Letters from T.S. Eliot to Emily Hale

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Letters from T.S. Eliot to Emily Hale

1 folder

Contact Information

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By German Packet BREMEN.

SOUTH KENSINGTON
4 MAY
1939
S.W.7

Miss Emily Hale,

22 Paradise Road,

NORTHAMPTON,

Massachusetts,

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

SOUTH KENSINGTON
MAY
1939

THE
CRITERION
A QUARTERLY REVIEW
EDITED BY T. S. ELIOT

TELEPHONE: MUSEUM 9543
TELEGRAMS: FABBAF, WESTCENT, LONDON

24 RUSSELL SQUARE,
LONDON, W.C.1

4 May 1939.

Dearest,

I thought that I might have had a letter from you by now, but nothing has come since that of the 18th on the Washington. My cable of enquiry was occasioned by a telephone call from Ashley Dukes, who had received a cable of enquiry about theplay from one John Housman, who he says is a young Englishman who is working with Orson Wells. Ashley has written to his agent in New York (Madden) to tell him to get in touch with Housman and Wells and find out what they want to do. Martin, who rang me up this morning, thinks very well of these men; and if they propose anything that sounds respectable, for the autumn, would like to go over and take a hand in it. (By the way, Henzie has been in very poor health, since having influenza before the Reunion began, and he says she has had a slight relapse. Her heart seems to be affected). I wanted to ask your opinion in time to get it before Dukes hears from New York; but I trust I made it clear that there was no need for you to cable - a letter will be in ample time. Apparently the New York edition has been selling very well; the notices have been good; and if one could be sure of as intelligent a production as New York can give, it might be as well to take advantage of the present interest.

It is odd that in each of my last letters I should have forgotten to mention the death of Janes. I saw him, you remember, on Easter Day, and thought he looked much weaker and a bad colour. The next Sunday I had to be at my Moot at Jordan's, so did not visit him again; and on the Friday that I went to the Morleys', I got a letter from his son saying that he had died the day before. I managed to order a wreath before I left, and came up on Monday for the funeral (going back to Lingfield the same afternoon). There was no one else at Brompton Cemetary except Fred and Frances, his son and daughter in law: I thought that the two granddaughters in Gillingham, and certainly the third grand-daughter in Clapham, might have come. Mrs.Webster was not well enough - the day was raw and cold and wet - but I have heard from her since; and she has embarrassed me by sending me his sister's (the late Mrs.Janes, Ada) engagement ring, which it was Janes's wish that I should have as a memento. I had hoped that Mrs.Webster would be willing to

keep it: it can be of no interest to his son or grand-daughters, because they come from his first wife - Ada had no children. It is large and showy and I shall just have to store it away. I shall miss him; he was a faithful friend, a most diverting talker, and a link with the past, having had his ears boxed by Disraeli when he was a choir boy at Hughenden. And it seems odd after five months not to pay the weekly visit to the hospital in Fulham.

Andnow my two favorite waiters at the club are retiring - or rather, the Head Carver who has always been so careful about my beef, and the oldest waiter - the latter has been there ever since 1889, and always advised me about the best cheese for the day.

This weekend I spend in retreat in Queen's Gate (the Society of Retreat Conductors): my first retreat for two years. The chief event next week is a dinner I am giving for Jacques Maritain to meet some men, after he has been lecturing at Oxford. His wife is not coming with him. The weather is slowly getting a little warmer again, but not warm enough yet for spring clothes: I dare say it will turn very warm suddenly. The weather has been toobad for anyone to want to take a holiday yet.

A nice letter from Willard Thorp, à propos the Reunion which they had been reading.

I hear from Mrs.Seaverns (who has just returned from Hove) that the Perkins's intend to sail on the 20th. There is not much time now, so we ought to be thinking of planning the summer. Especially because of the complication of Marion: it seems probable that they will come - arriving, inconveniently enough, a few days before you can. I am rather at a loss to know what to do with them for two months. They will at least return before you have to. I think that if I go with them for ten days or a fortnight to some quiet country place, and find somewhere else for them to go for part of the time by themselves, and have them in London for part of the time, that will be quite enough; and of course I want a continuous fortnight at Campden with you, and all the usual trimmings of weekends there, and your occasional visits to town. In short, I do not mean to see any the less of you, you may be sure; but it will need careful dove-tailing.

Well, my dearest, I hope that I may get something from you before Friday night.

Your loving

Tom

COLNE VALLEY

PARCHMENT

MADE AT CROXLEY

By C.P.R. DUCHESS OF ATHOLL.

Via Canada.

SOUTH KENSINGTON
3-15PM
12 MAY
1939
S.W.7.

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

12 May 1939.

My Scarest.

