

LADY STELLA READING

1936 - 1945

May 19, 1936

My dear Lady Reading:

Ambassador Bingham tells us that you are arriving on the twenty-fourth to stay with Miss Morgan, and that you will be here for a few weeks. The Ambassador himself will be arriving about the first of June and I hope very much that if we are still here you will come down with the Ambassador and spend the night of the second of June with us. The only difficulty is that a long while ago my husband promised if Congress adjourned in time we would start for Texas on June 1. Congress seems to show no signs of adjournment and I feel fairly sure that we will still be here, but I shall have to leave it more or less open until I can let you know definitely. It will be a great joy to us, however, if you could keep this date open and we could have the pleasure of seeing you. Of course, bring your maid or any one you have with you.

Very cordially yours,

Lady Reading  
c/o Miss Anne Morgan  
3 Sutton Place  
New York, New York

S:DD

May 26, 1936

100

My dear Lady Reading:

I am happy to say we shall be here on June 8 and look forward so much to seeing you. Will you be kind enough to let us know the time of your arrival so we can have you met? Of course, bring your maid.

Very sincerely yours,

Lady Reading  
Three Sutton Place  
New York, New York

DD

*Very kind  
am happy today, we shall be here*

June 2 + **THREE SUTTON PLACE** *Calicut 5-26-36*  
look forward to **May 25, 1936**

*much to seeing you here in the kind  
congratulations to let us know the "letter" of great  
interest to me and have your note the*

Dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

It is indeed kind of you  
to welcome me so charmingly, and I  
do want to thank you both for your  
very kind invitation and your lovely  
flowers which I found on my arrival.

*ER*

I need hardly say that I  
shall be more than delighted to come  
to you on the second of June, and I  
shall hold myself free until I hear  
from you again. I shall, if I may,  
bring a maid with me.

With kindest regards,

Yours sincerely,

*Stella Kearney*

Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt  
The White House  
Washington, D. C.

*rw*

100  
Lady Reading  
Care Hon. Norman Davis  
Lennox, Mass

Jul. 7, 1936

President will be at Hyde Park over weekend of 12th  
Could you come then? I may be gone by 17th

Eleanor Roosevelt



Somerville,  
Maine.

4. vii. 36.

Dear Mr. Roosevelt - If your  
neighbor's invitation to  
Hyde Park is still open I  
very much await you  
of your suggestion - may I  
come to you on the 17th -  
for the week end - I should  
so much enjoy seeing  
you again I need  
hardly say how deeply I

value all your kindness  
& hospitality — If your  
plans have changed in  
any way — I shall of  
course understand —

The impression made  
upon me at the Franklin  
Field Meeting is one I shall  
never forget & the emotion  
aroused by the President's  
speech & the crowds  
acclamation was a  
very real & very stirring

25, CURZON STREET.

GROSVENOR 2014.

Sensation - I was so thrilled  
that I felt very deeply  
moved - & am most  
appreciative of the opportunity  
afforded to me for interesting  
& participating in such  
a historic meeting.

With all my very great  
thanks for all your  
kindness.

Very sincerely yours  
Stella Meade.

Write her President will  
be at H. P. our week end  
of 12<sup>th</sup> & could she come  
there. 14<sup>th</sup> I may be gone.

Kathy reading

60209

3/40

Q

OCT 7 - 1936

Mrs. G. E. Bridgen  
Marathon,  
N.Y.

*[Handwritten scribbles and initials]*  
ple

32 Curzon Street, London.W.1.

25th September, 1936.

Dear Mrs Schneider,

I very foolishly have mislaid Mrs Bridgen's (of the Rural Women of the World) address and I wondered if you would be very kind and let me have it, forwarding <sup>done</sup> the enclosed at the same time.

I got back yesterday and can hardly believe that my lovely visit to the States took place. It really gave me so much happiness and I have learnt so much I believe it might rank as a post graduate course!

I suppose it would be idle to hope that you are all not killing yourselves at the moment, but I do hope that the result will justify your exhaustion.

*Yours sincerely  
Stella Meade*

Mrs Schneider,  
White House, Washington.D.C.

September 22, 1936

100

My dear Lady Reading:

Thank you very much for your letter. I am so glad you had such an interesting trip and saw so much of our country. We are all looking forward with a great deal of pleasure to your return and are counting on your letting us know ahead of time when you will be back.

Very cordially yours,

SO

Lady Reading  
32 Curzon St.  
London W1  
England

11  
9.22

THE COSMOPOLITAN CLUB  
122 EAST 66TH STREET  
NEW YORK

15th September, 1936

Dear Mrs Roosevelt,

I cannot leave this country without writing to thank you once more for all that you have done for me and for all your extreme kindness. I know I need not tell you how deeply I have appreciated the time you have spared me and the opportunities you have given me of seeing a great deal I should never have otherwise witnessed.

Since I was at Hyde Park, I have done a most interesting trip of 10,000 miles. I went as far West as Seattle coming back via Portland, Yellowstone Park and Chicago. This gave me a splendid opportunity of seeing a different part of the States to what my countrymen usually do and I am thrilled by all I have seen and by the strength and delightfulness of the people throughout. I do not think it would surprise you to hear that I am going back to England with all my fundamental beliefs strongly recharged through the forceful and delightful people with whom I have come into contact.

I am a great believer in fables and so would like to say if ever I can be of the least use to you, I do very sincerely hope you will call upon me to do anything in my power. I am afraid the next few weeks will be very strenuous ones for you and I send you and the President my very best wishes.

With kind regards.

Yours very sincerely  
Hillebrand

100  
November 6, 1936

Dear Lady Reading:

How very kind of you to cable your congratulations and good wishes! The President, of course, is tremendously pleased and heartened by the overwhelming vote of confidence which he received on November 3d. We are, all of us, however, thoroughly cognizant of the great responsibility which is his.

Do let me know ahead when you expect to come back to our country, as we both want so much to see you.

Very cordially yours,

SO

Lady Reading  
32 Curzon St.  
London  
Eng.

TELEGRAM

The White House  
Washington

London Nov. 4, 1936

Mrs Roosevelt,  
Washington.

Affectionate congratulations and best wishes for continued  
success health and happiness

Stella Reading.

December 28, 1936

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Dear Lady Reading:

Many thanks for your Christmas card.

I hope you will surely let us know in advance when you are coming back here, as we both are looking forward to seeing you again.

With every good wish for the New Year, I am

Very cordially yours,

SO

Lady Reading  
2 Chesterfield St.  
Mayfair W  
London

To wish you a happy  
Christmas and New Year

from

The Dowager Marchioness of Reading

*with the best of good wishes  
& in ever present admiration*

*Alfred*

2 CHESTERFIELD STREET MAYFAIR W



*12/21/18*

400  
December 28, 1939

Dear Lady Reading:

I was delighted to get your letter and I have been meaning to write you of my sincere admiration for all you have done. I think it has been a perfectly magnificent piece of work, and so many people in this country have spoken to me of how extraordinarily well they think the women in your country are organized.

Mrs. McLean was trying to see my sister-in-law, Mrs. J. R. Roosevelt, and she talked to me about it. The President felt that it was something which should be taken up with the State Department and we have told Mrs. McLean that.

I do not think that this country is ready for an organization similar to yours. We would not at this time be able to get it through Congress and there is no private agency big enough to do it. A great many people in this country still feel secure in our isolation, and until they are shaken in that belief, it would be difficult to accomplish very much.

There is a great deal of potential strength among the women and I have been longing to see them organized for something. I feel very strongly that we should be organized and ready to help when this war is over. I have done my best to stir people up to this need, but do not feel that I have been very successful.

With my best wishes to you, I am

Very sincerely yours,

SO

Lady Reading  
41 Tophill Street  
London, SW1

11/29

WOMEN'S VOLUNTARY SERVICES  
FOR CIVIL DEFENCE

41 TOTHILL STREET  
LONDON  
S.W.1

1st December, 1939.

WHI 7383

SR/MB  
H15/6/39

Dear Mr. Roosevelt -

I do want to write and tell you how tremendously touched we have been to receive so many tangible expressions of sympathy with us in our struggle from the United States. Dozens of my own friends as well as unknown people have written expressing sympathy and a desire to help and, of course, we are all thrilled by the offers of help from the American Red Cross, and what is even more important, in ~~our~~ particular work, the offers of help for Civilian Casualties from the newly formed American Society for British Medical and Civilian Aid, of which Mr. Winthrop Aldrich is President. The announcement in the Press of the formation of that Committee and of its proposed activities has evoked a tremendous response here of appreciative gratitude, and the Broadcast which Mr. Bertram Cruger, the personal representative here of the American Committee, gave both on the Home Service and Empire Stations, was extremely good and carried the news to millions of homes all over the British Empire.

I was interested to learn that a Mrs Alice McLean was going to see you at Hyde Park. She very kindly gave a great deal of help to W.V.S. while she was over here, and is now anxious, not only to organise help for France, and more especially Britain, which naturally would be extraordinarily welcome, but also wishes to form a similar Organisation in the United States. Naturally I have observed the greatest circumspection in any comments I have made on this project. Obviously we should be delighted if a similar Organisation were formed in America, but equally obviously I realise it would not be for me to give it any support or encouragement, and I am quite sure that if it is to be a success it must be an entirely spontaneous movement among large numbers of American women themselves.

2.

I have not met Mrs McLean and so have not the least idea whether she is the right person to organise such a movement on nationwide and truly democratic lines founded on the great ideal of common service which is its whole inspiration.

I do hope both you and the President are keeping well in these times, which for you, as for us, are so particularly arduous and trying.

With all my very best of good wishes.

Yours always sincerely  
Stella Keeble

Mrs Eleanor Roosevelt,  
The White House, Washington.



Reading, N.Y.  
100 12/28

## AMERICAN WOMENS VOLUNTARY SERVICES

December 22, 1939

26 East 62nd Street  
New York City

*Sentimental of the day*  
*file*

Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt,  
The White House,  
Washington, D.C.

My dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

After sending Mr. Macy's letter with my own, regarding American Women's Voluntary Services, to Mrs. J. Roosevelt Roosevelt, in the hope that she would be so kind as to hand them to The President, I received the enclosed letter from Lady Reading, which was, of course, written at the time when I had expected to go to stop with Mrs. Roosevelt at "The Red House". I do so hope that if The President is kind enough to see me, you will be there too. For although I feel that the Baptism of this organization should come from the Chief Executive, it is after all a Woman's Organization and I feel certain that your interest in it will be as great as Lady Reading's and mine. You, of course, understand that this is not a war time Organization, but an all time Organization.

I am enclosing some of the first bits of printed matter, which should show the purpose of the Organization's attempt to stimulate the Women of the United States to help co-ordinate their very great strength in an effort to maintain and glorify the Great Spirit of Democracy which exists by right of birth in this our Country.

Sincerely yours,

*William J. McLean*

WOMEN'S VOLUNTARY SERVICES  
FOR CIVIL DEFENCE

41 TOTHILL STREET  
LONDON  
S.W.1

1st December, 1939.

WHI 7383

SR/MB

H15/6/39

*Dear Mrs McKeon -*

I am indeed most delighted to hear of the wonderful success you are having in the United States and how much the fundamental ideas of the W.V.S. are appealing to women in your country.

We have borrowed so very much from you in the way of Voluntary Organisations - things like Rotary, Inner Wheel, Soroptomists etc., which have grown to be of immense value in our national life, and it will naturally give the greatest pleasure to me and to our Organisation here if you were to borrow the general idea of our Organisation and found something similar in America.

I hope very much indeed that you will be able to come over to Europe before long and discuss the whole position with us. You will, I am sure, realise that although I am more thrilled than I can say at what you have been doing, I cannot possibly, as a British Subject, take any official action in support of your Organisation. It must obviously be a completely spontaneous growth among American women. We shall I need hardly say be delighted to receive any help which you will be able to give us, and you know how deeply appreciative we are of your generous wish to help, and in that connection may I say how particularly anxious we are to build up a good reserve which will be so badly needed during the time heavy Civilian casualties occur.

From your own point of view I feel that the nationwide democratic Organisation on W.V.S. lines would have the most immense value as a unifying influence in America, as it has already had in this country.

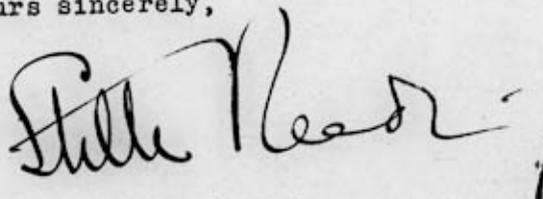
I was so very interested to learn from your cable that you were going to stay at Hyde Park. Mrs Roosevelt is a very good friend of mine, and I shall look forward with great interest to hear what her feeling is on this project of starting a W.V.S. in the States.

