

PSF Miss. Helen W. Reynolds

Box 177

Subject File

Box ~~177~~

Early Morning, New Year Day, 1941.  
7 North Randolph Avenue  
Tough Keepie

XR PSF

~~Am Combs~~

Reynolds,

Dear Mr. President - <sup>Helm</sup>

Your speech over the radio was just  
what was needed both for domestic  
& foreign consumption! I thank  
you for forceful words. May our  
country rally to the need before it  
& may such as Mr Wheeler be in an  
ever dwindling minority. This  
morning I have chanced to read  
some lines of Milton's & I pass  
them on:

"Get I argue not  
Against Heaven's hand or will, nor bate  
a jot-  
Of heart or hope; but still bear up  
and steer  
Right on ward."

Coming down to personal matters  
I would try to impress on you

the bitterness of my disappointment<sup>2.</sup> that I am unfit to go to Washington in January. My interest and ambition recurrently outrun my endurance + then something within gives way. That happened after I had accepted your invitation. I hope so much it will be all right for me to come later and I deeply appreciate the kindness of your saying I may go so.

As to the papers in the line box, from what Ellie has said to me I infer that she + Grace expect to put the papers in the library. However, if you are minded to buy them, I would be so glad for



3) Ellie + Grace have both told me that Mr. Mygatt had been paying principal & then as though it were interest + that it had crippled them seriously. How could such a thing happen? I lunched at Rosedale in November + felt much happier than before about the move for the sisters to join forces. It seemed to me that Grace was bringing something into Ellie's life that would be to the good + that friction was being minimized. They were very happy over the gift to them of paint for the house so I am sure that purchase money for the papers would be helpful. The sum you name seems to me entirely fair. The papers have much

4)

family interest but less public value! The public value lies in their economic significance. Some one interested in economic history might construct from them a "picture" of early New York business conditions.

I remember that your uncle let Edmund Platt reproduce in his History ofough Keepis a letter of Isaac Roosevelt's written at the time of the Constitutional Convention. But I cannot imagine for a moment that Ed Platt failed to return anything he borrowed. He was honest + your uncle cared too much for the documents not to have asked their return, had there been any delay.

At about that same time (around

1908-1910) your <sup>5</sup>uncle showed me  
old papers one day when I  
was at Rosedale. I do not  
recall what the items were  
but they were of the same grade  
of public interest as those he  
showed Mr. Platt.

No such items are now in the  
in box.

Talking yesterday with Ellie  
by telephone, I said I hoped more  
papers would be found in the  
attic. But she was doubtful.

My sorting of those in the  
in box was rough. I did not  
list or abstract them. I put  
together all letters (sub-divided  
as those of Jacobus & Isaac + James)  
+ in another group all real estate



items (deeds, leases, etc), & then  
grouped business accounts, etc,  
of Jacobus, Isaac & James. So  
there is still a good deal to be done  
to them.

Did you get your 1940 Year  
Book?

Recent letters to me from Mrs.  
Tower & Estelle de Ryster Horner  
have expressed their deep satis-  
faction in your knowledge of  
foreign affairs. (Old time Repub-  
licans they are, you know). I was  
so glad.

Thank you again for your  
thought for me individually  
& for carrying so ably the cares  
of the nation.

Affectionately, Your old friend  
Helen Reynolds

~~Miss Combs~~  
4-42

PSF

H.W. Reynolds

January 21, 1942.

Dear Helen:-

That is an awfully nice birthday present from you and especially because I only have one other copy. It is my thought that I will try to keep one set of photographs at the main house at Hyde Park and another set in a special filing section in the new Library, and I am putting Margaret Suckley in charge of the whole of the family things in the Library. In addition to looking after these family pictures, papers, etc., she has started a most important collection of material relating to that historic character Falla. She has pictures of him since he was a puppy, together with certificates, medals, etc. What an amusing thing it will be to keep these all locked up and have someone spring them on an unsuspecting public fifty years from now!

I so well remember Mr. Vail and his photograph place on the top floor of one of the buildings on Main Street -- also, the awful iron head rest that one's head was thrust into.

