The three enclosures of Mr. Shears were returned to him along with the President's letter of Sept 30, 1939.
Copy attached
September 30, 1939.

Dear Daisy:-

I used to call you that an unconscionable long time ago and I hope I still may.

I have been thrilled to get a letter from Mr. Shears telling me that if you cannot find a satisfactory purchaser for your uncle's place, you would be willing to give the estate to a worthy organization as a memorial to him.

I enclose a letter which I have just sent to Mr. Shears which will explain the situation.

I think it is still possible that the State of New York or the Taconic State Park Commission might be persuaded to accept this wonderful gift, but if they do not, and you approve, I could see if the Historic Monuments Division of the Interior Department would consider doing in this case what it is already doing in the case of several of the old Virginia estates.

That idea of the Yale Forestry School is merely one which occurred to me because of your uncle's deep interest in Yale and because he mentioned the need of a forest arboretum in the general neighborhood of New York.

As you know, I have always thought of the Hyde Park place with the greatest interest and affection because with the exception of one or two old Van Rensselaer or Livingston places, it is the only country place in the North which has been well kept by for nearly two centuries.

It would be a wonderful thing to have the maintenance of it assured for all time.

I hope to get up to Hyde Park for Saturday and Sunday, the seventh and eighth. If by any chance you are
going to be there some weekend this Autumn, I hope much
that you will let me know. I myself hope to be there
about every other weekend but, of course, I cannot plan
anything definitely during these difficult days.

Always sincerely,

Mrs. James Laurens Van Alen,
"Wakehurst,"
Newport,
Rhode Island.
Dear Mr. Shears:

I am, of course, made very happy by Mrs. Van Alen's suggestion of giving the estate to a worthy organization as a memorial to Mr. Vanderbilt. I am not much surprised by Commissioner Osborne's reply, especially because of the fact that the State of New York, through the Taconic State Park Commission, has already taken over the Lewis Thompson place and the Mills place at Staatsburg. However, as places with excellent river frontage are becoming scarcer with every passing year, it might be possible to interest the Taconic State Park Commission, and I will write informally to them asking what the possibility is. I was the first Chairman of that Commission myself.

I have another idea which is worth considering, I think, if Mrs. Van Alen would like to have me pursue it. A few years ago the Congress set up in the Interior Department, as a Division of the National Park Service, a Historic Monuments Division. The Secretary of the Interior has the right to accept as a gift historic monuments which should be preserved for all time for the benefit of the public. The Government has, I think, already obtained as gifts several of the old Virginia estates, and it is my thought that the Vanderbilt place is, in every way, sufficiently "historic" to bring it within the terms of the Act.

I have one other thought which I think Mr. Vanderbilt himself considered a long time ago -- twenty-five or thirty years -- because he mentioned it to me at that time. It was that the Yale Forestry School, in which he had taken much interest, could very properly develop a forestry demonstration area at some point comparatively near to big centers of population in the East -- not for large scale forestry but rather for the type of forestry that pertains to comparatively small acreages owned by people with sufficient means
to develop definite types of trees for landscaping and local wood uses. That type of forestry is what I am developing on my own place, as you may know.

I am writing a note to Mrs. Van Alen and I hope to be at home over the weekend of October seventh and eighth. Meanwhile you might talk with her and with Mr. Murphy. I will call you up when I get to Hyde Park.

Very sincerely yours,

H. C. Shears, Esq.,
Hyde Park,
Dutchess County,
New York.
The Honorable Franklin D. Roosevelt
President Of The United States
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. President:

I realize the load you are carrying, at the present time, and will be brief.

You remember you saw me on the day that Father Divine telegraphed you relative to the purchase of the Estate of the late Frederick W. Vanderbilt.

Since then I have talked with Mrs. Van Alen, and her attorney, Mr. William G. Murphy of Olin, Clark & Murphy, 120 Broadway, New York City, and they state that, unless she can find a satisfactory purchaser, she would be willing to give the Estate to a worthy organization as a memorial to her uncle, Mr. Vanderbilt.

I suggested that she give it to the Conservation Commission of the State of New York, and her attorney, Mr. Murphy, wrote to Mr. Osborne and I enclose with this a copy of Mr. Murphy's letter and Mr. Osborne's reply, and also a letter just received from Mr. Murphy. Will you please have one of your secretaries return these letters to me?

When you have time to think of things, outside of National affairs, I would be pleased to know your reaction to these letters, and any suggestions would be appreciated.

With kind personal regards, I am

Very truly yours,

H. C. Shears
TELEGRAM

The White House
Washington

POUGHKEEPSIE, N.Y., September 30, 1939.

THE PRESIDENT.

I think you would like to know promptly that Mrs. Van Alen has offered the Vanderbilt place to the State for a park and that the Park Commission must make a prompt decision whether to accept or to decline. On account of the upkeep, the Commission is in doubt.

GERALD MORGAN.
Dear Franklin,

Thank you very much for your kind and thoughtful letter. Knowing the burden of responsibility under which you must be laboring in these difficult times, makes it
doubly appreciated.

With regard to my uncle's place, quite frankly it has been my hope from the first that it become a memorial to my uncle rather than that I find a 'satisfactory purchaser'.

My only intentation would be that the gift be known as the St. N. Parkhurst Memorial. Knowing how busy you must be and how necessary it is for you to get rest over the week's ends, I would like you to suggest a time when we could meet to discuss this matter further. I would appreciate your giving me as much notice as possible, as I will drive over from here.
I shall look forward to hearing from you soon, although I feel a certain degree of trevity in bothering you with a problem of such small importance to anyone but myself. 

Yours sincerely,

Daisy [signature]
Our Being Friends

By Violet Aisey Horsay

Our being friends—

It is a way of knowing God—

While life rises above black sod,

The vast sky bends

Protectingly

Above the little earth;

And there are death and birth;

Cool moonlight on the sea,

Stars flickering through dark trees

On windy nights,

Geraniums on window sills,

And cottage lights.

High mountains, gentle hills,

All these

And more things, too,

That teach Him night and day,

That year

Our being friends—

I think is quite the dearest way

Of knowing God.

"But officer, Mother always told me... If anybody whistles, don't pay any attention to them"
My dear Mr. President:

This memorandum relates to the Hyde Park estate owned by Mrs. Van Alen, concerning which you telephoned to me the other day.

Sincerely yours,

[Signature]

Secretary of the Interior.

The President,
The White House.

