

The Bantam Book of

CORRECT LETTER WRITING

*an abridgment based on
Lillian Eichler Watson's world-famous*

STANDARD BOOK OF LETTER WRITING



**THIS AUTHORITATIVE GUIDE TELLS YOU HOW
TO WRITE CLEAR, SUCCESSFUL, EFFECTIVE
AND INTERESTING LETTERS FOR ALL OCCASIONS**

*...ations * thank-you notes * condolence letters
...ers of congratulations * business letters and
...ul job applications * personal and social letters
... a special section on children's letters * * * * **

MODERN * PRACTICAL * COMPREHENSIVE * EASY-TO-USE

H 315

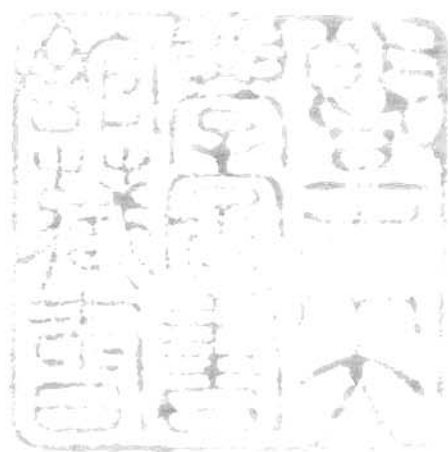
E 602

8410436

外文书库

THE BANTAM BOOK OF CORRECT LETTER WRITING

An abridgment based on
LILLIAN EICHLER WATSON'S
STANDARD BOOK OF LETTER WRITING



BANTAM BOOKS

TORONTO • NEW YORK • LONDON • SYDNEY

RL 7, IL 7



THE BANTAM BOOK OF CORRECT LETTER WRITING
An abridgment based on Lillian Eichler Watson's
STANDARD BOOK OF LETTER WRITING.
Copyright, 1948, by Lillian Eichler Watson.

A Bantam Book / published by arrangement with
Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Bantam edition / April 1958
23 printings through May 1981

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 58-5993

© Copyright, 1958, by Bantam Books, Inc.
All rights reserved, including the right to
reproduce this book, or portions thereof, in any form,
except for the inclusion of brief quotations in a review.
For information: Prentice-Hall, Inc.,
Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey 07632

ISBN 0-553-14047-7

Published simultaneously in the United States and Canada

Bantam Books are published by Bantam Books, Inc. Its trade-
mark, consisting of the words "Bantam Books" and the por-
trayal of a bantam, is Registered in U.S. Patent and Trademark
Office and in other countries. Marca Registrada. Bantam
Books, Inc., 666 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10103.

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

32 31 30 29 28 27 26 25

MODERN LETTER WRITING MADE EASY

Lillian Eichler Watson shows you how to write correct, effective and gracious letters for all occasions. Using hundreds of sample letters, Mrs. Watson helps you solve every letter-writing problem—effective sales letters, formal social occasions, condolences, club correspondence, love letters, bread-and-butter notes, and the lively, personal “visit on paper.”

THE BANTAM BOOK OF CORRECT LETTER WRITING

COMPLETE • INFORMATIVE • EASY TO USE

Acknowledgment

The author wishes to thank the following for permission to use material in this book:

Printers' Ink: H. D. Shaw, "How to Write an Effective Letter."

Victor O. Schwab: *How to Write a Good Advertisement*.

John B. Opdycke: *Take a Letter, Please!*

Thomas Y. Crowell Company: Curtis Gentry, *Fifty Famous Letters of History*.

Doubleday and Company, Inc.: Captain Robert E. Lee, *Recollections and Letters of General Robert E. Lee*.

Simon and Schuster, Inc.: M. Lincoln Schuster, *A Treasury of the World's Great Letters*.

Latham Ovens: "Letter to a Soldier."

Pantheon Books Inc.: G. Selden-Goth, *Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy Letters*.

Charles Scribner's Sons: Elliot Merrick, *Northern Nurse*.

R. H. Morris Associates: "How to Pre-judge the Effectiveness of Your Letter."

*As long as there are postmen, life will have
zest.*

—WILLIAM JAMES

THE BANTAM BOOK OF

CORRECT
LETTER
WRITING

Facts at Your Fingertips!

