

Letters from T.S. Eliot to Emily Hale

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Miss Emily Hale
Stamford House
Campton
Gloucestershire





0523

1937

Every Hall
in the garden
at Stamford
House, Camden-
ton, England



S. H. in garden
of Stratford House
Cambridge Glass
England

1872

T 106



T-5-E 1937

In garden
Stamford
Hues, 250
Chippin
Camden
Hes.
England

7. viii. 37

My dearest.

This can't be a letter, because there is no typewriter here, and I have had to write a few business notes, and my arm and hand are stiffer than ever, from tennis! So it is merely a note to thank you for your letter which came on Thursday - and I look forward first to writing it length (with rows of Salisbury and a satisfactory visit to East Coker) when I get back on Thursday - and then only one week until I see you - but these intervals in the summer

seem at the time harder to
bear than the whole winter -
harder for not being very
far away. I hope for news
of your delegates' party (Fred.
has not answered my letter)
but most anxiously for a con-
versation about your discussion
with the doctor. I am glad of
fine weather for you, & hope you
can sit quietly with the sun. My
handwriting gets worse & worse.

Your own.

Tom

TYGLYN AERON, CILIAU AERON, LAMPETER, CARDIGANSHIRE.

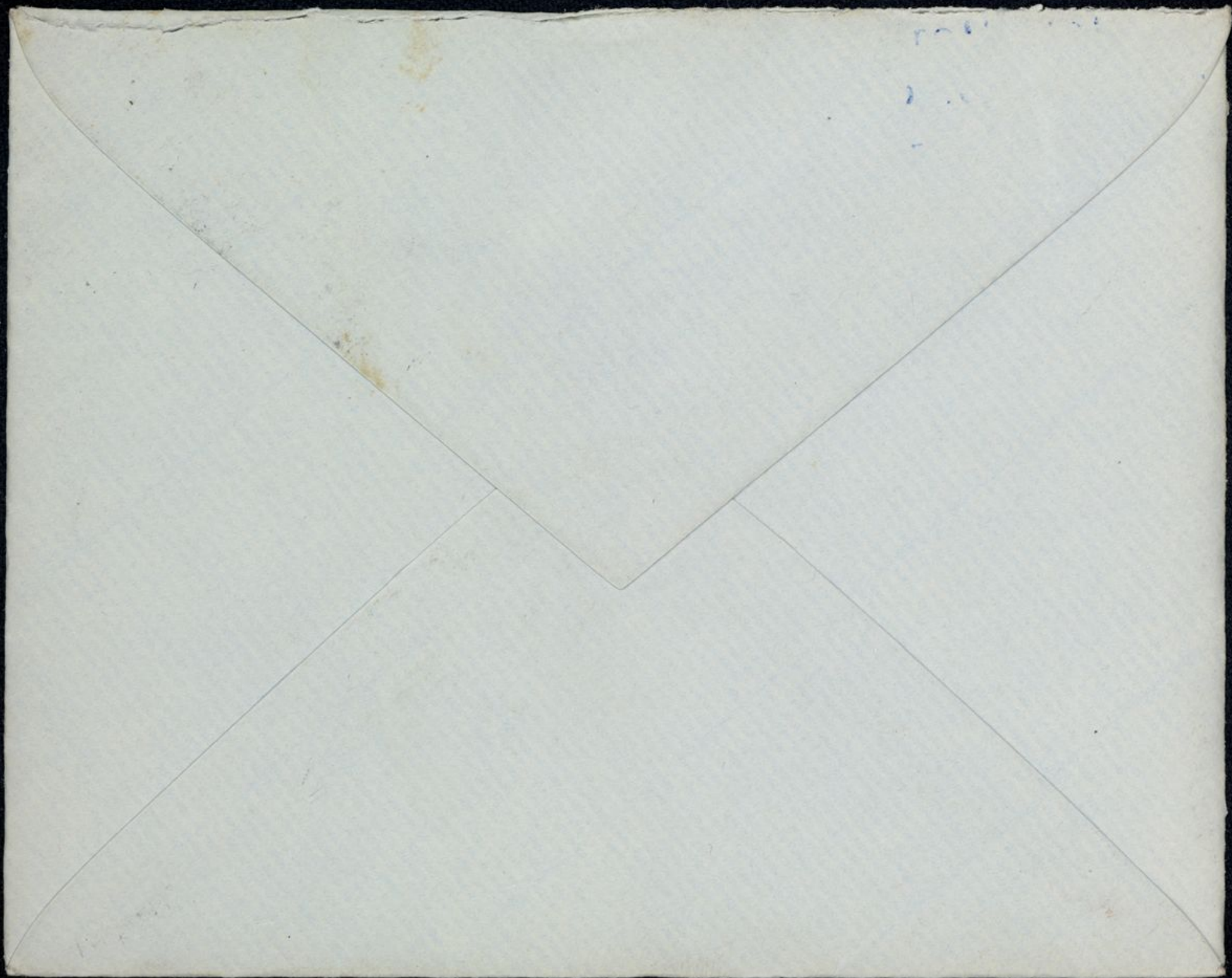
AERON 25.