Your last letter was that of the 25th April; and I hope that another may come to-day; but I am obliged to write early for a slow route, the Montreal boat now being the only one for some days. I am glad that you saw the Hamlet: I expect that Evans has developed a good deal since I last saw him at the Old Vic. There are two plays here worth seeing, or which I want to see: The Bridgehead, by an Irishman named Mayne (said to be quite an old man, though I never heard of him before) which has a good press, and Mauriac's Asmodée ("The Intruder") of which I hear varied opinion. I have not been thinking very much about politics during the last week. During the weekend I was in retreat - a good, but rather arduous retreat, with four hours meditation daily, but a walk in Battersea Park, in lovely weather (the last two days have been cool again); and have had two dinner parties since - a small informal one at the Hutchinsons', and last night my party for Maritain, who was as charming as ever. It went off pretty well, I think; I always take the part of host rather heavily, but in this case at least I had no responsibility for the choice of guests, as they consisted automatically of what members of the Moot were able to come: Mannheim, Sir Walter Moberly, Oakeshott (the new High Master of St.Paul's School, young and silent), Professor Hodges of Reading, Gilbert Shaw and Oliver Tomkins exofficio. I was sorry that neither Christopher Dawson nor Middleton Murry was well enough to come. The discussion, considering that it had to be bilingual - Maritain doesn't express himself in English, and only Mannheim and myself could talk French - went very smoothly, and I think they found it profitable. Now a quiet weekend at home.

I am trying to do the final re-writing of my lectures, so that they may be published in the autumn: that is my main job at present. My only speaking engagement between now and December is to go to Felsted School in Essex and talk informally to fifteen boys who are starting a literary society there - this at the request of the Headmaster Bickersteth, a son of Canon Bickersteth of Canterbury - Iddings Bell thinks quite well of him. That I rather look forward to: it is so much pleasanter to talk to fifteen than to a hundred.

I had a note from Mrs.Seaverns - I am to dine with her again on the 24th - to consult me about the opinion she should give to Mrs.Perkins about the advisability of coming this summer. I told her (it was her opinion anyway) that I did not see any immediate cause for anxiety, and that I was not discouraging my sister from coming. Not that I yet see any way out of the eventual conflict: if Germany is prevented from expanding to the East, and gets no colonies, and is checked in South America, I do not see what the solution can be.. I cannot blame Hitler for distrusting conferences, and I fear that the interests against him are too powerful to let him get anything except by menaces. I wish that the Germans were not so unpleasant, and did not do everything in such an unpleasant way! Hitler's speech was very able.

Tell me again what boat your reservation is on; I know you said the 14th June, but I don't remember in what letter you said it: and, if I may say so, reading through an indefinite number of your back letters in the search for a particular piece of information not taking up much room, is rather a long job! We have been promised a warm summer, by the people who write in the newspapers about sun-spots. It would be very welcome - though catching cold in Wales last summer had its compensation in being nursed at Campden! But I should like you for once to have a summer primarily dedicated to your own health.

Your loving Tom

The Family Reunion has sold so far about 2600 copies here; I don't know how many of the American edition, but I hear that it has gone into a second printing. No further news, of course, of Housman and Wells.

I forgot, by some blindness that occasionally overcomes me, a rather important piece of news: which is that Frank Morley has decided to accept a very attractive offer to join the firm of Harcourt Brace & Co. in New York. His prospects there are better than anywhere else; because I think he will certainly become head of the business in time. I should not have advised him to accept it on the grounds of financial advantage and future importance alone, because those could never be the primary considerations with a man of his type: the chief reason for which we felt that he ought to accept was the certainty of being able to bring up his children outside of the war area of the future. His greatest responsibility is to them. It will be difficult for Christina, of course. Again, if the children had been older, I should not have advised transplanting them, but they are all young enough to be able to flourish in America. I think they are very regretful at being taken away from Pike's Farm. I hope you may see them before they go (the date is not definite yet, but they may be here into July) but if you cared to write Christina a note about it, I am sure it would be appreciated.

Of course it is a blow for me, and for all of his friends here, I do not like to think yet how great. The business is being rearranged, I think as satisfactorily as possible - of course such a man cannot be replaced.

By German packet BREMEN

SOUTHAMPTON
11 45 PM
19 MAY
1939
S.W.1.

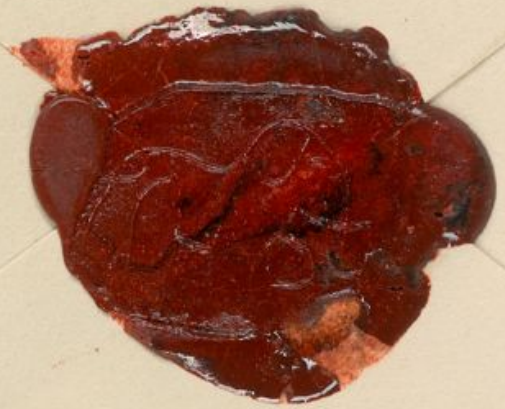
Miss Emily Hale,

22 Paradise Road,

NORTHAMPTON,

Massachusetts,

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



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CRITERION
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TELEGRAMS: FABBAF, WESTCENT, LONDON

24 RUSSELL SQUARE,
LONDON, W.C.1

My Dearest.

19 May 1939.

Your letter of May 9th arrived to-day, in time for me to reply tonight by the Bremen, and so assure you once more that English mails are still being delivered faithfully by German vessels. I was very glad to have it; but, dear me, how uncertain and difficult this summer is to arrange. I can understand Dr.Perkins's greater hesitations as he ages, but I hope that nothing will disturb him further between now and the end of the month. Perhaps I shall have more news from Mrs.Seaverns when I dine with her on the 24th. Also, I do not know whether Marion and Dodo are coming or not: that depends, not so much on fears of war, as on the latter's position, and apparently she won't know until June. In any case, I cannot make any definite plans for what to do with them until they come. I have a recommended address in Woodbridge, Suffolk; and the Tandys now have a large cottage in Dorset, where they could take paying guests. I thought of trying a week with them at each. If you and they should come, and not the Perkins's, and you were here only for July, I should aim to do my going away with them in August. Anyway, there is nothing to be done about it at present.

