

Carter

CARTER

My dear Mrs. Roosevelt,

In a recent *My Day* you wrote of hearing a blind student at Howard University playing the piano beautifully. That reference was of especial interest to us. We know him well. His name is Denny Carter. You may like to know something more of his story.

His father has worked on our farm for twenty-five years. It was while the family lived in one of our tenant houses that I first knew Denny, my only experience with a blind child. He was the same age as one of our children. They played happily together when they were three and four years old. Denny would lose his play-things on the lawn. It was pitiful to see him searching for them, feeling over the grass - "where's my riddy-car? I can't find my riddy-car!"

It took a whole year of patient persuasion to convince his mother that he would have to be sent to school away from home. When the time for parting came, his mother was as upset, and grieved as much, I thought all our carefully laid ground work had been in vain.

Denny was only five years old when Mr. Pratt and I took him to Batavia, N. Y. to the State Institution for the Blind. We stayed overnight there and visited classes the next day. I marveled at the excellent teaching, especially in music - the students were printing their own scores in treble for orchestra. But I was deeply concerned that some of the buildings seemed fire traps, with creaking wooden floors in the long corridors, and wooden stairways. That was in 1928. Perhaps they have been improved by this time.

Leaving Denny at Batavia without his mother, when he was so little, and so far from home, was one of the most

I don't think you conceived it.

knowing experience I have ever had. 2  
He did well there, however, was an honor student, and loved the work in music — pipe organ and piano. He came home for vacations and for the summer. Usually a school attendant would bring a group of children to Albany, and we would meet him there. He used to bring his braille readers home, and read them through to me while I was getting vegetables ready for dinner. We sat under a certain favorite tree for this pastime. He was much better taught than were our own children in the nearby village of Stillwater. He read as beautifully as he plays.

He is now a Junior at Howard Univ. and wants to continue another year for his masters. Many friends have helped him. The Mechanicville Rotary Club helped finance his Junior year. He has given organ recitals in the various Mechanicville churches.

Expenses have been heavy. He has  
to employ a reader, and since he  
is not able to travel alone, some  
member of his family must go to Wash-  
ington for him, and take him back  
again after vacations. (The home he comes  
back to is a miserable little shack near  
the railroad tracks.) His parents feel  
that they have done all they can do.  
Both have worked like slaves all these  
years. Every cent they can rake and  
scrape has gone to keep Henry in  
college. Three other little boys in the  
family "just grew" since both parents  
were away all day. Have you not  
known many cases where the well  
children in a family were sacrificed,  
to a greater or less degree, for the needs  
of an ailing, crippled, or otherwise  
handicapped child? That has been  
true in this case. The next brother,

just recently, became involved with a gang<sup>3</sup>  
of juvenile delinquents. He, with five others,  
was arrested and imprisoned for the  
theft of automobile tires, and is now out  
on a \$2000 or bail, which we furnished.  
We have known the family so long  
that what concerns them deeply also  
concerns us.

Denny has won scholarships each  
year at Howard. As I read your  
column, my first thought was,  
"How fine it would be if Denny  
could have that \$1,000 or scholar-  
ship." If not, perhaps in all your  
wide contacts you might know of some  
opening for him. I hope so.

I know, of course, that you  
must receive thousands of letters,  
begging, and otherwise, but I  
have ventured to write this because  
of your special mention of Denny  
after you had heard him play.

I am one of those who sent many thoughts  
of sympathy your way after your heavy loss. I  
grieve for your loneliness, and for the great  
change that came so suddenly into your life.

We had a daughter at Cornell during  
some of the years you spoke there on the  
Farm and Home Week program. I enjoyed your  
talks, and was glad to know that you and  
Miss Rose were such good friends. I heard  
her speak at San Francisco this December  
during the Annual Farm Bureau Federation  
meetings. She looked in splendid health, rested  
and in good spirits. The last time I saw  
her in Ithaca, her final year there, she  
looked worn and ill.

