

5208 Glenwood Road  
Bethesda, Maryland  
December 31, 1948

Dear Dona and John,

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Herewith Pop's latest account of his astonishing adventures. I suppose you also have received a postcard from Paris, too. I got a Christmas card from some ex-Caracas friends, now retired to Sussex and the *Rural English Life*, on which were written a few words, including the not surprising news that Helen had written to them announcing an impending trip to England. Well well well. Pop and Helen met the de Coup-Cranks when they were down in Caracas in 1946, so they will now probably visit them in Sussex. Dear old Pop must be really having the time of his life. The capitals of Europe, champagnes, gaity, mad flittings from high spot to high spot! More power to them.

We were all three simply delighted with our Christmas presents from you. I really don't know how you could have picked out more pleasing ones if you had thought and thought a year! I am terribly proud of my tricky perfume-dispenser, and never fail to drag it out to show friends (they nearly always think I'm about to burn them when I demonstrate). As for William, he immediately exclaimed "For heaven's sake, here's a Christmas tie I can REALLY WEAR!" - and then he proceeded to do just that, when we went out to an egg nog party. It was his only tie this year, and we both think it's very elegant indeed. L.J. was likewise delighted with his tool chest, and at once demanded some wood to make into a house. The other day when a plumber came in to fix our bathroom the boy ran screaming down to the basement to get his tool chest, shouting, "No, Mr. Plumber, don't use those pliers, I'll get MINE for you! Wait, wait!" Of course William and I can't share our son's unbridled, uninhibited enthusiasm for the tools, being positive, in a resigned sort of way, that he's going to saw off his finger sooner or later; but heck, while he's sawing it off we get a few moments peace.

We've been having quite a season of it. Our freids the Gaans from Caracas arrived to stay two days with us (much to our joyful surprise) at three A.M. on the night of the Big Snow. The evening of the day they left mamma came to stay with us, and the day after Christmas Tom Mann from the Embassy in Caracas arrived (having to be met at the airport at midnight) in the midst of a party we were giving for some friends from Switzerland. Since our guest room was occupied, I had to sleep with mamma and Tom slept in my bed for the three nights he was here. Everyone has now departed, but it was quite a thing while it lasted, and I still feel slightly numb. All those months we had that guest room, and then they all pile up at our door at once! But although I wish they had spaced things better, it was fun just the same.

And so, thanks from all three of us for our fine presents, and congratulations on your picking ability.

Love,