I am rather doubtful about Murdock for such a position! but I have never quite made him out - or quite taken to him either.

I am glad to hear of seasonable weather with you. Here, after another cold spell, very rainy, it has begun to get a little milder again to-day. I went to Felsted School in Essex on Tuesday, and inauguratedthe new "Literary Society" just formed there, giving some twenty boys an informal talk about the purpose and conduct of Literary Societies, with a few "don'ts", and everybody seemed pleased. A couple of the junior masters expressed pleasure at my commending P.G. Wodehouse as a master of style. I had a very cordial note of thanks from Bickersteth afterwards. This weekend I must go to the Mirrlees's in Surrey and next week to Herbert Read's at Jordans: both I do unwillingly, and therefore go on Saturday afternoon instead of Friday. The Reads, however, are

taking me to a Toscanini concert on Sunday (Whitsun). I am extremely busy trying to get my Cambridge lectures polished off for press by the end of June: both they and the Cats are supposed to appear in the autumn.

I read your review of "Dangerous Corner" with much approval - that is, never having seen the play, and of course knowing nothing of this production, I can only say that it is a model of form and balance of attention between production and individual actors. As is right with a revival of an old play, you avoided criticising the play itself: I wish that London reviewers would be equally restrained. I wish that you could review better plays and in more conspicuous places. Not that I know anything about the play: and at the moment I am on the best of terms with Priestley - they have asked me to dine week after next. Anyway, I am glad that you should do reviewing from time to time, to keep your hand in. I imagine that in a small department like yours, where the heads are well dug in and are not so brilliant as to be snatched away by other institutions, progress is slow; but I am happy and proud that you have made such a success of what you have had to do, all the more in a way because it is not the work congenial to you.

Boerre seems to me a hopelessly disorderly dog, but perhaps he is none the less lovable.

I am glad you reminded me about Georgie Powell, who had slipped my mind: but oh dear how many letters shall I have to read through to find your first instructions! It is my own fault for not sending off the books at once.

Always your devoted

Tom

By German packet EUROPA.

SOUTH KENSINGTON
26 MAY
1939
S.W.7.

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,

26 May 1939.

Your letter of the 16th arrived, and I can assure you that there has been a letter every week, but sometimes it arrives a post or two after I have written. I apologise for having asked you to cable, and I hope you will remember the cost so that I can refund it. I should have made a note of Georgianna (it doesn't look quite right, but that is how it was in the cable) at the time. The books went off last night, so they should arrive in good time.

Mrs.Seaverns, who seemed in pretty good shape, considering that she had been having a great do with International Women's Clubs the previous week, had heard from Mrs.Perkins, and confirmed your statement of their arrival on June 5th. She added that they were going straight to Campden, but I suppose that Mrs.Perkins will be up in town one day not long after that, otherwise I shall probably not see them until you are here. It is a relief to have all this settled. Mrs.Seaverns seems to be expecting you at Millbank for a week. My evening for dining with her fell out well, as Jim had left that morning to fly to Australia for six months, and I think she was rather depressed by that. She wants to go to Campden for the first two weeks of August, if she can be taken then. Parrott is as active as ever, it seems.

So you will be sailing on the Aquitania on the 17th June. And I shall be here to meet you on the 23d or 24th. On the 3d July I must be in Leeds for a night (I hope, with the Dobrées) to receive a Litt.D. from that University! - otherwise I have made no engagements after the middle of June. Ivor Richards tells me that I shall have to go down to Cambridge for a night, at some time within the next three weeks, to be inducted into an Honorary Fellowship of Magdalene, but I have had no official notification of it yet: that would be a very agreeable kind of honour, more gratifying than any degree.

I only regret that you cannot arrive before my family, so that we could lay our plans fully first; but I shall try to follow your injunction not to give them too much time! I hope that I shall just have finished putting my lectures in order, and designing a

cover for Cats, before the summer begins. There will have been no time for that holiday by myself.

The Richards's also are going to America, though only definitely for three years, and are to be at Harvard. He seems very pleased with the prospect. They have been out of England so much that I can hardly say that I shall miss them badly, much as I like them. The Morleys' leaving is a very different affair; we shall not see clearly until into the winter how the business is going to settle down without him. He was invaluable, and in particular to my own designs, as he could be relied upon to support any of the books that I especially wanted to publish; and we were apt to agree in opposing certain others. The chief burden that his leaving will impose upon me is that I shall have to take on the personal dealings with several authors whom he handled, whom no one else can handle so well - such as Ezra, a peculiarly difficult case.

This weekend to the Reads, the following to the Maxses, and the third - the last one visiting - to the Morleys. The weekend at the Mirrlees passed off very pleasantly: Mrs.M., though a Christian Scientist, is a very hearty normal old lady, with about the same degree of domestic luxury as Mrs.Seaverns: that is, every comfort, but not the magnificence of the very rich that becomes a strain: just a simple menage, with three or four maids indoors, a chauffeur, a large car, and two or three gardeners - simple comforts - and breakfast in one's room (a bath to oneself) and one doesn't make an appearance until about eleven o'clock. Ordinarily, going for a walk with Hope is rather exhausting, because she spends most of her time calling her dachshund, which gets lost, and eventually everyone gets lost, following the dog; but on this occasion the dog was just recovering from a major operation, and couldn't walk, so we we driven instead, and drove over to Winchester on Sunday afternoon. I note that Boerre continues to get into trouble, but I trust that nothing more will happen to him between now and the 17th June.

