

Title:	Letter by Ella Reeve Bloor, c. 1918		
Creator:	Ella Reeve Bloor		
Dates of Material:	c. 1918	Record Group Number:	RG 812
Summary of Contents:	<p>A letter by Ella Reeve “Mother” Bloor, prominent labour organizer and feminist activist in the United States socialist movement, addressed to “my dear children”. There is no date on the letter but it was likely written around 1918. The letter is written on Liberty Defense Union letterhead and is three pages. Bloor served on the General Committee of the Liberty Defense Union, which was a more activist alternative to the American Civil Liberties Union. The letter was written as she was travelling for meetings and speaking engagements, making stops in Beamsville, Ontario, Niagara Falls, Buffalo, and Olean, New York.</p> <p>Bloor apologizes for additional expenses incurred on her travels and comments on the difficulties of travelling and homesickness, noting that <i>“I’m very joyful because I saw you—I needed you so couldn’t wait another day—some people call it “homesickness” when one gets into the condition I was in in Jamestown, some call it loneliness, but it was literally starvation for love”</i>. She continues that <i>“[I] am in a strange comrade’s home—The Mayor says we can’t have a meeting—but I guess we will have one for there is no ordinance against it, only the Mayor’s word”</i>.</p> <p>She also comments on her friend Horace Traubel, writing that <i>“I see our dear Horace struggling with age, poverty, and pain—and feel such a helpless longing to make his life brighter. I’ll be so thankful when I know that he is sitting in your back yard with Betty and the baby, and Mildred and Frank building up his soul, with loving care, then his body will surely be healed. We cannot, we must not, let him slip away from us—His life is worth more to the world than ever before, his power grows each day...”</i> Traubel was a writer known for his friendship with Walt Whitman but was also a devoted Socialist. He suffered a stroke in 1918 and was cared for by family, friends and comrades until his death in the summer of 1919.</p> <p>The letter ends noting that <i>“I’m very much afraid that I cannot get to the Whitman fellowship, but I’ve had my “Fellowship” with the real Whitman lovers over in Hamilton and now I must go out to fight the Mayor—isn’t it funny that we, who so love peace, have to fight—even have to fight for love”</i>.</p>		

Physical Description / Condition:	2 sheets (21 x 27 cm)		
Administrative/ Biographical Sketch:	<p>Ella Reeve Bloor (1862-1951), also known as “Mother Bloor”, was an American activist and socialist who advocated for workers’ and women’s rights. In 1897 she joined the Social Democratic Party but moved the following year to the more radical Socialist Labor Party. However, in 1902 she returned to the Social Democratic Party, which had been renamed the Socialist Party of America. For the next 17 years she dedicated herself to working for the Party, and became the first woman to run for state office in 1908. In 1919 she was expelled from the Socialist Party with other radical members, who then organized independently as the Communist Labor Party.</p>		
Location:	Brock University Archives		
Source Information:	Acquired from William Reese Company in 2022.		
Described by:	Chantal Cameron	Date:	January 2023