

CARROLL BELKNAP

TO MY MOTHER'S MANY FRIENDS

Dear people, I beg you not to let this note sadden you, for there is no sadness in my heart.

As many of you already know, Mama died on the evening of December 22, two days before Christmas Eve. Death came to her quietly and gently, in her sleep. And now there are things that I know she would want me to tell you.

First, I think, she would want me to tell you about the two Marys whose tender care and companionship meant so much to her in the past two years -- Mary Clark, who came on duty at the nursing home in the morning -- Mary Freitag, who came on in the afternoon and evening. All of us who loved her owe much to these two compassionate and devoted women.

And she would like me to tell you about another Mary -- Maria Podhorszky (who will always be Marya to me), our dear friend who went to see her every Sunday for four years.

Most of all, perhaps, she would want me to tell you that her last weeks were not unhappy ones, for she knew she was surrounded by love. Each day, I would read her the Christmas Cards and notes and letters that came from you. They pleased her and she would ask for them to be read to her again -- and when I came to a name that I did not know she would tell me whose son or daughter or grandchild it was. As the days passed, I hung them on the walls of her room. She could not see them, but she knew they were there, for everyone who came into the room spoke to her about them. . . And I read to her the lovely letter that my daughter Anne had sent to her own friends, describing the birth of Mama's newest great-grandchild, Gillian. Mama loved that letter. She had me read it to her twice; and spoke of it several times in later days. . . Each day she would ask for up-to-the-minute news of the family, even to including Anne's new Siamese kitten.

A day or two before she died, Peg took the two little girls to see her -- Linda and Sara. I followed, half an hour later, so Mama could have the girls without distraction. When I got there, I found the girls at her bedside; each holding one of her hands and starting to sing Christmas songs to her. Just at that moment a little visiting band, out in the hallway, began to play old familiar carols that the girls knew; so they sang the words as the band played. . . Later, when Mama and I were alone, she smiled and said: "It was nice of the band to play for the little girls."

She slept a good deal, but when she woke she had things to say to me -- about Christmas gifts to the two Mary's, and to the family -- and about sending Christmas cards to all of you whose addresses I had -- and about visits from those of you who had come to see her.

The last Christmas note that I read to her came from the daughter of her most-loved cousin. It told of happy plans for Christmas. Mama smiled and said "That's good." And then, a few hours later she just didn't wake up.

Carroll

January 1, 1967

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Carroll

January 1, 1967

Post Office Box 213  
Canon City, Colorado 81212  
February 2, 1967

Dear Carroll and Peg:

As one of Nappy's dear friends, I feel that I can so address you, for being as close to Nappy as I was, feel that you two must now take the place in my heart that I had for Nappy, your Mother.

Upon receipt of your letter of Nappy's passing on, I was saddened and yet somewhat relieved, for Nappy had been through so much with her blindness the last couple years, and how often I had wished that I could be with her to talk to her. But, Nappy being the person she was, know that her joys came through her dear little family. Oh, how she used to tell me about her "Great Grands" and her eyes would twinkle as she spoke of them. How often I sat at her feet in front of her, and listened to all she had to say to me. We had many moments of joys, as well as tears together.

Your letter was most comforting, Carroll, and all I can say is: "Nappy had a most wonderful son." I was always so in hopes that someday when Nappy lived in my home with me, that you and Peg would have gotten out to see her, and also given me the pleasure of meeting you.

As you know, I did have the pleasure of meeting Jack and Gretchen, only that their stay was also much too short to get to know them, and yet, a very pleasant memory of having met them.

Nappy's plant, a small leafed philodendron, is still in my possession, and it having been Nappy's, gets most loving care as a living memorial to our Nappy.

Since Christmas now, it seems to be endless in shooting out new stems and leaves, and having a cherished place on the coffeetable in my living room, there isn't a day goes by that a thought of Nappy goes through my mind.

Our Nappy will live long in our hearts and mind, as she was a person most loved by everyone who knew her. Also, I shall never forget her many kindnesses to my father when he was there with us. I could never have gone on with my work had it not been for dear Nappy.

Thank you, Carroll and Leg, for being so wonderful to her, and now that she has gone on, I hope that you both will still remember me, and as you can, keep in touch. Maybe someday, God Willing, we may have the pleasure of meeting.

And, thank you so much for the letter.