I was so very sorry that I did not feel able to carry out your suggestion of asking Mr. Kennedy to bring back a copy of your proposed charter. From the point of view of AMERICAN neutrality I think it is most important that a person like myself, who is the head of an Organisation, which though entirely voluntary receives Government encouragement, should not at this moment appear to have any open connection with any Organisation which is set up nationally in the United States.

I am most eagerly looking forward to meeting you and discussing all these problems with you. I hope so very much that you may find it possible to come over, though I realise to the full what an enormous adventure it would be for you to undertake, and the many risks attendant on it.

With all good wishes.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Stella Keen", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Chairman.

Mrs Alice McLean,  
Barclay Hotel,  
Lexington Avenue, New York.

January 22, 1940

Dear Lady Reading:

I was glad to receive your card of greetings for Christmas and the New Year and appreciated your thought of me.

With my thanks and with every good wish to you, I am

Very sincerely yours,

The Dowager Marchioness of Reading  
2 Chesterfield St.  
Mayfair W  
London  
England

100

December 25, 1940

Dear Lady Reading:

It was indeed good of you to write and I was so happy to hear from you. I can well imagine what days you are living through and I never believed that people could have the kind of spirit which the English have developed under this extraordinary test. All I can do is to say that my hat is off to you and that I pray daily you may be successful.

We will welcome you with open arms any time you do come over here.

Cordially yours,

Lady Reading  
Women's Voluntary Services  
41 Tothill St.  
London, S.W.1  
Eng.

WOMEN'S VOLUNTARY SERVICES  
FOR CIVIL DEFENCE

41 TOTHILL STREET  
LONDON  
S.W.1

WHI 7383

12th November, 1940.

SR/MB  
D9/40

Dear Mrs Roosevelt

I know you must have been besieged with letters but I hope by the time you receive this you will be slightly rested after the arduous campaign that has been yours. I do want to send you my congratulations and good wishes. You will be amused to hear that, although I am not a betting woman, I made a lot of money over your victory because I backed the President from the start and every time anyone had any doubt I doubled the stakes!!!

We are having a very energetic time over here, not the least of which is looking ahead sufficiently to prepare in time for the months that are coming. I, personally, am quite convinced that the worst time from our point of view will be these next months when weather makes endurance a harder test than in finer days.

You would be astonished to see London again; everywhere there are traces of the enemy's passage and everywhere that curious thing, improvisation, has come in to help the need. Maybe it is the way the windows are patched up because glass is difficult to get; maybe the manner in which people have started to live on the ground floor and in the basement - quite often the way one sleeps oneself with a table over one's head. It is fantastically ridiculous and we shall be able to look back with laughter when it is all over. What we had all anticipated with doubt has actually come up to the scratch well and essential services are repaired with a rapidity that is quite astonishing. Failure of gas is a serious thing whenever it occurs because people are so dependent on it for cooking that it completely immobilises a household. In order to meet this, we have had to set up communal kitchens as the failure occurs. I wish you could see how funny it is when you go to have your hair washed and the heating system has been disturbed and the hairdresser has to wash your hair with a milk jug full of water, being very careful of it.

We have so often spoken of the spirit of the people but to watch it inspires one with a deep and almost spiritual admiration for an endurance which recognises no personal pain but only national tradition and obligation.

I am still looking forward to my visit to the United States. I was planning to come over when the Home Secretary asked me to start this piece of work and then I picked my sailing dates for last October thinking that the organisation was far enough forward to be left for six weeks; now I am promising myself a visit when the war is over.

Yours ever sincerely  
Stella Keeley

Chairman.

Mrs Franklin D. Roosevelt,  
The White House,  
Washington, D.C.

WOMEN'S VOLUNTARY SERVICES  
FOR CIVIL DEFENCE

41 TOTHILL STREET  
LONDON  
S.W.1

100

SR/MB  
D9/40.

15th January, 1941.

*Dear Mrs Roosevelt*

*Yours*

*LADY STELLA READING*

I am so ashamed not having written to you some time ago to thank you for your letter about Princess Tshai, but I realised that you were so snowed under with every sort of commitment at this particular moment that you would probably be grateful for the lightening of your postbag.

I cannot tell you how happy we all are by the strength which comes to us daily and the support generated from the White House. The need for such stimulation is of course self-evident. The courage shown by both men and women and indeed even the children of this country has been stupendous, for a glance at the map might be dispiriting were it not for the knowledge of the wonderful assistance and support we are getting from you.

The work of my own organisation goes ahead fast. We have of course got an immense amount of work to do. We have 97,000 workers on evacuation services alone and with the heavy blitzing of congested areas, there are day to day problems quite apart from the replacement of thousands killed on the job. The work as you can imagine is tiring and exhausting but the more so, the more wonderful the response. On the other hand the women working are of course always people who have some personal responsibility and the dual call made upon them is a heavy burden to bear. I am staggered from day to day to see the way they respond to the calls made not only on their endurance but on their courage. There is no difference between the young and old and the rich and poor except that the poor have so much more to lose. We are all learning an immense lesson from them and proud to be able to serve shoulder to shoulder with them.

2.

I do wish it were possible to come to America on a visit - that I am afraid will only be possible after this War has been won.

With kindest regards to the President and all good wishes to you both for 1941.

*Yours always,  
Fidel Castro*

Chairman.

Mrs Franklin D. Roosevelt,  
The White House,  
Washington.

*Feb 17.41*

**WOMEN'S VOLUNTARY SERVICES  
FOR CIVIL DEFENCE**

41 TOTHILL STREET  
LONDON  
S.W.1

SR/SN

17th February, 1941.

*Dear Mr. Roosevelt -*

David Bruce is leaving by air on Monday so I am sending this letter by him. I was so sorry it was impossible to see Mr. Hopkins again as I was very anxious to give him additional information on W.V.S. in case you should be interested in it.

..... I am enclosing herewith a note which rather elaborates the information I have already sent over via our Embassy, but if there is anything further that you would like to have I should be only too delighted to supply it immediately. I imagine you would like it sent over in your Embassy bag.

We have found quite definitely there is an immense value in having an all embracing organisation so that voluntary work can contribute continuity of service. In saying this I mean that organisations under the umbrella of W.V.S. can carry out specific tasks in their corporate capacity thus strengthening their own organisation without lessening the contribution they have to make. Our experience has been that there is real difficulty in organisations undertaking to do a specific task every day of the week, but they can very easily undertake to do it one or two or even three days and consequently if they are strengthened by having the responsibility of the other days taken off them, they can do a far better piece of work.

Our real difficulty right through has been the Municipal Authority which is charged with the responsibility of Civil Defence work. This responsibility has meant that a poor Municipal Authority has shelved its obligations to the last moment and has never welcomed co-operation. I very much doubt whether the pattern of W.V.S. could be copied from this angle because of the need to dovetail into whoever is the responsible Authority for Civil Defence work.

I have seen Dr. Martha Elliott and am seeing her again tomorrow and we are endeavouring to show her all the practical work and make her aware of all the difficulties which arise in such practical work, so as to be of real help to her.

I wish it were possible to show you how deeply we value all the wonderful assistance we are getting from the United States and the moral

/strength

- 2 -

strength your belief in us is giving us. Everyone of us, who is a responsible person, realises to the full what our own strain is likely to be. We are all convinced that we shall win. We know that the price may be high and beggars description but we are confident that you will do all you can to help us so that some of us may survive to carry on the tradition for which all of us are ready to die.

*Yours ever sincerely  
Stella Reed*

Chairman.

Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt,  
White House,  
Washington. D.C.

March 17, 1941

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My dear Lady Reading:

I am more than grateful for your letter and very much interested in your memorandum. As soon as something is really done by the women in this country, I will keep you in touch with it and get all the advice I can from you.

Very sincerely yours,

Lady Stelle Reading  
Women's Voluntary Services for Civil Defence  
41 Tothill Street  
London, S.W.1  
England

DD

WOMEN'S VOLUNTARY SERVICES  
FOR CIVIL DEFENCE

41 TOTHILL STREET  
LONDON  
S.W.1.

Air Mail

SR/SN

6th May, 1941.

*Whe*  
*Beatrix Rosswell*

LADY READING

100

I find it difficult to tell you enough how tremendously we are looking to you and to the President at this moment and how deeply thankful and grateful we are for the immense help both moral and physical which is pouring out to us from the United States. It is due to this that the most curious spirit of calm reigns here despite the grave news from Greece and other quarters and the widespread havoc resulting from the serious raids of these last weeks. This spirit is curious in that although the British people have always been able to face up to bad news and grim events it is their natural tendency to grumble and look on the dark side, at any rate in their conversation and comments, but now it is no exaggeration to say that the man in the street has such firm and complete faith in the final outcome and is so stimulated and heartened by news from the United States that he has been able to overcome his time-old prerogative and is cheerful at the same time that he maintains such calmness and courage. This is achieved on such a national scale that the combined effect is very great and remarkable to see and feel. While there are still differences of opinion and freedom of speech is exercised to the full, the discord is usually over minor matters of administration, and I think it must be almost unique for any country to be so completely and voluntarily united. The Prime Minister's speech on Sunday gave very real expression to our feeling here and epitomized our outlook at the present time, especially with regard to the United States and all you are doing.

Your lives must be very full and for months past you must have been working at very full pressure - though I cannot think of the time when you were not doing so - whenever our people tell of cramming things into a day, I try to tell them what you manage to get into the twentyfour hours. It is almost a relief in a way for us to be able to see immediate results from the work we do. I try to concentrate at the same time on laying plans for the future, for all along it has been

/our

our particular strength, in this organisation, that we have been prepared in advance to meet situations as they arise and to train our members to be prepared to meet the difficulties and problems which may eventuate.

There is no doubt that much suffering has been avoided as a result of this, for however willing people may be to undertake work, unless they have some idea ahead of what they are to expect and what assistance they may call on, they cannot act when the time comes as efficiently as they would like to. In towns which have been heavily raided, our Centre Leaders have shown an extraordinary strength and resolution in the execution of their work and have achieved very great success entirely through results of work undertaken by their own initiative and drive. I was very interested the other day when I had the 96 London Centre Leaders to lunch with me in three relays. Looking round the room, I think every type must have been represented and each in her own way was sure of her position and knew she could count on the Local Authority backing her judgement. Some of them were smart and well turned out, others were rather shabby looking and desperately hard working - yet our uniform was a great equalising factor and one was able to assess each Leader at her own value. All of these women have learnt through experience the intricacies of local government administration and has in her own way mastered the difficulties with which she has to deal. At the end of the war there will be a large number of women available and interested who will carry on work in connection with their local government and this will result in greatly improved administration for it is only too well-known that during these past years there have been serious short-comings in this line of country. Not only have they learnt the intricacies of the work entailed, but they have had dealings with people of every type and have had to cope with every kind of personal and municipal problem and difficulty, all of which are, of course, rendered very much more acute as a result of the war. Their eyes have therefore been opened to the interesting but specialised branch of work in this connection too.

I was amused to read in a report that in one town a laundry for evacuated women has been opened in part of the Town Hall; and not only that, but garments may be dried overnight on the radiators! The sanctum of the Mayor and Corporation having been taken by storm in such a fashion, is surely a straw in the wind!

Our particular thanks are due to the American Red Cross for the trust placed in us and the help we have been given which have enabled us to implement so many of the measures which were obviously necessary but which could not otherwise have been carried out.

The latest development in this direction is the opening of yet more

/War

War Nurseries by the generous gift of £70,000 through the Junior Branch. The enormous quantity of clothing and other supplies sent to us stream in regularly and we depend on them in an ever growing degree and know that we shall not be failed. So many other items are covered by the American Red Cross such as mobile canteens, utility-waggon, vans, food stores, such as powdered chocolate, milk, etc. and in fact wherever one looks or in whatever distress one may be it seems there is always some form of gift from the American Red Cross to meet the situation. Other American organisations have been very generous to us, but for the sake of preventing overlapping we are concentrating on centralising our requests through the American Red Cross so that there shall be no wastage of the very precious shipping space available.

Unfortunately our newspapers are so restricted for space that apart from day-to-day war news, there is very little space available for all the reports and comments we should like to read of your activities, but even then I have noticed more and more that all the available columns are devoted to news from the U.S.A. and this is a very real indication of the growing interest of the British public in United States affairs.

We know so well from our own experience the very great difficulties there are in switching industry to a new programme and I think it is true to say that there is heartfelt sympathy among all types for the difficulties in this connection through which you must be passing.

We are all delighted with Mr. and Mrs. Winant - those of us who know them trust them profoundly as well as liking them immensely individually - but the Ambassador's great conquest is the man in the street who has magnetically realised the sincerity and simplicity which are his strengths.