Enclosure.
Memorandum for the Secretary:

I have had a long distance telephone report from Poughkeepsie from Dr. Ronalds of our Branch of Historic Sites and Acting Chief Forester L. F. Cook, following their day and a half visit to and inspection of the Hyde Park Estate owned by Mrs. Van Allen.

Mr. Shears, the manager of the estate for the past 35 years, treated them with every courtesy and has shown them everything. Mr. Cook reports that the arboretum is fine but not of any special significance, there being many in the country better than this collection of trees. However, it contains some remarkably fine exotics, probably over 100 years of age.

Dr. Ronalds states that Mrs. Van Allen has definitely decided that Father Devine will not be able to obtain the estate and is also refusing an offer from the Greek Orthodox Church. Dr. Ronalds says that the house and furnishings are very fine indeed and that he believes the estate would be an example of a social and economic phase of our national development that would be of distinct national interest. He believes in the future, say 100 years or so from now, this estate would be of interest to the people of that day as perhaps Williamsburg and the Colonial National Historical Park are to us of this day.

Dr. Ronalds and Mr. Cook will be in the office tomorrow morning with a more detailed report.

[Signature]

Acting Associate Director.
My dear Mr. President:

Here is a further report that has just come from the Park Service on the Hyde Park estate. I will have this matter referred to the Advisory Board on Historic Sites at its next meeting, which will be November 14 to 16.

Sincerely yours,

Harold I. Cole
Secretary of the Interior.

The President,
The White House.

Enc.
October 5, 1939.

Memorandum for Colonel White:

In accordance with your instructions, on October 3 and 4, the undersigned visited Hyde Park, New York, for the purpose of inspecting the estate of the late Frederick W. Vanderbilt. We first stopped at the city library in Poughkeepsie in order to familiarize ourselves with the newspaper files on the subject and with the history of the property.

The Vanderbilt estate is, in part, the 1705 Hyde Park grant of the Governor of New York, Edward Hyde, Viscount Cornbury, grandson of the First Earl of Clarendon, to his private secretary, Peter Fauconier. Fauconier's granddaughter, Susanna Vallee, married Dr. John Bard (1723-1759), friend of Benjamin Franklin, and first Health Officer of the Port of New York, whose writings and speeches resulted in the establishment of the first quarantine station at Bellows Island. The property was inherited by his son, Dr. Samuel Bard (1742-1821), founder of the New York Hospital and private physician to President Washington. Dr. Samuel Bard is buried in St. James Churchyard. Dr. Samuel Bard's son William was forced in 1827 to sell the estate to Dr. David Hosack (d. 1835), botanist and agriculturist, who was Alexander Hamilton's physician. Dr. Hosack employed the Belgian, Andre Parmentier, one of the first landscape gardeners in America, to beautify the grounds. In 1852, Mr. Frederick W. Vanderbilt (d. 1859), purchased the estate from the heirs of Walter Longdon, 2nd, and built the present mansion in 1863.

The property under consideration lies immediately north of the village of Hyde Park in Dutchess County, N. Y., and includes approximately 673 acres. The estate is roughly 1 mile square and is divided into almost equal parts east and west by the Albany Post Road. On the west edge is the Hudson River. The New York Central R. R. mainline tracks cross the western edge of the property but a short stretch of river frontage is included in the area. The section of the estate east of the Albany Post Road is devoted to farm crops, fruit trees, and forest. It is rather typical of the usual Hudson Valley rural property. Some excellent reforestation by planting white and Norway pines, spruce, and other forest trees has been done in the area. The outstanding portion of the estate lies west of the Post Road and overlooks the Hudson River.
The property is extremely well landscaped and many of the trees are magnificent specimens of the species. Many of them are undoubtedly the original plantings. The species used are largely native white pines, maples, oaks, and hemlocks, but there are also a few fine specimens of ginkgo, catalpa, locust, European beech, and others. Some more recent planting of native trees and cultivated varieties has been done to fill in the landscaping of the property. The trees on the area are in an excellent state of preservation and large sums have been spent on tree protection work. There is also a formal rose garden, greenhouses, and a flower garden on the property. The latter has not been kept up during the past year. A very spacious lawn extends across the front of the main building and several large expanses of meadow have been annually cut for hay.

The area is not an outstanding example of an arboretum, since most of the trees are native or rather common exotics. However, the trees are excellent specimens of their kind, and the area does exhibit the great importance of the proper use of trees in enhancing the beauty and value of an estate.

Mr. Herbert C. Scars, for thirty-nine years Superintendent for Mr. Vanderbilt, informed us that the present owner, Mrs. Margaret Louise Van Allen, of Westport, New York, R. I., niece of the late Mr. Vanderbilt, had recently refused an offer for the property, and is willing to donate grounds, buildings, and furnishings to the Federal Government.

Although no great event of national moment occurred at Hyde Park this estate is indicative of a phase of American social history which might well be preserved. The house and grounds represent a way of life, a style, and even a habit of thought which belongs to our past as much as does Colonial Williamsburg. It appears to us that posterity would thank the Government for preserving such a site, rather than necessitating the future restoration of some example or other of the period. It is needless to point out that however well done, a restoration is not the same thing as the original.

The mansion contains many really lovely objects and regardless of any personal feelings the taste of the whole is that of the period. The house, carriage-house, boat-house, pavilion, and grounds, all in excellent condition, could not fail to be of great interest to the present day visitor. A few, collected at the Gate House, could easily be charged. How far the proceeds would go toward taking care of the cost of maintenance it is impossible to say. No doubt the cost would be considerable as it would require at least 6 men to maintain the grounds.
Attached is a newspaper article concerning Mr. Vanderbilt's will together with a brochure by Previews, Inc., which give some idea of the Vanderbilt estate.

Francis E. Roncalli
Acting Supervisor of Historic Sites.

L. Cook
Acting Chief of Forestry.

Enclosure 1706989
10-17-39

MEMO, FOR MR. KANNED:

For your information:

At the President's direction I phoned Ickes, giving the message to Burlew, as follows:

"Tell Secretary Ickes that the President expects to be in Hyde Park on Saturday morning and would like, Ickes care to have Mr. Romulus and the Supervisor of Historic sites come up to the President's place at 10:30 a.m., and go up to the Vanderbilt place with the President. If so, will they let Mr. Shears know. (Mr. Shears referred to is H. C. Shears, Hyde Park). Also ask Mr. Ickes if he wants to have Mr. Cook come along, he is acting Chief Forester."