Sincerely,

Edna



MRS. FRANK YAGER

P. O. BOX 725, IONE, CALIF.

Dear Coroll:

12/29/66

You and news just arrived today. It was hard to tell Mother but she held up very well outwardly although I know she is deeply grieved. Hilda and Bens were her family. One of the saddest things in age is to watch loved ones go & leave you behind. Mother never shed a tear over Dad's death, but she has (and still does) feel it keenly. It would have been easier for her if she had been able to cry more freely or to talk about it. She never did and never has.

Your note did not arrive until after  
the Memorial Service - not that it really matters  
although we would have read a wire. Strangely,  
Mother was very low in spirits that day and  
slept nearly all day. I sometimes think she  
is extra-sensory, clairvoyant, or something  
of this sort because I've sensed a similar  
sensitively in her before when something was  
happening that we knew nothing about. Some  
people would say "coincidental" and perhaps  
it is, but I don't think so, knowing my  
mother and her depth.

You can be thankful, Correll, that  
you have been such a devoted son. None  
could have been better or kinder and more  
loving than you & this leaves no scars  
behind. Father lived a full life untroubled

(2)

MRS. FRANK YAGER

P. O. BOX 725, IONE, CALIF.

by love (as you say) which she certainly deserved. Unfortunately, so many worthies never get what they deserve. I'm sure your thoughtfulness arranged it as that she did. Your mother was a wonderful person & so proud of you, & you did not let her down. She lived a life of fulfillment through you.

I'm sure that Hella was an inspiration & strength to others than yourself, too. I know she was to me. I have never forgotten the week we spent

visiting the World's Fair. I had met Helen  
before but had never become as well  
acquainted. I was a very young woman,  
married + with 2 children (one a baby). I flew  
there with Mother + went to see the World's  
Fair with you mother. I had more fun  
with her than if I had <sup>(with)</sup> my husband,  
any member of my age group, mother, father,  
or anyone around, plus I learned a great  
deal about life. Number one: she was a  
good sport - never complained even though  
she was much older than I and I was  
eager to see everything; number two, she  
was wiser than I (I learned that the  
things she wanted to do were really the  
wisest for us because she let me experiment a  
little + made only a few suggestions;

(3)

MRS. FRANK YAGER

P. O. BOX 725, LONG, CALIF.

number three, I learned that the older generation had a wonderful sense of humor; number four, I came away with a sense of the beauty of dignity and decorum in a woman (Conrad, not that my mother did not love the same - only that I saw this through Hester in a foreign situation ~~through me~~ to me).

She became my ideal on this trip. I really worshipped her and I have never been let down on this. I laugh now to think she & I both smoked cigarettes in the back parlor at Dennis and whenever it would not inconvenience Dennis so as to make her unhappy.



My only regret is that I am not  
able through circumstance to have a closer  
contact with you mother. You & Peg and  
many others have been more fortunate &  
must have many more treasured memories  
than I. But mine are not diminished by  
their frequency.

Conrad, I am never much concerned  
by religion or the religious affiliations of  
my friends, but something in your message to  
me concerning "love" made me wonder if you &  
Peg are Christian Scientists or inclined that  
way. I have had some interest in this line  
and wondered.

My love to all of you. Let's keep in  
touch.

Betty.

MRS. FRANK YAGER

P. O. BOX 725, LONG, CALIF.

Just an afterthought but it may help to  
comfort you:

I've come to the conclusion since  
Dad's death that whenever a great  
person dies (and Lewis a wonderful  
man) the person leaves behind a  
part of himself that has an influence on  
the whole world. It's just like a pebble  
kicking water - the circle of waves spread  
— to infinity — who knows? I know Dad's  
goodness & kindness had a tremendous  
influence on me even though I didn't appreciate  
his personality in the turbulence of youth

and I have even the most ~~new~~ tremendous  
influence the memory of this war has  
exerted upon my children. This heritage,  
of course, they will transmit to their own.  
Isn't this a wonderful world?

King City, Mo.  
Jan. 7, 1966

my dear Carroll:

While I never met you, I always have felt that I knew you and your family because during my stay in Capitan your mother talked about all of you and then Jack spent one summer with her and then through the years since, as long as she could write letters she would tell about each one of you.