Well, my dear, I must remark that I shall be very glad to see you.

Your loving

Tom

COLNE VALLEY

PARCHMENT

MADE AT CROXLEY

Via Canada (EMPRESS OF BRITAIN)

SOUTH KENSINGTON
11 45 PM
2 JUN
1939
S.W.7.

NORTHAMPTON
JUN 13
1130 AM
MASS.
19

Miss Emily Hale,

To Rev. John C. Perkins ~~22 Paradise Road,~~

~~NORTHAMPTON,~~

Campden Gloucestershire ~~Massachusetts,~~

~~UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.~~

England

Reunion

The Family Reunion. T. S. Eliot. (Faber & Faber. 7s. 6d.)

Twenty-four hours after I had read Mr. Eliot's play, when I was doing something quite different, it returned with a sudden shock. Examining myself (as the Book of Common Prayer says) "truly and earnestly" to find out what had produced this "obscure sense of possible sublimity" I thought that perhaps it was the obscure sense of the word "expiation."

What we have written is not a story of detection,
Of crime and punishment, but of sin and expiation.
It is possible that you have not known what sin
You shall expiate, or whose, or why.

These perhaps are not the greatest lines in the play, but they are metropolitan—to it and to more than it. Mr. Eliot (if the least of his readers may say so) has always been dealing with a kind of moment, a Now, which he has put under different lights and in different circumstances. But what the moment was did not always seem clear. It is now becoming translucent. The values of this world were then turned on to that strange secret moment which is the soul. But now the values of the soul begin to show from within.

It is possible that sin may strain and struggle
In its dark instinctive birth, to come to consciousness
And so find expurgation.

This is not at all to say that these other values are any easier.

Liberty is a different kind of pain from prison.

Mr. Eliot is the most responsible of living poets; it is why if he says "liberty" one is terrified. He has rarely cared to take rhetorical chances in his verse, and certainly he has his reward. He has redeemed the word "expiation" from the classical scholars.

Harry, Lord Monchensey, returned to Wishwood, the house where his old mother, and his family, are waiting for him. He believes himself—But no: why try to separate Mr. Eliot's plot-sense from Mr. Eliot's sound? Let us all get it, if we wish to, by the only way it should be got. I would rather proceed with the reverie which the play induces.

The verse is, as it nearly always has been, a mingling of a ritual worked in some hollow cave of the soul with the music-hall song and with dinner-table conversation: not that they are necessarily different. There are moments when it might almost be itself a kind of curse, the intense accurate voice of a Calvinistic sorcerer ivoking horrors under "the smiling moon." There would be a flesh-creeping quality if it were not that the soul-creeping is more noticeable. But this soul-creeping has about it the noise of a greatness, both in the verse and of the soul.

In the end
That is the completion which at the beginning
Would have seemed the ruin.

That is terrible and consoling, and yet it is neither terrible nor consoling; it is of another kind. When Harry says

Now I know
That my business is not to run away but to pursue,
Not to avoid being found, but to seek,

the whole business of "seeking the Kingdom of God and his righteousness" becomes more awful. "It is at once the hardest thing and the only thing possible." That is what Mr. Eliot says—just says.

The curse fell on the family; and it is carried by the child from the womb. The curse is the struggling of the sin into consciousness, into expiation. The Eumenides pursue the innocent, and yet the innocent are not innocent, for they carry "the origin of wretchedness," which our fathers bore for us and we for them. The sin and the child are awfully united. "Am I my brother's keeper?"—it seems so, in a sense beyond all interpretations but such as this—and happiness is beyond even that.

"What if every moment were like that, if one were awake?"

CHARLES WILLIAMS.

or make constructive suggestions. Professor Seton-Watson may be a partisan by sentiment, but he is also a historian who knows the danger of attaching a too *simpliste* explanation to any happening. He goes, as some will think, to extreme lengths in his indictment of pacifism, even stigmatizing it as "subversive of the whole Christian faith". Those who hold that "nothing matters if only peace be saved" are myopic heretics in his judgment. Yet he does not blink the fact that their temper has for two decades been prevalent and at times preponderant among the democratic peoples. His quotation from Sydney Smith's century-old letter to Lady Grey, begging her to secure the Prime Minister's sword and pistols "as the housekeeper did Don Quixote's armour," betrays awareness that their mood is a spontaneous generation after every great war.

Mr. Zilliacus shuns all issues that might complicate his argument. Behind each concession or capitulation to the Axis Powers he sees "the vested interests of plutocracy," exactly as in resistance to them a Nazi would espy a Jew. All the same, he is convinced that the capitalists with their parliamentary puppets are plotting a war of their own for the days after tomorrow. Why they should prefer a war patently undertaken for colonies and commerce to one for which more generous pretexts might be urged is a problem to which he offers no satisfactory solution. Between an original *casus belli* and the spoils to which the victors hope to help themselves, there is no necessary relationship. Battles in one continent may decide the fate of another, and armament rings can draw as much profit from a crusade as from the most shameless smash and grab raid. Pitt won Canada upon the plains of Germany. Why have our millionaires and their accomplices missed so many opportunities for similar performances?