THE GREAT BRITISH AMERICAN ASSOCIATION

1914



Miss Emily Hale.
Stamford House.
Campden
Gloucestershire



9. iii. 37

Dearest,

I am writing a few lines before
 having my thumb pruned again -
 result of getting a thorn into it.
 Also slightly lame from tennis. The
 weather has been very fine until to-
 day. Life pleasant and quiet and I
 have not used my mind at all -
 Sun and bathing make one healthy
 stupid. This afternoon the General
 Hopkins's arrive, and a school friend
 of one of the boys' (Mrs. H. née
 Minthead of Camb. Mass.) I hope
 for a letter from you tomorrow, but
 letters are slow, cross-country to a
 remote place like this. My mind

is too tired to have much to
offer, but it will not be so
at the end of next week.

Meanwhile I pray for your repose
of mind and body.

Your devoted

Tom



POST EARLY
IN
THE DAY



Miss Emily Hale,

c/o Miss Brooke-Gwynne,

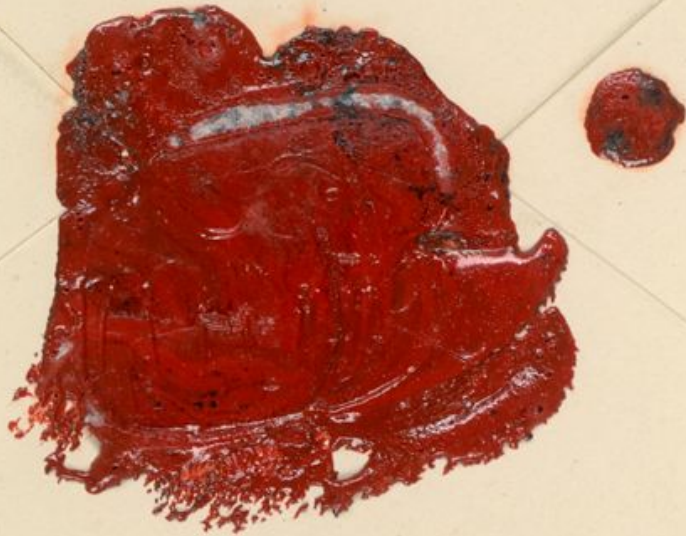
Deepdale,

Buckden,

SKILTON,

YORKS.

return to
Stamford House
Camden -
Gloucestershire -



11, Emperor's Gate,

Sunday.

My Love,

I was disappointed by not getting an answer to my wire, saying that you would turn up this afternoon - I should have had to make arrangements at very short notice! but that would not have mattered, and it would have been lovely to have seen you for an evening, a week before expectation. I assume that you are getting to Yorkshire direct tomorrow, but I shall not write a long letter now; I will write again in the morning; and if you cannot go to Yorkshire, I have no doubt I shall hear from you by the first post. But I do hope you can - I applaud the decision, which seems to me judicious - and think the visit will do you good. And I want to see you very well and at your best at the end of the week; don't I? Moira Gwynn is the lady who came to tea with me, and whose class in Southampton Row I talked to? and who lived with an infirm uncle at Thorp-le-Soken? I think so. She was very nice indeed.

First a practical point. I hope you will be here on Friday night; but, please, let me know as soon as possible, because my club is closed for annual cleaning and holidays, until a week hence, and I shall have to make other arrangements. That is easy enough, if I know by Thursday. And would you mind coming down by the 1.45 instead of the 10.15? Because I am to be on duty at the office on Saturday morning - I have been out of town a good many Saturdays lately, so I could not arrange a change over; but if you came with me it would be more fun to take the 1.45, and you would lunch with me in the restaurant car. Another reason for your letting me know your plans soon: it might be as well if I took the tickets in advance and reserved two places, and then we could meet at the train - otherwise, I should have to ask you to call for me at Russell Square at 12.30, or meet at the booking office. But if you come up to London, as I hope you will, you won't mind waiting over a train and travelling down with me in the afternoon, will you dear? You see, you thought you were preventing me from coming on Friday, and as it turns out I am asking you to wait over a train. And remember that you should know how much I enjoy train journeys in your company.

I shall write again tomorrow (to Skipton Yorks. that's where Christopher Dawson lives, I wonder if Miss Gwynne knows him) about Mrs. Hale, and somewhat about my travels, though that might wait till I see you. For the moment, it will do to say that I had very good weather, and have got very sunburnt, though that may have disappeared before I see you; that I think I am very well, but am rather tired from being always in company; and that I have spent a good part of the last two days sleeping in an armchair in the United University Club, where the armchairs are not so well formed for sleeping as at my own, and the neighbourhood is noisy. And I hear from Miss Bradby that my good cousin Fred is coming to tea with me tomorrow.

The vicar is away on holiday, and you will have this place to yourself and Elizabeth, who has just returned from a visit to her family in Essex, and perhaps Miss Bingham. The vicar says that in case of fire one walks out of my window along the roofs, and he prefers to trust himself to roofs and not to ladders, but I mean to get a ladder for myself. Tomorrow I have a number of letters to write: including one to the Church Times - Dark not only printed my previous letter, but referred to it in his leader, and I must correct his interpretation of it. And I have been reading Shakespeare, six plays in two days; because I think that my two lectures in Edinburgh in the autumn must be about Shakespeare; and I am wondering whether I might talk about the development of his blank verse? Is there anything left to say, I wonder? What do you think? It seems to me that I might be better qualified to talk about his versification than about his dramatic technique. But Goodness Knows I dont want to be lecturing at all. Edinburgh has been kind to me, and I must reciprocate; but I am afraid that I consider this only as something to be cleared away so as to get back to my own play. But if I can make these two lectures somewhat good, then they may be of use to me elsewhere: they could be repeated in Copenhagen and Paris if I have to go there.

