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December 22, 1948

Mr. Ivor and Doctor Herman Mercer
4622 Riverview
Louisville 11, Kentucky

Dear Friends:

I am sorry to have to tell you that Gertrude died October 30, after being quite seriously ill for the greater part of four months. You may or may not recall that she was operated for a malignant growth in January, 1946, and had a second operation performed in January, 1948.

I think that everything that love, tender care, and medical science could do, was showered upon her, but it was not enough.

Our families did not know each other long, and yet the friendship formed is deep and sincere.

I think that no woman in Lawrence has ever been mourned by a larger number of people than Gertrude was, and that included people of almost every walk in life. She had been helpful to others in so many ways and took great enjoyment in so doing.

When Mrs. Simons, our daughter, Dorothea Johnson, and myself were in Louisville a few years ago, we called upon the Matthew sisters in Pee Wee Valley, which is a suburb of Louisville. They occupy the fine old home that at one time housed a governor of the state. They are charming women. Kate, the artist, illustrated the Little Colonel books. The youngest of the group, Miss Jessie, whom, unfortunately, we did not meet, was the originator of the painting of the girl with the violin which hangs in our home. The painting was used in a magazine called Illustrated America about 50 years ago, and the picture interested me so that I painted it in colors. Strangely enough, the colors I put in the picture were the natural colors of the original subject and her dress. This led to a brief correspondence between Miss Kate Matthew and myself, and we still exchange holiday greetings.

I know they would love to see you and that you would be delighted with their beautiful home. With very best wishes to you all,
I remain,

Cordially yours