

QUEEN MARY'S LAST LETTER TO HER CHILDREN
ULTIMA SCRISOARE A REGINEI MARIA ADRESATĂ COPIILOR

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Abstract

In 1968, three manuscripts entered by acquisition from Ana Iamandi the former Party Museum's patrimony: Queen Mary's will (copy) and two letters belonging to Queen Mary ("To my country and my people" and To my children"). Being dated 1933, the two letters have also an inner testamentary value, the Queen clearly stating her last wishes.

In this article, we've taken a closer look over the letter entitled "To my children", which we entirely reproduce. The tone of the letter is a reconciling one, the Queen forgiving her two sons for the way in which their relationship evolved. At the same time, she asks of them to stay united and protect their sisters. She speaks of all the things she loved and the way in which she would like the inheritance to be divided: the Balcic property to Carol, the Brad property to Ileana, the Copăceni property to Elisabeta

She also demands that her body be put to rest at Curtea de Arges, next to king Ferdinand and her heart placed at Stella Maris, in Balcic. At her funeral, the coffin would be carried by Rosiori?, and would be placed on a gun carriage, because a black funeral wagon frightened her.

Key words: Queen Mary, last wish, Carol II, Prince Nicolae, Balcic

Balcic
Tenha Juvah
June 29th 1933

My children,

When I shall have gone into god's rest, I want you think of me as one who loved life but was ready to die and pass on into unknown which I believe to be better world than this one, through I depart from this life grateful for every hour which made it worthily by love, trust loye [loyal] and beauty.

In your youthful pride you have sometimes judged me, my children, especially you my sons.

Now that I am gone and that my living voice can no more reach you, you will, I believe, be more faithful to my memory than you were to me in the flesh.

It is difficult for the different generation to understand each other, but it is sad to be denied.

I forgive you Carol and Nicky for having denied me and I would like to stretch out shadowy arms to embrace you from beyond the grave for a last time.

You were my babies once and I was passionately proud of you, I believed in your future and wanted it glorious, but especially I wanted you to be happy and yet one day, you Nicky turned upon me and said you never been happy at home. Those are the sort of words a son should never have said to his mother, they are words which murder the heart.

Nicky boy, you were my joy, my fun, my happiness we were such good companions. You had in you my own spirit of adventure; remember the days when we used to explore Iassy together in stubborn Bambino.

I treasure those days, also the days when you would come and cry out your eyes lovely young cousins had been unkind to you, [and] then you were in the English navy.

I believe you had our clean English spirit which has mad England what it is; but you passed out of my reach, and you turned rounds denied what had been, even my love...

This hurt more than anything has ever hurt me, but for all that you have a good heart Nicky, so come for the last time into my arms; you are not a bad boy, and deep down, right in side you, you never really believed the cruel things you said.

And you Carol, my eldest - you brought tragedy into our lives, you broke up the home because you were not faithful to the loyal traditions we your forefathers, believe in, you tore the family to pieces; you have chosen a new road have set up other ideas; other principles perhaps our old ideal of honour honesty and fidelity has passed away for ever. Today the fate of our dear Roumania is in your hands; love it, worked for it, as we did, but try and learn that, nothing is to be had without sacrifice and to be a master of others one must first of all a master over oneself.

There is in you much of myself. When you were young we were natural allies. I remember the time when you proudly wore my "ciffre" and looked upon it as an honour to be my right hand.

We were really built to be co-workers our double strength ought to have melted into one for the good of the country if it would have been a splendid force; but those about you would not allow this; they were afraid of our alliance.

In the eternal optimism which was always the very foundation, the very basis of my character, I always hoped, that the day might come when I would have again a mother's place, a mother's job, but you did not wish.

So good-bye Carol, go ahead and, win, there is strength in your turn into good, become clean straight, this country needs a straight master, it is a good country, a good people, but do not let them confuse right and wrong. It is from above that the example must come; give a good example Carol, do not try to invent news values, what is right is right, what is wrong is wrong; however much we may try to blind ourselves to the country.

