

Halloween, 1948

Dear Mamma,

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That boy of ours is hipped on the subject of your coming down here. Today again, just as I was putting him to bed for his nap he said, (and I quote!) "Is gammamma and Jimmy coming to see my little beddy-bye in Washington?"... "Are you going to call them on the telephone and tell them to hwy up? Is Gammamma afraid about the chickens?" and before that, as he was eating his lunch, I ventured to call up to William and ask him to vacuum clean the chaise longue for me, please. Laurence John immediately spoke up in injured tones, saying "That's not mamma's chaise longue, daddy!" I asked him whose it was. "That's my Gammamma's chaise longue, it's NOT yours!" He is equally offended when I make a mistake and call it the guest room. The other day when we thought we might have Walt Terpenning here for the weekend he was incensed indeed to find out I was planning to put Walt in Gammamma's room. He cried bitterly because someone else was going to "sit on Gammamma's bed". As it turned out, everything went as he desired, for Walt had to go back sooner than he expected and the trespassing on his gramamma's property never took place.

My poor neighbor is coming home again tomorrow. She and her daughter Laura went out to St. Louis right after the memorial service at the Unitarian Church. So I shall be busy tomorrow morning getting something in the house for them to eat. They gave me the key to their house before they left.

We had a most interesting evening last night with Mr. Shantz and Jack MacSweeney. The latter has been in Russia until a few months ago, first in Moscow and then in Vladivostok. Mr. Shantz knew Russia in 1934, when he was assigned there, and paid another week's visit in 1940 while assigned to Finland. Jack is now on the Russian desk at the Department, right in the thick of things. Mr. Shantz doesn't deal with Russia, but he's right in the middle of things also, and he's still as nice as he can be. Since we last saw him he's been in Cairo, Canberra Australia, and Belgrade. But they stayed till one o'clock, which made it rather latish by the time we'd done the dishes!

I'm inclosing a poem by Ogden Nash which reminds me so vividly of my own youthful certainties that I'm sure it will amuse you even more than it did me. It's me to a T! It reminds me of all the battles we had over wearing warm underwear. Ah me, how times and people do change!

I've been reading the Anthony Trollope Barsetshire series and enjoying them all hugely. YOU SIMPLY MUST GET THEM, if the library has to send for them from the Library of Congress. Dear old Mr. Rouse next door let me have them to read a week or so before he died. To me they are as good as Dickens, with a big dollop of Jane Austen.