(The President kept the papers on this for his Hyde Park files. It had to do with the Vanderbilt estate).
An appointment has been arranged at Hyde Park on Saturday at ten-thirty in the morning for Mr. Francis B. Romnoid, Chief of the Historic Sites Division and Mr. Lawrence P. Cook, Acting Chief Forester, (both of National Parks) together with Mr. E. C. Shears of Hyde Park (representing Mrs. J. J. Van Allen, who owns the Vanderbilt estate) to meet the President and accompany him to the Vanderbilt estate.

Mrs. Daisy Van Allen will meet the President on the Vanderbilt estate grounds and will be present during the inspection.

The President has invited Mrs. Van Allen for luncheon at his home and she has wired her acceptance.
REMIND THE PRESIDENT OF THIS ON FRIDAY BEFORE HE LEAVES FOR HYDE PARK.

TELEGRAM

The White House
Washington
Newport R I 163pm Oct 17 1939

The President
The White House
Delighted to luncheon with you Saturday many thanks will be at my place before luncheon.

Daisy Van Alen
TELEGRAM
OFFICIAL BUSINESS—GOVERNMENT RATES

From
The White House
Washington

October 17, 1939

Mrs. J. L. Van Alen,
"Wakehurst",
Newport, Rhode Island.

Expect to be Hyde Park Saturday. Hope much you
will lunch with us that day. If you can be there I will
drive up to your place with a National Park Service man
before luncheon.

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT.
MEMORANDUM FOR MISS LEHAND:

The attached telegram for your information. Will you also make a note and tell the President, that Secretary Iokes office advises that Mr. Ronalds and Mr. Cock will also be at Hyde Park at 10:30 A. M. Saturday to go on up with him to the Vanderbilt place. They are notifying Mr. Shears today.

Roberta
November 1, 1939.

Dear Daisy:

I need not tell you how very happy I was to see you again the other day and to know of your plans. I want you to realize how happy I am in the assurance that it will become a permanent memorial to your Uncle Fred — and furthermore, that it will be enjoyed and appreciated by so many people through all the years to come.

I feel very certain that he would have given his entire approval to it.

Be sure to let me know if there is anything further I can do and I hope much that in the process of having the government work out the transfer and take it over for public enjoyment, you will feel free to call on me at any time in case any problems arise.

Also, I hope much that you will be back at Hyde Park some weekend when I am there and that you will come to luncheon with us again.

I had an awfully nice note from your Jimmy. I liked him a lot.

Always sincerely,

Eisenhower

Mrs. J. Laurene Van Allen,
Wahoo, Ne.,
Newport, Rhode Island.

Copy of Mrs. Van Allen's letter to Pres. and copy of this reply to Mrs. Van Allen sent to Secy. Ikees, by direction of the Pres.
October 22, 1939

Dear Franklin,

I can't begin to tell you how much I appreciate the interest you have taken in my place. Thank you for a delightful luncheon and for having Jim James. It was such a pleasure to
To Miss Ellen P. B. Allen

Dear Miss Allen,

I have your kind offer in mind to place a memorial monument to the memory of the loved one, and it is a matter of pleasure to me to accept your kind offer in that behalf. I hope your efforts will be successful, and that we may see you and your mother in your home. It is looking just as it did when I saw her several years ago, and I have quite lost my heart to her. I am very grateful for all you have done, and it is wonderful. E. B.
November 1, 1939.

Dear Jimmy:

Thanks for that nice note of yours. I hope very much that the plan for the permanent care of your Uncle Fred's place will go through and I need not tell you that as a very old friend of your mother I am delighted to be of any possible help.

I need not tell you that if your mother or you could live at Hyde Park, it would make me very happy but I know the difficulty these days of tearing things up by the roots and also the difficulty of trying to live in a number of different places.

If the plan goes through, I shall count on having your advice in working out the permanent plan and of seeing you at Hyde Park at that time.

Always sincerely,

J. H. Van Allen, Esq.,
Del. Ash,
Rocklyn, New York.
Oct 21, 1939

J. H. Van Allen
Dal Ash
Roslyn, N.Y.

Dear Mr. President,

You have been most kind in helping another over the suitable disposal of Uncle Fred's place. I am very grateful.

I enjoyed yourself, conduct of Cook's Tour of Hyde Park & the environs tremendously, but no more than the opportunity of meeting Mrs. Roosevelt, your brother & having a quiet family lunch with your Both. With renewed thanks for your kindness & hospitality.

Very sincerely yours,

[Signature]
November 14, 1939.

Earlier letters with Mrs. Van Azen and Mr. Shears given to the President by G.O.T. on Oct 17, 1939. The President is holding these.
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Hyde Park, N. Y.,
November 17, 1939.

MEMORANDUM FOR
THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

F. D. R.
Dear Daisy—

The enclosed has just come to me from the Secretary of the Interior and I am very happy that the Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings, and Monuments has approved the designation of your uncle’s place as “representative and illustrative of its period, of national significance in the economic, sociological, and cultural history of the country”.

In order to bolster up the last paragraph about meeting the cost out of admission fees, I am writing to the Secretary of the Interior to express my personal belief that the place will be of such real interest to the public that the small admission fees to be charged will pay for its maintenance. This is especially true because of its location on one of the most largely traveled highways in the country.

May I suggest that you send the enclosed copy to your lawyers to take the necessary steps?

I am home for two days and hope to come back here again for Sunday, the third, and Monday, the fourth of December. If you happen to be coming to Hyde Park at that time, I hope I shall see you.

Always sincerely,

Mrs. James L. Van Alen,
Wakemast,
Newport,
Rhode Island.
(Enclosure)
MEMORANDUM FOR THE FILES:

Copy of letter from Daisy Van Alen, Wakeshurst, Newport, R. I., 10/22/39 to the President, in regard to her place and to keeping it as "a memorial to Uncle Fred and a national monument", and copy of President's reply of 11/1/39 to Mrs. J. Laura Van Alen (Daisy), attached to which is a note "To Secy. Tokes by direction of the President", and the President's notation "What is status? F.D.R.", sent to Secretary Tokes, 11/2/39.
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

November 9, 1939.

MEMORANDUM FOR
THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR

What can I tell Mrs. Van Alen? I hope to goodness it will go through all right.

F. D. R.

Letter from Daisy Van Alen, Nokomis, Newport, R. I., 11/7/39 to the President. Thanking for President’s letter in further reference to letter about which she wrote the President on 12/27/33 in re “bar place and to keeping it as a memorial to Uncle Fred and a national concern”. States she will keep President advised.
The President,

The White House.

My dear Mr. President:

I have received your memorandum, with enclosures, requesting the status of the proposal to designate the Vanderbilt Estate at Hyde Park as a national historic site.

The Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings, and Monuments recently has been in session, and during that meeting, after considering the question of the designation of the Vanderbilt Estate, it adopted the following resolution:

Whereas by Act of Congress it has been declared a national policy to preserve for public use historic sites, buildings, and objects of national significance,

Whereas the estate at Hyde Park in New York, formerly the property of Frederick W. Vanderbilt, has been offered as a gift to the United States, to be administered by the National Park Service,

The Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings, and Monuments does hereby resolve that the aforementioned estate, as representative and illustrative of its period, is of national significance in the economic, social, and cultural history of this country, and

That the Board duly cognizant of the budgetary problem of the Service recommends the acceptance of the gift, provided there is a reasonable prospect that the cost of maintenance can be met by admission fees or other appropriate means.

If Mrs. Van Alen makes a formal offer of the property to this Department, the above resolution makes possible the acceptance of the estate and it could then be proclaimed a national historic site under authority of the Historic Sites Act of August 21, 1935 (49 Stat. 666).

Sincerely yours,

[Signature]

Secretary of the Interior.
Dear [Name],

Perhaps you have heard that the state has purchased Hyde Park. It is a disappointment but all the same I want to thank you for all the trouble you
have taken in the
matter. I shall never
forget your kindness.

Your sincerely,

[Signature]

Nov 26th, 1939
To the Hon.

Franklin D. Roosevelt

President of the United States

Washington, D.C.
Dear Franklin:

Perhaps you have heard that the State has refused Hyde Park. It is a disappointment but all the same I want to thank you for all the trouble you have taken in the matter. I shall never forget your kindness.

Ever sincerely,

(Signed) Daisy Van Alen

Nov. 26, 1939
Dear Franklin,

Then I wrote you this morning. I did not grasp the fact that it was the State and not the Federal Government that had refused Hyde Park, so there is still hope. It seems that several months ago...
A letter was written to the State of my lawyer and received an answer yesterday. I must confess I am feeling happier.

So sorry to have bothered you by my letter sent early this morning.
To the Hon.

Franklin D. Roosevelt

President of the United States

Washington, D.C.
Dear Franklin:

When I wrote you this morning I did not grasp the fact that it was the State and not the Federal Government that had refused Hyde Park, so there is still hope. It seems that several months ago a letter was written to the State and my lawyer only received an answer yesterday. I must confess I am feeling happier.

So sorry to have bothered you by the letter sent early this morning.

Ever sincerely,

(Signed) Daisy Van Alen
TELEGRAM
OFFICIAL BUSINESS—GOVERNMENT RATES

FROM
The White House
Washington

NOVEMBER 28, 1939.

MRS. JAMES ROOSEVELT
47 EAST 65TH STREET
NEW YORK CITY, N. Y.

NO, YOU ARE HAVING THE ALDRICHS FOR LUNCH TO PRESENT THE
MEDAL.

MISSY
MAY WE LUNCH WITH MRS VAN ALEN AT HYDEPARK ON SUNDAY I PROMISED TO LET HER KNOW ANSWER NEW YORK HOUSE = MAMA =

1010 P

You are losing for lunch
he colored for lunch
To present colored
MAMA
Mrs. J. Laurens Van Allen,
Vanderbilt Estate
Newport, Rhode Island.

My dear Mrs. Van Allen:

The President has referred to me the matter of the proposed establishment of the Vanderbilt Estate at Hyde Park, New York, as a national historic site. The proposal has been considered by the Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings and Monuments, which has declared the estate to be of national significance and recommended its permanent preservation as a national historic site, provided the cost of maintenance can be met by admission fees or other appropriate means. I have approved the recommendation of the Advisory Board, and when title to the necessary property is vested in the United States the estate will be formally designated as a national historic site under the authority of the Act of Congress approved August 21, 1935 (49 Stat. 664).

Your conversations and correspondence with the President have been interpreted as an offer to convey the property to the United States as a donation. If this interpretation is correct, I am ready to receive a conveyance of title to that part of the estate which lies between the Albany Post Road and the Hudson River as soon as plans for adequate maintenance and operation can be completed. A study of this problem is now in progress.

When the conveyance is made it should be accompanied by satisfactory evidence of title. There is enclosed a copy of the Department of Justice circular dated April 16, 1934, for the convenience of your attorney in preparing the necessary conveyance and evidence of title. It is possible that you may have further questions regarding the transfer of title, in which case you may communicate directly with the Director of the National Park Service of this Department.

In addition to the real property, it is understood that you desire to donate the personal property which is situated on the estate, to be permanently preserved in connection with the national historic site. Such use of the property will in the future add to the unique interest of the site. Many other historic properties have
suffered the disadvantage of complete dispersal of their original furnishings and equipment, with the result that it has been necessary to reassemble or reproduce some of the things previously removed. It will be necessary for you to execute a bill of sale covering the property which you wish to donate, as a memorandum of your gift to the United States. The title to the personal property will be accepted at the same time as the title to the real property.

It is hoped that you will have great and lasting satisfaction from your generous gift.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) Harold I. Ickes
Secretary of the Interior.

Enclosure P111613

8 cc by NFS

cc: The President
Mr. H. F. Lee (by NFS)
Mr. Monkey (by NFS)
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

December 4, 1939.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

This information submitted
in compliance with your request.

E.W.
E.M.W.
MEMORANDUM for General Watson,
The White House:

Following your telephone call late yesterday afternoon I have checked the present status of the Vanderbilt Estate project. We sent a copy of the Secretary's letter to Mrs. Van Alen to the White House yesterday, in which he advises her that he will accept conveyance of title at her convenience, as soon as plans for maintenance can be completed.

Mrs. Van Alen's attorneys have advised the Department that she is ready to convey title as soon as an agreement can be reached on the exact boundaries of the property to be conveyed. Preliminary views of the National Park Service on boundaries have been formulated and are about ready to be transmitted by the Secretary to Mrs. Van Alen's attorneys.

A supplemental estimate for maintenance and operation of the Vanderbilt Estate is in preparation for submission to the Bureau of the Budget as soon as the boundaries have been finally determined.

E. K. Burlew,
First Assistant Secretary.
THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON  

Warm Springs, Ga.,  
November 25, 1939.

MEMORANDUM FOR  
GENERAL WATSON  

Will you call up either  
Ickes or Burlew on Monday morning  
and ask when the transfer of the  
Vanderbilt Estate at Hyde Park  
is to be made?

F. D. R.  

December 4, 1939  

RETURNED TO THE PRESIDENT.  