Impression at the moment: All's Well that Ends Well a poor piece of work - one great line by Parolles (and that in prose) " simply the thing I am". Measure for Measure, Troilus, and Timon (what is Shakespeare in it) of the very best. The interesting question: why are some of his best plays box-office failures to this day?

Also, I rather wish I had elected to be taken by you to Stratford to see The Winter's Tale rather than Cymbeline. Both are masterly: and it would be worth any pains to hear "Fear no more the heat o' the sun" - but on reading The Winter's Tale seems to me the finer.

Until I write tomorrow,

Your

Tom

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COLENS VALLEY

PARCHMENT

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MADE IN GERMANY

COLNE VALLEY

PARISHMENT

MADE AT COLNE

1830

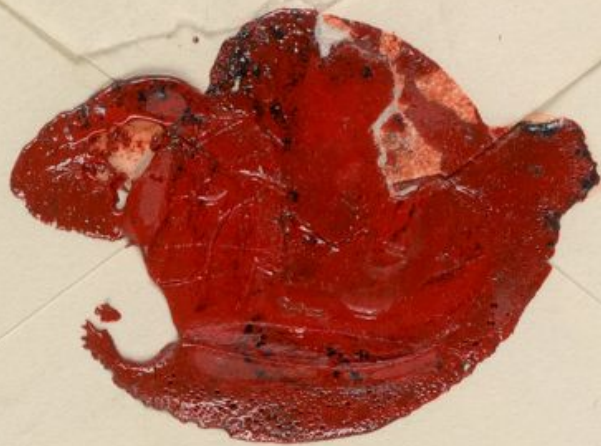


POST EARLY
IN
THE DAY



Miss Emily Hale,
c/o Miss Brooke-Gwynne,
Deepdale,
Buckden,
SKIPTON, Yorks.

return to
Stamford House,
Campton, Glos.



THE
CRITERION

A QUARTERLY REVIEW

EDITED BY T. S. ELIOT

TELEPHONE :- MUSEUM 9543

TELEGRAMS : FABBAF, WESTCENT, LONDON

24 RUSSELL SQUARE,

LONDON, W.C.1

17 August 1937.

Dearest,

I have written to Mrs. Perkins to explain that I cannot come until the 1.45 on Saturday; meanwhile I hope to hear from you what are your final plans: whether you will come to London and spend Friday night here (I think the situation at Russell Square is now such that I can sleep there: I have seen Mrs. Lister about, though I have not seen the twins) and come down with me, or whether you prefer to return via Gloucester.

As for Mrs. Hale and her letters. It seems to me that one ought to take as long a view as possible. I see nothing in her letters to indicate that she is likely to become more mentally irresponsible than she is. She speaks of having enough income, and I hope that her capital is safely tied up with trustees, so that she cannot invest it on the advice of spirits etc. I think that with people like her one must remember that everything one does for them is only entertainment for the moment, that the craving for attention and sacrifice is insatiable, and that the line must be drawn when more permanent values are at stake. The best thing for her would be to become at least self-dependent, like my sister Margaret. (I think there is this difference, that while Margaret is just as liable to complain of members of the family to other members, I believe her to have too strong a family feeling to complain of them to outsiders. This could hardly be expected of Mrs. Hale in any case, as it isn't her own family, and she never took the trouble to adopt it when she might have done - but my point is that you should be prepared, so as not to be upset if you found that Mrs. Hale had maligned you or the Perkins's to outsiders).

I can only rejoice, of course, that she did not join you this summer. Now I imagine that the Perkins's will want to continue to come to England for part of the year, for as many years as they can travel about - they might even wish to settle here in the end, who knows? But with every year they will be less fitted to cope with a visitor like Mrs. Hale. If she started making a practice of coming to Campden in the summer, she would encroach more and more, and in the end would have to be ~~th~~rown off, which would be painful all round. But really, even two years ago, the state of gloom to which she could reduce your uncle was almost unbearable. Even if you were there too, that would merely add another victim, without your

being able to spare them enough. And for yourself, certainly your first duty is towards your employers and pupils - to use your holidays for physical and mental restoration so as to be able to do the best by them in the winter - your second duty towards your aunt and uncle - a duty to Mrs. Hale only so far as it did not conflict with the first two: that is to say, a very little way indeed.

I should not take Mrs. Hale's suffering too seriously. In her reaction to your letters there is a certain amount of envy and jealousy. Of course she would enjoy being in a place where a succession of different people were provided without any trouble on her own part, but she enjoys her grievance, and she would not be really happy even at Campden. The pleasant situation for her would be where she had two or three tame old gentlemen to pay attention to her; for really she likes only masculine society, and has no use for women and no ability to take an interest in them: but that is a situation that no one can provide for her to order. There is no harm in reminding her that she really was invited (though this won't console her at all); only, be guarded for the sake of another year - to have her with you for as much as two months would be a very bad thing: at most, a stay of three weeks, or two visits of a fortnight each, and she should understand that she would have to shift for herself the rest of the time. Which she is quite able to do: if she can make shift at American country or seaside hotels she could do the same in England, and she ought to learn to travel about in steamships alone. The more she was with strangers the better, because in these cases outsiders can be of more use than relatives and connexions. It is a pity that she has no religion except mumbo-jumbo; but there again is a matter in which only outsiders, preferably fresh acquaintances which she made for herself, could have any influence upon her.

