

## DORLETTTERS196o-61 L0006 (English)

Holland-America Line

R.M.S. Vancouver Jan 4/62

Dear Ulla!

Your birthday is really inconvenient; Christmas is barely over and it's already too late to wish you a happy birthday. But I'm sending you belated wishes for all the best and that all your dreams come true, as far as that's possible. Please forgive me for the letter being late, but I'm just very busy with wedding preparations. I would have gladly stayed home this last weekend, but duty is duty. A few days ago I had a "shower." It's a custom here for a friend to give you a shower, either before a wedding or before a birth. All the acquaintances are invited, only women and girls; men are not allowed at a shower. Everyone brings something, and the person the "shower" is for knows nothing about it. Yesterday when I came in the door, the light was out in the room and then suddenly it went on and everyone yelled "Surprise!" To be honest, I knew about it beforehand, but of course I had to act very surprised.

has, and only Karl his piano. Then you pay for everything with a check; it's not paid in cash at all, often not even birthday cards and mortgages, which is very interesting. This weekend I was in the Okanagan Valley, 300 miles from here. That's the main fruit- growing region of B.C. There are fruit farms there, especially peaches and apricots and plums, but also many pears and apples and grapes. The landscape looks completely dried out; there's an almost subtropical climate there in the summer. Dry, everything is thirsty, cacti and saltbushes are the only vegetation. Rocks between the sandstone and barren sandstone walls, grass and yellow sand. Green patches are the fruit farms, which are constantly artificially irrigated. Pumps pump water into the gardens, which are about 1 1/2 years old, and which are wide above the ground. But in dry periods the young ones are watered. In the winter, however, it is very cold there, often -20°. It has a terrible number of rattlesnakes. In one town in one summer. Otherwise, there are few snakes in B.C. In Ontario, there are also quite a few rattlesnakes, and other poisonous ones.

Willing's parents want a boomerang from Australia in the fall. Do you know what a boomerang looks like? About 2 fingers wide and 60-70 cm long. The natives in Australia use it for killing; sometimes they throw one around an opponent. In the tourist version, it is thrown without the killing and live part. But you have to