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|-------|--|--------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 20832 | THE PUBLICITY HANDBOOK David Yale | \$3.50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 22573 | THE BANTAM BOOK OF CORRECT LETTER WRITING | \$3.50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 20775 | THE COMMON SENSE BOOK OF
KITTEN AND CAT CARE | \$2.95 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 14582 | AMY VANDERBILT'S EVERYDAY ETIQUETTE | \$3.50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 14954 | SOULE'S DICTIONARY OF ENGLISH SYNONYMS | \$2.95 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 14483 | DICTIONARY OF CLASSICAL MYTHOLOGY | \$2.75 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 14080 | THE BETTER HOMES AND GARDENS
HANDYMAN BOOK | \$3.95 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 20085 | THE BANTAM NEW COLLEGE SPANISH &
ENGLISH DICTIONARY | \$2.75 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 20356 | THE GUINNESS BOOK OF WORLD RECORDS
20th ed. | \$3.95 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 20957 | IT PAYS TO INCREASE YOUR WORD POWER | \$2.95 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 14890 | THE BANTAM COLLEGE FRENCH &
ENGLISH DICTIONARY | \$2.75 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 20298 | THE FOOLPROOF GUIDE TO TAKING PICTURES | \$3.50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 22574 | SCRIBNER/BANTAM ENGLISH DICTIONARY | \$2.75 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 14090 | WRITING AND RESEARCHING TERM PAPERS | \$2.50 |

Ask for them at your local bookstore or use this handy coupon:

Bantam Books, Inc., Dept. RB, 414 East Golf Road, Des Plaines, Ill. 60016

Please send me the books I have checked above. I am enclosing \$_____ (please add \$1.00 to cover postage and handling). Send check or money order —no cash or C.O.D.'s please.

Mr/Mrs/Miss _____

Address _____

City _____ State/Zip _____

RB—8/82

Please allow four to six weeks for delivery. This offer expires 12/82.

期 限

SAVE \$2.00 ON YOUR NEXT BOOK ORDER!

BANTAM BOOKS 

**Shop-at-Home
Catalog**

Now you can have a complete, up-to-date catalog of Bantam's inventory of over 1,600 titles—including hard-to-find books.

And, you can save \$2.00 on your next order by taking advantage of the money-saving coupon you'll find in this illustrated catalog. Choose from fiction and non-fiction titles, including mysteries, historical novels, westerns, cookbooks, romances, biographies, family living, health, and more. You'll find a description of most titles. Arranged by categories, the catalog makes it easy to find your favorite books and authors and to discover new ones.

So don't delay—send for this shop-at-home catalog and save money on your next book order.

Just send us your name and address and 50¢ to defray postage and handling costs..

BANTAM BOOKS, INC.

Dept. FC, 414 East Golf Road, Des Plaines, Ill. 60016

Mr./Mrs./Miss _____
(please print)

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Do you know someone who enjoys books? Just give us their names and addresses and we'll send them a catalog too at no extra cost!

Mr./Mrs./Miss _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Mr./Mrs./Miss _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Table of Contents

BOOK I

THE BASIC RULES OF SUCCESSFUL LETTER WRITING

1. Letter Writing as a Social Asset 1
 - What the ability to write good letters can mean to you
 - A letter is like a "visit" on paper
 - How letters can enrich life—create more enduring friendships
 - The busiest people make the best letter writers
 - Write the letters that don't need to be written
 - Send personal letters instead of greeting cards whenever you can
 - If you "don't know what to say" in a letter
2. Personality in Letter Writing 7
 - Make your letters sound the way *you* do!
 - Visualize the person to whom you are writing
 - Just write as you speak—that's the whole secret!
 - Use your customary words and patter
 - Some easy ways to make your letters sound conversational
 - Keep your language simple—short words are the best
 - How to write with greater ease and clarity
 - People judge you by your letters
 - Avoid careless remarks that may be misunderstood
 - Don't write anything you may later regret
 - The letter everyone loves to receive
3. The Physical Characteristics of Your Letter 17
 - The correct stationery for social and personal correspondence
 - Short notes should be handwritten
 - Use of the typewriter
 - The spacing and arrangement of a letter
 - Sequence of pages and folding the letter
 - How to avoid mistakes in spelling and grammar
 - The use of punctuation