In general, it seems to me that one has to try to get quite clear, in every case as it turns up (and no two are quite the same) what are one's duties towards a person and where they stop. It is bad to be haunted by the suspicion that one is sacrificing too much for somebody; and it is bad to be haunted by the suspicion that one is not doing enough. These problems have to be cleared up. Loving one's neighbour as oneself does not mean immolating oneself, but regarding both equally. One is not called upon to love one's neighbour absolutely and oneself not at all: there is no unlimited obligation except to God.

Well I think I'd better stop at this point, and wait to find out if what I have been saying is at all the sort of thing that responds to your need in this matter. If not, I'll start afresh.

Your Tom

Not clear from your writing whether you want the letters back or not. I think they might as well be destroyed.

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COLNE VALLEY

PARCHMENT

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all

COLNE VALLEY

PARISHMENT

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Miss Emily Hale,

c/o Miss Brooke-Gwynne,

Deepdale,

Buckden,

near SKIPTON,

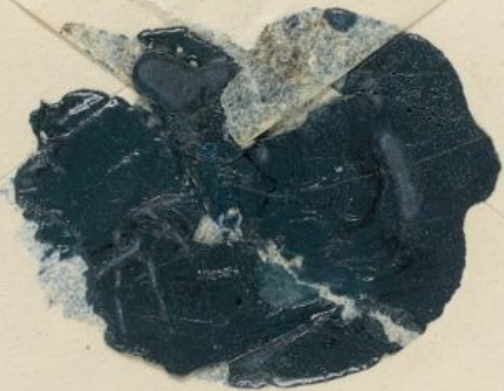
Yorks.

England.
Gloucestershire,

CAMPDEN,

Stamford House,

return to



THE
CRITERION

A QUARTERLY REVIEW

EDITED BY T. S. ELIOT

TELEPHONE: MUSEUM 9543
TELEGRAMS: FABBAF, WESTCENT, LONDON

24 RUSSELL SQUARE,
LONDON, W.C.1

18 August 1937.

My Lamb,

Well my dear I must forego the pleasure of seeing you tomorrow night and going down with you, and lunching with you on the train, on Saturday; but there is evidently good reason for it, and I must look forward instead to being at Stamford House to receive you - though that is not quite as good as the other way about, since you as hostess can come up to my room to see that I have everything I need, whereas I, as guest, must stay put in drawing room or garden. Still, you will be up for a night or two in September. And now I have only 46 hours, or somewhat less, to wait. I shall hope to find you refreshed by your visit to Yorkshire, and will welcome you back, as I said, to England!

*Yours
Tom*

CRITICISM

COFFEE VALLEY

PARISHMENT

MADE IN BRITAIN



POST EARLY
IN
THE DAY



Miss Emily Hale
Stanford House,
Camden
Gloucestershire



THE
CRITERION

A QUARTERLY REVIEW

EDITED BY T. S. ELIOT

TELEPHONE: MUSEUM 9543
TELEGRAMS: FABBAF, WESTCENT, LONDON

24 RUSSELL SQUARE,
LONDON, W.C.1

Wednesday.

Dear Sir,

Thank you for your dear letter.
I have forwarded the excellent letter
to Mrs Hale. This is only to explain
that the reason why I have not
written to you or Mrs Perkins is
that I am having the usual two
days in bed with a slight tem-
perature - I will write tomorrow,
and expect to be ^{out} about on Friday,
so don't worry. I will see you
on Saturday at tea.

