

# The Salvation Army

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OFFICE OF  
THE GENERAL

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Personal

Colonel Laurence and Margaret Hay  
INTERNATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

Dear Laurence and Margaret,

This is not going to be a hard letter to write, and I won't need to ask anyone for a draft, for I long since joined the Laurence and Margaret Hay fan club and admiration society. I am only sorry that our paths now separate. But that is physically only, for inspirationally the contact will always remain, and, who knows, our paths may yet cross. In fact I hope they often will – perhaps when you are over in London to see your family.

All four of us – you two and Freda and I – are about to embark on the next stage of our adventure through life, that of retirement. And we do want to wish you well in every way. As you might imagine, we have given this coming phase some thought. We see it very definitely as a change of appointment, not the end of a journey. We have plans for intellectual, spiritual and physical development – yes, one of the first visits will be to the Beckenham gym (and that will be additional to the nearby one that Freda already belongs to) – and as I think of you both and the conversations we have had, I imagine that you also have many plans and that they are exciting ones!

I want to thank you both officially and personally. Officially I want to thank you for the absolutely splendid service you have given as officers. I had opportunity to speak about that service in my remarks before Family Prayers a week or two ago, but I here want to record in writing the great sense of appreciation that we – and I speak for the Army here as well as personally – feel towards you. You have both been outstanding examples of what officership in The Salvation Army is meant to be – both in the way that you have combined your gifts and in the unique way that you have exercised independent but complementary ministries.

Thank you for your total dedication to the cause of Christ and of the Army. Thank you too for the way that you have been able to remain yourselves when a movement like ours would tend to squeeze us all into its own mould. Thank you for the innumerable lives that you have touched, directly and indirectly, through your joint and separate ministries.

Thank you, Margaret, and I speak both officially and personally, for your own very special service for the Lord and the Army. I am so pleased that your gifts have found release within a system that might have inhibited them. I think of our association when you were principal of the training college in Wellington, and then when you were principal of the ICO. It was always a delight to work with you. And we all felt proud of the leadership you were giving. But our admiration has been equally so for this amazing gift you have of setting out on different paths, and without side of any kind, being prepared to get out there and serve at the front lines. Thank you again for all of that.

WILLIAM BOOTH  
Founder  
JOHN LARSSON  
General

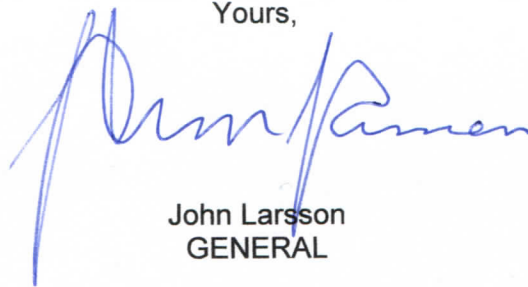
And, Laurence, what can I add to what you must have read between the lines a thousand times? It is not a joke, IHQ is parting with its brain! God help IHQ! The contribution you have made during these last ten years has been beyond words. And to that I add my appreciation for the contribution you made in the all the years that went before. In your own way, and with your own particular gifts, your input into the life of the Army has been simply immense!

And, personally speaking, it has been such a delight to work with you. Thanks for your skill and also your patience. Thanks too for the timely reminders, as befit a Guardian reader, of the Army's calling to be radical! Not many may know of that streak in your character. But we know, and have appreciated it. I truly thank you for all those many qualities that have made you a superb colleague to work with!

May the Lord now bless you both as you set out on that next stage of the journey. As I sometimes say, may it be filled with joys both expected and unexpected! May it be the best appointment yet!

With affectionate greetings and thanks and best wishes for the future from Freda and me.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John Larsson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "L".

John Larsson  
GENERAL