*Young over signing*  
*Stella Reed*  
Chairman.

Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt,  
The White House,  
Washington. D.C.



JUN 18 1947

With the Compliments  
of the Overseas Department.

Copy of letter sent  
ten days ago.

WOMEN'S VOLUNTARY SERVICES  
for CIVIL DEFENCE.  
41, Tothill Street,  
Westminster,  
London, S.W.1.

BR/113

100  
LADY STELLINGMA  
Kearney  
No record  
22 August 1941.  
C. W. B. J.

I am sending you a copy of our booklet "Community Feeding in War Time" which I think you may find interesting. This is the second edition and I think we can claim that it is really comprehensive in that it is based on our practical experience of the last year during which time we have opened communal feeding centres of many different kinds throughout the country and in so doing have come up against every conceivable difficulty and problem. We have taken into account all such questions as food rationing, salvage of waste, economy of gas and fuel and other such factors. In many places centres have been run for some time by women who have had little or no previous experience whereas in others trained workers have given of the best of their knowledge and experience so that we feel every side of the question has been brought into account. It is quite probable that as time goes on and when the air raids return to us with renewed intensity that communal feeding will become part of all of our lives.

I am very much looking forward to seeing Mrs Dwight Davis, Director of the American Red Cross Volunteer Services when she arrives in this country as I hope to be able to show her the full measure of our gratitude over here for the help which we have been receiving so regularly and in such tremendous quantities and for which we find it so difficult

to thank all the generous donors throughout the United States adequately when letter writing is our only means.

This brings you our very best wishes and kindest regards.

*Your sincerely  
Stella Keating*

Chairman.

Mrs F.D. Roosevelt,  
The White House,  
Washington, D.C.  
U.S.A.



With the Compliments  
of the Overseas Department.

Copy of letter sent  
ten days ago.

WOMEN'S VOLUNTARY SERVICES  
for CIVIL DEFENCE.  
41, Tothill Street,  
Westminster,  
London, S.W.1.

Miss Thompson:

I have been held <sup>full</sup>  
for a long time but  
rig has not arrived.  
It may be at bottom of  
ocean —

PFA

Lady Reading's letter sent to Mayor LaGuardia. 8/9/41

August 9, 1941.

100

My dear Lady Reading:

I was more than glad to get your letter. I appreciate so much all that you tell me about your work, and your letters are of great help to the people who are working on our civilian defense here.

I have heard confidentially that you may be coming over here, and I hope of course, if you do come, that you will stay with us.

I saw a statement in the papers that I was going to London. I do not expect to go as there does not seem to be anything useful for me to do, and this is no time to add to the burdens of England unnecessarily.

Very sincerely yours,

VDS

Lady Stelle Reading  
Women's Voluntary Services for Civil Defense  
41 Tothill Street  
London, S. W. 1  
England

WOMEN'S VOLUNTARY SERVICES  
FOR CIVIL DEFENCE

41 TOTHILL STREET  
LONDON  
S.W.1.

AIR MAIL

SR/MMS

17th September, 1941.

*Dear Mr. Roosevelt*

I was delighted to get your letter of August 9th and your very kind invitation to stay with you if I come to the United States. I know I need not tell you how much I should value such a visit but at the moment it is difficult for me to fix anything definite either in regard to a date or plans until we know a little more what is likely to eventuate during the coming months. As you will readily appreciate I should be very loth to absent myself from the country during a period of attack and now that our workers number close on a million there are, of course, many questions which have to be decided which it would be difficult to do without full knowledge of the situation. It is for this reason that I am delaying coming to a conclusion but I must admit whenever I want to enjoy myself I think of and plan a visit to your wonderful country!

We have had many rumours that you are coming over here and I, personally, have always been delighted at the thought. I am very sad to see from your letter that you do not contemplate a visit. I have always said what an immense help it would be to us but on the other hand I have always realised what a toll it would be on you and how extremely difficult it would be for you to leave the United States at this time. I do hope you will let me know if there is anything at all that I can do in the way of sending you information or help in regard to Civil Defence.

We have in this country discovered a very curious situation which is that however much governmental authority works out a framework it is always necessary to have cement to weld together the stones of legislation and fill in the interstices which have been left empty. I believe that is where our organisation has

*to fill in the interstices*

been more use than anything else.

With very kindest regards to yourself and the President.

Yours sincerely,  
Walter Dill Scott

Chairman.

Mrs Franklin D. Roosevelt,  
The White House,  
Washington.



With the Compliments  
of the Overseas Department.

Copy of letter sent  
ten days ago.

WOMEN'S VOLUNTARY SERVICES  
for CIVIL DEFENCE.  
41, Tothill Street,  
Westminster,  
London, S.W.1.

October 7, 1941

100

Dear Lady Reading:

I was so glad to get your letter and while I realize your unwillingness to leave, I should be delighted to welcome you here.

It is pure rumor that I am coming to England - I have never been asked and have no idea of anything I could do except add to your burdens.

I am trying to organize our volunteers over here. The program was not developing very rapidly and after much urging I decided to do what I could. We have an amazing reservoir of volunteers ready and willing. The difficulty has been in organizing the Washington office so it would be able to reach down into the local communities and into our rural areas. I think we are starting.

Very sincerely yours,

MCT/cah

J J  
Lady Stelle Reading  
Women's Voluntary Services for Civil Defense  
41 Tothill Street  
London, S.W.1 England

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

October 4, 1941

Dear Lady Reading:

I was so glad to get your letter and while I realize your unwillingness to leave, I should be delighted to welcome you here.

It is pure rumor that I am coming to England - I have never been asked and have no idea of anything I could do except add to the burdens.

I am trying to organize our volunteers over here. The program was not developing very rapidly and after much urging I decided to do what I could. We have an amazing reservoir of volunteers ready and willing. The difficulty has been in organizing the Washington office so it would be able to react down into the local communities and into our rural areas. I think we are starting. ~~Even our isolationist and apathetic "middle west" is awakening. I think the last speech of Mr. Lindbergh made many people furious because he brought out into the open, his prejudice against Jews.~~

20  
Lambert

Many thanks and all good wishes.

Very sincerely yours,

— Charles Lindbergh

Rec'd  
files

WOMEN'S VOLUNTARY SERVICES  
FOR CIVIL DEFENCE

41 TOTHILL STREET  
LONDON  
ENGLAND.

President: H.M. THE QUEEN

Chairman: The Dowager MARCHIONESS OF READING, D.B.E.

*Autumn*  
23rd October, 1941.

SR/MS

*Bea F. Roosevelt*

*LAST*  
We are always having wonderful gifts sent to us from the United States and words are permanently failing me in my attempts to write and thank for what we are getting. As I sit dictating to you I look out on to ruined houses which were bombed last autumn and I watch balloons being lowered and pushed up from I imagine an exercise point of view.

✓ We have got so accustomed to war and to carrying out duties Civil Defence entail on us, things which a year ago seemed queer now seem so normal we hardly see them, but the one thing to which we cannot accustom ourselves is the wonderful generosity which is always flowing to us from the United States. It is for this reason that I am venturing to send you under separate cover, a rug made out of old stockings and ravelings!!! It does not sound a very nice present but if you have time to look at it I think you will see how ingenious war is making us and how thrifty we have become. This particular rug was made by one of our W.V.S. Centres in Cheshire and I thought it so clever that it is being copied throughout the country and will no doubt soon become a "standard pattern."

The last months have been spent in constant reviewing and tidying up and preparing. No-one has had more than a weeks leave and everyone has been working at full strength in order to be ready to face the next onslaught, and looking back over the last year I think we have moved many years forward not only in preparation of Civil Defence but also in national social services and for this only the individual contribution

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of each citizen can be praised. The country is stolid and  
solid ready to face whatever comes with the assurance that we  
now work not only on an organised basis but as a practised  
team.

I do hope you will like the rug and will not think it  
very foolish of me to send it to you.

Yours ever sincerely  
Felix Frankfurter

Chairman.

Mrs F.D. Roosevelt,  
White House,  
Washington.D.C.  
U.S.A.

WOMEN'S VOLUNTARY SERVICES  
FOR CIVIL DEFENCE

9R/BN

41 TOTHILL STREET  
LONDON  
ENGLAND.

President: H.M. THE QUEEN

Chairman: The Dowager MARCHIONESS OF READING, D.B.E.

29th November, 1941.

100

LADY STELLÉ KE...

DATE

A film has been taken of a variety of the activities of W.V.S. and if there should be an opportunity for you to see it, I do so hope you may have a look at it. We have, of course, not put in it all the major sides of Civil Defence work because they are now so well known, but we do feel that Civil Defence work is absolutely impossible to handle unless all the small ancillary things are also dealt with and this is where a large body of women organised on this basis is so magnificent. The British Library of Information are in possession of the first copy of the film which has been sent over, and they would, of course, love to send it to you for you to look at it if you would care for them to do so. I know what an interest you take in Civil Defence and I believe that you would find in practice the same as we have done, that those who legislate beforehand think of all the big things and ignore the vital importance of food, hot drinks and the incidentals for which no-one calculates. It took me a long time to convince people that in fact men and women working on Civil Defence would need to be fed on the spot and that it would be necessary to make provision for feeding them in spite of the fact that they were working from their own home bases. The problem viewed ahead is always so different from the problem viewed at the moment and my experience of the last three years has taught me increasingly to value all the practical suggestions that women who actually do the work can make in order to carry normality through as far as possible.

I have been having many talks with Mr. Richard Allen

/wha

who is just flying back to Washington and I am quite sure that the American Red Cross is immensely lucky in having him and his wisdom and understanding. He has seen many things and has appraised a great deal of the worth while work which is being done and I do hope you will have an opportunity of discussing matters with him.

Yours very sincerely  
Ethel Reed,  
Chairman.

Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt,  
The White House,  
Washington. D.C.

400

April 6, 1942

Dear Lady Reading:

The booklet for the Housewives' Service is excellent and the Quarterly Report of the London Regional Department is most interesting. I am giving them both to our Office of Civilian Defense, for they contain much useful information for us.

I am always glad to hear from you and to have any reports, for we have much to learn from your experience in England.

With my warm regards and my best wishes, I am

Sincerely yours,

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Sent to Jonathan  
Daniels

The Marchioness of Reading  
Women's Voluntary Services  
41 Tothill Street  
London, Eng.

Lady Reading's letter of May 13, 1942 sent to Jonathan Daniels,  
in the Office of Civilian Defense.

July 2, 1942.

100

Dear Lady Reading:

Thank you so much for your  
interesting letter of May 13th, and  
especially for what you say about the  
boys you met in our camps in Northern  
Ireland.

With my warm regards and my  
best wishes, I am

Sincerely yours,

The Marchioness of Reading  
Women's Voluntary Services  
for Civil Defense  
41 Tothill Street  
London, England.

VDS

September 9, 1942

My dear Mr. Minister:

This is just a note to tell you how much I enjoyed meeting the representative of your country who attended the Student Assembly, held under the auspices of the United States Committee of the International Student Service.

I hope from the reports which you have received that you feel as I do, that this Assembly was worthwhile. The decision to continue its existence, seems to me to point to one of the ways in which we can achieve international understanding and cooperation.

I, as a member of the executive committee of the International Student Service, am very appreciative of your cooperation.

Very sincerely yours,

ELEANOR ROOSEVELT

The Honorable Adrian Recinos  
The Minister of Guatemala  
1614 18th Street

er

WOMEN'S VOLUNTARY SERVICES  
FOR CIVIL DEFENCE

SR/MFW/D101/40.

41 TOTHILL STREET  
LONDON  
ENGLAND.

President: H.M. THE QUEEN

Chairman: The Dowager MARCHIONESS OF READING, D.B.E.

30th November 1942.

*Hyde* *Nina Thompson* - /

Now that you have got back and are just as engulfed as ever in work, but at any rate have got over the flight I hope, I do want to write and tell you how tremendously successful every minute of the trip over here was, and how much we one and all of us enjoyed having Mrs. Roosevelt with us, and how much I personally enjoyed having the opportunity of renewing my acquaintanceship with you and, I hoped, ~~beginning~~ a real friendship. When one works with people one realises to the full the true value of them, and I have noticed so many things ~~that I learnt~~ - so many things of the strength of not doing rather than the strength of doing, which is so much more difficult - that I feel I learnt a great deal during the time I had the pleasure of seeing you.

I do want to thank you so much for returning the books and also for the two bottles of honey which came with it. I do not know whether it was a mistake or not, but I have greedily used them with much satisfaction.