Your devoted

Tom

ORIENTAL

OF THE EAST

THE GREAT WALL OF CHINA

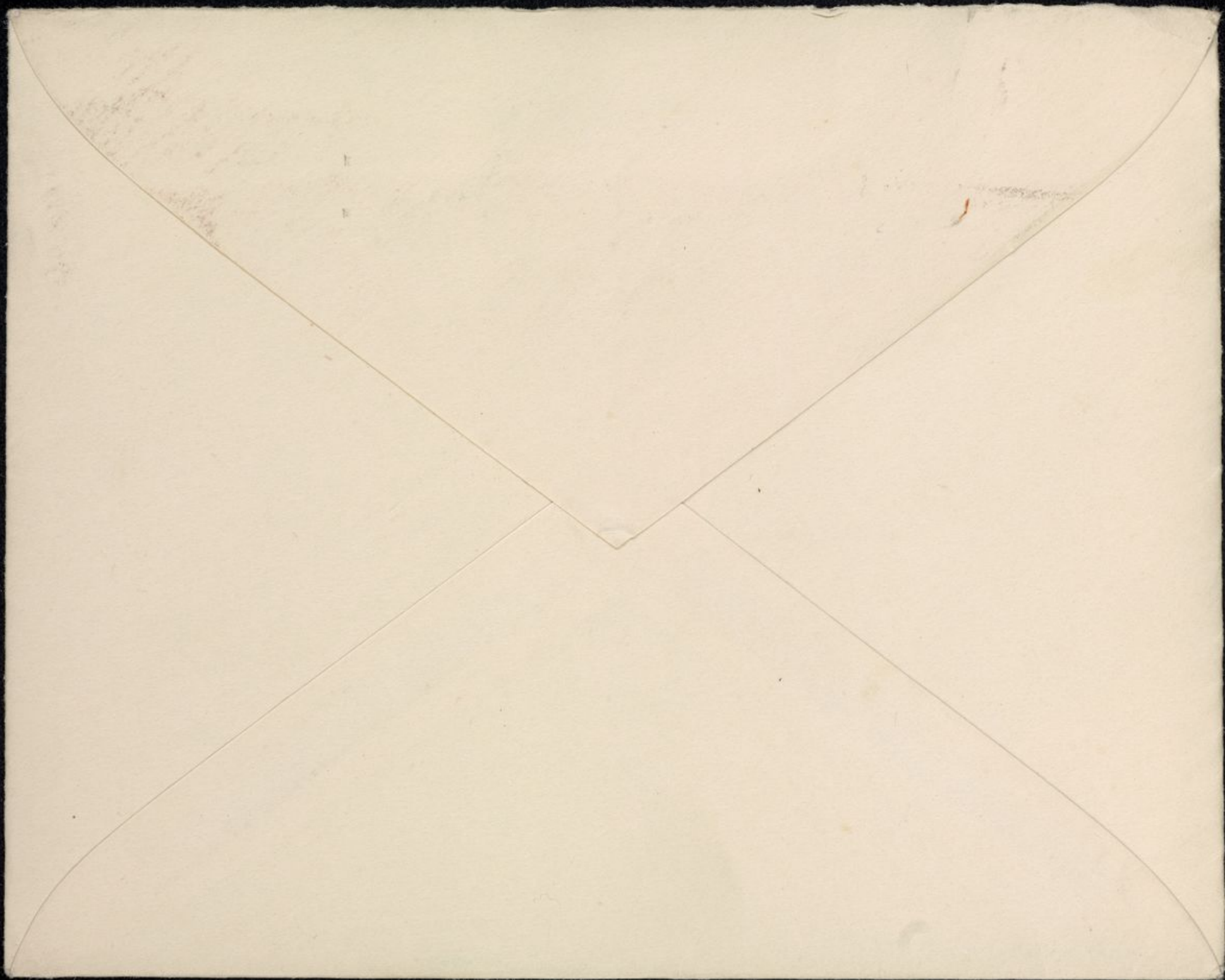
COLNE VALLEY

PARCHMENT

MADE IN ENGLAND



Miss Emily Hale,
Stamford House,
CAMPDEN,
Gloucestershire.



THE
CRITERION

A QUARTERLY REVIEW

EDITED BY T. S. ELIOT

TELEPHONE: MUSEUM 9543
TELEGRAMS: FABBAF, WESTCENT, LONDON

24 RUSSELL SQUARE,
LONDON, W.C.1

3 September 1937.

Dearest,

Thank you for your note of this morning, as well as your letter of yesterday. I am disappointed not to have written a letter, but there it is. Yesterday I still felt rather feeble, but went out twice for a few minutes (scurrying back from the rain) and Dodo came to tea. I feel quite well again this morning, and shall go to business, and take D. out to dinner. I will attend to the wine in the morning - I was much amused by your remark, as it was quite obvious that the sherry was not popular! I will try to get something more sweet and sticky this time. I am glad that the arrangements with Mrs. Seaverns are settled so satisfactorily for Wednesday and Thursday (Friday I shall take D. out for a last dinner, as she sails on Saturday the 11th for Montreal). I like Mrs. S. but I am always afraid of meeting Beatrix Curtis Brown there, and for your private information I will tell you that I do not like the lady, and I should not care to put anything on paper about her brother (this especially should be kept private, because he is a literary agent). I am thankful that you did not take the cold, either from me or from the household.