The answer is, of course, that circumstances have changed since the Marxian theories on which the author is relying were first propounded. A law of diminishing returns from conquest is now in operation; warfare has ceased to be good business. The very armament makers stand to gain more from occasional panics and the preparations for unfought wars than from actual outbreak of hostilities. Notoriously, there would be peace in the Far East today if the bankers and merchants of Japan had not been thrust aside by young warriors trained to contempt for trade and traders. Professor Seton-Watson holds that we are on the eve of a second 1848, and awards the future to those countries which "avoid internal complications and preserve their essential institutions". To Mr. Zilliacus, the institutions of capitalist society are at the root of our present troubles. He does not appear to have

some very good stuff in their various memories, real poetic feeling and understanding of character. But the form she has chosen is a tricky one and these "thoughts" are often too orderly and literary to produce any effect of real memory or indeed of vivid experience. All the bite is taken out of the thing.

There is bite and to spare about the stories in *Hope of Heaven*. Mr. O'Hara's characters, all wildly unsuitable for a minister's party except as lost to be saved, have the virtue of coming to life, their own crazy kind of life, as none of the Skye dreamers do. His method is the flexible one of direct conversation; his settings are chiefly Hollywood and New York, and his talkers are quick-witted, crude people, out to exploit their bodies and minds for pleasure and money: cars, food, drink and love fill up their unnoble days. Many of his tales are extremely short but in their three or four pages he manages to turn somebody inside out, show up self-deception, solid selfishness or permanent heartache behind a glittering façade. Love is, in fact, the Achilles heel of the worthless as of the good, and with all their promiscuity these people don't always escape the fate of loving in earnest with love that drink cannot cure. From the point of view of literature, by the way, M

"The Family Reunion" (Westminster)

Mr. T. S. Eliot's *The Family Reunion* achieves in a masterly fashion an effect of limpid depth. In the foreground is a family group, an English country-house family reunion, the different characters, uncles and aunts, well and sharply observed. But this setting is only the foreground. Through it the poet takes us to look

PUNCH *or The London Charivari*

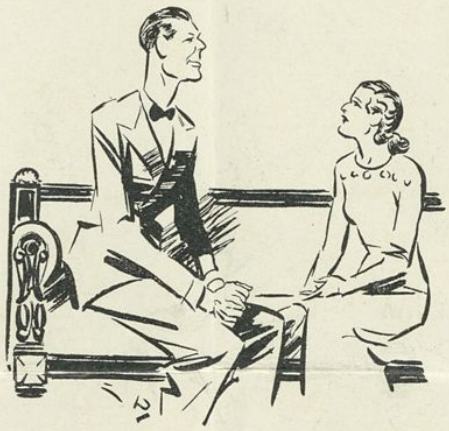
into the real depths of human nature, to show us how the superficial and apparent relationships and actions are not reality, and, in the central character of *Harry, Lord Monchensey* (Mr. Michael Redgrave), to show us the real life of the human soul living in a world peopled by other beings and under influences drawn from afar.

For these purposes a family with a full domestic life and many traditions and memories has been most skilfully chosen, representing in little the social framework and social pressure in which the human individual lives out his earthly existence. *Harry* is not only partly conscious in fields where most people have no consciousness at all, he also carries a special share of the evil inheritance of man, while the uncles and aunts and his mother are given too little interior life of their own. But the confusion for one evening's entertainment would have been intolerable if they were not so grouped and limited, and treated not as ends in themselves but as a setting in which we concentrate upon the central figure of the head of the house.

The evil which afflicts *Harry*, which has made him murder his wife, seems at first the more oppressive from being a social inheritance, but in the turning-point of the play the driven man turns from flight to pursuit as he realises that the fatalistic character of this evil also means that it is not essential to himself and that there is in himself the possibility of facing and opposing it.

We are led to think that his rôle is limited to that of expiation, that when he leaves the family home it is not to find any long lodging anywhere else on earth. His mother (Miss Helen Haye) has imagined that he can find his life in the life of the country-house which she has kept going for him and from which she has herself drawn vitality as well as conferring it. But, in fact, Wishwood, being the embodiment of the family, is also the embodiment of the burden of family sin. Here, as in innumerable points, the country-house of a well-to-do family is a symbol of larger societies which nourish man but which also maintain and carry in themselves dark legacies.

The language passes easily from conversation to a free verse which proves in Mr. Eliot's hands adequate to the most difficult tasks. When *Harry* is



CHILDHOOD REMINISCENCES

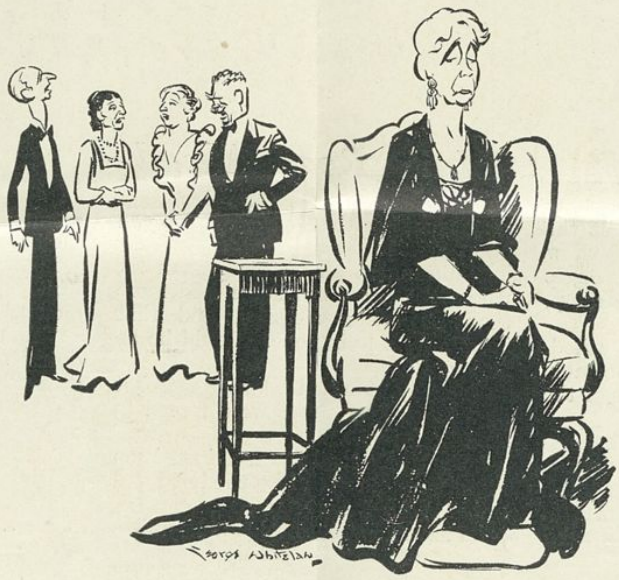
Harry, Lord Monchensey. Mr. Michael Redgrave
Mary . . . . . Miss Ruth Lodge