There is a moral in all things which finally works it self out. Be kind to the others Carol, it is this alone which gives content; do not rejoice in power because it gives you the possibility to help.

Do not be a persecutor, but an upholder; one who stretches out his hands.

Now that I am gone and that you can hurt me no more and can take nothing more away from me, be kind to Ileana and to Nicky, become a centre to them, as your own kith and kin who will finally stick to you when all else fails. Do not believe that you are stronger without them, this is a fatal mistake.

I have left you Balcic, the place of my heart; you alone have the means of keeping it up. I built it with my own money, every bit of it much of which was earned with my pen.

I built into it also all my love of beauty and many terraces, its water and flowers it really a little earthly paradise.

Treasure it, Carol dear, because of all it meant to me. It is a place to be happy in to be at place, but if you feel you will never care for it, let Mihai (Mickel) have it, he will be so proud of having something all his own.

And because, this was the places I made myself, the place I loved I ask this of you: although I always had the horror of the knife I want that, after my death, my heart should be taken from my body and buried in the little Chapel "Stela Maris". "On revient toujours à les premiers amours". I came back to the sea, and I want my heart to lie there, near the sea under the stones of Stella Maris. I love Tenha Juvah, the place I created the place, I built so let my heart lie there even if my body must be buried al Curtea de Argeş beside Papa as is correct for a Queen.

Papa would, I think, like to have me there at his side; be counted so much upon me in life that, I have the feeling be still counts upon me in death. We were very different, he and I, the same things were not always important to us, but never theless we were firm friends to the very end.

Today, as the grave lies between us I can say anything to you; you need no answer now need you be shocked, but Carol, do what I ask you; have my heart cut out of my body, place it in a golden casket and bury it near, or under the altar of Stella Maris and this it will find rest and Stella Maris will become a "Wallforstsort". All trough life people came to my heart, much was asked of my heart, always, more than you will ever know; so let them come to my heart even after death, after it has stopped beating and I shall be up then waiting for then in the rustic little church by the sea and my the lilies I planted. Become there every season along the

way which leads up to the sanctuary; it was so proud of my lilies, they were so white so fragrant and just the right sort of flowers to lead up to the church; to a heart...

And at my funeral let my Roşiori carry me to my grave, do not put me on the black-chapel funeral, car put my coffin in a gun-carriage, like a soldier; this honor can be done on me; I deserved it Carol dear, do not discover reason why this should not be done; say it was my wish and that will suffice. I life you denied my many a wish, do not so today, I shall never more ask. I hate the idea of a black car, it is so ugly and sinister and I always hated everything that was ugly and perhaps when you read this we will no more be in 1933, it may be many years later and you may have learnt how to give pleasure instead of pain. Carol dear is it not a pity that you would no more enjoy me as in former days; it was such a waste; I was a good companion and we might have been so happy together even you were a king.

Nicky boy, I did not leave Bran to you as I had at first meant to do, you know why Nicky, you never came to me there any more Bran Belonged to the things you had grown out of, it meant nothing more to you, it belonged to the days of our fun; we discovered it together, but afterwards because you denied me and even my love for you, you also denied Bran, and Bran has got a heart and cannot be possessed by one who would not understand its heart...

And you my three daughters; Lisabetha, Mignon, Ileana, it really seems hard to have to say goo-bye to you, but perhaps when you read this, I shall be really tired and glad to lie down and rest - and you will be glad also that I should rest. But if I go before my time, do not think of me in sickness and sorrow but as a lover of life, because with a heart open to every interest run, full of a thousand plans, wandering bitter and thither, amongst my flowers, amongst the many things I collected which today are to be yours.

Lisabetha loves the plains so it is quite natural that Copăceni should be hers, and Ileana is to have Bran as she has no house of her own. Dear agree have unpractical little Bran - all of you know what Bran meant to me: a rebeginning, a bridge between yesterday and today, sport and must be understood. Ileana dragă you will understand it and teach your children to love it.

Anton is sure to love it because of you. And when you think of me and of the pleasure I had to make the little fortress live, think also of dear old Lioman who loved it as passionately as I did and gave to it the lost years of his life.

