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Dear Family,

The Fourth is always a time when we wish we were with family. Dr. Olkowski said Dan could travel now, so for most of the day yesterday, we put off calling Virginia, debating whether or not to attend Uncle Delbert's family reunion. We finally decided we had better take the extra precaution and take it easy here at home.

We did have a little ceremony this morning by ourselves, pledging allegiance to our flag after we placed it on the porch over the front door. It is a beautiful day here in Basking Ridge with true skies, pure clouds, and bold lilies blazing our national colors.

Dan and I watched through moist eyes as a gentle breeze caressed the emblem of so much national hope and suffering. Who can calculate the price paid so our sons and daughters can proclaim a gospel of peace to a less-free, hungry world. God bless our flag. And God bless you missionaries, students, and young husbands and wives in our family--all of you doing your best to live the values which made this country great. We're proud of our next generation and grateful for the rich blessings which make your activities possible.

Last week I put Jonathan Sortle Alexander's Revolutionary War pension application account into the computer and read much early American history on some other lines. The ghosts are working overtime to give me genealogical opportunities. Dan can drive now, but until yesterday it was verboten. So I drove him to work twice (he can work at computers, read, and make phone calls) and then went to the nearby Morristown Public Library (they have a marvelous genealogy section) until he was finished.

Yesterday evening, just as I was getting ready to leave, a Mrs. Cortessis (Phoebe) of LaFayette CA noticed I was counting copies of early Plymouth Colony records and asked if we could compare lineage charts. I didn't help her much, but she extended my records with two new names! She had the parents of John Warren (called John "The Middle" because he also had an older brother named John). He was one of our emigrant ancestors from England, whose daughter Mary (also our ancestor) married John Bigelow. The Puritans searched John's house a few times because he sympathized with Quakers. He came to this country about 1630 in the Arbella.

According to Mrs. Cortessis, John "The Middle" married Margaret BARRON. His parents were John Warren and Elizabeth SCARLETT. So now you who are still barron daughters can name your next beauty "Scarlet"--especially now that we are finding some ancestral southerners among these Halls.

I have filled four disks now on PAF 2.2--hopefully good progress will come this year in sorting out what temple work needs doing for our ancestors and getting it accomplished.

Most of the daylilies Dan took as splits from the White Plains Presbyterian cemetery are now old enough to bloom. We have had such a treat each morning, going around the house looking at the

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exquisite color combinations. It has been a big job transplanting them in complementary clumps each day (while the blooms last), but I'm sure we'll be glad for this effort next year.

Last week I tried to bargain with James Wood to come mow our lawn, since Dan is out of commission. He owes us two car washings which we bought at the ward auction, and I thought I'd get a lawn mowing instead. No deal, as far as he was concerned. But his sister, Michelle, overheard the conversation. When I came home from the library last week, I found a beautifully mowed acre of lawn. Dan said President Wood and Michelle brought over their mower and one of them did the front and one used ours to mow the back (a real pain with the slopes and the clutter of many little trees and shrubs, even though Dan marked them each with white sticks). A Stake Pres. and daughter who are "greatest among..." to be sure.

Another Wood daughter, Lori, came to me in Church Sunday and asked how Laura was doing. I said she had quite an adjustment at first, but seemed to be feeling better. I did express my concern that she did not have a roommate to come "home" and talk with. Well, most people would make some empathetic comment and move on. But not Lori. "I'm going to Utah next week to see my boyfriend and get my braces off. Give me Laura's address, so I can go see her. It can be very lonely at first--I know how that feels."

She also volunteered to take some things Laura needs which I took over last night and which she is going to try to fit into her already stuffed bags. (Laura I took over your running shoes, white flats, green moccasins, two pair of jeans, and two T-shirts). She did not have room for your hot curlers. Ask around the family. Maybe Grandma Hall has some hot curlers sitting around which she doesn't need (I hardly use mine now that my hair is short--but don't like to mail electrical appliances like that when I don't have the original packaging).

Thanks to all you grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins, who have done so much to help Laura adjust since she arrived! Laura thought that was some feast at Karen and Cal's Sunday!

Laura said my visiting teacher, Winnie Stobaeus, mailed her a generous check last week. What especially moved Winnie was she got a letter from Laura thanking her for her sweet example and kindness the day after she mailed Laura the surprise check. Winnie couldn't believe a young woman so busy with start of school would take time to remember "an old lady" (and not even knowing green stuff was coming). Thanks, Laura. You have no idea how you brightened Sis. Stobaeus' week (and I'm sure, she, yours)!

Apparently Laura wrote some other letters, too. Laura Lefgren told me it absolutely made Anne Marie's day when she got Laura's letter. Laura, did you know Anne Marie graduated from middle school top of her class? And this with her mother working and having to tend her sister every day after school. Her mother got up in testimony meeting and cried about what a blessing Anne Marie had been in keeping the home front going.

Laura Lefgren made an (ahem) point last week to let me know