

are  
asking of she wants  
rather send direct  
to central depot  
(but sent boxes to  
save delay time)

Millhouse  
Hyles of Bute.  
13.4.18.

To Mrs MacDougall of MacDougall.

Dear Madam,

I notice your appeal  
in the Oban Times for collectors of eggs for our  
gallant lads who have been wounded, and  
I wish very earnestly to be a helper in this  
necessary work, therefore I have made inquiries  
among friends here and have been given  
promise of eggs weekly for the wounded, so  
I beg of you to please forward at the very  
earliest possible convenience a box for the  
purpose of forwarding same to the collecting  
centre. I will be glad to be allowed to  
pay all other expenses, such as postage on  
eggs etc myself. My Husband is in France  
and although I am on munitions I have  
plenty of time to collect several dozen eggs  
each week. Hoping a speedy reply from you  
I Remain.

Sincerely Yours.  
Mrs John MacDougall Reid

Millhouse, Kyles of Bute

13.04.1918

Dear Mrs MacDougall of MacDougall,

*I notice your appeal in the Oban Times for collectors of eggs for our gallant lads who have been wounded, and I wish very earnestly to be a helper in this necessary work, therefore I have made inquiries among friends here and have been given promise of eggs weekly for the wounded, so I beg of you to please forward at the very earliest possible convenience a box for the purpose of forwarding some to the collecting centre. I will be glad to be allowed to pay all other expenses such as postage on eggs myself. My husband is in France and although I am on munitions, I have plenty of time to collect several dozen eggs each week. Hoping a speedy reply from you.*

*I remain*

*Sincerely yours*

*Mrs John MacDougall Reid*

Context for the letter:

National Egg Collection for the Wounded – the Dunollie Depot during WWI

The National Egg Collection was launched in November 1914 following proposals put forward by Frederick Carl, the editor of Poultry World. The aim initially was to provide 20,000 newly laid eggs a week to the wounded in hospital at Boulogne. However, very soon the organisation began to aim even higher, endeavouring to collect or purchase 200,000 eggs a week: a target that was reached at Easter 1915. In the following August, partly to celebrate the fact that Queen Alexandra had become the patron of the scheme, the War Office decided to see if the number could be increased to one million eggs a week. 1,030,380 eggs were received during the week 16-23 August (there were over 2000 depots run by local groups and churches) and free transport was provided by the railways. A central collection point was established in London in a warehouse initially provided free of charge by Harrods.

Mrs MacDougall of Dunollie sought to become heavily involved in this practice by establishing a local depot here at Dunollie. Calls for donations rallied as Mrs MacDougall often sent out appeals in the Oban times. In turn, the collection centre became a monumental success, attracting generous and continued donations from farms and schools from North Uist, Barra, Coll, Iona, Lismore, Kilninver, Kilmelford, and many more, all doing their utmost to contribute to the war effort. The eggs collected would be quickly despatched and carried free of charge by ship and coach, for use in Scottish hospitals and hospitals for the wounded in France. As Armistice was signed on 11 November 1918, the National Egg Collection effort was gradually wound down, drawing to a close in March 1919. Many collectors were issued with Certificates of Honour. Mrs MacDougall sent out a note of thanks, commending the generosity of those who gave eggs when they could ill afford to spare them. A special mention was given to the aged participants who walked many miles to ensure that their eggs were donated.

In total, it is believed that over 100 000 fresh eggs were collected and sent off to wounded soldiers from the front line, from the depot at Dunollie.