Think also of our faithful Zwiedy who has lifted every debt from it and who so splendidly finished the work. He will be sad when I am gone, be kind to him; be loved his work...

And Mignon my dearest child "child of my flesh" and I used to call you, dear fat, restful Mignon, I have you no houses, and very little fortune I am afraid, I was not one who "laid by" and as I was not given the part Papa meant me to have, I have very little to have. But Sandro is looking after you and being a Queen, you

have little time to live in other lands I also never had my time, till Papa went and that was no more needed for hard work.

Continue to be restful Mignon, to be good and dear as I have always known you and as Papa knew you our "guter camarad". Do not give my laziness, Mignon dear, do not let yourself go Sandro and you your Country must always be able to be proud of you when god ever made and you came to me as sunshine after a dark period of my life.

I bless you my dear, dearest fatty with, all the strength of my heart.

Lisabetha my eldest, but us claps hands. It was sometimes difficult for us to understand each other, our natures was very different, but when it came to fundamental things, then we felt alike, thought alike.

You found me at the hours when you really need me, the hour when we were just two women, not mother and daughter just two hearts that know, about love.

I have the feeling that it will that be you, Ileana, who will miss me most, there was a very special link of understanding between us you were my lost.

You were nearest to me as you were near me longest, you were the child of my soul, the child of my riper years; therefore what you learnt from me was also riper; wiser perhaps you are a brave child, Ileana you were born with the law within you and this is rare.

I cannot bear to think that we are never more to be together we belong at to each other somehow, you understand my spirit; you also understand all my grief.

This is a long letter, but it is my last, and being my last it had to be entirely truthful as from today onwards I shall be for ever dumb.

Be faithful and fair when you divide up the things I have left to others, I have chosen according to the person I am leaving it to, you know how I liked to give pleasure even after death. I have tired to remember everybody, but if anyone has been forgotten give them something in my name; I have through the long years collected so many things.

Remember how I loved the little place created "my little corners of peace" or my "Fool's Paradise" as I used to call them, and remember also that in each your will still probably find faithful servants who looked after them so that finally they almost feel as through the places were theirs; I was always able to make others share enjoy things with, if it is possible, go on letting them feel at home.

Bran, Copăceni, Tenha Juvah, my three dear creations, may they be dear to you who are to possess them as they were to me. May they be a joy, comfort and rest to you as they were to me? Be kind to those around you, children, and speak to them sometimes of me; we all like to believe that we will be remembered by your own day!

I love you deeply and truly, my children, each of you in another way, I have not counted what I left to each; according to value, I only tried to be fair is possible, and kept thinking of your different tastes.

Somehow, it is difficult to imagine that when you read this, I shall be no more of this earth, I am till so tremendously alive, but “man knower not this hour” and you remember I always felt strongly by how each man should make his will.

May my voice reach you from beyond the grave as something absolutely natural, cheerful and loving, my all I leave you bring you joy and when is spring, summer and autumn the flowers are a glory in my gardens, remember how I loved them, their shape, colour, perfume, profusion, they were ecstasy to me and when you pick them and arrange them in the rooms of my dear little houses, feel my smile, my voice, my blessing in each one of them and also of that exuberant “joie de vivre” which ever anew bubbled up from within me like a fountain that could never dry up!

God bless you my children! I would like for a last time together you all in my arms but it is good-bye for ever, alas!

Your Marie
Your Mama

P.S. Nicky boy, I feel as though I had not said enough to you. I do not know what sort of man you will be when you will read this. You were one of my greatest joys, Nicky, and one of my greatest griefs. I believed so much in you and you forsook me and may never, never allow you to know how much this hurt. I had to learn to live without children; you forsook me and neither of you my boys had a single one of those small loving attentions for me which kept a mother's heart warm and young.

Be clean Nicky and good. Do not put your pride in deceiving others, it may be funny and amusing, but it is not “good”. Think of others, be helpful, kind and do not despise your neighbor.

Both of you, my son, wanted to take without giving there is not possible: “Noblesse oblige” do not despise this old motto which ought ever to be dear to kings and the sons of kings.