

June 21, 1935

Dear Mrs. Pritchett:

At last I have had my day with  
Lena Kennan. Possibly she has already written you  
that I was there.

There are several things I want to  
report. First, there is Mrs. Kennan, herself. It is  
a relief to know that she is to have this \$100.00 a  
month as long as Mrs. Carnegie lives. She was about  
ready to give up I think and this has brought her back  
to life and to a feeling of self-respect which she  
says she was losing.

It is touching in the way she sees  
George in connection with it - how happy he would be to  
know that this had happened to her.

We talked, of course, of her  
possessions and what could be done with them. I went  
over her things, those that she has mentioned in her  
letters and looked about carefully to see if there were  
other items which might be salable. But I think she has  
about covered the articles of value. As I gather she  
has given away to friends and institutions a large  
quantity of ~~odd numbers~~ of articles of one kind or  
another that if she had them now would be of considerable  
value. Of what she has left the rugs are undoubtedly  
the most valuable. The big one is certainly a beauty  
and I urgently advised her not to push its sale now that  
she can get on, to wait for better times and to enlist  
people who might want later something really fine and  
interesting.

I was in Rochester the day after I  
saw her and I spoke to two or three women there who  
seemed to have money and who I saw had faith about the  
big rug. I also spoke to one of my friends here who  
knows a lot about this kind of thing and has connections  
with friends who do buy to keep an eye out for a  
purchaser. The smaller rugs are good.

arked

tarte

Outside the rugs the most valuable thing from my point of view is a blue and white woven bedspread. It is the most beautiful pattern I ever saw and I think the finest weaving. It has a border with a very rare design - the Eagle and the Willow Tree. It has the date of its making woven in its border. ~~Now~~ ~~this~~ ~~is~~ ~~a~~ ~~piece~~ ~~which~~ ~~I~~ ~~think~~ ~~ought~~ ~~to~~ ~~bring~~ ~~a~~ ~~good~~ ~~deal~~ ~~of~~ ~~money~~ ~~from~~ ~~an~~ ~~old~~ ~~quilt~~, ~~a~~ ~~family~~ ~~piece~~, ~~made~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~Revolutionary~~ ~~times~~, ~~but~~ ~~to~~ ~~my~~ ~~mind~~ ~~it~~ ~~is~~ ~~not~~ ~~nearly~~ ~~the~~ ~~value~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~blue~~ ~~and~~ ~~white~~.

The fabrics of which she wrote are interesting and beautiful, but are not unusual. I brought down what she considers her most valuable Jade ornament and I am having that appraised by a woman that I think knows something of these things. I have a list of the fabrics and of the ornaments, but there are not a great number of unusual value I am afraid in any of them.

*who among*

*art* The house is full of quaint and interesting odd objects but their value would all depend upon someone who happened to want some particular thing. And then I think there would not be much return, that it would be wiser to keep these things to have about her, to give her a sense of the life she has had.

Now as to the house. There is a mortgage on it which I understand is not over-large. How much she did not say. The Harriman estate is paying the interest and so far as she knows they will continue doing this. I came away convinced that every effort should be made to keep her in the house as long as she lives. I am not sure that it is going to be very long. She seemed fragile. I am afraid to attempt to put her somewhere else; give up the house would be the end of her. Then, too, she has a feeling that it would be so unfitting for George Kennan's memory to have her move out from this place which she was so anxious they should always keep as a retreat. She wants to stay where she is; she says she cannot bear to have people think that he left her without any means, people who would know nothing of course of the failure of the bank.

*should*

*he*

If the mortgage should be foreclosed the house would go for very little. Its location is good, very charming now with the greenery all about it. It could be made into a desirable home but it is terribly run down from the point of view of one who likes things fresh and modern as buyers seem to like them these days. I don't mind the condition and the lack of modern conveniences but when it came to selling that would militate greatly of course against a good price. All of this is in her mind. True, there is the fear that if it was sold for any price at all the bank would take it away from her.

She lives on very little. I don't know if it would be possible for her to pay the interest on the mortgage in case the Harriman estate ceased to pay it, but she could do something towards it so carefully is she of her pennies. And then if a good sale could be made of the really valuable things she could save the place. I am convinced that somehow it should be managed. It would make me very unhappy to think of her having to leave because I came away feeling just as she seems to feel that for George Kenman's memory she ought to stay.

As long as Mrs. Kenman has Mrs. Carnegie's one hundred dollars a month she will feel secure. And of course the chances are that that will be as long as she lives.

As long as the Harriman estate pays the interest on her mortgage I am convinced she should stay where she is and if they should redraw I should feel that everything possible ought to be done to keep up the payments so that she might stay where she is.

I think the effort to find a purchaser at full value for the few desirable pieces that she has should continue. I am inclined to think that if the situation can be kept just where it is that our anxiety can be lifted. I do think as friends we must keep an

~~Her Account~~

eye on her. I am surprised she is saying nothing to her family or her friends about the money.

I hope you and Dr. Fritchett are finding Santa Barbara the very happiest place in the world, and that you are both well. It will be a pleasure to see you back in the Fall.

Sincerely yours

Mrs. Henry Fritchett  
Santa Barbara, California