My only regret is that we should have tired you out so much. The weather was certainly unkind, and your cough didn't help you much, but I do hope you have taken back with you to America a real sense of how thrilled we all were to have you, not only those of us who love America, but those who hardly know her, who know of and have conceived an admiration and affection for her, and who certainly held out both hands with all their heart to Mrs. Roosevelt in her trip over here.

There have been a lot of the most enthusiastic messages everywhere. Lots of people telling of how thrilled they were, lots of people telling that the greatest day in their life was

30th November 1942.

the day when they had an opportunity of meeting Mrs. Roosevelt. Quite a lot of people saying they saw her, who never saw her, just to get that additional glamour, that additional thrill! Everywhere there has been the same recognition inasmuch as they have found that when Mrs. Roosevelt asks a question she listens to the answers, then she asks supplementary questions, which showed that she was interested and understood what she was talking about, and was keen to find out the difficulties, the strengths, the weaknesses, the helps and hindrances. That, I think, has been the great and strong impression everywhere. I met nobody who was not deeply impressed with her broadcast, men and women alike, and all the more so when you realise how extraordinarily difficult that broadcast must have been going to two countries as it was. I am quite sure that every moment of her visit over here, however hard it was, has been more than worth while and will help so much in the direction that both of us have so deeply at heart.

Thanksgiving Day has been a great success I think. Two months ago nobody over here knew what Thanksgiving was, but last week everybody was primed with Thanksgiving, and I doubt if there is a turkey left in the country for Christmas - they have all been drawn and cooked for Thanksgiving Day. They were extremely difficult to get, I must admit. I gave a Thanksgiving party to a certain number of Americans over here, and as the turkey came in there was a whisper from the maid, saying: "Don't touch the legs. Such a tough turkey! If you can do anything with the white meat it will be all right, but the black meat just won't stand up to it!" I suppose even wartime turkeys have had indulgences, and that was one of them apparently.

... I am sending you a copy of "Front Line," because I think it is good and I think you may be pleased to have it. Do not trouble to acknowledge it. I am sending it just in case some of the photographs and the information in it may be of interest and of value to you. It has only come out this week and, therefore, will take a little time to get round I imagine. I managed to get an advance copy, which I sent over to Mrs. Roosevelt two or three days ago, and I hope that this reached her quickly.

We should all love to see you here again soon, but do come for a little longer and do come so that we can all see you a little bit, and especially so that I can see you and have a good long talk with you, which I really would enjoy.

Miss Malvina Thompson,  
The White House,  
Washington. D.C.

*Wm. B. Stewart*  
Chairman.

January 11, 1945

Dear Lady Reading:

A group of youngsters working on salvage asked Mrs. Roosevelt to send a book, "George Washington's World" to the British children for them.

It has been sent to you under separate cover.

Very sincerely yours,

Secretary to  
Mrs. Roosevelt

The Marchioness of Reading  
Women's Voluntary Services  
for Civil Defense  
41 Tophill Street  
London, England

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WOMEN'S VOLUNTARY SERVICES  
FOR CIVIL DEFENCE

41 TOTHILL STREET  
LONDON  
ENGLAND.

SR/MFW

President: H.M. THE QUEEN  
Chairman: The Dowager MARCHIONESS OF READING, D.S.E.

Letter No. 1.

9th March 1943.

I do want to thank you for sending "George Washington's World" through to me, and I must confess that I held on to it to read myself before passing it on to a school. It is one of the most delightful books I have ever access for a long time, and I was quite fascinated by it. I am wondering whether there would be the slightest chance of our being able to have 20 or 30 copies more, we would lend them to one school after the other and we could make sure that the largest possible number of children had access to the books, and I do feel it would be tremendously worth while if something of this kind could be arranged.

I felt myself tremendously refreshed after realising all the troubles and difficulties that piled up on every side at that time, and also all the tremendously profound and permanent lines of thought and action that seem to slip in to all the other world activities so unobtrusively yet surely.

I have been receiving many copies of American newspapers lately, which I find intensely interesting, and the more we can follow each other's lines of thought and planning, the more I feel sure our two countries can pull together in unity.

I can well imagine that your already busy life must be over flowing more than usual now, and I only hope that you do find it possible to eliminate some of the activities which crowd in on you, and to spare yourself at least a fraction, although I very much doubt that this is possible.

The reaction of your visit over here is still a very live issue. In all parts of the country that you visited, Mrs. Roosevelt is looked on as almost personal property, any mention

9th March, 1943

of her in the press or on the wireless excites immediate comment of a very possessive kind, and she has left that invaluable feeling that she came over to see each single person individually and entirely on their own merit, or to see their own special bit of work.

Since you were here things have been tightening up steadily but very definitely. The outward veneer of our daily lives seems much the same except in the places where it is broken by sporadic air raids, but all the time more and more men and women are being called up, people are giving longer hours, taking more jobs, carrying more home responsibility and taking their part in the defence of their home localities as well as their ordinary day-to-day occupation.

News from the men serving overseas, in the Air Force, in the Navy as well as the armies in Africa, India and elsewhere, brings the population here at home into close and personal touch with the big military happenings and links up very directly all that they are already doing towards the war effort, with what their sons and husbands are doing too, so there is close unison between the home front and the fronts overseas. This is much more marked now than it has been in any of the preceding years, and linked to it is the determination that there shall be no light-hearted switch over from war to peace, but each individual will still have a responsibility towards the nation and the community, and cannot return to an individualistic mode of life.

The American men over here have now settled down into our lives, and seem to be a good deal more at home. Most of them have had their fill of sight-seeing and are now anxious to be introduced into friendly home circles, so that the offers of hospitality which have poured in from every type of home in the country, are now being taken up more and more. A large number of our workers in the London area have taken on a special job at the request of the American Army, which is the sorting out of kit-bags left in this country by your men who have gone overseas. I understand that they arrive with two kit-bags each, but they only take one with them when they go into the battle area, and those left behind contain a miscellany of bits and garments, some of a purely personal nature and some of a standard Army issue.

We supply a rota of 20-30 women a day who check over the items, return to the Ordnance Department equipment which could be re-issued, check and re-pack all the little personal things which

**WOMEN'S VOLUNTARY SERVICES  
FOR CIVIL DEFENCE**

41 TOTHILL STREET  
LONDON  
ENGLAND.

President: H.M. THE QUEEN

9th March 1943.

Chairman: The Dowager MARCHIONESS OF READING, D.B.E.

have been accumulated, so that they may be returned to the men's families. The women doing this work simply love it and, although it sounds a routine and fairly foolproof job, in actual fact a certain amount of intelligence is needed to determine what things are put in which category, and occasionally they come on something which is only fit for salvage and which must be thrown away. Deciphering the Army numbers and getting the things separated is quite a complicated little job, but they love to feel that they are doing something of such a personal nature for your men, and they have now got to the pitch of thinking that they can determine the character, looks, height, weight and even the colour of each individual's eyes just by checking over the contents of an abandoned kit-bag!

The lengthening days are going to make a tremendous difference to the happiness of your people over here, and indeed to us all. You know how cramping the curtain of the blackout is when it comes down so firmly and immovably each evening. Now that people can begin to get home in daylight after their work and can cook their breakfasts by daylight, and really get a glimpse of the sky before having to knuckle down to their daily jobs, it does make all the difference in the world.

I do hope if you ever come across an instance of when we can help you or send you anything interesting, you will let us know at once, as this seems to be our only means of keeping in touch and expressing our anxiety to build up from strength to strength the relations across the Atlantic.

This brings you my very best wishes,

*Weyman*  
*Stella Reading*

Chairman.

Miss Malvina Thompson,  
The White House,  
Washington, D.C.

Chicago, Ill  
March 23, 1945

Dear Lady Reading:

I read with such interest the account of the canteen and also your letter.

I am happy if my visit still has good results, and I do think I have had some good results over here, as I talk to groups in different parts of the country. I have been mostly talking in the east so far, but at the present moment I am starting for the west coast, doing a few speeches on the way in Chicago, Minneapolis, St. Paul, and on the west coast.

I can well imagine how happy you are that the winter has been mild and that spring is on its way.

Your ingeniousness and imagination in all of your new campaigns interest me very much, particularly the development of the use of part time workers in the factories. I am always interested in every hint you sent of what you have developed and I think these hints are very good when I pass them along.

What your housewives do for our men over there is certainly bearing fruit. I have seen many letters home lately which express great appreciation and understanding of the British people.

I loved your story of the Nebraska soldier and the little girl.

There is some slight talk of my doing some travelling in other directions, so I am afraid it will be some time

before I will see you again in Great Britain. After the war is over you must come to us and have a good rest which you will certainly need.

Very cordially yours,

WOMEN'S VOLUNTARY SERVICES  
FOR CIVIL DEFENCE

SR/MFW

~~4XXIOTMILX STREET~~  
~~LONDON~~  
ENGLAND.

Southease,  
Nr. Lewes.

President: H.M. THE QUEEN

Chairman: The Dowager MARCHIONESS OF READING, D.B.E.

Letter No. 3.

18th June 1943.

*Beatrice Roswell*

Thank you so very much for the perfectly lovely present which I have received from you. I think you know how much we all love getting Maple Sugar, and it always means a great treat for whoever comes to dinner when it is used in the sweet of the evening.

I am glad to say that I am now quite well again, and have been allowed to look forward to going back to work on the 6th July. It seems like a lode star ahead of me, and I could not be more thankful at the prospect of getting into harness once more. I must say, I was extraordinarily appalled when the surgeon told me I should have to give up three months to this little amusement, and I am equally grateful now that the three months are over, and I have weathered them all right and am on the verge of being able to return to the treadmill.

I have been extraordinarily lucky in two things - one the fact that I have had fine weather to convalesce in, and the other the fact that there has been nothing of major importance from our work point of view, and so I have not felt that awful sense of frustration when one is wanting to do a job which one is not allowed to undertake. It has been very curious to lie back and watch life from a completely different angle, and to see things from a point of view of persons in an institutionalised world as against persons who have taken on institutional work because of necessity. Nurses, doctors, surgeons and all the whole gamut of those people, are only looking upon war as a dislocation of their institutional background, whereas people who have had a complete change of their work are looking at it from a very very different point of view, I find.

18th June 1943.

It is interesting talking to everybody like cleaners, lift attendants and so on, and getting their viewpoint on so many subjects, and I feel that although I have been extraordinarily lazy I have learnt a very great deal, which I hope I shall be able to put into effect. The only result as far as I am concerned is, that I am looking so well I'm making all my friends very jealous, and I am making all my colleagues rather apprehensive, because they are being told that I am getting so much renewed energy that I shall be a great nuisance to them!

The air is full of thrill and excitement at the turn that world affairs are taking, and naturally we can hardly bear to wait until news comes through on each successive day. In the meantime I have been watching with great care the question of how good a harvest I'm going to have of apples and pears, and doing all those things which I have left undone for the last five years. It has been a real thrill to be able to go round one's garden, to watch the continuity of effects in the things one has planted, and to try out new vegetables and new things even though one was not allowed to do much of the work. I am trying to grow my own peppers this year, which I think is perhaps an act of optimism, but nevertheless one which is rather fun.

I do wish we had your visit to look forward to this year instead of to look back on now, and I do hope that you are very well although I know it would be very foolish to try and hope that you are not leading too strenuous a life.

With very kindest regards,

*Your ever sincerely  
Stella Reed*

Mrs. F. D. Roosevelt,  
The White House,  
Washington, D.C.

Chairman.

July 21, 1945

Dear Lady Reading:

I am delighted to know that you are well again and I can easily imagine how the enforced idleness irked you.

The war news is heartening at this moment, although the many casualties will cause many a heartache. What a blessed day it will be when hostilities cease! I know we have a tough job ahead in the post-war period, but the killing will be over.

I have just been on a trip to the West Coast, to spend some time with my daughter, who is running her house, three children, and her job on the paper. Her husband is somewhere overseas. She is so gallant and so cheerful and efficient about it all, my hat is off to her.

We have had, as you probably read, a most reactionary Congress. They have abolished and curtailed so much of the domestic policy we have been building up over the last ten years. I am particularly sorry about the National Youth Administration, because I felt we were started on a program of real education, whereby able young people could go to college and not be penalized by lack of money. It was doing a good job in vocational teaching, which has never been well done here.

The Farm Security program, which helped over a million farm families to rehabilitate themselves, has been curtailed.

Reading  
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The members are back in their homes now and I hope their constituents will let them know how they feel. The anti-strike bill is bad, I think, but, fortunately, it is only for the duration.

It is much harder here to ration food because of the distribution difficulties and the effect of pressure groups on Congress. By and large, the people are accepting rationing without complaint, but when they have ration points and money and can not buy food they do not understand.

The time has gone so rapidly it does not seem possible that a year ago we were whispering about plans to visit Great Britain.