The title has to be cleared. Mr. Burlew  
is writing for the information as to when  
this will be done.  

E. M. W.
The President of the United States
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. President:

I had a talk with Mr. H. C. Sh ENG today and he informed me that the Vanderbilt Estate is going to be disposed of on Tuesday, November 23rd.

I have talked with several people in our town and also in the County and the sentiment is that it is a fine thing for the government to accept the Vanderbilt Est. on the west side of the Albany Port Road. (In other words the mansion) but they are also of the opinion that they should not take-over the east side (or the farm) as this would tie-up several hundred acres of land in our town and in the vicinity of the village that in the future would mean a great deal to us for development purposes of this property has access to the Albany Port Road and the East Side - Hyde Park Estate Road and it would not be difficult to get a right of way to the new East Park - Rhinebeck State Road.

The income of the entire property would be a great burden on the taxpayers of our town inasmuch as last year we lost $235,000, on the villa property and this year a reduction on the Vanderbilt property of $118,900, and a reduction on the New York Central property of $33,000.

I hope that if there is anything in your power that you can do to further the above that you will do it as it will be a great benefit to our town and community.

The next time that you are in Hyde Park I will make every effort to get in touch with you on this matter, and also I would like to talk with you about various locations in our village for our new Post Office.

Hoping to see you soon, I am

Very truly yours

Elmer Van Wagner

Elmer Van Wagner
THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR
WASHINGTON

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
WASHINGTON

COPY FOR INFORMATION

[Signature]

The White House

W. G. Murphy, Esq.,
Elia, Clark & Murphy,
130 Broadway,
New York City.

Dear Mr. Murphy:

I have received your letter of November 20 concerning Mrs. Van Allen's generous offer to donate to the Federal Government the Hyde Park estate of her uncle, the late Frederick W. Vanderbilt.

The slight reservations in Mrs. Van Allen's willingness to deed the full tract appear to be reasonable. I believe that the residential portion of the estate lying between the Albany Post Road and the Hudson River would be sufficient for historic site purposes and that the farm and wooded land on the other side of the Post Road, as well as the reserved areas that Mrs. Van Allen has in mind, would be excluded from the proposed national historic site. Before coming to a final decision, however, I should like to have a map or plot plan of the Vanderbilt estate, showing the exact area or areas which Mrs. Van Allen proposes to donate. This map could then be studied by the National Park Service of this Department with a view to recommending suitable boundaries.

If it should be decided that only the residential portion of the estate between the Post Road and the Hudson River is needed for park purposes, I wonder whether Mrs. Van Allen would be willing to permit the sale of the remaining 400 acres, subject to scenic easements, in order to create an endowment for historical research relating to the F. W. Vanderbilt memorial.

The mansion as it is now furnished would make a splendid exhibit illustrative of one of the most interesting periods of American social and economic history. It is therefore unnecessary for Mrs. Van Allen to return the small number of articles removed from the mansion since her uncle's death. However, if she wishes to donate any of these, they will be added to the other museum pieces which will be displayed in the mansion.
The memorial character of the gift may be shown by the designated title of the national historic site or by an appropriate memorial plaque, or both of these devices may be employed.

Sincerely yours,

(Sgd.) HAROLD L. ICKES

Secretary of the Interior.
Dear Daisy,—

I was awfully sorry that I had to give up going home last Sunday but I felt that on account of the Finkind situation I could not be so far away from dispatches.

I am so glad that the Interior Department is going ahead and that things will soon be settled for you in regard to the part of the place west of the Post Road.

The other night I talked with Mr. Shears and did not realize that you were still at Hyde Park. I asked him to tell you of my thought that it would be a splendid thing if you could organize a little syndicate and sell off the acreage between the Post Road and the Creek Road for home building.

As you know, the area in which the village of Hyde Park can expand is very limited. The Rogers place is very close to it on the south and your place on the north — and the people in the village, plus the officials of the town, would, I think, really welcome additional acreage for home building.

I told Mr. Shears, however, that I felt it had been a great mistake for the farmers near East Park to sell off tiny building lots facing a straight road — in many cases only fifty feet long and two hundred feet deep, less than a quarter of an acre. It has always seemed to me, where there is really plenty of land available, no family should build a house on less than one acre of land, preferably two acres, so that the family can have enough room for a small garden, fruit trees and some chickens. That helps to feed the family in times of unemployment.
If you think well of such a project I shall be very glad to help you and I know that it would do real good to lay out the property east of the Post Road with simple curving roads. In a comparatively short space of time I think the greater part of it would be sold because there are many inquiries from people who work in Poughkeepsie but would prefer to have a house in the country.

Incidentally, you would get more out of it in cash than if you were to try to sell the whole acreage.

I hope now to be at Hyde Park on Sunday, the seventeenth, and if by chance you are there I count on seeing you.

Always sincerely,

Mrs. James Laurens Van Alen,
Wakehurst,
Newport,
Rhode Island.
Dear Franklin,

Your letter just received & I am thrilled of the good news. There is no certain thing & that is that I should have been quite helpless without you. If I have been so kind & I can't
Thank you enough. Yes of course I shall be at Hyde Park on the third & fourth of December & it would give me so much pleasure if you, your wife, & mother would come with me on that day at 138.
December 19, 1939.

Dear Daisy:—

Sorry not to see you this past weekend but I will be at Hyde Park about once a month from now on until the Spring. Apparently the plan with the Interior Department is getting on well and later on you and Mr. Shears and I can talk about the property east of the road.

That old Livingston bible is most interesting. Peter V. B. Roosevelt was Eleanor's branch of the family. Evidently the old boy had flocks and flocks of children, though I do not think any male descendants of his are in existence.

Always sincerely,

Mrs. James Laurens Van Alen,

"Wakahurst",
Newport,
Rhode Island.
Dear Franklin,

I arrived home last night after a few days in town. I found your letter waiting for me. I was very much disappointed not to see you at Hyde Park especially as I wanted to tell you rather than write...
How delighted I was to hear from the Secretary of the Interior. It all seems too good to be true—thanks to you! Xmas being so near, I can afford I can't be at Hyde Park Dec 17. As to the acreage between the Post Road & Creek Road, I will give it a great
Dear \{ Consideration \} it is very kind of you to say you will help me. I enjoyed my visit to your brother, if I shall be interested to hear what you think of the Livingston Bible that I left with her. Always Grandly,

Daisy Van Allen
MEMORANDUM FOR

THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR

What is the latest news about the Vanderbilt Place at Hyde Park?