I rejoice in the recent honors  
you have received. They have been  
richly deserved.

Believe me

Yours sincerely,

Anna B. Pratt

"Riverlea Farms"  
R. D. 2, Schaghticoke, N. Y.  
(near Stillwater on the Hudson)  
April 2nd, 1947

HOWARD UNIVERSITY  
WASHINGTON, D. C.

June Tenth

1 9 4 7

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

*Dennie Carter*  
*How to see what*  
*Langston*

Dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

Your letter of June fourth, advising that Dr. Embree, of the Rosenwald Fund, has indicated the willingness of the Fund to consider Dennie Carter for a scholarship, is greatly appreciated.

I am forwarding the information to Dean Lawson, so that he will be in position to act in this direction on Dennie's behalf if it is found desirable to make application during the coming fall.

In the meantime, the Dean is continuing his canvass with Professor Lang of the Department of Music, Columbia University. It is now clear that Dennie will have to take some courses to complete the requirements for the Bachelor of Arts degree before he can begin work for the Master's degree. The exact courses to be taken are now being determined.

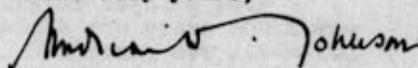
Dennie prefers to study at Columbia University during the coming school year because of the unparelled advantages which New York City affords in the way of concerts and other contacts with persons who are outstanding in the field of music. Dean Lawson concurs. The Dean has been informed that while Columbia's music classes for the fall quarter have been closed, students of unusual competence can still be considered. It is hoped that it will be possible to have Dennie admitted on that

basis.

I am requesting the Dean to advise me when a decision is reached concerning Dennis's program, so that I can forward word to you. In the meantime, I am returning herewith the letter which Mrs. Anna B. Pratt addressed to you in this regard, with the thought that you may wish to communicate with her at this time.

With every good wish, I am

Sincerely yours,



Mordecai W. Johnson  
President

Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt  
Apartment Six A  
29 Washington Square  
New York 11, New York

Many thanks for  
your letter in  
which I was very  
much interested.

Perhaps when the  
boy has finished  
his education we  
can work together  
to get him a  
start

*Dennie Carter*

STATE OF NEW YORK  
NEW YORK STATE SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND

BATAVIA, N. Y.



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SUPERINTENDENT AND SECRETARY  
JESSE YERMAN  
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MRS. FLORENCE W. ROSSING  
MRS. ANNE W. BEBIE

*I am thankful  
for you  
to try  
to help  
educator  
he can  
help  
a lot*

April 21, 1947

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt  
Hyde Park  
New York

Dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

A few days ago I had the pleasure of reading your column, "My Day," for April 11, in which you spoke about the young Negro lad from Mechanicsville, New York, now attending Howard University. I was deeply interested in what you had to say, because this boy graduated four years ago from the New York State School for the Blind in Batavia.

I brought the matter up before the Board of Visitors of the school at their meeting on Thursday, April 17. Mr. Frank W. Severne, president of the Board, a blind man who is editor of the Watkins Glen Express, and a former graduate of our school, wanted me to be sure to express to you his own appreciation and that of the members of the Board for your continued interest in all problems dealing with the handicapped.

Mr. Severne especially wanted me to call to your attention the fact that he has not forgotten the deep interest in our school which was shown by you and your husband at the time he was Governor of the State of New York. Undoubtedly Dennie Carter, the blind boy of whom you speak in your column, was a student at our school when Governor Roosevelt made one of his frequent visits here.

You will be further interested to know that Dennie obtained his college education despite other handicaps in addition to his blindness. At first there seemed to be no financial help for him. This matter has worked out beautifully, and it is now his intention to continue with his music another year in order at least to obtain his master's degree.