despairing of conveying at all to his relations the special stress which weighs upon him he exclaims that there must be some way of making language convey meaning; and Mr. Eliot, who has felt the difficulty, has mastered it. Except at one or two moments, as when the Eumenides appear, the transition from a country-house dialogue, often very entertaining on the plane of comedy, through acute observation of human relationships, to the high expression of spiritual truths is always natural and easy—the natural and the supernatural are never allowed to be two distinct worlds. The verse is packed with meaning and matter for thought, and it holds the attention through an evening in which there is little dramatic action. Most of the characters are assembled and displayed rather than used; they are not essential tools in the construction of the piece.

It would be easy to go to this play and to come away disappointed, reflecting that Ibsen, for example, never considered the depth of his themes as conferring an exemption from a dramatist's business of telling a story—and a story with suspense in it. But here the characters atone for the circumscribed action by the wide range and memorable distinction of the lines they speak.

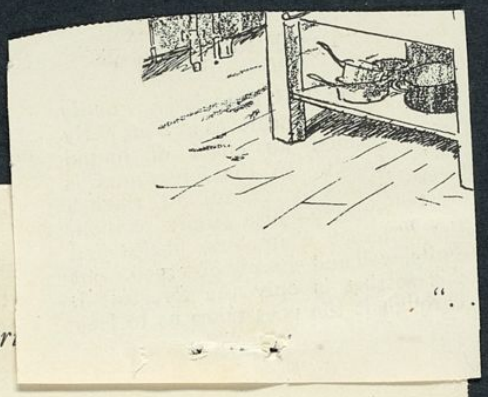
Whether it is, as one line phrases it, "the low conversation of triumphant aunts" (though the aunts have little triumph) or the descriptions of his master which the faithful chauffeur *Downing* (Mr. Robert Harris) is called upon to make, there is no character, except perhaps *Sergeant Winchell* (Mr. Charles Victor), who is not endowed from the poet's store with moments of perception and powers of language which arrest the attention and stir the mind.

The assembled family, in their smaller way, do illustrate the central truth which it is Mr. Michael Redgrave's achievement to illustrate in the person of *Harry*—the lot of fallen man and his need for grace, the way there is in each human life a vast past inheritance, at once a support and a menace, to be met and mastered, vicarious suffering and personal redemption. It is a difficult but a most rewarding evening, in which Miss Catherine Lacey and Miss Ruth Lodge in particular play distinguished parts. D. W.



THE FAMILY CHORUS AND THE MATRIARCH

The Hon. Charles Piper . . . . Mr. E. Martin Browne
Violet . . . . . Miss Marjorie Gabain
Ivy . . . . . Miss Henzie Raeburn
Col. the Hon. Gerald Piper . . . Mr. Colin Keith-Johnston
Amy, Dowager Lady Monchensey. Miss Helen Haye



PUNCH *or The London Charivari*

"What time do we 'ave to be 'ere to see 'em bury their 'eads in the sand?"

Major Road Ahead

THE tramp came aboard as the country was beginning to show through the hideous pink fringes of London. He looked like a tramp, anyway.

"Is this your caravan?" he asked, having made himself as comfortable as he could in the other corner of the driving-seat.

"It is not," I told him, "it belongs to a man I am beginning to dislike, who suggested if I cared for a little holiday I could drive it down to Sussex for him. When I accepted I was under the impression that thirty or forty miles a day was nothing to a good horse. I now know how wrong I was."

"Have you any idea why he is moaning so?" asked the tramp, lighting a short black pipe.

"None," I said, "he started it as soon as we left the town behind. But his general health seems good. Do you know about horses?"

"Nothing at all. I am a man for whom the horse has never had more than a passing message, and that invariably a losing one. Could he be hungry?"

"Hardly. He had a large breakfast at the hotel where we were forced to spend the night."

"I notice it is all you can do to keep him from pulling us into the left-hand ditch. Why is that?"

"I have no idea," I told him, "unless it is some primitive political bias. It has never left him since we started out yesterday morning, and whatever it is my right arm is growing very tired of it."

The spring sun, striking us warmly, caused my passenger to take off his ancient green hat and open his tattered jacket. We smoked in silence for some minutes, during which the moaning of the horse grew embarrassing. He was a huge brown creature with shaggy white spats and a chest like a locomotive's boiler.

"You do not think he could be dying of thirst?" asked the tramp dreamily.

"He drank several buckets of water at breakfast," I said.

"There is a pond. Let us offer him a drink, in case."

I steered over to the edge of the pond and stopped. The horse glared at it vacantly and went on moaning.

"What is his name?" asked the tramp, getting down.

"At the stables where my friend hired him they called him Herbert."

The tramp walked round to the front and looked him squarely in the eyes.

