

Princess Sayre looks at newspaper. A.I.

Wayside, Bellevue Avenue,
Newport R.I.

Bear Friends,

July 7 1943

We appreciated so much your news and all the interesting things you wrote. Please excuse the way I write but there must be something in the air, I have never felt so lazy, tired, or stupid- we both feel worn out - even in the morning after a long sleep we never feel refreshed or active. We have been so often on seacoasts so it can't be the sea - maybe the dampness and the atmosphere the people generate. Or the artificial, unreal emanation of a bad imitation that has lost all touch with nature and forgotten the real pleasures of life.

We went to a party the other evening and the dullness of mind of the bejewelled widows was depressing. All of their palatial residences are surrounded by comparatively small gardens with huge iron railings that destroy any happy, active atmosphere. The millionaires who built them had the competitive spirit of Louis the Fourteenth and so on. Everything is overloaded excepting the Breakers which has real taste and my friend Gladys Szechenyi is the one real sunshine in the place. The rest of the place is a combination of old women whose flatterers or husbands were lucky enough to make money and leave them in these hideous cages like chattering parrots. I do not ~~xxxx~~ think I have ever heard one of them laugh a natural hearty laugh. They are so much concerned with their social importance- which is fading rapidly and falling apart like a cheaply built box - that they cannot indulge in the freedom of enjoyment.

Even the best theatres are stuffy, stale and close. I like real people and space. This is a conglomeration of cast off things with no space to breathe in. They regulate their breaths lest their reputations collapse - and poor things they do not see that if they did no one who amounted to anything would be looking. It makes us very sad, for here is a class with money which they could use for good purposes and to enjoy themselves but they live in an unhappy coma. They live like very little people busy all their lives in trying to keep up appearances, artificial appearances. Their lives are limited and tainted with snobbery.

We must all face facts and realize that the tidal wave sweeping over the world will swallow everything and everybody unfit to survive, and in its rage will carry down some who deserve to float. This is the wave that has grown and gathered strength since it leapt up in the French Revolution. It menaces the traditional foundations upon which we have built our civilization in Europe, and none of the world is immune from its affects. While the world is turning upside down these people here, with their really vast powers, remain idle, and choose to avert their eyes. No one knows where the social revolution will fetch up for a pause.

The slogan of everyone here is that we shall all be poor after this war, which of course is rot. These who have no solidity will certainly be poor because they contemplate their own silly grandeur and see nothing else. They do not see that the bolsheviks have not drawn in their weapons, that there is upon the world now, the great world where many have for the first time a gleam of sufficiency of food and clothing and anodynes for pains

a great hope or dream of universal equality. We know that will not be achieved all at once, if ever as long as man lives on this planet, though ~~we~~ have the enduring hope. ~~There~~ We have seen all that goes before such uprooting go on in Europe and it makes us sad to see it happen here among the rich. It began in Europe before the bolsheviki came to power. It has been forestalled here and there, but with all its horrors, its devastation it has cleaned out many unhappy shoals and is not done its work of waste and cleansing.

Money is power and once the money is gone and these people are flung on the street into a hostile mob at an age when practical sense and elbow power are lacking, there is not much to puzzle about the result.

We personally have been through so much and seen our life crash down and everything we possessed and all our hopes and occupations swept away, trampled upon and destroyed, yet we are not afraid of the future for within us we find an outlet to happiness in our love of beauty, our thoughts, and congenial friends. Even so the times we are living in affect one's nerves and one's resistance, and we are not young.

This is the first place we have been to in America that reminds us of the Europe we knew before the curtain fell. I may be too pessimistic, I may be all wrong, but I think these are the reasons we are so tired here and so depressed. I think if we were living in a camp in a beautiful wood and lovely scenery we would get back our energy. And forget the past, which is the best thing to do. We cannot recover by regret nor act of memory our destroyed homes and our wasted estates.

To change the subject only slightly and to do a little complaining ourselves, we are losing our imported help tomorrow and must try to cope with living in this great ragged house on our own. Cooking in this big kitchen without adequate screens and plenty of mosquitoes will not be much of an easy task.

We very much want to come back to Florida this autumn and see you both and the baby. I only hope we can take the car. If we could only find a comfortable house for that is half one's life. How shall I tackle this problem. If you can please advise me. It must be nice in Virginia in the dreamy peace of such a setting. We send our best wishes to Mrs Shepard for the happy day to come.

With all best wishes and greetings from us all

Sincerely,


Mathilde Sapieha

22 July
1943

I wonder what you think about it all -

The death of Sikorsky was very tragic -

We have found a Polish help for the summer - she had twelve children but we are glad we found somebody - so that I can relax a bit! -

Do you ever hear about the Butts? I never do -

How is dear Mrs. Norton?

Do please write us soon as we are anxious to have your news & how Mrs. Shepard is - Please give her our very best wishes & greetings & lots for yourself from yours & sincerely
Mabelta Lapieba

" Wayside " Bellevue Avenue

NEWPORT
RHODE ISLAND

July 9th
1943

Dear friends,

I am so ashamed for not writing, but we were so busy & had no time to do anything, but pack & unpack & try & get settled - very many thanks for your most interesting letter. We enjoy so much always all you write & your wonderful style & ideas - First I want to wish you both much much happiness for the coming event. Do let me know how Mrs. Shepard is & when your Baby will arrive - You must be thrilled about it & so happy -

Where will you be this coming winter? We may come to Florida if we possibly can as we dread the cold long winter. I don't know how conditions are there - I mean rents or food question. Here we can't get any meat nor rarely a chicken - I wish we had a farm as we would be more independent. Are the prices going up in Florida - What would Palm Beach be like? The house we are in is very big here - but nearly all the rooms are empty & we occupy just a few - All the houses here are big & slowly falling apart - The big millionaires are more or more worried because of taxes

or if it goes on like this in a few years it will be all closed or like a cemetery - The upkeep is too expensive - We work in the afternoons in a lovely vegetable garden which belongs to Countess Bebelitz who is a very good friend of ours - Where ever there is space she grows vegetables but there is such limited help that we do the weeding & enjoy garden work very much. The climate is very cool or no idea of bathing - much too cold - no pleasure driving or so we can't move much except to try & find something to eat - Since you have written the war has brought many events

Wayside Aug. 19
Bellevue Avenue 1943

We decide — I
do hope we shall
see you both &
the Baby in Dayton.
We envy you as
four peaceful plans
shall write ^{when}
when I have time
to breath. — Plus
is to work you
food break
our best greetings
Matilda & Joseph

Dear friends
Very many thanks
for very interesting
letters — We are es-
pecially now thinking
of you both as the
great event ^{is} approaching
& we wish you both
all the luck in
the world — It is
wonderfull really,

to have a baby
which will not
see the horrors
we live through
& will see better
times ahead —

We are now all
so tired out as
we have no help
& this terrible house
to cope with alone —

I got such a nice
letter from Geraldine
Morton & she put
me in touch with
an agent in P. S. ^{Sea}
I wrote Miss Morton
that perhaps we
could find a small
bungalow for a
short time in Sea
Breeze — so that we
have some where
to go too before