Every time I read of a raid over Great Britain my heart aches for your people who have been so courageous for so long.

Please take care of yourself and do not try to do too much. You will be needed more and more for the future.

Affectionately,

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The Dowager Marchioness of Reading  
Women's Voluntary Services for Civil Defense  
Southease  
Nr. Lewes  
England

LADY READING

WOMEN'S VOLUNTARY SERVICES  
FOR CIVIL DEFENCE

SR/MFW

41 TOTHILL STREET  
LONDON  
ENGLAND.

Autred

AUG 25 Rec'd

Letter No. 5.

President: H.M. THE QUEEN

Chairman: The Dowager MARCHIONESS OF READING, D.B.E.

16th August 1943.

*Neely Roosevelt*

I got your letter about Miss Fleeson and saw her on Wednesday, and completely lost my heart to her - she really is a delightful person, and one with such a broad vision and such a receptive mind, that it is a delight even to have a conversation with her.

We had a good long conversation on general principles, and I suggested to her one or two lines of country which have not been covered at all by any correspondent, as far as I know, and which might be of real interest to American women readers.

Miss Fleeson is finishing an article first on a particular subject very close to the hearts of all Americans, and as soon as she has completed that she is coming back to me, so that we can give her every sort of help to do the other articles which she thinks would interest her.

She told me she is getting a small flat and will make her headquarters in London, although she wants to travel round the country a good deal and to travel in the most sensible of all ways - staying in the homes of people of small estate, so that she can get to know the real people of the country and not be taken in by the veneer, the very poor veneer, of the Dorchester, the Ritz and the other big hotels. If she is able to complete the programme she is thinking of at the moment, I believe she will make a most wonderful contribution in what she will be able to write, and I am full of thrill at the thought of collaborating with her in whatever way it may be, and I know I need not assure you that we will do everything that is possible in every single way to help her.

16th August 1943.

I do hope you are well, although I know it to be very foolish even to think that I might hope that you have had any sort of a vacation this year.

With very kindest regards,

Yours very sincerely  
Stella Meade,

Chairman.

Mrs. F. D. Roosevelt,  
The White House,  
Washington, D.C.

September 28, 1943

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Dear Lady Reading:

I have your two letters, which were awaiting my return. I am sending you a copy of the letter which I wrote to Lady Linlithgow.

I enjoyed my trip to Australia and New Zealand. The women there meet their obligations, but are not, of course, doing as many things as the women of Great Britain are doing, because the opportunities do not seem to be the same.

I had a chance to see many of our men in the Southwest Pacific and it is unbelievable what these men have accomplished.

My best wishes to you.

Sincerely yours,

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The Dowager Marchioness of Reading, D.B.E.  
41 Tothill Street  
London, England

WOMEN'S VOLUNTARY SERVICES  
FOR CIVIL DEFENCE

SR/LG

41 TOTHILL STREET  
LONDON  
ENGLAND.

Letter No 6.

14th September 1943.

President: H.M. THE QUEEN

Chairman: The Dowager MARCHIONESS OF READING, D.B.E.

Confidential

*Neel M. Roosevelt -*

*Private Document*

I was so delighted to get your letter and to hear something of you. It was more than interesting and I can realise so deeply how you must feel about the bills to which you have given so much attention, and the programmes to which you have really devoted such a great portion of your life.

I suppose it is always very difficult to see things in the perspective of history and to recognise that these very things have happened so often before to reformers and to the protagonists of new and virile ideas. Nevertheless it is no less discouraging to know that other people have gone that way before, and that the path which was blazed has been grown over once again.

Sometimes I want to tear the hair of the people who are such dreadful obstructionists, and so often I wonder how much is stupidity and how much is gainful wickedness from a completely selfish and disgusting point of view. I am afraid I have very little patience with that type of person, and feel that I should like to see retribution descend upon their heads at once so that the nicer people would not suffer. It seems so cruel that in order to frame a great measure or carry through a great reform, so many people must suffer in order to convince the public of the necessity for that measure.

Every single day of my life I seem to feel that those great philosophers who wrote the Bible were far wiser than anyone has ever realised, and "Eyes have they and see not" seems such a true way of describing it.

From my own point of view, one of the things I am very anxious about is to see that this wealth of goodwill that has been engendered

*Private Journal*

in the war, and the sense of responsibility realised by each individual in the part they have played in the war, should be continued right through, and that the same devotion should be given to the community in peace time as is given in war time. In that way without an additional strain on the budget, the standard of living should be so heightened that each person should be able to enjoy their lives to that extent more. The simple things are so difficult to get and so very necessary to life itself, that they can only be got by the volume of goodwill which will only be engendered if each individual really plays their part.

Since last I wrote to you I have had a letter from Lady Linlithgow telling me she has written to you, and enclosing a copy of her letter to you. I hate to have to put into words what I feel, but I do think it is only fair to say to you that this is a most un-thought out and a most uninformed demand she has made on you, and I personally am more than sad that she should have been so thoughtless as to write in that way. I can only explain that she obviously knows nothing either of the make-up of your legislation or your national institutions, and that what she has done she has done in fullness of heart and not with any ulterior and mischievous motive. I think one of the contributive parts was that Begum Shah Nawaz, who is well known as a superficial lady, got back from America to India stating that the A.W.V.S. was in every way the same in America as it is in Great Britain, and that is where the trouble began. When I read a resolution passed by the Indian W.V.S. I immediately wrote to Lady Linlithgow and explained to her the position of the A.W.V.S., and this letter of hers is a result of my information. I very much deprecate the whole thing, and I hope, if it is possible, that you will merely acknowledge the letter and do nothing more. I have discussed the matter with Lady Wavell, who is, as you know, Lady Linlithgow's successor, who is a person of deep thought and who entirely agrees with me and who knows I am writing to you, and who I think would appreciate it if you were to acknowledge the letter and do no more. She herself sees in what a very difficult position Lady Linlithgow has put you, and she would help to close the incident and to see that a proper record of how things have happened was kept on the book.

For those of us who have lived long years in India, this is just one more sign of how things happen there. It is just a little misinterpretation, and little out of alignment and a little

*ever yours  
Lady Linlithgow*

Private Personal

- - 3 -

14th September 1943.

throwing out of gear of each part that makes the whole, and that is what has made a British woman in high position, who has been out there for seven years, able to focus so falsely and to mistake her own position to such an extent.

I could not write as frankly as this to you about one of my own countrywomen were it not for the great affection and respect in which I hold you, and I know you will take my letter in the spirit in which it is meant. I am asking the Ambassador to send it through his bag because I naturally do not want it to go through the British Censor who would certainly misunderstand part of it, and who might in consequence make a good deal of difficulty about it. But I thought I would like to let you know exactly what the position is so as to leave no shadow of doubt at all.

Yours affectionately  
Stella Reed

Chairman.

Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt,  
The White House,  
Washington, D.C.

January 12, 1944

Dear Lady Reading:

I am delighted to have the calendar and your note of good wishes, which both my husband and I appreciate.

You did not say how you are feeling. I hope you are not doing too much.

The war picture looks more hopeful, although I shudder every time either Mr. Churchill or my husband warns of the probable cost in men before final victory.

The next several months will be difficult here because of the election, and everything one does will be open to attack. My trip to the Southwest Pacific gave the opposition much material! However, I shall continue to do what I honestly think is right and hope for the best.

My best wishes to you.

Affectionately,

The Dowager Marchioness of Reading, D.B.E.  
Women's Voluntary Services  
41 Tothill Street  
London, England

WOMEN'S VOLUNTARY SERVICES  
FOR CIVIL DEFENCE

41 TOTHILL STREET  
LONDON  
ENGLAND.

SR/MFW

President: H.M. THE QUEEN

Chairman: The Dowager MARCHIONESS OF READING, D.B.E.

Letter No. 8.

17th December 1943.

*he  
didn't  
come?*

I do hope you will accept this calendar with my  
very best wishes to you and the President, for a Happy  
Christmas and prosperous New Year, in which your hopes and  
plans may be brought to fruition.

DUPLICATE

*Yours ever sincerely  
Stella Reading*

Chairman.

Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt,  
The White House,  
Washington, D.C.

WOMEN'S VOLUNTARY SERVICES  
FOR CIVIL DEFENCE

41 TOTHILL STREET  
LONDON  
ENGLAND.

SR/MFW

Letter No. 8.

President: H.M. THE QUEEN

Chairman: The Dowager MARCHIONESS OF READING, D.B.E.

17th December 1943.

*Dear Mrs. Roosevelt*

I do hope you will accept this calendar with my very best wishes to you and the President, for a Happy Christmas and prosperous New Year, in which your hopes and plans may be brought to fruition.

*Yours very sincerely  
Stella Reading*

Chairman.

Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt,  
The White House,  
Washington, D.C.

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January 13, 1944.

My dear Lady Reading:

It was more than kind of you to think of me and I am delighted to have the calendar with your picture.

I shall always remember my trip to Great Britain even though I would have much preferred it under different conditions. Your kindness and the many opportunities to be with you and observe your efficiency and ability will always be the high spots.

I was chagrined at not being allowed to go to Australia and New Zealand, etc. It was a tough trip and perhaps I would have fallen by the wayside as Mrs. Roosevelt feared. I had an attack of Shingles after the British trip and was laid up for a week and Mrs. Roosevelt seems to feel since then that I am "delicate". The doctor explained it was a neglected sore throat, but that did not convince Mrs. Roosevelt. In addition, she feared criticism if she used space for two. The critical ones did not need that additional material.

My best wishes to you and all of those who were so kind to me in your organization, for the New Year.

With admiration and affection,

The Dowager Marchioness  
of Reading. D. B. E.  
41 Tothill Street  
London England.

VDS

WOMEN'S VOLUNTARY SERVICES  
FOR CIVIL DEFENCE

41 TOTHILL STREET  
LONDON  
ENGLAND.

SR/MFW

*asb*  
*11/13/44*

Letter No. 2.

President: H.M. THE QUEEN

Chairman: The Dowager MARCHIONESS OF READING, D.B.E.

17th December 1943.

*Dear Mrs Thompson*

This brings you my very best wishes and every hope  
that it will serve to some degree as a reminder of your  
visit over here just over a year ago.

With every possible good wish for the New Year,

*Yours affectionately*  
*Stella Reading*

Chairman.

Miss Malvina Thompson,  
The White House,  
Washington, D.C.

FEB 21 REC'D  
WOMEN'S VOLUNTARY SERVICES  
FOR CIVIL DEFENCE

SR/MPW  
ask  
2/26/44

41 TOTHILL STREET  
LONDON  
ENGLAND.

Letter No. 90

President: H.M. THE QUEEN

Chairman: The Dowager MARCHIONESS OF READING, D.B.E.

25th January 1944.

Becky Roosevelt

I am so very grateful to you for letting me see a copy of your letter to Lady Linlithgow, and I feel sure that this will make it very much easier for Lady Wavell to direct the future policy of the Indian W.V.S. on clear lines. I do feel so apologetic for troubling you in this matter.

Lady Wavell is very clear-headed and I think will be able to direct the thing extraordinarily tidily. Already repercussions have arisen which show the wisdom of trying to keep the thing within the boundaries of India and tidy, and I think it will solve itself with not too much trouble.

I think you will be interested to hear something of the reactions in this country to the very large numbers of American forces, which have been arriving over here lately. We felt rather worried that the local schemes for offering hospitality and so on were perhaps not forthcoming enough and were not making themselves known to your responsible officers, with the result that in some cases many of your men had no idea that arrangements could be made for them to receive individual hospitality in British homes. We have now launched a British Welcome Scheme, which aims to supplement all that the American Red Cross is providing so magnificently. In the areas where there are no American Red Cross clubs, it is hoped that British Restaurants, or other suitable premises, can be opened in the evenings so that the local girls may invite their friends there for a snack, a game and perhaps a dance. You know how acute the whole question of accommodation becomes under the conditions in which we are living today, and this is really the biggest factor that we have to overcome in running any such programme. By breaking each area down to the smallest possible unit, we hope to succeed a great deal more than we have done up to date and to make it possible for selected Americans to meet selected British people so that they may each grow to have a real appreciation of the

25th January 1944.

other and a better understanding will naturally follow of each others country and ways.

The trouble here, as I gather everywhere, was that a lot of the wrong type of girls got hold of the men. They come forward in a very cheerful energetic way, and the men naturally don't realise the type of girls they are, and in consequence a lot of ill feeling has arisen both by the local inhabitants and the men themselves. Now on the selective basis, I hope a great deal of the past troubles will be overcome. I think the real mistake was to imagine originally that anything of this sort could be directed centrally. It obviously must be done on a local basis with local understanding of the problem and of the people concerned, and I am much happier now that the thing has been broken down to a very small unit on an extremely parochial and local basis.

