



[Ruth Cutler and family papers.](#)

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OUR WORK

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No. 1

The Officers and Board of Directors of the United Charities extend to all members and friends of the organization, cordial wishes for a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

THE CHALLENGE OF 1919.

When Nature in the dying hours of the old year covered everything with her shroud of snowy white, she performed a sacred rite, an act symbolical. She hid over night the wreck and ruin left in the wake of the last years' wars and conflicts, and at the same time issued a challenge to those who have vision and thought for the future to build anew on a foundation of spotless purity.

Probably not since the beginning of civilization, certainly not since the birth of Christ has any year held such possibilities for good or evil, as the year we have just begun. The agreement men will reach and the articles they will write in Versailles in 1919 will decide the welfare of the whole world for centuries to come.

The policies of reconstruction adopted this year here in the United States will, to a great extent, decide whether or not the nation and its individual citizens are about to embark on a period of sound growth and prosperity. What is true of the nation at large is also true of the city of St. Paul and its citizens.

The attitude of society towards its unfortunate members, the recognizing or ignoring of its responsibilities for the rational care of the needy will play a large part in determining the weal or woe of society as a whole. No man can ignore with impunity a just debt; neither can society hope to escape disaster except by discharging fully its obligations to those who for any reason whatsoever, are unable to help themselves. A wrong attitude always dangerous in the past, spells disaster at this time.

There is one force of evil that has survived and has even been strengthened by the war. Autocracy is gone; thrones have tottered and fallen, crowns are popular only with the dental profession; but Bolshevism is with us, a menace real, not fancied.

Bolshevism is a fungus growth of poverty. When men's stomachs are empty, their heads soon become filled with its destructive doctrines. At such a time the agents of Bolshevism find prime subjects for their pernicious work.

Albert Atwood, in a current number of one of our national weeklies shows how Bolshevism became rampant in a certain part of Texas, where it had not rained for three years and where in consequence, the settlers were poverty stricken. Oil was discovered in that district and every trace of Bolshevism disappeared by magic.

Now oil—or gold—cannot always be found to serve as a cure for poverty; nor is this necessary. The one thing needed is organized, systematic effort to strike at the root of poverty, to strike fearlessly and effectively, whether it be in the social system or in the individual needy family. Such effort will find quick response on the part of those who must be served and wherever it is put forth with sufficient strength and sincerity, Bolshevism will find no home.

Moreover we must get away from the philosophy of David Harum "that a reasonable amount of fleas is good

for a dog;" that a reasonable amount of privation are good for the poor; and that we have done our full duty when we have kept them from starving.

If it is true poverty makes for sullen and violent discontent which may swell into a great wave of social unrest, bringing in its wake disrupted business, closed shops, unemployment and lawlessness—and one glance at Russia will convince you that this is so—then the danger is apparent, that this poverty may clutch even you in your comfortable home and make you one of its very own.

No charitable organization can be content to be a mere supply house for food and hand-me-downs and satisfied to merely keep the poor alive in their poverty. As responsible citizens of a great democracy we must realize, that by banding ourselves together into an organization—such as is the United Charities—and jointly fighting poverty, we are doing our plain duty and are only attempting to remove the powder kegs, which a spark from the firebrand of a conscienceless Bolshevik agitator may ignite at any moment.

The New Year's challenge then to us is to continue and strengthen to the utmost the organized, uncompromising fight against poverty. We have accepted it.

HER SERVICE STAR GLEAMS GOLDEN NOW.

From over the seas comes the word that another of St. Paul's heroes has made the supreme sacrifice for the cause of liberty and justice. This time it is Ruth Cutler, daughter of E. H. Cutler, who was called to pay the price of devotion. She died from pneumonia, in Paris, two days before Christmas.

Since the day war was declared, her supreme desire was to serve her country on the battlefields of France.

Her chance came last November when she joined the Vassar Unit of the American Red Cross. Her death after only a few weeks of service was a sad but withal fitting close to a life devoted to the service of her fellow men.

For some years she filled the position as Assistant General Secretary of the United Charities with marked ability and devotion. Not only did she put into effect the present system of district offices, but many a needy family—without ever suspecting the identity of the kind donor—received aid out of her personal funds. Such was her quiet custom and those who were privileged to know her, valued her all the more highly for it. Her life and her death shall be an enobling example to us all.

The Board of Directors and Officers of the United Charities extend to her bereaved family their sincerest sympathy.

January 5 1919
Presidents Hill
Quincy, Mass.

Dear Cousin Edward;

I learned yesterday that you too, have been called on to undergo the same shock that came to us a few weeks ago:

That the brave daughter -ready to devote her life and strength to aid her fellow men - the victims of this cruel war - was suddenly called to her Heavenly Father's home to help them "over there". I think you must feel as I do that God has noble and useful work for all these brave, bright, young, vigorous souls who have gone to Him in countless throngs and they will help in making Heaven more of a home for our generation who will sooner be ready to follow them.

My son Hobart lived but half an hour after the shell burst in his dugout in the horrible devastation of the Argonne and I am assured he knew no earthly suffering. He wrote me a long, long letter describing his situation on Sunday evening Oct. 6 and the U was the

fatal day for him. The closing words were"
"Remember this is what I am here for - and
rejoice that at least once, I have been of some
use to our Uncle" - and they were probably
the last words he ever wrote. That was the
spirit in which all these brave young people
"crossed the stream". They leave our homes
desolate, but all is well with them.

