

Roosevelt-Vanderbilt
National Historic Sites
1946-52

[Roosevelt - Vanderbilt]

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
VANDERBILT MANSION NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE
HYDE PARK, NEW YORK

April 29, 1946

Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt
29 Washington Square
Apartment 15A
New York, New York

Dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

When I was talking to Miss Thompson on the telephone last night concerning the placing of a bronze bust of President Roosevelt in the rose garden, I had not had a chance to reread the deed for the Site. At the office this morning I find that the President stated:

"That at all times hereafter, the premises conveyed, consisting of the residence of Franklin D. Roosevelt, together with all appurtenances, shall be maintained as a National Historic Site and in a condition as nearly possible approximating the condition of the residence and grounds prevailing at the expiration of the life estate of Franklin D. Roosevelt, as herein-after reserved. In the maintenance of the property as such national historic site, no change, modification, alteration or improvement in connection with and upon the premises shall be made except such alterations or improvements which the party of the second part shall deem proper and necessary to protect and preserve the same;"

My personal belief is that the placing of a bust would be contrary to the President's wishes, and even though this work is excellent, might set a precedent that would lead to pressure for some very questionable things in the future. The change would not come under the description of alterations "to protect and preserve" as in the case of walks, fences, and barriers that we have had to place. I, also, feel that irrespective of the above requirements any piece of art work would be an anti-climax to the beautiful, perfectly proportioned stone that the President designed.


Without having an opportunity to discuss the matter with Mr. Shipman, Director of the Library, my own feeling is that the Library and it's grounds should be the depository for memorial objects. The reception that the Site has been given by the public as the Hyde Park home of the President strengthens this opinion. I will try to discuss the matter with Mr. Shipman before next Saturday.

*W. L. G. of Fair
but to say in
suggesting it good thing
in favor of lib. Shipman
W. L. G. of Fair*

*This gives an answer
to the question
of the bust
in the rose garden
and for any
other purpose*

I am sending a copy of this letter to our office and will ask
for an official opinion by next Saturday.

Sincerely yours,


George A. Palmer
Superintendent.