4. The Parts of a Letter	25
The heading	
The salutation	
The body of the letter	
The close	
The signature	
How to address the envelope	

BOOK II

YOUR SOCIAL CORRESPONDENCE

1. The General Rules of Social Correspondence	43
All social correspondence has a specific <i>purpose</i>	
The difference between formal and informal correspondence	
What you should know about informal correspondence	
What you should know about formal correspondence	
2. Dinner Invitations and Acknowledgments	52
Always respond promptly to a dinner invitation	
Dinner in honor of a special guest or guests	
Dinner to celebrate a special occasion	
Dinner followed by concert or opera	
Dinner by sons and daughters in honor of parents	
How to postpone or cancel formal dinner invitations	
How to break a formal dinner engagement	
Inviting a friend to fill an empty place at dinner	
Informal dinner invitations—and how to answer them	
Inviting friends to dinner and the theater	
When a daughter acts as hostess	
Note to recall an informal dinner invitation	
Note to break an informal dinner engagement	
Note to an intimate friend recalling a dinner invitation	
Note to an intimate friend breaking a dinner engagement	
3. Luncheon and Supper Invitations and Acknowledgments	69
Invitations for simple informal luncheons	
Inviting someone you do not know	
Supper invitations	

4. Party Invitations and Acknowledgments	80
Card party invitations	
For an informal bridge luncheon	
For a formal bridge luncheon	
For an informal cocktail party	
For a formal cocktail party	
For an informal tea party	
Formal tea parties	
Garden party invitations	
Invitations for house and week-end parties	
Invitations for showers	
Invitations for christenings	
5. Dance Invitations and Acknowledgments	92
Debutante dances and dinner dances	
Supper dance invitations	
How to acknowledge formal dance invitations	
Recall or postponement of formal dance invitations	
Subscription dances and charity balls	
Invitations for informal dances	
The friendly note of invitation	
Asking an invitation for a relative or friend	
6. Wedding Invitations and Announcements	103
Announcing an engagement	
The church wedding	
Church admission card	
The home wedding	
Train and direction cards	
Wedding announcements	
Enclosing "at home" cards with the announcement	
Wedding invitations for special and unusual circumstances	
Invitation to a double wedding	
The bride with one parent	
When the bride has no parents	
Invitations for a second marriage	
When the groom is in the military services	
Recalling a wedding invitation	
How to acknowledge wedding invitations	
The informal wedding invitation written by hand	
Bride's note of invitation to a close friend	
To a relative	
If there has been a recent bereavement	
To an old friend of the groom—a stranger to the bride	
To a business associate of the groom	
Inviting a friend to the reception only	
Invitations to wedding anniversaries	

7. Letters of Thanks

130

When and how to acknowledge wedding gifts

To relatives

To intimate friends

To less intimate friends

To a business associate of the groom

To an old classmate of the groom—a stranger to the bride

Shower gifts should be individually acknowledged

Notes of thanks for Christmas gifts

For birthday gifts

For wedding anniversary gifts

For a gift for a newborn baby or young child

For a "Bon Voyage" gift

The bread-and-butter letter

Thanks for gifts to a patient or invalid

Thanks for a favor received

Thanks for a letter of condolence

Thanks for a letter of congratulation

On a birthday

On an engagement

On a marriage

On a wedding anniversary

On the birth of a child

On graduating from college

On winning an honor or distinction

8. Letters of Congratulations

149

Congratulations on an engagement

Congratulations on marriage

Congratulations on a wedding anniversary

Congratulations on a birthday

Congratulations on the birth of a child

Congratulations on graduation

Congratulations on winning an honor or distinction

Congratulations on a promotion or a new venture

Congratulations on a speech or a performance

9. Letters of Condolence

158

On the death of a parent

On the death of a husband or wife

On the death of a child

On the death of a relative

When death is a release

When someone is killed or commits suicide

Some famous letters of condolence

10. Notes of Sympathy on Illness, Injury and Material Loss	171
To those who are ill	
To those who have been injured	
To those who have suffered material loss or damage	
11. Letters of Introduction	177
To be presented in person	
To be sent by mail	
"Follow-up" letters of introduction giving additional information	
A famous letter of introduction	