This needs no reply - I know so well
what it is to try and respond to the
sympathy we have received.

My love to Amelia whom I remember very
pleasantly in her school days,

Affectionately your far away
cousin,
Nelly Lawton

The more I see of the work here the more I realize how wonderfully Ruth would have done it. It takes the very best we have to give and her best was so very fine and she gave it so readily. I like to think of her in her uniform for her whole life has been one of the most unselfish and devoted service I have ever known. She never thought of herself---never considered her own comfort; never knew her own worth. She was always such a brave, keen, honest spirit, so awake in her interests, so sound in her thinking, and so absolutely sincere in all her relations---there are few who can be so crystal clear and so beautiful. Here she would have found a tremendous need for all her gifts; she was a born nurse and knew so well how to soothe and how to cheer; and she was so ready and versatile with her hands, so thorough and systematic in her executive work---and how she would have loved it!

WINTHROP S. G. NOYES,
404 SIBLEY STREET,
SAINT PAUL.

Dec. 28.

My dear Mr. Cutler

Dwight told me you had gone, so I did not come down to see you. Later Dwight returned to say that you were still in the office & I hurried down, but then you had really gone. I had a talk with Will, but what can one say to you, to Will, to Amelia, to all Ruth's family, of such an unexpected and heart-breaking outcome of her devoted service to her country, and to those who needed her help. She was always

So full of purpose in her life,
and of such fine purpose, such
a strong spirit of service, the
strength of a man with the gentle-
ness & attractiveness of a woman.
I feel that a rare spirit
has gone from us, & slightly as
I knew Ruth I always admired
her, and genuinely feel the shock
of this sad news. We all feel
deeply for you. I never heard
more sincere expressions of sympathy
than from our men, both house
& salesman. It grieves us all
that such a sorrow sh^d come to
you & that such a lovely & noble
life sh^d end. Sincerely Yours
M. H.

Sonnet in
memory of RC
written by
friend
Margaret Tabor

To Ruth

Dec. 23rd

They tell me you are gone, — far, far away,
— The winter winds sweep seaward, and the night
Seems very dark, and without stars or light, —
They tell me you are gone, — that never May
Nor April with her gleams of spring, can bring
You back — — Through blinding thoughts I grope
Bewildered, with a broken sense of hope
Unrealized, voices hushed that were about to sing.

But soon as dawn creeps up the morning sky,
And early flowers win through the yielding ground,
— The murmur of trees filling the fragrant air, —
So through this silent, singless hour, I
Hear a sudden whir of wings, a sound
Of voices, and oh, then, the vision, unaware!

520 GRAND AVENUE
SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA

Dear Amelia,

When I left you the other
day, everything remained
unsaid. I could not seem to
speak. Inadequate as it is,
this little sonnet may tell you
something of what I failed
to say.

With my love,

Maycent

January 21, 1919.

To Ruth -
Dec. 23d.

They tell me you are gone, — far, far away,
— The winter winds sweep seaward, and the night
Seems very dark, and without stars or light, —
They tell me you are gone, — that never May
Nor April with her gleam of Spring, can bring
You back - - Through hindering thoughts I grope
Bewildered, with a broken sense of hope
Unrealized, voices hushed that were about to sing.
But even as dawn creeps up the morning sky,
And early flowers wind through the yielding grass,
— The murmur of trees filling the fragrant air, —
So through this silent, songless hour, I
Hear a sudden whir of wings, a sound
Of voices, and oh, then, the vision, unaware!

My dear Mr. Butler —

In all the tender years
That Rufus and I were together
I think you realize what she
meant to me and how I loved
her. And yet, because you are her
father, I long to tell you what
a constant source of strength
and power and joy she was
to me. She was the dearest friend

I ever had, and her friendship
means even more to me now
than before. And I do want also to
tell you, Mr. Butler, how truly
Hershel feels the loss with us.
I am so grateful to think that he
and Rufus came to know and
enjoy each other so thoroughly
in these last few years. I wish I
could tell you of the sorrow of so
many of my friends here who, even
though they have met Rufus only
a few times, seem truly to
appreciate the way we have
learned to speak of Mr. Hobson

who was ^{so} interested in her ability and helped her with modelling. She sent him a relief of a little boy which she did herself and which he has always prized. Thinking that you might not have a copy of this relief, he has cast it in bronze and is sending it to you today. He wished us to write this explanation and to tell you what real happiness he had found in doing this work "for Nettie and for her family". Of course the bronze in itself is so much harder than the plaster that the lines of the child's face do not seem as soft as the original, but still it is a copy in permanent form of that very beautiful thing that Rufus herself created. Mr. Hobson said that as he came to work over it he was more and more impressed by the excellence of Nettie's ability.

Dear Mr. Cutler, I hope that you know all that we feel for you and with you, and all that it seems so impossible to express in words. This brings our love to you, and to Amelia and Elmer.

Very sincerely your friend
Margaret Taber.

Wallingford,
January 24, 1919.