Devotedly

Tom

CRITERION

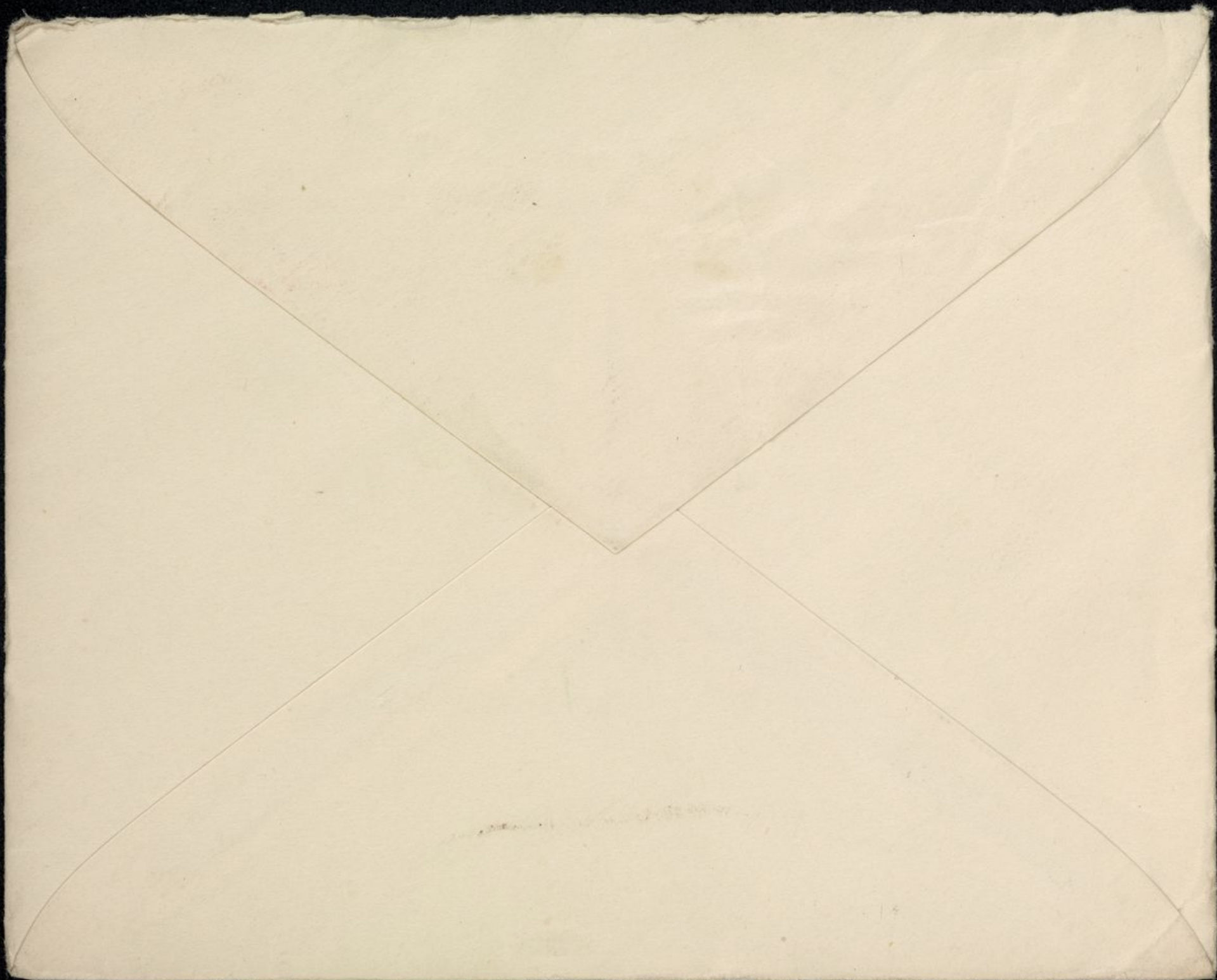
GOLDBE VALLEY

PARSONS MENT

INDUSTRIAL



Miss Emily Hale,
Stamford House,
CAMPDEN,
Gloucestershire.



THE
CRITERION

A QUARTERLY REVIEW

EDITED BY T. S. ELIOT

TELEPHONE: MUSEUM 9543
TELEGRAMS: FABBAF, WESTCENT, LONDON

24 RUSSELL SQUARE,
LONDON, W.C.1

September 13, 1937.

My Dearest,

I got your letter this morning, and enclosed the note with the books for Mr and Mrs Morison which I have despatched. I look forward to Thursday - and shall be happy when the party is over and the guests (however agreeable) are gone. I did think that there would not be time to do anything satisfactory in the way of fur~~ns~~ in London; so we must arrange it for Boston. I thought you were not very well, but did not guess that it was the neuralgia - perhaps I was too occupied with my own cold, and the fear of communicating it. I must praise you for doing so well in the circumstances. It doesnt seem to me necessary to take tea with Mrs. Seaverns - I shall have to go from the train to my office for a few hours; so if you felt that you wanted to go to Mrs. Seaverns, I could pick you up there after tea - but I do not want you to overdo yourself the last two days. I will enquire about river steamers tomorrow morning. The stool is a great success - it came into use the first day, when Louis MacNeice came to tea; and I used it to-day by myself. I look forward lovingly to Thursday and Friday and Saturday.