BOOK III

YOUR PERSONAL CORRESPONDENCE

1. The General Rules of Personal Correspondence	183
Answer every letter promptly—it's easier for you	
You don't need literary style to write interesting letters	
How long should a letter be?	
2. Friendly Letters	186
How to begin a friendly letter	
What to write in a friendly letter	
What <i>not</i> to write in a friendly letter	
Consider the person to whom you are writing	
How to close your letter	
Examples of letters to personal friends	
Friendly letter from one man to another	
Friendly letter from one woman to another	
Letters to friends in distant places	
Letters from distant places to friends back home	
Christmas letter to a friend	
3. Family Letters	201
The ever-welcome letter from home	
To a daughter living and working in another city	
To a husband away on business	
To a married sister living at a distance	
Letters to children away at school or camp	

Excerpts from letters to children written by famous people
 From a bride to her parents on her honeymoon
 Letter to a relative who has asked for advice

4. Love Letters 215

Examples of love letters from women to men
 Examples of letters from men to women
 Excerpts from the love letters of famous men and women
 Postscript on personal letter writing

BOOK IV

YOUR BUSINESS AND CLUB CORRESPONDENCE

1. The General Rules of Business Correspondence 223

The parts of a business letter
 The inside address
 The salutation
 The body of the letter
 The complimentary close
 The signature
 Addressing the envelope
 Suggestions for writing more effective business letters
 Write your letters from the reader's point of view
 Be sure it sounds sincere
 Enthusiasm is contagious
 Courtesy counts in letter writing, too
 How to prejudge the effectiveness of your letter

2. The Tone and Language of a Good Business Letter 239

Abbreviations in business letters
 The opening paragraph
 Examples of effective openings for various types of letters
 The closing paragraph
 Examples of effective closings for various types of letters
 The use of postscripts in business letters
 The Ten Commandments for writing a good business letter

3. Examples of Routine Business Letters 248

Letters of order and confirmation
 Letters of complaint and adjustment

Letters of inquiry and acknowledgment	
Letters about credit	
Collection letters	
Acknowledging collection letters	
Miscellaneous business letters	
 4. Letters That Sell	 265
Examples of effective sales letters	
Letters that sell good will	
 5. Letters of Application	 272
Don'ts in preparing your letter of application	
Examples of good letters of application	
Letters of reference	
Letters of introduction and reference	
Letters requesting information from references	
Thank-you letters for help in getting a job	
 6. Your Club Correspondence	 287
Notification of election to office	
Letters of resignation	
Requests to speak or entertain at a club	
Answers to invitations from clubs	
Letter of thanks for speaking or entertaining at a club	

BOOK V

CHILDREN'S CORRESPONDENCE

1. The Letters All Children Must Learn to Write	297
Children's thank-you notes for gifts	
Children's thank-you notes for hospitality	
Children's personal correspondence	
 2. Children's Invitations and Acknowledgments	 306
Notes of invitation	
Notes of acceptance	
Notes of regret	
 Appendix	 311
Forms of Address	

Book I

*

The Basic Rules of Successful Letter Writing

* * *

1. Letter Writing as a Social Asset

There's an old familiar saying that you must have heard many times: "To have a friend, you must be a friend."

It's equally true that to receive interesting letters, you must *write* interesting letters. If you write only when absolutely necessary, when duty or responsibility demands, you are missing out on what can be one of the greatest personal enjoyments of life.

But apart from the pleasure and satisfaction that a wide correspondence with friends can mean to you, letter writing is an important social asset. The ability to write good letters can be as useful to you socially as the ability to talk well or entertain successfully. In some ways letter writing can be even more useful to you, for it helps facilitate all social activities—often saves you much time, trouble and inconvenience.

The letter you write is your personal representative. It takes your place when circumstances make it impossible for you to be there in person. It goes to the hospital to cheer a sick friend. It goes to your hostess to thank her for entertaining you. It conveys your best wishes, congratulations, condolences—when you are not able to do so in person.

WHAT THE ABILITY TO WRITE
GOOD LETTERS CAN MEAN TO YOU

Letters can be one of the most powerful and far-reaching influences in your life, if you let them be. They can do amazing