14 December 1954

Mr. Stuart Hedden
Marryall
New Milford, Connecticut

Dear Stuart:

When you were in Washington some time back you told us that Mabel and you had once spent a very nice holiday at some small place in or near Charlottesville, Virginia. Do you recall the name?

Elizabeth and I are planning to spend a few days of quiet and rest during the Christmas holiday and will try the place you visited, if you remember the name or how to get there. We need a rest—finally and at long last, the manuscript of our book is finished!

I enclose with much immodesty a copy of a letter I received quite recently. This was wholly unexpected, for despite the request of the Britannica that I limit the revision to 6,000 words, I went to over 8,500. Hence I fully expected them to fire the manuscript back to me with instructions to cut it down to size. Not only was there not even a murmur as to size, but also they sent a check very promptly and followed it up with the letter of which I send you a copy. Please return it. Doing the Britannica revision cost me considerable effort and diverted me from the work on the book—but now I can see the wisdom of doing the job as I did. And don’t neglect to remind yourself that the ms. had to receive the full clearance treatment by the authorities before I could submit it to the Britannica. Getting it written so that it could be cleared—and still have it remain as interesting and useful as the Britannica letter implies—that seems to have been a good trick. Maybe I don’t have to be too modest about the letter!

Otherwise things are in good shape, too. Very recently I sold practically all of what we owned in the way of stocks—I thought I’d get out while I had fair or better than good profits. Maybe I made a mistake but I don’t stay awake at night worrying about what we had in the market.

With our very best wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, and love to Mabel.

Sincerely,

William F. Friedman

Incl:
as

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