F. D. R.
Wakehurst
Newport
Dec 27, R.I.

Dear Franklin,
I was delighted to get your letter & to hear the plans with the Interior Department is getting on well. I forgot the King's Bible might interest you & it would give me so much
Pleasure if you & Mr. Roosevelt would accept it. Will best wishes for the New Year & looking forward to seeing you on one of your visits to Hyde Park. Very sincerely,
Daisy Van Allen
MEMORANDUM for The President:

With regard to your inquiry as to the status of the Vanderbilt Estate at Hyde Park, the Bureau of the Budget advised us a week or two ago that you had approved an item of $1,700 for maintenance and administration. In response to a recent inquiry from Mrs. Van Alen's attorneys, we have advised that funds for maintenance and operation are expected to be available on July 1, 1940, and that maintenance prior to that time can be accommodated only by transfer of needed funds from other operating projects. Funds for the employment of one custodian could be made available to protect the property when title is accepted until June 30, 1940.

Transfer of title awaits final determination of boundaries and preparation of the abstract of title. Final determination of the boundaries cannot be made until we receive Mrs. Van Alen's suggestions regarding that portion of the estate which lies east of the Albany Post Road, usually referred to as the "farm". Mrs. Van Alen has discussed with you the disposition of this portion of the property, and she has advised us that she wishes to consider the matter further before reaching a decision. There are one or two minor reservations in the area west of the Albany Post Road which Mrs. Van Alen wishes to make. On December 7, I advised her attorneys that I believed such reservations reasonable but that I was withholding final decision until a plat showing the reserved areas had been submitted.

With regard to the abstract of title, Mrs. Van Alen's attorneys informed us on December 15 that they are communicating with her suggesting that she have the titles searched so as to comply with the regulations of the Department.

The donor wishes the estate to be considered as a memorial to her uncle, the late Frederick W. Vanderbilt. On December 7, I advised Mrs. Van Alen's attorneys that the memorial character of the gift may be shown by the designated title of the national historic site or by an appropriate plaque, or both. In pursuance of that conception, it
is believed that the estate might be known as the Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site; that the designation order include a paragraph stating that one of the purposes of the site is the creation of a memorial to Frederick W. Vanderbilt; and that a suitable memorial plaque be placed at an appropriate location, perhaps at the gatehouse. 

Secretary of the Interior.
February 8, 1940.

Dear Daisy:—

Thank you for your note. I think the papers got the story substantially right and I am flooded with messages to say how delighted everyone is.

I am looking forward to seeing you on the river this Spring.

Always sincerely,

Mrs. James L. Van Allen,
The Savoy-Plaza,
New York City,
New York.
Dear Franklin

I have just read your statement about Hyde Park. I know how much I owe to your interest and intercession to believe me. I am very grateful.

Ever sincerely,

[Signature]

Feb. 18
U.S. to Get Estate
Near Hyde Park,
Roosevelt Says

HYDE PARK, N. Y., Feb. 5
(U.P.)—President Roosevelt disclosed today plans are nearing completion for Government acquisition of 250 acres of the old Frederick Vanderbilt estate, Hudson Valley showplace for nearly half a century.

Mr. Roosevelt said at a press conference that Mrs. James Van Alen, a niece of the late Mrs. Frederick W. Vanderbilt, has made arrangements to present the old home and about 250 acres to the Government free of charge.

The land, lying west of the Albany Post Road not far from Mr. Roosevelt's own 1,200-acre estate, has been the subject of rumor for months. Father Divine, Negro cult leader who acquired an old estate at Krum Elbow, opposite Mr. Roosevelt's home across the Hudson, reportedly had been attempting to acquire the Vanderbilt property.
May 8, 1940.

Dear Gertrude!—

We still hope that the appropriation will go through and that the title will be cleared before July first. I shall write to you again when I have something more definite.

I do hope you had a good trip and that I shall see you soon.

Affectionately,

Mrs. Dexter Cooper,
155 East 55th Street,
New York City,
New York.
April 30th

156 East 56th Street - New York

Dear Franklin,

Back from my

mouth in New Orleans

and full of ambition

again!

I realize that

nothing has been

settled yet about the

Vanderbilt place, but
I have been wondering if there would be any way in which I could be put on the pay-role and sent to visit some of the places which are running smoothly, and learn some of the snags and pit-falls which there
must be in anything of that sort. It seems to me it would
make me more valuable when
the time comes.

Affectionately,

Gertrude Cooper
Office of the Attorney General
Washington, D.C.

By dear Mr. President:

There is no appeal from your judgment awarding Harold a drink on me and awarding me a drink on Harold. The decision is Solomon-like. I suspect the Judge expects to cut in on both ends when the judgment is satisfied.

Sincerely yours,

[Signature]

Attorney General

The President
The White House

Enclosure
By dear Mr. President:

Bob Jackson had sent me a copy of his memorandum of May 10 to you with reference to the Vanderbilt property, so that I was already on the war path when your memorandum of the 13th reached me in which you suggested that I would want to spank somebody in my Department. Like the superlative lawyer that he is, Bob made out what seemed to be an air-tight case for his department, if not for Justice. He convinced me as completely as he had himself, but I find that there is some question as to whether this Department is guilty as charged.

I did make one mistake which was the result of a misunderstanding, when I reported to you that the matter of the title to the Vanderbilt property was still pending in the Department of Justice. It is a fact, as Bob informed you, that his "opinion" was sent here over forty days ago. The reason I put the word "opinion" in quotation marks is because it was an opinion containing this language: "The abstract and accompanying data discloses the title to be vested in Margaret Louise Van Allen, subject to:"

Then followed an enumeration of six items, some of them very important, that would have to be cleared if we were to be sure that
we were getting a clear title. I will not enumerate those but they are available for your information.

Bob's letter concludes: "Then all of the above objections, except objection numbered 4, and the above-noted requirements, have been met, etc., etc., etc."

You are a lawyer and I believe that you now have enough before you to enable you to determine whether, in view of this "opinion approving the validity of title", as Bob expresses it in his memorandum to you, you would advise a client to accept title with the comfortable assurance that there were no flaws therein.

You will still want an explanation of the delay in taking care of these flaws. I say say that we have done our best in this Department but Mrs. Van Allen's lawyer has been very slow in coming through. As to some matters, undoubtedly he is having his own difficulties. For instance, one of the Attorney General's requirements was that there should be a showing that the inheritance tax on the Vanderbilt estate has been paid. Although the estate has deposited a considerable sum of money with the United States for the purpose of settling this tax, the amount thereof has not been ascertained and it cannot be said that the lien of the tax has been released in so far as it may affect this property. We are doing our best to clear up this matter.

