

C O P Y

Foss Mountain, Snowville, New Hampshire

June 27, 1950

Dear Lucy:

What you have to say about Mrs. Dorr is extremely interesting. We've had the question of a documentary of Helen simmering on the back of the stove for some time. Last winter we had two long talks with Robert Flaherty, at the end of which both sides concluded that he was not the man for it. Mrs. Dorr seems to have the first great qualification: apparently she sees the special thing that is Helen. Helen is not the easiest subject in the world to photograph, but Mrs. Dorr has seen her and knows this. The mistake that is sometimes made is to try to act as if she is not blind. Augustus Tack who painted her portraits some years ago accepted the blindness as fundamental and I thought did a very fine job. Jo Davidson is now at work on a portrait of her and Polly--the results are said to be very exciting.

But to get back to the movie. Years ago a monstrosity was produced called "Deliverance." It was all full of sentimentality and symbolism and goo, a full-length picture which opened in the middle of the Actors Equity strike and flopped as it deserved to do. There have been some news reel movies, none of which I have seen, but excellent movies were made of Helen and Polly when they were last in Japan. This film is in New York. Parts of it are quite thrilling, not only in the shots of Helen herself but also in the flow of the crowds towards her.

*I told  
her about  
your Dorr  
Co. film.*

Nothing can be done at the moment because Helen and Polly are in France. Helen couldn't bear the thought of facing the 70th birthday celebrations here--the birthday incidentally is today. I don't know just when they are coming back, but I am writing them about your letter. Who is the Viennese and would he have a part in it? At any rate the whole business is worth all sorts of discussion--I'd come down from here for a conference at Westport if it seemed at all necessary after Helen and Polly get back.

A lot of people are interested in a movie of Helen, Katharine Cornell among them. It is no secret that she hopes some day to act the part of Teacher either in a movie or a play. She would have the rights for this kind of thing, but the documentary is something else. We have gone over it with her and she is very enthusiastic about the idea.

*This refers  
to a docu-  
mentary  
in general  
& not to  
your film  
here.*

I agree with you that the production costs can be managed and I am writing now to one person who may be the key figure in this aspect of the affair, but everything of course is tentative until after we have talked with Helen and Polly.

Nella (Braddy) Henney