

120 Park [?]  
Dec 31. 1869.

Dear Mr. Swarr,

Mr. Johnston, as requested by you, has informed me of the offer of Mr. Wm B Reed to return to your custody as Executor the various documents in his hands belonging to my Uncle's estate.

In my opinion, it is of the utmost importance that you promptly accept this offer ~ indeed I consider it essential for you to do so, in order to carry out my dear Uncle's cherished wish to place before the public a thoughtful statement of the events connected with his administration of the government. It is the most sacred obligation upon me, as having been so near & dear to him ~ as he was to me ~ & his fame is now a most cherished object of my life - but this obligation is upon all his relatives & upon every friend & well wisher of the Democratic Party ~ & to accomplish this result the custody of these papers is essential. Suppose they were to fall, by legal proceedings against Mr. Reed, or otherwise, into the hands of the Republicans ~ who would pervert truth to falsehood, & try to condemn the pure & upright statesman by the perversion of the very evidence that shows his pure & lofty patriotism. The pecuniary value of these papers is inestimable. I am sure the Republican Party would purchase them at any price. I shall feel the greatest uneasiness until I know them to be safe in your hands, when arrangements can be made by which my dear Uncle wishes can be expected with or without Mr. Reed's assistance as may be deemed expedient.

Believe me,

Yours very respectfully

Harriet Lane Johnston