Up till now the number of your troops over here has been more easily absorbed into whatever arrangements were already on foot in the different localities, but with this new influx it is no longer so, and I feel it is very important indeed that there should be absolutely no room for misunderstanding to arise. We have met with the most helpful understanding from General Devers, his staff and the officers of the Special Services, and we really do hope to achieve the kind of scheme one would like to see running to get the very best of the enormous opportunities there are offered by the presence of so many of your citizens here among us.

In East Anglia experiments are being run on different lines. We have filled up some hampers with a selection of different games and these are sent round to isolated villages, together with a gramophone and some records, so that even those out of the way places may have a chance of providing some kind of entertainment, and by interchange of the hampers it will be possible to maintain a variety. Clubs are also being started of which girls in the neighbourhood may become members, so that we can scrutinise the type who are being hostesses, and they can bring in their friends, both British and American, and in this way have an opportunity of getting to know each other.

✓ We have very much welcomed the appointment of Mrs, Sloan Colt as Deputy Commissioner of the American Red Cross over here. She has an extraordinary gift for making friends and showing a depth

25th January 1944.

of understanding of our difficulties and problems, and she is very much beloved by all who have worked with her. It is the greatest possible pleasure to be able to 'let our back hair down' completely in talking over questions that arise, and we are able to do this with her without the slightest fear of any difficulty being misinterpreted.

The work of the American Red Cross over here is being carried out admirably. Watching how their programme has expanded with such rapidity, it is astounding to see how they have developed the capacity for dealing with the situation at the very same time as the situation is there to be dealt with on the spot. It seems a long time ago since you had five representatives over here doing all the work that there was then to be done.

I followed your journey to New Zealand and Australia with very great interest, and a good deal of envy for, although I know how tiring such a trip must be, it must have been tremendously interesting to see the problems going on the other side of the world as well.

We are still dealing with endless problems here, shortage of man-power and the pressure of work have been the keynotes of our lives for so long now, that we have grown quite accustomed to them. People are quite astounding in the way they are prepared all the time to do just a little bit extra to their day's work, and in this way by sharing it round amongst everybody, we are able to get through the programme we are set. With all this we have concentrated a great deal on re-training our members who are responsible for operational duties within the Civil Defence, and during the last raids there have been, I have been very impressed at the automatic way in which they have assumed duties of a very responsible kind in complete co-operation with the rest of the Civil Defence General Services at high level. We have a difficult balance to maintain - on the one hand man-power is required urgently and immediately, and on the other hand we have had proof only too often of the absolute necessity of keeping a top notch pitch of preparation against air attack, and it is

25th January 1944.

working out that only by women assuming bigger responsibilities than they have done up to date, can we meet the situation.

It is interesting to see how people have accommodated themselves to the very great burden of work. I suppose it is rather the same thing as food rationing, it has come on gradually and, therefore, the body has been able to accommodate itself, but in spite of all my very great optimism I am always marvelling at the way that women are taking additional burdens and carrying through with them, and not breaking down physically too often. Usually when they break down they really do die, because the strain has been very heavy and they haven't let up. But on the whole, taking it quite objectively, I think everyone feels that doesn't matter so long as the job is done. We hope there may be some slight lightening in the programme of the country so as to release the type of woman who is a charwoman and who can do some of the heavy scrubbing work not only on institutional bases, but for domestic homes. I am afraid that on a long term if that type of help is not available, we shall be using much too good material to do the chores which really should be done by persons who have not got the intelligence or the ability to do more skilled work. The situation seems to be solving itself a bit, we have two or three rather interesting national governmental committees sitting to deal with it, and through representation on them one is able to watch very closely and try and put some of the evidence we have got throughout the country to national advantage.

I do wish there were some possibility of being able to talk things over with you again, but I am afraid this is rather wishing for the moon at the moment!

*With all best wishes  
Yours ever sincerely  
Stella Reed*

Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt,  
The White House,  
Washington, D.C.

Chairman.

Re

February 28, 1944.

Dear Lady Reading:

I was delighted as always to get your letter and I am deeply impressed by the amount you all do over there for the avalanche of soldiers. I passed on to the Red Cross what you said about Mrs. Sloan Colt. I know they will be pleased.

I am soon starting on a trip to our military installations in the Caribbean with some diplomatic visits on the side. There is so much criticism of my trips, I considered carefully before agreeing to go, but the military people tell me it is important because these men are not in danger and find life dull. This year the criticism will be worse than ever but I imagine I will weather it.

I think of you very often and, very confidentially, it is not too impossible that you may see me again before too long.

Affectionately,

The Dowager  
Marchioness of Reading, D.B.E.  
Women's Voluntary Services for Civil Defense  
41 Tenthill Street  
London, England.

VDS

March 3, 1944

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Dear Lady/Reading:

I am giving this note of introduction to Mr. Jay Krans who is going to be in England as assistant to the Deputy Administrator of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration.

I shall appreciate anything you can do to help him in his work and to make his stay pleasant.

Affectionately,

WOMEN'S VOLUNTARY SERVICES  
FOR CIVIL DEFENCE

D9/40.  
SR/MFW

41 TOTHILL STREET  
LONDON  
ENGLAND.

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*6/3/44*

President: H.M. THE QUEEN

Chairman: The Dowager MARCHIONESS OF READING, D.B.E.

Letter No. 10.

11th April 1944.

PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL.

*Frank Roosevelt*

It was delightful to get a letter from you dated the 28th February, and I was so pleased to hear that you are well and starting on another trip. I suppose you never stop starting on trips, and the only relief is coming back from them! I must say, I should very much like to feel that I should see you myself before too long, and that is something to look forward to.

We have been having a very energetic time as a certain amount of raiding has started again, and, of course, we have a very heavy programme indeed. The programme in itself is an interesting one, because it is being carried out by a very much older age group, and one which is bearing a strain which might, a few years ago, have been considered quite impossible to take. They are not only taking it, but adapting themselves to it so well that I feel the result will be a strengthening of character and a very useful contribution to community welfare in a shape of participation in local government on a post-war basis, and that in itself will be the most extraordinarily valuable contribution to national character and national resilience that can be. It is so curious to think that in the same way as our greatest export in the past was an unseen export in the shape of banking and insurance, our greatest result of the work of these last five years will be a completely unseen and intangible one, which, nevertheless, will be a very valuable one by strengthening the community and, therefore, the life of the nation on a local basis and also creating a background for the return of the men and women from the forces. I feel here that they will be a very useful eliminator of age differences. The people who have faced all sorts of trouble at home have got a certain poise which is going to be very valuable indeed, and I am constantly watching

11th April 1944.

men and women on leave who help during a bad raid, ~~gaining~~ <sup>gaining</sup> a new respect and looking in a new way at their older relations who are tackling an operational as well as an administrative job, and tackling it without very much fuss or very much excitement.

We have just had the award of official chevrons for W.V.S. Like so many things which are run on a voluntary basis and which are entirely ~~optional~~ <sup>optional</sup>, I had a very great fight to achieve it, the argument being that I could neither prove contract nor discipline in a body of women of so great a size. I had to prepare a very careful document on this, and was able to show that each one of our members signed an undertaking which is absolutely binding, and that I have had 17,000 persons refuse to join W.V.S. because they would not sign an undertaking which they did not feel they could implement. When we came to the question of discipline, I was able to show my interlocutor that in fact we had dismissed three of his own friends, quite apart from many others, and that could show that there was discipline because we got rid of them owing to the fact that they were not fulfilling the pledge they had undertaken. On that we have been awarded the war chevron for all people doing straight ancillary Civil Defence work, and for the people who are doing the other work we are issuing our own W.V.S. chevron. This has an interesting repercussion, I think, on a long-term basis, and I am very glad to have won the battle, although I personally do not attach any too much importance to the chevron.

At the moment our greatest contribution towards conservation of raw materials is the clothing and shoe exchanges, and the Board of Trade is at the moment thrilled that we have opened our 500th, as this means a great saving of children's clothes and also helps the mother unbelievably to eke out her coupons and, therefore, to conserve raw material in a way that otherwise might not be possible. The Board of Trade, to help us, in the first place offered up to £30 a year if we needed it to open the places, in fact out of 500 only 49 have availed themselves of this offer, which shows that the initiative of the local woman can overcome all sorts of difficulties, and that with a bit of ingenuity she can conquer the obstacles put in her way and the difficulties which always seem so insurmountable until you really attack them.

- 3 -

11th April 1944.

I do hope you are well and not too busy and not too worried. We, who believe so much in the President and in you, watch with the utmost interest each stage of this very difficult time, and realise what a strain of mind and body you must be going through during the preliminary days. You have, as you know, our affectionate thoughts and good wishes with you the whole time.

Affectionately yours  
Ethel M. ...

Chairman.

Mrs. F. D. Roosevelt,  
The White House,  
Washington, D.C.

June 3, 1944.

My dear Lady Readings:

It was nice to have news of you from some of your friends who came to see me lately and also to have your letter of April 11th.

I liked your tribute to old people so much that I used it in my column and I think it has pleased older people here and perhaps spurred them on to do a little more work themselves.

The question of chevrons is one that is going to be argued over here in various ways so I was interested in what you had accomplished.

Your description of how you are conserving materials, I used in a speech at a luncheon of our AWVS who are just beginning to establish places where materials and old clothes can be made over by various processes as conservation of our materials.

My husband is very well again and all goes well with us. I hope you do not think I was too flippant about Mr. Churchill's attitude toward Spain when I said that he thought that way for sixty years and was not going to change now. I was really quoting what he said himself to his wife at his own table when there was a discussion of the attitude of Great Britain, France and ourselves toward the Spanish situation before the war. I think of course, he has been a magnificent war leader but I am afraid that some of the things that we have to face in the future will not be easy for him

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to face. I imagine many of you who love him and admire him and are grateful to him for his leadership realize that this is so. None of us knows what the future holds but I think daily with anxiety and hope for our joint forces for the greatest effort and our prayers in this country will be with them and with all of you when the day comes for action.

Affectionately,

The Dowager Marchioness  
of Reading, D.B.E.  
41 Tothill Street  
London, England.

VDS

Reading:

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Affec.

June 5, 1944

Dear Lady Reading:

I am giving this letter of introduction to Mrs. Elizabeth May Craig, a Washington newspaper woman whom I have known for a long time. She is going to Great Britain in connection with her work and, as there may be occasions when she would need advice or assistance, I am sending her to you.

You will enjoy meeting Mrs. Craig, I feel sure, and I shall be deeply grateful for anything you can do for her.

With all good wishes, I am

Sincerely yours,

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The Dowager Marchioness of Reading, D.B.E.  
41 Tophill St.  
London

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August 24, 1944

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Dear Lady Reading:

I was so glad to get your letter of July 25th. I think of you constantly and of the added horror of the robot bombs. It seems almost too much to bear. One of our newspaper women, Doris Fleeson, who is now home, gave us a description of how extraordinarily well the W.V.S. had worked through this robot bombing.

We are about to go through the attacks and counter-attacks of a national campaign. I am accused of all sorts of dire motives because I believe in a year of service for both boys and girls. We as a people still like to think we are chivalrous, and yet in some states little girls work in factories and fields with little chance of schooling.

We have been so fortunate during this war, we have no conception of what girls in Great Britain have had to do.

I personally would like to get out of the public eye, but if the majority of the voters want the President to continue in office, my personal wishes do not count.

The possibility of any trip is entirely off, so I am sorry I can't look forward to seeing you very soon.

Affectionately,

The Dowager Marchioness of Reading, D.B.E.  
W.V.S.  
41 Tophill Street  
London, England

**WOMEN'S VOLUNTARY SERVICES  
FOR CIVIL DEFENCE**

41 TOTHILL STREET  
LONDON  
ENGLAND.

SR/MEW

President: H.M. THE QUEEN  
Chairman: The Dowager MARCHIONESS OF READING, D.B.E.

Letter No. 11

25th July 1944.

*Dear Mrs. Roosevelt*

*Read by  
Mrs. Roosevelt  
at the  
W.V.S. meeting  
at the  
Royal Albert Hall  
on 25th July 1944*

Thank you so very much for your letter of the 3rd June, which took a long time to reach me, and only arrived three days ago. It is quite unbelievable how sometimes letters seem to be here in no while at all, and at other times they seem to roam half round the world before they reach us. In any event, it was very exciting to get it and I was delighted to have it.