May I also add a personal note. I recall with a great deal of pleasure attending two committee meetings in Washington to which you came. I also recall the pleasure of meeting

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt

-2-

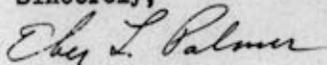
April 21, 1947

you personally in the White House after the committee meeting was over.

It is refreshing to know that those who are high in public life show such great interest in the welfare of those who are handicapped. Those of us who are actively engaged in the work have a deep and abiding confidence in the ability of handicapped people to succeed. Those on the outside, however, oftentimes need to be convinced.

Thank you once again for giving this notice to a talented young blind colored lad.

Sincerely,



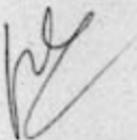
EBER L. PALMER  
Superintendent

ELP:HAD

Transcribed by a blind Ediphone operator.

JULIUS ROSENWALD FUND  
4901 ELLIS AVENUE  
CHICAGO 15, ILLINOIS

*Carter*

  
July 7, 1947

Dear Mrs. Roosevelt: At Mr. Embree's  
request I have  
sent an application blank for a 1948  
fellowship to Dennie Carter, in care of  
Mr. Eber L. Palmer at the New York State  
School for the Blind.

Sincerely yours,

*Hilde Reitzes*

For the Committee  
on Fellowships

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt  
Apt. 15A  
29 Washington Square West  
New York 11, New York

APARTMENT 15-A  
22 WASHINGTON SQUARE, WEST  
NEW YORK 11, N. Y.

June 10, 1949

Dear John,

Do you know of any  
group that could help this boy?  
He plays beautifully.

Affectionately,

— Eleanor Roosevelt

I just received a wonderful letter  
from you & I can now eat for  
some time to come! Many many  
thanks for always remembering  
the little ones —



## United States Information Service

SERVIÇO CULTURAL E INFORMATIVO DOS ESTADOS UNIDOS DA AMERICA  
LARGO DE SÃO FRANCISCO, 181  
SÃO PAULO

January 31st, 1947.

My dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

This morning I received an unusual request to be transmitted to you from Sr. Antonio Marcondes de Abreu, who is employed by the local Postal and Telegraph Office. As a token of a typical Brazilian family's sincere admiration and love for the late president they have named their grandson Franklin Delano Roosevelt Brasil de Abreu. At the time of the child's birth, January 29, 1945, Sr. Abreu came to this Consulate and asked us to forward the request to you. However, due to the war, we were unable to assist him and today he returned in the hope that now we might be able to handle this matter for him.

As the boy was named in honor of your husband, they would feel deeply honored and grateful if you would consent to be godmother to the child. He is now two years old and has not yet been baptised, in view of the war and the death of President Roosevelt.

I am suggesting that you might authorize Mrs. Cecil M. F. Cross, wife of the Consul General in São Paulo, to represent you at the baptismal ceremony. Mrs. Cross has informed us that she would be honored to serve.

Enclosed please find a photograph of the boy which they wish you to have. I do not deem it necessary to tell you how much this family would appreciate it if you would accept this exemplification of their devotion for our late president.

Very sincerely yours,

Prof. Henry Hare Carter  
Cultural Officer

Mrs. Franklin Delano Roosevelt  
c/o United Nations Organization  
Lake Success.  
New York  
USA

TAS/as

CLASS OF SERVICE

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JOSEPH L. EGAN  
PRESIDENT

SYMBOLS

- DL - Day Letter
- NL - Night Letter
- ~~IC~~ - Deferred Cable
- NLT - Cable Night Letter
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PKB 2 26 4 EXTRA= LAKEPLACID NY 7 VIA HYDEPARK NY 8  
MRS ELEANOR ROOSEVELT=  
29 WASHINGTON SQ WEST NYK=

*Handwritten initials and signature*

AN EXPRESSION OF JOY FOR UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT'S DECISION  
IN PRESENTING MEDAL TO YOU WELL EARNED BY ONE OF AMERICAS  
GREATEST MEN=

MRS INEZ CARTER,