dorothy had to stay on in Italy after I left to finish some articles for the Saturday Evening Post. She also twice butted into Germany, though she is not popular there, because of her opposition to Hitler. She has just landed, all safe, with Micky, and will be up here in a couple of days -- she is held up in New York with shopping and with about a million requests for speeches, radio talks, etc. I've talked to her three times long-distance, and she is plenty homesick for the farm here, even after the beauty of Italy.

Ever,

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