"Herbert," he said gravely, "this

THE

CRITERION

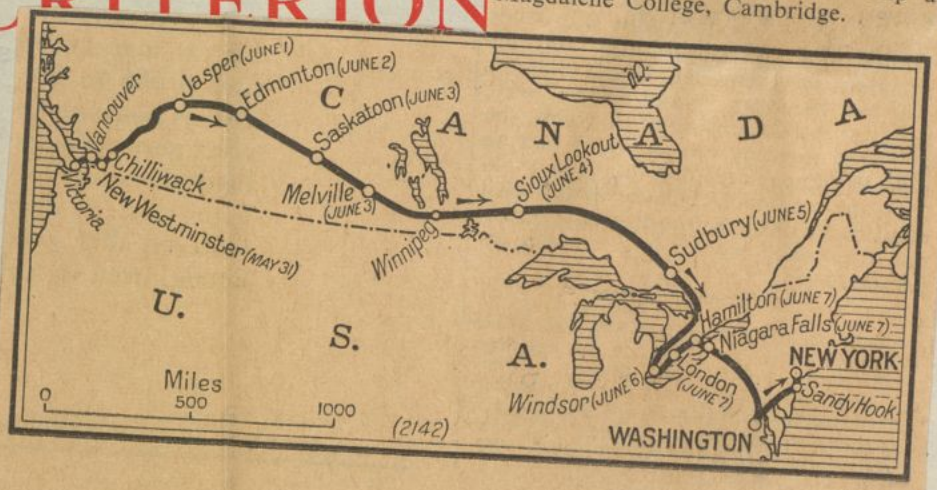
A

TELEPHONE: MUSEUM 9543

TELEGRAMS: FABBAF, WESTCENT,

CAMBRIDGE FELLOWSHIP FOR MR. T. S. ELIOT

Dr. Thomas Stearns Eliot has been elected to an Honorary Fellowship at Magdalene College, Cambridge.



Dearest,

I have now r
on the Aquitania,
arrive on the 20
me that if you p
for a night or t
if you stay in t
be better. I should like y
but I should also like you to stay longer; but if you
tired when you arrive, it might be best not to stop long in London, and I could come down for that weekend. I do not intend to leave London for more than a weekend or so, until the end of June, as I want to finish the notes to my Lectures for the printers. I expect to go to the Dobrées in Leeds for the weekend of the 1st July, as my degree is on the Monday, the 3d. I thought that after that I might take a week with my family at Southwold, Sussex, where I have the address of a good hotel, and then a fortnight at Campden just overlapping Mrs.S. who expects to be there for the first fortnight of August. While Mrs.S. is with you, I might take another week with the family somewhere else, though Polly Tandy doubts whether their house in Dorset would be comfortable enough for Marion - I may have to go down there for a night to find out. But I must wait until next week to decide, until I have corresponded with Mrs.Perkins and learnt when it suits her to have me. And I should be able to pay another visit to Campden towards the end of August.

Anyway, if you spend one or two nights in London on arrival, I CAN come to Campden for the first weekend.

I go to Cambridge on Wednesday to be "received" at Magdalene.

The Morleys have had misfortunes. Oliver was taken to the London Fever Hospital with scarlet fever, and on the same day came the news of his mother's death in Baltimore. This was a kind of relief, as she had been suffering a great deal with cancer for the past year or more, and he had had a good deal of distress over her, of which I will tell you more when we meet. (It is pleasant now to be able to postpone things for conversation!)

CRITERION

A QUARTERLY REVIEW

EDITED BY T. S. ELIOT

TELEPHONE: MUSEUM 9543
TELEGRAMS: FABBAF, WESTCENT, LONDON

24 RUSSELL SQUARE,
LONDON, W.C.1

Count Stanislas Zamoyski and Count Jan Tiszkiewicz have been killed in a crash near Lublin in a [illegible] had flown

attentions were unwelcome and that his note had been torn up and thrown away. Later, at the Commissariat of Police, she suggested that any one so stupid had no right to pay any attention to a lady at all. Even the traditional balance of the legal mind broke down before this final thrust, and the young lawyer is at present inconsolable.

and generation or only to a great hel and profit to the chases and commo colts unpromising, be destroyed. R 2,000 lbs. of doci fostered

Dearest,

2 June 1939.

I have now memorised the fact that you are to be expected on the Aquitania, sailing June 14th, and suppose that you should arrive on the 20th. As for where you should stay, it seems to me that if you propose to stop, on this occasion, only in town for a night or two, you might as well have Emperor's Gate; but if you stay in town longer, Millbank would, in the circumstances, be better. I should like you to occupy these rooms, of course, but I should also like you to stay longer; but if you are very tired when you arrive, it might be best not to stop long in London, and I could come down for that weekend. I do not intend to leave London for more than a weekend or so, until the end of June, as I want to finish the notes to my Lectures for the printers. I expect to go to the Dobrées in Leeds for the weekend of the 1st July, as my degree is on the Monday, the 3d. I thought that after that I might take a week with my family at Southwold, Sussex, where I have the address of a good hotel, and then a fortnight at Campden just overlapping Mrs.S. who expects to be there for the first fortnight of August. While Mrs.S. is with you, I might take another week with the family somewhere else, though Polly Tandy doubts whether their house in Dorset would be comfortable enough for Marion - I may have to go down there for a night to find out. But I must wait until next week to decide, until I have corresponded with Mrs.Perkins and learnt when it suits her to have me. And I should be able to pay another visit to Campden towards the end of August.

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So you have just a fortnight more - less, 12 days. I can hardly imagine it.

Your loving

Tom.

I shall say: "I am glad to see Em".

