

Bethesda, Wednesday Nov. 3, 1948

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Dear Mama:

William just called to tell me about the election results, since we don't have a radio. Pretty surprising, what? Everybody was wrong except old Uncle Harry. Including Dr. Gallup, so I feel sorry for him as well as for Thomas Elusive Dewey, the Candidate in Sneakers. There wasn't much choice, but I must say that Uncle Harry seems to be the pleasanter fellow of the two.

Your grandson, madam, is pestering me to come down and "talk to you", as he puts it. I asked him what to tell you in my letter, and he said "But I like to write a letter to Granmamma too! Sweet Granmamma!" So now he is weeping great salt tears up in his room, since its a rainy-day. He is just shouting down to tell grammama that he "hoorts, gammamma!" "Tell my gamamma that Laurence John OWIED!" He keeps asking me when I am going to make gammamma's bedspread for her.

We went over to Alexandria last Sunday afternoon with Laurence John to call on Mrs. Hart and her son, William's old Stuttgart friend B. G. Hart. I wish you could have come along! When next you come down here I'll ask Mrs. Hart for permission to call with you, because it was just wonderful. They have hooked a house in an old row of three-story white clapboard buildings on the main street of Alexandria. The buildings must date from between 1800 and 1810, I should guess, and the sidewalk in front is still the old red brick variety. The outside is nice, very nice indeed, obviously old but well kept up. But inside, my dear! Long windows, almost to the ground. A dado around the drawing room, the original mantelpiece, a high ceiling with a lovely crystal chandelier. The woodwork and dado is painted Williamsburg green, and the wall is cream. Wallpaper would look nice, but since it's rented, there's nothing to do about it. The entrance hall is very narrow, and I've never seen such high, narrow steps upstairs except in Curacao. The dining room leads off from the living room, and is enchanting. It also has a fireplace with lovely mantel. The kitchen is large and old-fashioned, except that all the fixtures are modern. There is a tiny brick terrace leading off the dining room, and it is surrounded by a high wall, ivy-covered as I remember, though I didn't get a good look in the dark. Mrs. Hart has some lovely, lovely old furniture to go in the house and do it proud. She collected not a few of the things in Brazil. She has a set of 12 perfectly lovely old Portuguese dining room chairs, and an Empire sofa, with the original caning still in it, accompanied by matching caned chairs. These she got from an Englishman's house in Brazil, and they are English antiques. The handsome sofa (uncomfortable, of course, but oh so gorgeous!) is in perfect condition and cost her about fifteen dollars! It just made me turn green with envy, both the house and the furniture, but all the same I was delighted and happy to be able to see it. I could just picture myself back in the early nineteenth century. Just at dusk, when the lights were first turned on, it was heavenly. Mrs. Hart is, incidentally, about your age I should imagine and very nice indeed.

I've just finished the Trollope series and am therefore without reading matter. I'd better go next door and borrow an history book for the evening. Also I'd better finish supper. Laurence John is out on the porch now anyway, and is bothering me so much I can hardly write. How he resents my sitting down to write a letter!

Love,