*Your devoted
Tom.*

*Have to take
Bowling Pond to dinner tomorrow.*

CRISTION

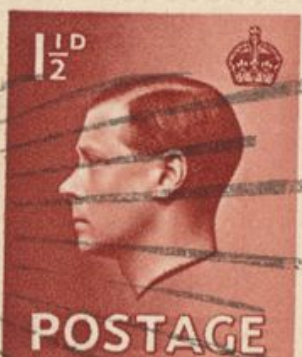
COLNE VALLEY

PARCHMENT

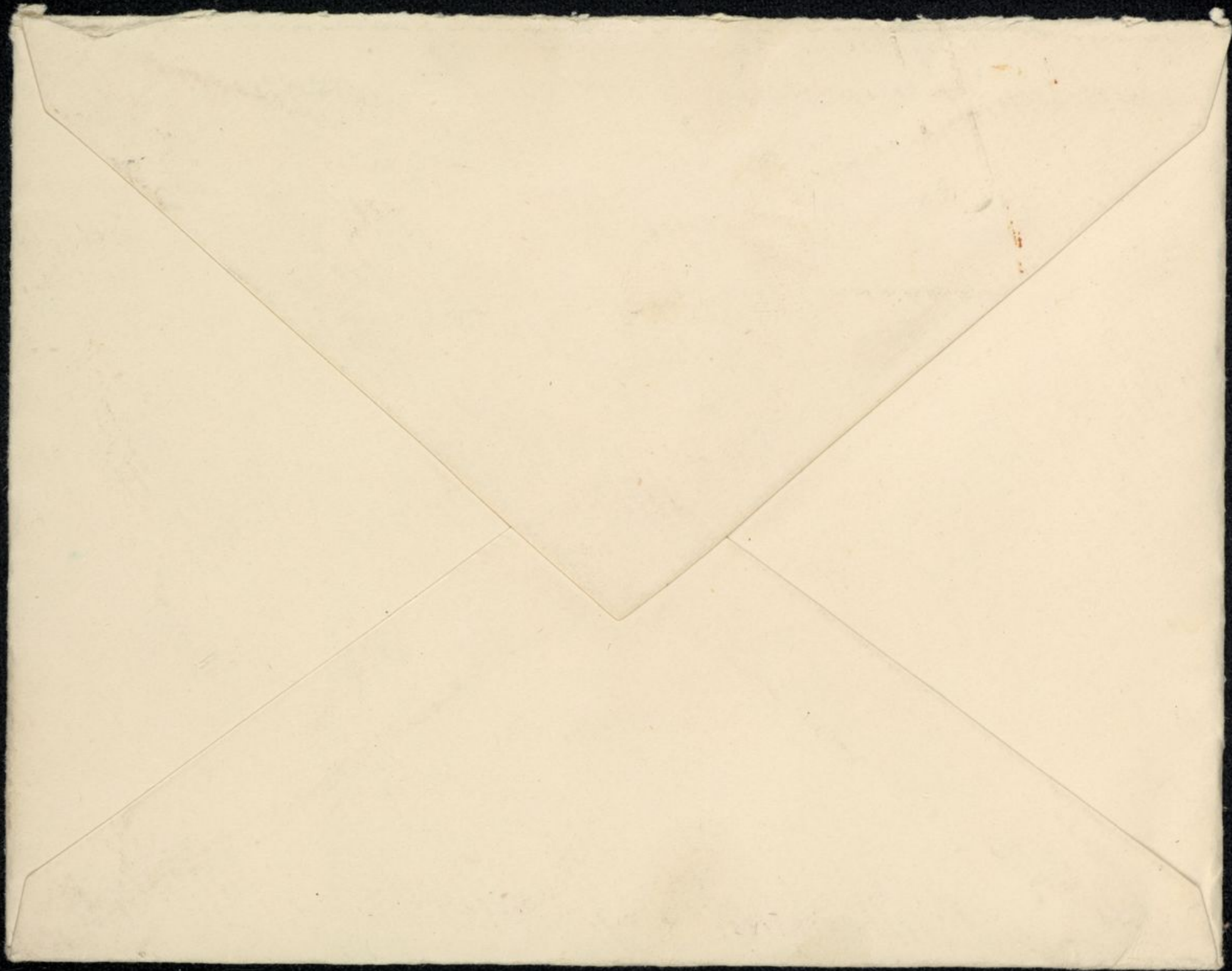
MADE IN ENGLAND



POST EARLY
IN
THE DAY



Miss Emily Hale,
Stamford House,
CAMPDEN,
Gloucestershire.



THE
CRITERION

A QUARTERLY REVIEW

EDITED BY T. S. ELIOT

TELEPHONE: MUSEUM 9543
TELEGRAMS: FABBAF, WESTCENT, LONDON

24 RUSSELL SQUARE,
LONDON, W.C.1

15 September 1937.

Dear Sir,

Your letter arrived the same day, and I found it last night on returning from dining Dorothy Pound (The Morleys helped me). I hope that Cheltenham is a satisfactory shopping centre, for whatever you have not time to do in London. I have recovered from my cold, thank you, and hope to be quite presentable tomorrow evening. I should have written a line to this effect in any case, but your letter calls for an answer on another point, which is probably better dealt with in writing now, and we can discuss it or not later.

I don't know that it is really my business to offer counsel or criticism - but as you have asked - I can't see any reason why Mrs. Perkins should not justify herself, so far as that can be done without prejudicing the future. It seems to me that with other summers in view (and it would really apply wherever the Perkins's were to be) it should not appear as if Mrs. Hale had been invited, or might be invited in the future, on whatever terms, for the whole time. She would have to be prepared to look out for herself for most of the time; and as she seems to be quite able to look after herself at New England summer resorts, she could equally well do so at Sidmouth, Torquay, or anywhere else. She seemed to me, if anything, rather stronger than Mrs. Perkins, but I may be wrong. She can't be combined happily with everybody (though she is a good deal more adaptable than my sister Margaret) and she does want to be taken notice of - and I should say she was the type of woman who can't get much from other women - other women, to that type, are merely a convenience when they are not a bore - and she can't always have jolly souls like Sir Philip Stott to flirt with. But certainly she could be told that she was asked - on conditions (which might not have been very acceptable perhaps); especially if Mrs. Perkins is prepared to ask her again on the same conditions. But I don't think that either of you should undertake to convoy her across the Atlantic; if she can't manage that alone I don't think she ought to come; because it would be only a step from that attendance to having to find her seaside hotel for her, instal her, make arrangements, and fetch her away etc.

All this seems rather impertinent of me, and I wouldn't have forced it on you. But you must also keep in mind what you said to me about planning your own future summers.

I am getting on slowly with Shakespeare. I look forward to tomorrow night.

Your loving

Tom

COLNE VALLEY

PARISHMENT

MADE IN ENGLAND

COLNE VALLEY

PARCHMENT

MADE AT COLNE VALLEY

By German packet EUROPA



POST EARLY
IN
THE DAY



Miss Emily Hale,

22 Paradise Road,

NORTHAMPTON,

Massachusetts,

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.



