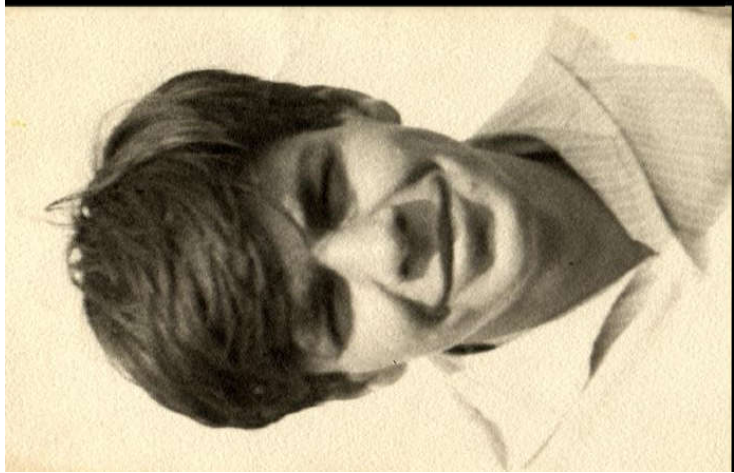




Sam Levinger grew up in Columbus, Ohio. He was a member of the Young People's Socialist League (YPSL), and, after high school, he went on to study sociology at Ohio State University. He was also an excellent writer—of stories, letters and poetry. When the conflict in Spain broke out, Levinger volunteered to “fight against the fascists and big land-owners.” He fought in the battles of Jarama and Bruenta, after which he was transferred to the Aragón front. He was wounded at Belchite and, due to a lack of medical supplies, he died not long after in Pueblo de Hija. His body is buried in the town.

In case of death only, please send this to:

Mrs. Lee J. Levinger
2257 Indianola Ave.
Columbus, Ohio, USA
(Do not send in case of injury).

Dear Mother and Father:

I suppose that by the time you receive this, I will have been dead several weeks. Of course, war is a confused thing, and I have seen enough certified corpses walking around to make me a little skeptical, but if you receive this and an official announcement too, count it as definite.

This is the last day of relief. We are going up to some front tomorrow to clear out the Fascists. I do not doubt that we will be successful in repatriating the boys across the street, but it will be at considerable cost, and as the Lincoln Battalion is good it should be in the middle of it.

I still stick by my original conviction that I will be alive long after a whole lot of dictators have died of lead poisoning or hardened arteries; but I've been wrong on other matters before. Hence I decided to write this letter.

Certainly I am not enthusiastic about dying. I've gotten a good bit of fun out of my first twenty years despite the fact that, except for the last six months they were pretty useless. I suppose I would have enjoy my next twenty just as much. I wanted to write this letter, however, to make it clear that there is absolutely nothing to regret.

If I were alive again I think I would join in the battle again at this crucial place. There was an extremely important job to do over here and I was one of the men who decided to do it. That a good many of us were killed while doing it is unfortunate, and the fact that I was killed is still more unfortunate from our standpoints. However, this has no relevance to the necessity of doing the job. This difference between world Fascism and world socialism is too great to permit our safeties to be a factor for consideration.

Next I want to beg both of you not to see this out of context. World change is a stern master. It has killed and will kill millions of boys as dear to somebody as I am to you. The Fascists want war, and bitter war we will give them.

You are more fortunate than many of the parents, for you still have two children with extremely bright futures. You have your extremely valuable work. I am less able to evaluate Father's work, though I realize its great worth; but in my field, that of an author, I can say I think Mother should become one of the



most valuable authors of the generation. And you still have the emancipation of America to be achieved.

I think my ideas on immortality agree largely with yours. I once wrote a lousy poem “If there is darkness beyond I shall sleep, if light I shall wake.” So if I meet you folks again all to the good— if not, we’ve had quite a bit of pleasure in each other’s company while it lasted.

As for my friends, give them my love if you run across them. Tell them I said there’s only one thing to remember—that there’s one comrade less to do the job of soldier of discontent. They’ll all have to do some work to make up for my getting perforated. See if that will get a few of these mugwumps into action.

This has been a clumsy letter. I just want to say that I love you both a great deal, and so forth. Also that it isn’t such a serious thing.

Love and revolutionary greetings.
Joy to the world.

Samuel Levinger

Samuel Levinger



Samuel Levinger on Writing this Letter...

“Suppose I do get bumped off. Suppose Harry won’t write home for me like he’s promised. I better do it myself. But suppose I’m just wounded. Suppose some fool finds the letters to mother and Clara and sends ‘em off. Nice anticlimax! But I’ve got to risk it.

It’s harder to write than I’d thought. I keep thinking of that book at home, *Letters of Fallen Englishmen*. Too bad I can’t just say, “Dear Parents, Consult *Letters of Fallen Englishmen*. Most of those boys were young like me, just past twenty; most of them loved their parents. Same sentiments here.” But of course that won’t do...”