

(Letter to Paul Jordan Smith from his new bride, Ethel Sloan Park Smith, Oct. 12, 1904)

Dear neglected darling,

Your wife has kept silent because she couldn't be optimistic and so she thought she'd better not bother her beloved.

I am trying to be sick but am determined to disappoint myself.

I put up much more preserves Monday and when they were ready to be canned I could find no cans in the town. So I told the zerves please to wait in a stone jar till I runned to Bridgeport after some fruit jars. And up I got betimes yestermorn and went a shopping to Bridgeport and the journey being so long and tedious I was worn out yesterday afternoon and couldn't write the dearest darling in the world.

Are you being good in school? Do you think you'll get E in department?

I really haven't time to be writing this morning. I have a waist to make to wear to see you Saturday. I thought I'd try to get off Friday but I believe I'd rather wait till Saturday soze you can meet me.

The sweet mater wrote me such a mournful letter Monday that I made up my mind I'd worry myself into brain fever and die, but I have decided it would be a deal cheaper just to live and tough it out. The sunshine's bright and God's in his sky ---

Will see you Saturday and love you muchly,

Your Wife

Paul and Ethel were wed secretly on September 14, 1904, much to the dismay of Paul's parents. At the time, Paul was a nineteen-year-old student, and Ethel, age 20, had just completed high school. Their first-born, Lucille Isabella (Isabel Jordan), arrived on August 4th of the following year. At the time the letter was written, it appears Paul and Ethel were still living with their respective parents. The envelope is postmarked Chattanooga and is addressed to Paul at 505 West 7th Street.