Since it was written our doodle-bug season has started, and it is a much more annoying little amusement than might be believed unless one has to deal with it. It is not, of course, that it is frightening, but it does make a mess, and a mess at this time in the war is a nuisance. W.V.S. has naturally been very busy on dealing with all these things, and one of the most interesting things of all is the way the Incident Inquiry Point is manned, and the solace it brings to people who have been affected. It is called an I.I.P. and is set up on the spot - literally on the spot - where the trouble occurs. Usually the I.I.P. is set up within a quarter of an hour of the incident occurring, and therefore it is in a place where the mortar is all over and where people are covered in dust by reason of the 'plume' - as the dust cloud is called - which rises as the bomb has fallen. The Incident Inquiry Point is the focal point where all information is collected and from which all enquiries are answered. That is to say, immediately lists are made both of wounded, dead, as they are known through the mortuaries or hospitals, people who have been sent to rest centres or people in the first aid posts, suffering from shock, and so on and so forth. And as men rush home from their work, or come home in the evening from work, as mothers come back from their shopping to find out what has happened to their children, the answer is given to them from the Incident Inquiry Point, and instead of a lot of rumours being given, actual facts are verified and the

WOMEN'S VOLUNTARY SERVICES  
FOR CIVIL DEFENCE

41 TOTHILL STREET  
LONDON  
ENGLAND.

SR/MFW

President: H.M. THE QUEEN  
Chairman: The Dowager MARCHIONESS OF READING, D.B.E.

Letter No. 11

25th July 1944.

*Beatrix Roosevelt*

*Read by  
Cecil Gray  
Fanny of the  
Cathartes  
Lovers of the  
Dowager*

Thank you so very much for your letter of the 3rd June, which took a long time to reach me, and only arrived three days ago. It is quite unbelievable how sometimes letters seem to be here in no while at all, and at other times they seem to roam half round the world before they reach us. In any event, it was very exciting to get it and I was delighted to have it.

Since it was written our doodle-bug season has started, and it is a much more annoying little amusement than might be believed unless one has to deal with it. It is not, of course, that it is frightening, but it does make a mess, and a mess at this time in the war is a nuisance. W.V.S. has naturally been very busy on dealing with all these things, and one of the most interesting things of all is the way the Incident Inquiry Point is manned, and the solace it brings to people who have been affected. It is called an I.I.P. and is set up on the spot - literally on the spot - where the trouble occurs. Usually the I.I.P. is set up within a quarter of an hour of the incident occurring, and therefore it is in a place where the mortar is all over and where people are covered in dust by reason of the 'plume' - as the dust cloud is called - which rises as the bomb has fallen. The Incident Inquiry Point is the focal point where all information is collected and from which all enquiries are answered. That is to say, immediately lists are made both of wounded, dead, as they are known through the mortuaries or hospitals, people who have been sent to rest centres or people in the first aid posts, suffering from shock, and so on and so forth. And as men rush home from their work, or come home in the evening from work, as mothers come back from their shopping to find out what has happened to their children, the answer is given to them from the Incident Inquiry Point, and instead of a lot of rumours being given, actual facts are verified and the

28th July 1944.

answer is given on the spot, and in that way people are helped by knowing the truth straight off and not getting a lot of garbled accounts, which is usually ~~general in what goes under~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~the~~ ~~of~~ ~~somebody~~ ~~else~~ ~~saw~~. Of course there is every sort and kind of pathetic little occurrence, and always there is every sort of confusion when everyone wants to know where their animals are, what they should do about their valuables, how they should move their furniture, and all the ten thousand silly little things that mean so much to the actual participant and are so difficult to disentangle.

There is the usual crop of stories, of course, in regard to doodle-bugs. I must say I think almost the funniest was one that happened to me - I got into my office very early one day and the charwoman hadn't finished cleaning, and I said to her in a cheerful way "Well Mrs. Pain, what do you think of the doodle-bug?" She looked at me quite solemnly and said "I don't care for them much, there is nothing individual about them like the old bombs, is there?" I must say, personally I should think there was a great deal of individuality about them, but the mere fact that people can see them coming and see where they go, and take cover in time, seems to make them less of a 'personal contribution' to their mind as far as I can make out.

The doodle-bugs have been the most wonderful introducer of the American G.I. to the British populace. The G.I. has been quite splendid in the way he has rushed forward to try and help, disenthomb victims and do all that is possible on the spot, and again and again one finds them working feverishly and with so much real interest and understanding. They have, of course, themselves participated in the trouble, and I think that it has drawn both your people and ours very close together to share the same trouble, the same apprehension and, above all, the same jokes.

The evacuation took place very carefully and tidily, and it is extraordinary how the second time anything is done, having flustered everyone the first time, there is really no fluster or dislocation. I must say, I was endlessly proud of the way N.V.S. played their part, and the way they worked day and night to get things going on easy methods, so that there should be no dislocation and no difficulties the other end. As you know, our people

25th July 1944.

do a great part of the billeting and a tremendous lot of the welfare in reception areas, and this has meant a very great deal of hard work, preparation, actual work and now, of course, the follow-up work.

We have had a good few casualties because naturally our people are working on the job and cannot afford to take time to look after themselves the whole time, and to pay too much attention to warnings. But I was rather touched when I heard that two old ladies had been killed in a clothing depot, whose friends all said "Well of course, that is the sort of death they would have chosen." I thought it was rather sweet that women, who are well over 65, are anxious, if they have to die, to die on duty rather than pleasantly and comfortably in bed.

I do wish there were a chance of seeing you again and of talking over so many things. It seems a very long time since your visit here. I expect you are dreadfully busy with the election and everything else, and that you never have time to draw breath. I do wish there were a chance of your getting a rest sometime and of spending that rest over here.

I would like to thank you very much indeed for all your kindness to Kathleen Halpin. She cannot say enough for all you did for her, and all the time you gave her, all your kindness in allowing her to come not only to the White House, but also to Hyde Park. I never realised that you could spare as much time as that to her, and I can assure you it made a very deep impression on her and helped her in many many more ways than you can possibly believe.

With very many thanks,

Mrs. F.D. Roosevelt,  
The White House,  
Washington, D.C.

Weyman's affectionately  
Ethel Reed,  
Chairman.

November 16, 1944

100

Dear Lady Reading:

You were more than kind to cable and both my husband and I deeply appreciate your thought.

I was glad to have a talk with Mr. Winant, who spoke of you with such affection and who told me you often spoke of me.

The account of your flying bombs has been very painful, for I realize this last terrible attack must be almost more than your people can bear. You will never know how much I admire the way the British people and each one of you as individuals, are facing horrible conditions from year to year of war with constantly increasing dangers. I realize how hard this winter is going to be and if I did not have such faith in your ability to meet it, I should be more worried than I am.

The campaign is over and the election has left me with a feeling that my husband could do nothing else but run. But I must say I envision the problems of the next few years with no great joy. They seem to me such appallingly difficult ones, but courage comes with the need and I only hope that we will all be equal to whatever we are called upon to do.

I still hope to see you before too long. In the meantime, my very best wishes to you.

Affectionately,

The Dowager Marchioness of Reading  
41 Tophill St.  
London, England

0

TELEGRAM

The White House  
Washington

11K54/10

LONDON, W 21, 1538, Nov. 9, 1944

MRS ELEANOR ROOSEVELT:

VERY HEARTIEST CONGRATULATIONS AND ALL THE BEST OF GOOD WISHES  
TO YOU BOTH.

STELLA READING.

230PM/10TH

10/10/44  
SR/MFW 100  
4.7.44  
WOMEN'S VOLUNTARY SERVICES  
FOR CIVIL DEFENCE

41 TOTHILL STREET  
LONDON  
ENGLAND.

NOV 4 1944

Letter No. 12.

President: H.M. THE QUEEN

Chairman: The Dowager MARCHIONESS OF READING, G.B.E.

10th October 1944.

Dear Mrs Roosevelt

I was so delighted to get your letter of August 24th. It took a long time to reach me, but was nevertheless very welcome indeed.

We are so happy because the attack from fly-bombs is dying down and the amount we get now is so slight that there is no real need to worry, but it has been horrible, and I for one have disliked it more than almost anything we have had. It has seemed so inevitable and so immensely destructive of all that human nature has built up in niceness and understanding, and the tragedy of seeing the small homes that have taken a whole life-time to build, gone just in a second, gone without any chance of ever being replaced, is something so heartbreaking that it beggars description.

I feel so much for you in all the burden of a great national campaign. It must be a very very heavy time, and one which must be a strain, not only physically, but in every other way, and I do hope so much that you will have the strength to meet it in every way and that you may be spared as much as possible in it. I know there is not very much that you can be spared in it, and I know equally that with your indomitable strength of mind and belief, you will want to take what comes in that way, but those of us who admire you so much wish you might be spared some of the blows and some of the burdens which are inevitably yours. We naturally watch with the greatest interest from this side, and as the time shortens we listen with anxiety to every bit of news we can get. I wonder if ever you realise how much everybody in this country listens to the Friday night commentaries? They have become so much an institution that every single person turns into them. I am rather sorry they have been put as late as half past ten recently, as that rather narrows down the

10th October 1944.

number of people who will listen, but even so people will stay up again and again in order to hear what there is to say.

The atmosphere in this country has changed very considerably. People are feeling so much happier now that the danger to their families and to their homes is lightened, and at the same time people are realising that the strain, even if it must go on for a time, has an end, and an end within a question of months, not years. We are realising that it means a great burden on us in the way of re-homing people, which is going to be a colossal task, for the evacuees who will have to be brought home, places will have to be found for those who have lost their homes to live in, and that is going to be the most difficult and the most heartbreaking of all things, and then there will be the everlasting readjustment which will take time, patience, ingenuity and understanding as well as compassion and sympathy. By and large, I think that the discipline that so many people have had to endure, whether they wished to or not, will have strengthened their characters and made a better thing of their lives, but I think there will be many adjustments where people have been transplanted into a soil which has, perhaps, been too rich or too heavy or too restricting for them, and those readjustments are always the things that Governments cannot plan for and the people do not foresee in their entirety.

We are watching this winter with apprehension. The amount of work that will have to be done, and the amount of pain that has been caused by the robot bombing, and the consequent dislocation of living space, is going to mean a very severe test for everyone. We realise that very fully and are trying to prepare accordingly. We also feel the conservation programme, whether of raw material or of material that can be transformed, make-do and mend, fuel conservation, salvage, and all the other things, are going to be of intense importance, and we are concentrating on those as hard as ever we can go.

This letter brings you my very very best good wishes, and every hope that all those things which you would wish will come to pass, so that you can feel the fulfilment of all the hard work you have done all through your life. I do wish you knew how many of us think of you and of the work you have done, and

10th October 1944.

of the lead you have shown us, and how truly we admire not only the strong and purposeful way in which you have pursued the things you thought right, but the complete ignoring of self that you have shown in that, which is the greatest sign of patriotism and all it means.

Yours ever affectionately  
Sulle Medley

Chairman.

Mrs. F. D. Roosevelt,  
The White House,  
Washington.

100  
December 2, 1944.

My dear Lady Reading:

Mrs. Roosevelt asks me to send you the enclosed check for \$5.00 which was sent to her by Mrs. Elaine K. Chapin, Box 028, Ketchum, Idaho, whose ten year old daughter Doris Marie, collected it for the "Shell Out Fund" for milk for the children of England.

Mrs. Roosevelt feels you will know the proper destination for this money and will appreciate it so much if you will be good enough to see that it reaches there.

With every good wish, I am

Affectionately,

The Dowager Marchioness  
of Reading, D.B.E.  
41 Tothill Street  
London, England.

VDS

December 2, 1944.

My dear Mrs. Chapin:

Mrs. Roosevelt has asked me to thank you so much for your letter and the check for \$5.00 which was collected by your young daughter for the "Shell Out Fund". She thinks it fine what Doris Marie has done and congratulates her. Mrs. Roosevelt is sending the check to The Dowager Marchioness of Reading, who is Chairman of the Women's Voluntary Services for Civil Defense in London, England, who Mrs. Roosevelt is sure will see that it reaches the proper organization.

Mrs. Roosevelt deeply appreciates the kindness of you and your husband in offering to send her pictures of the Navy's Rehabilitation Program at Sun Valley, Idaho, and will be delighted to have them.

Very sincerely yours,

Secretary to  
Mrs. Roosevelt.

Mrs. Elaine K. Chapin  
Box 028  
Ketchum, Idaho.

VDS

# Challenger Inn

SUN VALLEY, IDAHO

Box 028  
Ketchum, Idaho  
November 15, 1944.

Mrs. F. D. Roosevelt  
White House  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

Many times I have asked myself why do people bother you with all of their personal problems both major and minor but I believe I now have the answer. You are the only one who really takes and interest in all of these problems. Thanks to your kind consideration to all of those who have imposed on you in the past I am taking the liberty of sending a small check to you in the hope that you will see that it is forwarded to the proper source.

