

Adams

2

1

7829 Euclid Ave.,  
Cleveland 3, Ohio.

Adams, A

April 9, 1945.

APR 11 1945

My Dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

The only excuse which I can offer for presuming to address you is that I believe that you can help me and that if you can, I think you will.

I have recently completed the manuscript of a little book which I call "The Story of Me." I suppose it is a cross between an autobiography and a travel book. My other book, published in 1929 by Grafton Press was an out and out travel book and told the story of a year which I spent in Europe as chaperone to a singing girl. I have since been twice in Europe travelling alone, that is, securing local guides in the places which I visited. Naturally any story of my life features prominently this experience. But mixed though the classification of the book may be it has one supreme purpose namely, to help the boys who return blinded from this war.

Because I have been blind ever since my earliest memory and because I had a most unusual mother who would never let me think of my handicap as an obstacle to a single thing which I felt that I was meant to do, I believe that my book can awaken in these boys a faith in themselves and a courage to attempt which the word of no person save one who had known the handicap of blindness could possibly do. Also I have tried to give to them many practical suggestions as to ways of meeting and conquering this handicap which could be learned only by experience.

I sent this manuscript to Simon and Schuster. I enclose a copy of their reply. Because timeliness is the one great asset which this book has. Because it must make a sharp and vivid impact upon the mind of the newly blinded soldier, it must be published now. Simon and Schuster had it six weeks. By the time other publishers have kept it as long as that or longer, it will have lost its great moment. I realize that the paper shortage is against it as is the fact that it would perhaps have no very wide sale.

I would make any financial arrangement with a publisher which would secure him from loss. I am utterly sincere Mrs. Roosevelt, when I say that my intense interest in the book is wholly for what I believe it will do for the boys. But it must come to them at just the right time and for many of them the "right time" is now. By the time they sit around for six months brooding over their loss and growing daily more discouraged it will be too late.

If you are in the least interested in this matter I have an extra manuscript of the book which I would send to you. My first book, "Seeing Europe through Sightless Eyes," I once sent to you, but I fully realize that probably you never found time to read it. Even as I write I realize how many thousands of demands must be thrust upon you. If you throw this letter in the waste basket and forget it I shall not in the least blame you. Nothing could ever lessen the love and admiration which I feel for you and my adored President.

Please forgive me if I have presumed too far in writing this letter.

Yours from the heart,

Almeda C. Adams.

SIMON AND SCHUSTER, INC.  
PUBLISHERS

Rockefeller Center - 1230 Sixth Avenue - New York - 20

March 22, 1945.

Dear Miss Adams:

We have all read your book, and we like it. I am sorry to say, however, that the final decision is negative. Paper restrictions have so curtailed our list that we are forced to decide against many books which ordinarily we'd be delighted to publish. This, after a number of readings and a good deal of discussion, was the case with your story.

However, it seems to me that you can find a publisher without too much trouble. Your story is well told, and enlists the reader's interest from the start. Perhaps, since all book publishers are as much limited as we are by the paper rationing, you should try the magazines first. Would you like me to send your manuscript to Hugh MacNair Kahler of the Ladies' Home Journal, and recommend it to his attention? I'll be glad to do so if you say so, and meantime shall hold the script here.

Thank you for sending the story to us, and for your patience while we have been considering it.

Sincerely,

Maria Leiper  
(signed in her absence)

ml/ab

Miss Almeda Adams  
7829 Euclid Avenue  
Cleveland 3, Ohio

(C-O-P-Y)