Another difficulty arises out of the fact that Mrs. Van Allen's lawyer notified the Park Service that it would be necessary to complete a cooperative agreement covering the use of the present water...
system including pumping facilities, standpipe, and reservoir, as a portion of these facilities is located on the land intended to be conveyed to the United States while the balance is on the land intended to be reserved by Mrs. Van Alen.

But you are interested in results and not in technically legal details. I went personally to the Hill yesterday and checked with Senator Adams. The conferees at that time had our appropriation bill under consideration. This was before I had had a report from my own Department on the status of the title, and so in entire good faith, I assured Senator Adams, on the strength of Bob Jackson's memorandum to you, that the title was all clear and had been accepted. You will recall that it was in the Senate that the appropriation for this property was thrown out. Senator Adams assured me that this action was not taken by the Senate on account of any flaw in the title but because the august Senators, mainly, I believe, on the representations of Senator Green, were of the opinion that this property did not classify as an historic site.

I told Senator Adams of your and my interest in this matter, and I urged him to do what he could to restore the item originally allowed by the House. I assured him that the property would be self-supporting at the very least and that this was merely a small sum necessary to make it possible for us to get going. I even suggested that the sum we are asking for might be deducted from the $150,000 that he put into the appropriation bill for the San Luis Valley Project in which he is so much interested. I hope that he
got the point and that the conferees will adopt this item.

I really had gone so far as to get out my much-used kicking
machine, but in view of what our records here disclose, I have put
it away again — at least tentatively.

I repeat, that Bob Jackson is a fine lawyer; as a matter of
fact I have never run into a better one. It takes a better than
good lawyer to speak of an opinion as "approving the validity of
title" when there are only six flaws that have to be cured.

Anyhow, Bob's memorandum served one good purpose. On the
strength of it I could assure Senator Adams that the Government
had a title of crystal clearness. If I am ever brought to book
for that statement I will look to Bob to get me out of the jail
into which he so deftly shoved me.

I am returning to you Bob's memorandum.

Sincerely yours,

[Signature]

Secretary of the Interior.

The President,
The White House.

Enclosure.
Office of the Attorney General  
Washington, D.C.  

MEMORANDUM TO THE PRESIDENT  
Re: Vanderbilt property  

The Secretary of the Interior has referred to me your memorandum of May 3 regarding the Vanderbilt property, requesting an explanation of the delay in approving title, reciting the principal events in the chain of title and expressing your opinion that the title should be approved.

I wholly concur in your views. In fact, your memorandum aptly summarizes my opinion approving the validity of title rendered to the Department of the Interior over 60 days ago. The request for this opinion was received from the Department of the Interior in the Lands Division of this Department at 11 a.m. on March 21, and a final opinion approving title was written on March 28, reaching the Department of the Interior on March 29.

This whole incident illustrates perfectly the confusion in the handling of title work due to divided jurisdiction, which I have long regretted. Under the Historic Sites Act (49 Stat. 666), the title to the Vanderbilt property must be "satisfactory to the Secretary of the Interior". As a matter of law we had no actual jurisdiction whatsoever over this matter. A letter from the Secretary of the Interior requested my opinion because a long and complicated chain of title was involved. The most difficult cases are usually referred to us. We are glad indeed to handle them, as we have a highly trained staff familiar with the laws of the respective States, but having no responsibility we have no power to pursue the matter to conclusion.

No doubt the Department of the Interior has good reason for delay in this case, but in so far as title is concerned, there is no reason why the Vanderbilt acquisition could not have been concluded promptly after the rendition of our title opinion on March 29, for only minor matters remained to be checked, such as taxes and the will of Frederick W. Vanderbilt. As you say, "in the County in which the property is located titles such as this are considered Grade A-1".
A coincidence of dates in the closing of the Hyde Park Post Office Site proves this point. We received the Controller General's check on March 29, and affected the closing on April 5, seven days later. Our preliminary title opinion had been written on March 14, but of course we had to await the issuance of the check before effecting the closing. Here we had complete jurisdiction of all processes and could move rapidly.

For your information, in rendering title opinions we require from 24 hours to 18.5 days, counting from the hour and minute of the day when a request for an opinion is received in the Lands Division of this Department to the time when it is mailed out. The average time for all opinions is 11 days, 2 hours, and 40 minutes. Since July 1, 1936 we have rendered 74,799 title opinions, a weekly average of 382, and a daily average of 69. The principal functions of all title work for the majority of agencies are handled by this Department, with an increasing tendency on the part of practically all agencies other than the Department of Agriculture and the Department of the Interior to turn over to my office all legal functions in respect to title work.

I deem this an appropriate instance in which to call your attention to the needless expense, delay, and overlapping of functions which exist in respect to title work when carried on in acquiring agencies and not under my direction.

Respectfully,

[Signature]
Attorney General.

Attachments
MEMORANDUM FOR
THE PRESIDENT

I called the Secretary of the Interior to ask about the Vanderbilt title transfer to the Government and the status of the appropriation. He said the Senate struck out the appropriation. Burlew is going to try to get in touch with Jim Rowe to have someone put it back on the floor. It will be before the Senate today. They have lost no time on trying to clear the title but there are some complications.

G. G. T.
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

May 2, 1940.

MEMORANDUM FOR
THE PRESIDENT

Mr. Burlew called to say that Senator Hayden had asked Senator Mead to introduce the Amendment on the floor. They ran into some difficulties with Senator McKellar because the title has not yet been cleared but the Department of Justice is working on it and they expect to have the title cleared before July when they get the appropriation. The bill will, they hope, be passed this afternoon.

G. G. T.
MEMORANDUM FOR

THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR [2]

May 3, 1940.

This business about title to the VanclerBut place is silly. I know all about it. Please ask Department of Justice to let me know what the snag is.

This place as an entity has descended from the granddaughter of the original grantee, about 1750, through herself and her husband to Samuel Bard, their son, thence by deed to David Hoseck, about 1820, thence by deed to Walter Langdon, Sr., thence by will to Walter Langdon, Jr., thence, I think, in 1898 by the Executors of the latter to Frederick W. Vanderbilt. Mr. Vanderbilt owned it until his death, a little over a year ago, and bequeathed it to his wife's niece, Mrs. Van Alen.

I appreciate the care that has to be taken with old titles — I have had many experiences with them — but in this case, being such a well known property, there are and could be no undisclosed claimants, and in the County in which the property is located titles such as this are considered Grade A-1.