This money was obtained through the hard earned efforts of my ten year old daughter for the Halloween "Shell Out Fund" for milk for the children in England. One week prior to Halloween I heard an announcement over the radio to the effect that the children of America were foregoing the usual "Tricks and Treat" custom on Halloween and in its place were collecting money for milk for the children of England by saying "Shell Out" at each home and asking for a dime donation for this worthy cause. I spoke to Doris Marie about it and she thought it a splendid idea and I suggested she ask about it at school. The result being that the only child in town who observed "Shell Out" was Doris Marie. She handed me the money informing me that she knew I would send it in for her. I have tried from every possible source in this part of the country to locate someone who might enlighten me on this subject but to date no one seems to have ever heard about "Shell Out". Of course I could have suggested to Doris Marie that she contribute the money to the Red Cross but it would not have been fair to her nor would it have been fair to those who contributed. I will greatly appreciate your assistance in finding the proper channel for this money and in the future I assure you I shall not be guilty of such a mistake but will have the full particulars before I make such a suggestion.

My husband is Ellis L. Chapin the photographer for Sun Valley in peace time as well as during this emergency. He has been making pictures of the Navy's Rehabilitation Program at this world famous peace time resort here in Sun Valley. Knowing how interested you have been in the facilities and the care of our boys in the service I thought you might enjoy having some pictures of the Program here in Sun Valley. If you should like to have these pictures both my husband and I will be very glad to send them to you.

Thank you very much for your kindness and if you should desire the pictures please let us know. Before closing I must say how very happy I am that Mr. Roosevelt will continue as President of the United States.

Sincerely,

*Ellis L. Chapin*

*Red Cross + Shell Out Fund  
A Lady's Reading*

*Shell Out Fund*

*Check  
B.S.  
200-3415*

*ack  
12/2/44  
NOV 29 1944*

100  
December 14, 1944.

Dear Lady Reading:

It was more than kind of you to write about the election. I am glad there is to be no change because of the aspect of our international relations and I am quite sure that my husband can do the work required but I certainly hope that the war will be over and peace well on its way before another four years are over.

With many thanks for your letter and for the calendar which you sent me and with every good wish, I am

Affectionately,

Lady Reading

The Dowager Marchioness  
of Reading, D.B.M.  
Women's Voluntary Services  
for Civil Defense  
41 Tophill Street  
London, England.

V 3

Reading:

It was more than kind of you to write about the election. I am glad there is to be no change because of the aspect of our international relations and I am quite sure that my husband can do the work required but I certainly hope that the war ~~will be over~~ will be over and peace well on its way before another four years are over.

With many thanks for your letter and for the calendar which you sent me, and every good wish,

affec.

e.r.

WOMEN'S VOLUNTARY SERVICES  
FOR CIVIL DEFENCE

41 TOTHILL STREET  
LONDON  
ENGLAND.

2-4  
12/14/44

President: H.M. THE QUEEN

Chairman: The Dowager MARCHIONESS OF READING, D.B.E.

LETTER NO.13

SR/MJ

14th November, 1944.

Dear Mr Roosevelt

I do want to write and tell you how delighted we all are at the election of the President. We have sat with bated breath wondering, waiting and yet quite certain in ourselves that it would come to pass. I know that for you, you must be very worried at the extra strain and the extra burden, but to us who believe so much in his understanding and in his great wisdom culled from so much experience, we should have felt it very, very hard and very, very worrying, if a change had been made at this moment - we have relied so much on his judgment and on his knowledge of the psychology of individuals and nations, and I for one, have always felt that it was the sound knowledge of his which has helped so much, not only in your affairs but in our affairs, again and again. It is very difficult to sit by and not say a single word when you are longing for a thing and to watch without making any outward visible sign of your inward and very forceful feelings, but I think it's quite fair to be allowed to say how much we rejoice in his election, and how truly we wish you every single possible good wish in the way of success in every undertaking, and happiness and health in the years ahead.

I know you must have hundreds and thousands of letters and this at any rate, is one that does not need answering, /but

Mrs. F. D. Roosevelt,  
The White House,  
Washington, D.C., U.S.A.

Mrs. F. D. Roosevelt

14th November, 1944.

but I could not bring myself to forbear from writing to you because I do so want you to know that your English friends are sending you every possible good wish, spoken and unspoken, for strength to undertake what must be a colossal burden, in the years ahead, and the great fulfilment of all that you and we so truly believe in.

Ever affectionately yours  
Felix Frankfurter

Chairman

WOMEN'S VOLUNTARY SERVICES  
FOR CIVIL DEFENCE

41 TOTHILL STREET  
LONDON  
S.W.1.

190

ED/AM - D9/40

3rd January 1945

Dear Miss Thompson,

Lady Reading is away in India at the moment so I am writing to thank you for your enclosure of five dollars, sent by Mrs. Elaine Chapin for the children of England. I am writing an acknowledgment to Mrs. Chapin for her kindness in sending us this gift.

Yours sincerely,  
*Headmaster*

Head of Empire and Foreign Department.

Miss Malvina Thompson,  
The White House,  
Washington.

February 26, 1945.

100

Dear Lady Reading:

I was glad to get your letter and I would be so interested to sit down with you and hear about India.

I can well imagine what a breaking time you are having with rehousing re-equipping the bombed out families. I do not know how human beings stand so much.

The casualties of the present fighting are appalling and weigh heavily on all of us, though most of us say prayers of thanks every night that we have been spared what you have gone through.

The results of the Yalta conference were well received here on the whole and there is great interest in the coming conference at San Francisco. There is an encouraging and increasing interest in world affairs which we are all working hard to nurture.

With best wishes, I am

Affectionately,

The Dowager Marchioness of Reading  
Women's Voluntary Services for Civil Defence  
41 Tophill Street  
London, England.

VDS

WOMEN'S VOLUNTARY SERVICES  
FOR CIVIL DEFENCE

41 TOTHILL STREET  
LONDON  
ENGLAND.

President: H.M. THE QUEEN

Chairman: The Dowager MARCHIONESS OF READING, D.B.E.

*Handwritten: 1/24/45*  
*Handwritten: 2/24/45*  
LETTER NO. 14

SR/MJ  
D.9/40

30th January, 1945.

*Handwritten: Mrs. Roosevelt -*

I was so delighted to find your letter of November 16th when I arrived back from India, and to get news of you direct. It is always such a very real pleasure and one which I personally enjoy more than you would ever believe.

I had a most interesting visit to India, and found how greatly it is impossible to make either the people there know what is happening here, or our people here know what is happening there. I'm sure that is everlastingly the same difficulty with your men overseas. The hardships at a distance, and especially the distance in a country where there are very few European women, have to be overcome, and, therefore, we have agreed to send out WVS members to the forward areas of the SEAC Command on a separate basis to anything that has ever been done before. These members will be accredited to the Commander-in-Chief and will follow behind the Army, so that there will always be a certain number of people to direct the activities of the various welfare work that has to be done. In fact, very much what your Army has always done but what our people have not done up to date, and I hope it will be very successful.

I had a very interesting trip. I was, alas, only in India three weeks but it was a delightful three weeks and I visited a great number of people and saw a great deal and was able to bring back a bird's eye view of the whole situation. We have in consequence, arranged to lend them key members of WVS to  
/WVS(India)

Mrs. F. D. Roosevelt,  
The White House,  
Washington, U.S.A.

Mrs. F. D. Roosevelt

- 2 -

30.1.45.

WVS (India) to try and stimulate both their recruitment and co-ordinate the effort there is locally so that there should be a pool of volunteers instead of each undertaking canalizing their own volunteers and not using them to the common advantage.

I was immensely impressed to see to what an extent absence from this country makes one see the work that has been done in a perspective which is valuable from an appraising point of view, and although I worked frightfully hard the whole time I was away, I really do feel as if I have had a most lovely holiday of several weeks duration. I have come back with a difficult proposition because, of course, we have got a very hard winter here with every sort and kind of complication and yet we want to denude ourselves of our very best people in order to make this new job go well, and it isn't because we want the job to go well but because we know the men require the help to such a huge extent. I am very struck by the fact that the people here, although they are very worried and although they know how hard it is to get anything of the sort done, have agreed to take an even heavier responsibility in order to release other people to go out.

Last Monday I went down to see a very nasty incident in one part of London and I was talking to some of the old people who looked derelict beyond words, they were crowded round a tiny fire, it was very cold with very heavy frost and snow outdoors, their homes had been smashed by one of these lovely V's and they really were in poor shape. I thought I'd cheer them up and so I said to them I had just come back from India and "do you know there are lots of eggs there? I saw one man who had had so many eggs in two hours I don't know how he ate them." One old lady looked at me and she said "Eggs, eggs - I call eggs old fashioned." It really does augur well for a woman who has nothing, who perhaps has not seen an egg for three months, to be able to call eggs old-fashioned, and I marvelled at her courage!

/We

Mrs. F. D. Roosevelt

- 3 -

30.1.45.

We are working very hard on a rehoming programme and have so far had more than 100 railway containers of furniture and gifts brought up from the country. We are appealing to every single area in the country that hasn't been bombed this last year, to contribute something to the people who have lost their homes and who find it impossible to set up new homes, because even if you have the money the things aren't in the shops. The scheme is working extraordinarily well, with great generosity, and we are finding that people are not giving their second and third best but their really good stuff, which I think is a grand sign of understanding but, of course, the whole thing is heart-breaking and very, very heavy work indeed.

I do hope I shall see you at no too too distant a date

With love  
Affectionately yours  
Lilla Meek

Chairman

copy

WOMEN'S VOLUNTARY SERVICES

FOR CIVIL DEFENCE

41 TOTHILL STREET

LONDON

S.W.I.

3-5-45

My dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

I hesitate to trouble you with even one extra letter but the Lord of Courts Council have asked me to approach you and say (unofficially) how deeply they would appreciate the honor of entertaining the President or yourself when you come to England -- As you know they are the foremost in municipal authority of the United Kingdom and fulfil a rather special function in the make up of our administration in which the Nation of central legislation puts loyalty on the shoulders of local government. I do hope you will keep this upright in mind if you possibly can.

I have just embarked on a tour of Scotland recruiting workers for work in Burma and it is quite an energetic undertaking.

With all my best wishes

Ever yours affectionately

(signed) Lady Reading

4/11/45

WOMEN'S VOLUNTARY SERVICES  
FOR CIVIL DEFENCE

41 TOTHILL STREET  
LONDON  
S.W.1

S. 111. 45.

WHI 7383

My dear Mr. Roosevelt -  
I do hope it etc to trouble you with  
even one extra letter but the  
Local Civil Defence Council have  
asked me to approach you &  
say (unofficially) how deeply  
they would appreciate the  
honour of entertaining the  
President & family when  
you come to England - As  
you know they are the  
most distinguished authority.

of the United Kingdom is published  
with special permission in the  
interests of our administrative  
work in which the information  
relative to actual legislation  
falls largely on the shoulders  
of local government - I do  
hope you will keep this  
request in mind if you  
possibly can.

I have just embarked on  
a tour of South America,  
whenever you read in Buenos  
Aires it is quite an exception  
with all the best wishes  
Ever yours affectionately  
Stella Keeble,

156

March 20, 1945

Dear Lady Reading:

I am giving this letter of introduction to Miss Mary Hornaday, who is going to Europe for the Christian Science Monitor.

I have known Miss Hornaday for a long time. I will appreciate anything you can do to help her.

Very sincerely yours,

*Lady Reading*  
The Dowager Marchioness of Reading  
London

O/h

March 22, 1945.

Dear Lady Reading:

Thank you for the photographs showing the work being done by the W.V.S. I found them very interesting and appreciate so much your sending them to me.

With every good wish, I am

Affectionately,

*Lady Reading*  
The Dowager Marchioness of Reading  
Women's Voluntary Services for Civil Defense  
41 Tothill Street  
London, England.

VDS

WOMEN'S VOLUNTARY SERVICES  
FOR CIVIL DEFENCE

41 TOTHILL STREET  
LONDON  
ENGLAND.

*ack*  
*3/22/45*

President: H.M. THE QUEEN

Chairman: The Dowager MARCHIONESS OF READING, G.B.E.

LETTER NO.15

SR/MJ

24th February, 1945.

*Herbert Roosevelt*

*Thank you*

I am sending you out under separate cover,  
a set of photographs showing the work of WVS,  
which is being produced by the Ministry of  
Information.

I know how interested you are in the work  
undertaken by women, and I think you may be interested  
to see some of the activities WVS undertake, a number  
of which will I know, be familiar to you from your  
own visit here.

With all best good wishes.

*Very yours affectionately*  
*Elizabeth Reading*

Chairman

Mrs. F. D. Roosevelt,  
The White House,  
Washington D.C.,  
U.S.A.