THE
CRITERION

A QUARTERLY REVIEW

EDITED BY T. S. ELIOT

TELEPHONE: MUSEUM 9543
TELEGRAMS: FABBAF, WESTCENT, LONDON

24 RUSSELL SQUARE,
LONDON, W.C.1

21 September 1937.

M. Jove.

It was a happy surprise to find your dear letter to me when I got back to Emperor's Gate, with my bag, at about ten on Sunday morning; and to see the note to be opened on the 26th; and to-night to get your letter from Cherbourg (with a German stamp and Columbus postmark. I am relieved to know that you have your cabin to yourself, but from what you say of the conditions, I shall be still more relieved to know that you have arrived in New York - five more days - and hope that you will not again descend lower than Tourist, unless on a really up to date boat. I hope that the diet will not upset you, or the company - which at the worst is not, I suppose, likely to be Jewish.

I have not yet quite adjusted myself to life without you in the same country. I got through in a kind of daze - an afternoon with Enid and the two boys first at the Zoo, where we had tea (showers off and on) and then sailing on the lake (where we got rather wet) - the boys in a last-day-of-the-holidays state of mind, between depression and anxiety to get all they could out of the last free day, and then rushed back and changed my clothes, in to church just after the service in time to deal with the money, and then supper with John Hayward - so that I did not get to bed as early as one should having risen at six - so yesterday was also a hazy numb day - to-day (after beginning the day by a visit to the dentist) more normal perhaps. Dukes to lunch: Murder is to open again at Golders Green next Monday! then to Liverpool - he is sure that he will have one company working in the provinces and another ready to go to Boston about January 15th - for what theatrical assurances are worth. He quite agrees with your suggestion about the Theatre Arts Monthly (of which he is English editor) and I am to send him my Rochester paper. It appears that the Monthly is run by the Dartington Hall people, and he wants to drive me down there to see them, or rather the place as a remarkable example of the modern "irreligious community". I have bought also this morning a winter overcoat, and this evening after I post this I must pay a farewell call upon Dorothy Pound and her mother Mrs. Shakespeare.

The parting is so much like an operation in which a limb is re-

moved - it takes one some time to come to after the anaesthetic - and the way I felt on Sunday morning is very much like being under an anaesthetic - one is not really feeling acutely then, because the beneficent instinct of self-preservation prevents that - and gradually one comes to into a strange world in which one has gradually to get used to doing without one limb which was there before. I still feel rather queer. Yet, dear, it is a happiness to know that this summer has brought a new and further stage of nearness to you, and that it is something which I shall not be able to understand and appraise until I see the year from a rather further perspective. It seems increasingly natural to have you here, and increasingly strange that you should be at such a distance. But it was a good summer! My love.

I shall send a draft on Northampton (or Boston) for your birthday present - and you may change your mind if you like, about what you want.

My love. I shall write more regularly this winter - and until we meet in the summer again -

Yours

Tom.

Faint, illegible text, possibly bleed-through from the reverse side of the page.

COLNE VALLEY

PARCHMENT

MADE AT COLNE

COLNE VALLEY

PARCHMENT

MADE AT COLLEY

By French packet NORMANDIE



POST EARLY
IN
THE DAY



Miss Emily Hale,

22 Paradise Road,

NORTHAMPTON,

Massachusetts,

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.



THE
CRITERION

A QUARTERLY REVIEW

EDITED BY T. S. ELIOT

TELEPHONE: MUSEUM 9543

TELEGRAMS: FABBAF, WESTCENT, LONDON

24 RUSSELL SQUARE,

LONDON, W.C.1

Dearest Love,

24 September 1937.

A line to catch the Normandie, and I shall write again on Monday for the Queen Mary. A week tomorrow since we went down the river - it might be yesterday or a year ago - and last Sunday was all a phantasmagory - not the least when Cheetham asked the prayers of the congregation for "Emily Hale, travelling by sea" as the formula is. (I have not seen him since, but have written him four letters on four different subjects). And this week has been filled in the usual way, but including the dentist and the tailor (I hope you will like my new winter suit and overcoat, and my teeth are less dilapidated than one would expect after six months) and I have finished Lecture I and started Lecture II which I hope to finish next week. And on Sunday evening I shall think of you arriving at Northampton, and you will think of me sitting at the Wolfs. At this moment - let me see, I suppose it is about 8 o'clock with you now, and it is 10 here - I imagine you just having finished dinner and being pleasant to fellow-passengers - I think of you as dreading the arrival: yet by the time you get this letter you will be thoroughly in the engrenage again; and I am longing to hear your frank opinion of your new rooms and landlady, and of your colleagues on seeing them again and afresh. On Sunday night and through Monday, I shall feel torn and distracted, sharing your feelings; by the end of next week I shall feel a little more stable: for thinking of any strain for you, 3000 miles away, is a strain for me.

Helped a little by having to deal with others: yesterday McEachren (a schoolmaster at Shrewsbury) to lunch, and Tomlin, a young protege of mine for some six years, to dinner, and a waifish youth named Waller, whom I have been seeing for about three years, this afternoon.

Your dear letter from the boat is in front of me. Yes, our having breakfast together here was an experience that takes its important place: and I shall open your note (c/o Leonard Woolf) on Sunday morning. And in spite of the chill of arrival, how glad I shall be that your voyage among the third class is over! I try to hold you in my arms as I did at Campden. For one thing, my memories of Campden are happier than in any previous year.

Molly and Tom

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