This note is to express my appreciation to you for keeping me informed about your mother since letter writing became too much for her. I waited for your letter that came in December before mailing her Christmas greeting because I realized from your earlier messages that she was quite frail. I hope my letter reached her before her passing. After I had mailed my card to her I had a letter from Ruth White Thomas who lives in Arteria, but she had spent part of the summer at Ruidoso and had visited Capitan several times. I had planned to write your mother again and pass some of Ruth's information on to her, but someone in Capitan may have written her. At any rate, I think



several of them send her a birthday greeting.

Also I want in some way to try to express my feeling toward you at this time. I think it is wonderful that you can write there is no sadness in your heart; it is such a satisfaction to know that you were able to surround her with love and to know that <sup>her</sup> physical needs were so well taken care of; to love our dear ones, to care for them and when the time comes to bid them farewell, to be able to let them go without sadness or regret, knowing that for them it is best, and still treasuring the memories they have left with us, <sup>is I truly love,</sup> I am not very adept with words, but please understand that I will be thinking of you and that I too have ~~many~~ many happy memories of her.

Sincerely yours  
Grace Hudson

Hudson  
Box 416  
King City, Mo. 64413



*Answer*

Mr. Carroll Belknap,  
25 Club Road  
Riverside, Conn. 06878

Mother — I want  
you to see this "the two  
letter from one of the two  
at the morning ROM.  
Mary

26 Doreen St  
Norwalk

Dear Mr and Mrs Belknap  
that was such a beautiful letter  
to thank you for it and I knew you wanted to  
share it with everybody so I took it to the office  
and they thought it was beautiful.

Now I want to tell you the last day I was  
around your Mother, I brought her Breakfast  
she liked hard boiled Eggs and Butter in  
them she ate all her Breakfast  
I got her up she went to visit Mrs Hull  
and Mrs Bliss the Blind Lady she enjoyed  
her, then she come back in about 30  
minutes and she went to Bed

Then you came Mr Belknap and you stayed all  
afternoon.

When I went in next morning and they told  
me she was gone I could not believe it I went  
to her room and then I seen the Bed empty.  
All I can say the Lord just came and took  
her away. It was so nice to be around her  
as she was always young at heart  
and I am So glad I had a little part in  
her life

Sincerely

Mary Clark

P.S.

We made a date to wash her Hair the next Day  
she said she would feel better



8 Lincoln Place  
Ossining

New York

11/1/69

---

Dear Mr Belknap

Please forgive

the Delay in answering your  
letter telling me of your Mother's  
Death and my Dear Friend. I am  
sure it was a Shock coming just at  
this Holiday season, But we have  
the assurance that God took Her  
to spend Christmas in a lovely  
home on High. where we will  
all hope to meet Her some day.  
Thank God for the wonderful



2  
Pierces. they will be blessed for their  
good work and kindness. Please  
give my Sympathy to all her Dear ones  
all but were very sorry to hear  
of her Death and send their Sympathy  
I will close this letter and say  
I will be glad to hear from  
you at any time.

With Kind regards  
Jane Mac Millan

MRS. JANE MACMILLIAN  
8 LINCOLN PL.  
OSSINING, N.Y. 10562



To

Mr & Belknap,  
25 Club Road,  
Riverside,  
Connecticut,  
USA.

*John Frost*



1/3/67

Dear Peg and Carroll,

I am so grateful to you for calling me about Nappy. I guess I really believed she would make it to a 100 because it was a shock in spite of all I knew. I had planned to come to see her during the holidays - and of course will always regret I didn't go sooner.

My own life has been in a rather miserable turmoil since last spring - with marital problems - and I am dismayed to see what a narrow view of the outside world mine has become. I didn't, for instance, even ask

if you were having services for her - and she and my family were always so close. Is there a charity or other endeavor contributions are being made in her name?

The children are growing up well - busy & beautiful. One of the great experiences of my life was watching Jeff be Amahl in the very fine high school production of the Menotti opera. (He made it through '66 without breaking anything!)

Thank you for being so wonderful to Nappy and her friends. I certainly do not want to lose touch.

With love, Ellen



My dear Mr and Mrs Bellenap:-

Please accept my  
deepest sympathy on the  
death of your wonderful  
mother.

I shall treasure  
the memory of her friend-  
ship. Really I have never

known anyone quite  
like her.

I found your letter  
when I returned from va-  
cation yesterday. Needless  
to say, I am saddened!

Very sincerely -  
Florence Wood.

Thurs day -

✓  
Mrs. William George Wood