

Mrs. Mary Ferrell  
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8/24/93

Dear Mary,

I'm glad to get your letter of the 20th and something happened to me that may bear on it. Please be alert to what I give as fact and what is not that but may be and is my belief.

A dear dear friend is counsel to Carroll & Graf. From the time Harry turned his manuscript in I did not hear from him. I am confident that because we are friends he would not give them a liberal opinion on a book relating to me. He would have had a conflict of interest. By the way, please keep this to yourself. I'll tell Gary Mack.

Dave Wrone and several others were here for the awarding of the honorary doctorates to Lil and me. Dave stayed and worked in my files, his own work. On Monday we got the USNews/Posner for him. I did not want it. Posner told me he'd send me one of the early copies of the book and copies of all the promotional materials. I felt that reading the book would be enough time on it. Then Dave went to SARC for some work. When he returned he had two copies of the book and told me I should read it. I had intended annotating it only and I began doing that. But I got to a point where I decided I had to do more and that I would do it in the form of a book. Whether or not it would be published it would

be a more detailed and despite my terrible typing a more legible one than my worse handwriting when I hold what I am writing on on a clipboard in the air and then write. I got to the point where I decided it would make an important book. Having no agent or publisher, because that had nothing to do with Carroll & Graf I wrote this friend about it. He wrote me back asking for more information. His letter is dated the 13th. The postage meter is dated the 14th. There is a post office cancellation of it dated the 13th. And it took about 8-9 days to get here. When I got that letter I wrote him immediately but we had no mail going out until the next day. That afternoon he told me he had spoken to Herman Graf about it and they could be interested. He asked for what I could let him have and I sent it. I've heard nothing since and, of course, there has not been enough time for me to hear. I kept working on the book and I also thought about how Graf could be interested. He'd look like a fool if he publishes all that crazy stuff about me that Harry made up and any other book by me at anything close to the same time. So, I came to believe that Harry's book says nothing bad about me. This is, however, only belief. Maybe they can be crazy enough to do both but I think not. They'd be ridiculed and laughed at. But, if I am correct, that need not apply to anyone else, as I explain.

Beginning some time back I wrote Carroll, needling him politely over Harry's saying I tried to wreck him and his book and enclosing a copy of what I could have used to do that and never used, I did that a couple of times. He gave the first to Harry to respond to and Harry being Harry replied with a nasty diatribe and the accusation I'd never read

his book. I did not reply to Harry. I sent Carroll a short letter with a xerox of where Harry had said exactly what I had said he did. No more from Harry. And no responses to those various polite needles. I think he realized that before publication I had made him witting, that he knew that what Harry said about me is false and, I think, he got the idea that if I sued I could show malice. So I think that it is not impossible that I may have been separated from the rest. There is also the possibility that the libel lawyer told them something like that.

I am confident that Graf would not have expressed any interest at all if it would make them look foolish and if Harry says in the book about me what we know he said they surely would like worse than foolish.

If Graf decides to go ahead with my book I think that will be convincing as regards <sup>me</sup> me. But it need not relate to anyone else.

There <sup>is</sup>, it seems to me, a weakness in what you say about Russell and the 18th and what Carroll said. They surely can do something about Harry's book if they see something in it over which they can anticipate any kind of trouble. Separate from this is interpreting why Carroll said such a thing and why Russell accepted it, assuming he did.

I am relieved that you spoke to Locke Purnell and gave them copies! I had worried about your not doing that! If I may make a suggestion I may have made before. That Maryland code Zaid gave to Peggy is for other than libel and makes it a felony. Those who do not work in that kind of law may not know it if your code down there has such a provision. It might be of help in Texas, to them or to Gary.

I forgot. There is also a line of reasoning I pressed on Carroll after I gave him a few samples of what I can still do to both of Harry's books. I then asked him to put himself in my place. If I say nothing I validate all those lies. So, I have to fight back and I told him that I had given him only a few samples and if I have to fight I'll do that as vigorously as I can. While I do not know, I think that, too, may have influenced him.

At Rando<sup>m</sup> is a beautiful job. Thanks. I'll read it when I'm resting during my early morning <sup>walk</sup> walking.

Several weeks ago Lil and I decided that after the first burst of sales Random House is going to be disappointed. I think there are only a limited number of people who care a bit about defending the official mythology. I've not seen a NYTimes list yet.

*Carroll*