Do please get hold of Grace and Ellie and tell them if they love me at all they will not sell any more family papers. I will be glad to pay them far more than they can get from any second-hand dealer or junkman. I am having a terrible time trying to recover for the family the old Jacobus and Isaac Roosevelt ledgers -- mostly 18th Century sugar house accounts. The book dealer is asking \$5,000 for them which is, of course, an absurd price, but I think that Ellie sold them for \$100.00. If she would only



Speak to me about these things it would, as the  
say, "be to her advantage".

I do hope to see you very soon.

Affectionately,

Miss Helen W. Reynolds,  
56 Grand Avenue,  
Poughkeepsie,  
New York.

I have no doubt but that you already own a copy of this photograph but also I think that it is quite possible you have only one copy of it. Extra copies of family pictures have a way of disappearing after a while.

And so I have had the Vail print of the old negative copied to send to you on this particular birthday of yours. I send it not as a picture of the infant of 1882. No, it is to me, and I hope will be to you, more significant as a record of your Mother's love. Her love for you is so indicated by her pose and expression.

I have a photograph of my Mother and myself taken about twenty years ago, that I have always since said was a picture of my dear Mother's love for me (her only child) and now, since she went on, that picture is priceless to me. Perhaps you will let the picture I enclose herewith speak to you comfortingly as that of my Mother does to me.

May I add that as I went on through the Vail volumes I found a number of other pictures of you, yourself, and two of your father. Should you wish the numbers of these prints I would send them to you.

And may I also add that a few days ago Grace and Ellie told me that they have found more old papers in the Rosedale attic, which they are going to show me.

56 Grand Avenue,  
Poughkeepsie, N. Y.,  
January 19th, 1942

Dear Mr. President,

With this letter I am sending you --- for your birthday --- a photograph, the story about which I would like to tell you.

The firm of Vail Brothers, photographers, was in business in Poughkeepsie from the 1870's into the 1890's. When they made a negative they put a print from it into a large book. They filled thirty-odd volumes in that way, each volume containing more than a thousand prints, numbered in sequence. Those thirty-odd volumes were presented a few years ago by one of the last of the Vail family to the Adriance Memorial Library, as the Vail Memorial Collection.

Under only a part of the prints were names written. This winter I have been going through the volumes, page by page, and writing in the name whenever I recognized a face.

In the course of this task I came to a picture of your dear Mother, in all her youth and beauty, holding you in her arms. I fancy it was the first picture ever taken of you.

I hope to see you some day when you are at home again and not too tired to talk with an old friend. Do take time off and come home for rest whenever you can.

Margaret Suckley and I have good talks about the library.

Affectionately yours

*Helen*



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personal*

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4-42

MISS HELEN WILKINSON REYNOLDS  
56, GRAND AVENUE  
POUGHKEEPSIE, NEW YORK

*PSF*  
*H.W. Reynolds*  
December 1st, 1942.

Dear Mr. President,

The gift-copy of "The True Story of Fala", with its inscribed fly-leaf, which you have sent me, gives me the greatest pleasure and I thank you for it !

The book reached me on Sunday as I returned on Saturday from Vassar Hospital, where I had an operation on November 17th. Dr. Moffit removed an abcess from the vicinity of the frontal sinus and found a condition in the nasal passage (a "retention cyst" or "muco-cele") that obstructed drainage. Dr. De Garmo is now trying to shrink the lining of the passage. When that is accomplished I hope to be all right.

Meanwhile I am ordered to lead a "normal life" within fixed limits, - no push, no fatigue, early hours, common-sense care. I spend hours by the radio, keeping in touch with the news of the world, listening to recorded good music and knitting for the Navy.

Mr. Frost tells me he has begun listing items at Vassar Institute that belong to the D. C. H. S. and that he finds much more of value than he expected. I am glad for I thought that 90% of what was there was trash.

I have not heard from Kansas City since writing that you would welcome the Thompson heirlooms in the library but I will report when I get further word.

Meanwhile, when you are at home again I should be so glad to see you if ever the pressure on you were not too great. How little you and I thought years ago

that we would ever see history being made before our  
eyes at the rate it moves today !

Always

Affectionately

Your old friend

*Helen*