If this were in Tattnall County, Georgia, or if there were any question of surveys involved, I would use the utmost care to check from the original grantee down — or if there were any missing link in the title, I should exercise equal care. I am really curious to know why the Department of Justice holds this up.

F. D. R.
### Time Required for Closing Acquisitions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agencies</th>
<th>Acquisitions closed by Acquiring Agency</th>
<th>Acquisitions closed by Attorney General</th>
<th>Total acres purchased during fiscal year, July 1, 1959, to June 30, 1959</th>
<th>Total consideration for lands purchased during fiscal year, July 1, 1959, to June 30, 1959</th>
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<tr>
<td>Year Department</td>
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<tr>
<td>Department of Agriculture</td>
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<td>1. Forest Service</td>
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<td>2. Soil Conservation Service</td>
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<td>3. Trust Fund</td>
<td>16.16 days</td>
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<td>4. Rural Rehabilitation Corporation</td>
<td>167.1 days</td>
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<td>5. Administrative Sites</td>
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<td>1. Bureau of Biological Survey</td>
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<td>2. Office of Indian Affairs</td>
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<td>3. National Park Service</td>
<td>77 days</td>
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<td>All other agencies, including Federal Works Agency, Civil Aeronautics Authority, Veterans Administration, Navy, Commerce, etc.</td>
<td>69.5 days</td>
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### Notes
1/ Average based on acquisitions in which final title approval was rendered by the Attorney General during the 6 month period of July 1, 1959, to December 31, 1959, inclusive.

2/ Under procedure followed in these acquisitions the statistics are not available to this Department.

3/ Federal Building sites give rise to the most complex title problems in the Federal Government. They are almost invariably urban properties with long title histories, active ownership and high values. Notwithstanding this, these cases are closed by the Department of Justice in 69.5 days, the longest time needed for any group of cases, but less than the minimum time required by any agency engaged in closing its own acquisitions. (See first column above.)
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Number of opinions requested during 6 months period of July 1, 1959, to December 31, 1959</th>
<th>Total number of days required to render opinions</th>
<th>Average number of days required for each opinion</th>
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<td>4. Sub-Aridinal</td>
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<td>5. Rural Rehabilitation Corporation</td>
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<td>6. Administrative Sites</td>
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<td>All other agencies, including Federal</td>
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<td>Works Agency, Commerce, Veterans</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arm State-Highway, Civil Aviation Authority, National Catalf Parks and Planning Commission</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Average time required for rendering title opinions: 11 days, 2 hours, 50 minutes
Dear Franklin:

I have hesitated and been hot and cold about writing to thank you for your letter written just at the time when you were probably the world's loneliest man. However, I finally decided that you don't have to read my letter if you don't want to.
I don't want to, and anyway I wanted the chance to add my word to the thousands you have heard in praise of your speech to the Scientific Congress, and also the one to the joint session of our own Congress. I would have liked to be where my colleagues could have
helped swell the applause, instead of by my own radio.

I have filled in the application blank which Mr. Barkan sent me, and sent it back to him.

Thanks again for writing in person.

Affectionately,

S. S. Cooper
Dear Daisy:

Ever so many thanks for your note. I am made very happy that "Hyde Park" belongs now to the Nation and in memory of your Uncle Fred. Did you see the excellent photographs in the Times and Tribune supplements Sunday?

Mrs. Cooper who will have charge, was an old neighbor of ours at Campobello — she was Gertrude Sturgis — and she will, I think, do very well in running the house for the visiting public because she has taste and appreciates beautiful things.

Some day this summer or autumn, you must drive up to lunch with us and we can go up and see the house and the place under new management.

Always sincerely yours,

Mrs. James Laurens Van Alen,
Wakehurst,
Newport,
Rhode Island.
July 15, 1920

Wakehurst
Newport
R.I.

Dear Franklin,

I have just received the good news about Hyde Park. I have already sent the deed off to Mr. Broughton for recordation. It has been one of my fondest hopes that this place become a national monument and memorial.
To Uncle Fred, so you can understand how happy this news has made me. I shall always remember the interest you have taken in this matter with the deepest appreciation.

Very sincerely,

Daisy Van Allen
MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

In accordance with your memorandum of August ninth, I asked Mr. Van Wagner what he thought about trying to get Alex Knauss of Hyde Park employed on the Vanderbilt place.

Mr. Van Wagner said that Mr. Knauss is a Republican who under all circumstances always votes the straight Republican ticket. He further advises me that all of the present employees of the Vanderbilt place are out and out Republicans, with the sole exception of Cecil H. Halpin, who is about to be employed there by transfer — at your request.

Mr. Van Wagner seemed greatly disturbed at the prospect of having the place packed with Republicans. He said he wished he could have a little time in which to make a recommendation. Mr. Knauss, previous to two years ago, was a regular employee at the Vanderbilt place.

R.N.H.
MEMORANDUM FOR

BILL HASSETT

August 9, 1940.

Will you ask Elmer Van Wagner what he thinks about trying to get Alex Knauss of Hyde Park employed on the Vanderbilt place? Please return letter from Mrs. Cooper so I can send reply.

F. D. R.
Vanderbilt-Mannion National Historic Site
Hyde Park
August 7th

Dear Franklin,

This is just a very personal report of our activities here, but I thought you might like to hear such news as we have.

We have had over eight hundred people, including children in the one week we have been open, and they have come from twenty-nine states and five foreign countries. Everyone seems very enthusiastic and from the number of tips we have had to refuse, we must have at least
reasonably efficient.

Our C.C.C. boys have come, and so far seem to be working out very well. The one important thing is to get Alex Knows on just as soon as we can. They have sent us a man temporarily, but Knows knows the work so thoroughly that it would help a lot to have him as soon as possible.

Everyone has been most helpful, especially Mr. Young, & Mr. Smith the landscape man.

Hope to see you soon.

Affectionately

[Signature]
Dec 29

Dear Franklin,

Last night I had an impressive and happy experience. I saw what a kindly thought and a telegram could do to make an old man happy. I'm hoping the telegram was yours, the old gentleman was Peter Belmont.
It was an altogether delightful evening on Dr. Belmont distinguished himself, being quick on judge & chief justice. From Dr. I Supreme Court, who gave incident one of the finest - extemporaneous speakers I have ever heard. Dr. Shears keeps me posted about Hyde.

Park & I are glad to see how your estimate of its importance as a national monument is borne out by the number of visitors. If you should by any chance visit Dr. Shears College again I hope you will accept some hospitality from one.
With best wishes
Very sincerely,
Dame Van Allen