By French packet NORMANDIE

Miss Emily Hale,

S/S "AQUITANIA",

(Tourist cabin 143),

Sailing June 14th,

Cunard-White Star Docks

NEW YORK CITY

U.S.A.

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 Emily.

6 June 1939.

I was glad to get your letter of the 29th to-day. I am now only writing a short note, because I doubt whether you can get this before you sail, and I shall in any case boil it down for a cable - a long one! It is going to be very odd this year, because Marian and Dodo will arrive on the 19th, and you on the 20th. So I agree about your going to Mrs. Seaverns on arrival: but I will meet you, at whatever time the Aquitania arrives, and I am ready to come for the weekend to Campden if Mrs Perkins will have me. It will be a very divided week at best, and I think I am entitled to the weekend. Then we can arrange the summer. I am writing tonight to Mrs. Perkins: I sent a telegram for Dr. Perkins's birthday..

I have sweet peas in my room. My next ten days are pretty full, but after the 20th I have my diary clear.

A heat wave has come in full violence: I hope that it will last for you. A temperature of 82 in the shade feels a little too hot, however.

Second thoughts: I will send this to the Aquitania, as a steamer letter, and cable to Northampton.

I do hope the books arrived in time. I was very stupid.

So now bon voyage!

I am very glad you have a cabin to yourself.

Your Tom

11

Miss Emily Hale,

Stamford House,

Chipping 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

The address is
c/o Dorothy Sowerby
Cottingham
Leeds.

Dearest.

29 June 1939.

I had my first evening at home last night, but was too tired to attempt anything but a few business notes. After the business of the committee, John Hayward arrived to be shown over the premises and be introduced to some of the staff, followed by sherry and the presentation by him to the Chairman of a privately printed volume of verses exchanged between some of us on several occasions. Tuesday was tiring, but satisfactory: a good day for Dulwich, which I think they enjoyed, as much the curious charm of the village as the paintings, with lunch at the tea room which you will remember; then back to take Morley to tea with the Woolfs, and back to dress for dinner and a very good ballet - three ballets all of which were new to me, and the "Coq d'Or" especially agreeable in its décor and pageantry. Tonight I dine with them at their hotel, tomorrow with Sidney Waterlow, and Saturday morning to Leeds. I have no knowledge of who the other graduands will be. I should be interested to see Kennedy.

You say nothing in your welcome letter received this morning, of confirmation of the tentative dates - though by implication I understand that I shall be expected on the 7th, and very impatient I am for that date to arrive. I should like to get the second visit arranged before I come, so as to be able to fix with the Fabers, who would like me to come for the preceding week - which suits us both very well, I think: I know that I prefer to be proceeding from Wales to Campden, rather than vice versa. It is very odd (as well as natural) even to think of you as now at Campden. I wish the weather were better for you, but it is more important that there should be some warm starry evenings for the garden after I arrive.

Last week is more satisfactory in retrospect than it was at the time: one can balance one moment against another; Osterley will always be a happy memory, and the few minutes the final evening cast a glow over everything that preceded. That was the first really restful and serene moment. But we shall have a happier time next week. I am glad of your news of the Perkins's; and I hope that Mrs. Perkins will bet more repose.

I shall try to write again before I go.
Your very loving Tom.

Miss Emily Hale,

Stamford House,

Chipping 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

6 July 1939.

My Dear,

This is the first opportunity to write since last week, and all that really matters is to thank you for the letter which I found on my return from Leeds, and to say that I am impatiently awaiting the 4.45 train tomorrow afternoon. On returning on Tuesday morning I had some vestry business waiting for me, and at the end of the afternoon was driven down to Much Haddam for the De la Mares' dinner for the Morleys. I stayed the night with them, and on returning again yesterday morning, looked in for half an hour on Marian, as they were leaving for Cambridge after lunch, and then went on to my oculist for a final examination of my eye, with atropine, or whatever it is that they enlarge the iris with. He finally pronounced, to my great relief, that my right eye has suffered no further damage since it was affected by teeth-poisoning in 1925. The the committee, and then the Mannheims' to dinner - in Golder's Green. This afternoon I have to see a man about a refugee, drop in on the Stuart Moores, dine with the Woolfs, and leave them to see the Morleys off at King's Cross. Even to go away for three weeks, one ought to have a whole week in which to clear up beforehand.

Now a practical point. I have to join my family at Southwold on the 22nd, so I shall probably have to leave you on the evening of the 20th, so as to get a whole day in town before going away again. Then, I do not seem to have made myself clear about the Faber visit. I can't go to them until the 12th August, as I must be in town for a time in August, which means that I shall get to Campden a week later, on the 19th, for a week. I thought that we worked this out, and agreed that I could give Mrs. Seaverns a miss, in view of the special complications of this summer. I hope that this will be allright, and that you can carry out your intention of coming to town for a few days before the 12th August, and getting away to the sea - if possible, or somewhere else - during Mrs.S.'s stay. As for the weekends in September, until you sail, you may be sure that I shall not engage them, and hope that I may come to Campden on the 1st for the weekend, and then you will spend a night or two in town before you sail.

I enclose a photograph of Leeds. As for your apple-sauce, gaze on my portrait here: I fear that your eyes are deteriorating - I hope, only when I am the object looked on.

Book sent off to Scripps. The cheque more than covers the cost. I should have been glad to present the book myself, and am sorry that it is paid for.

And now I shall leave you till tomorrow night. It has been pouring with rain, but just at this moment the sun has peeped, and you may be sure that I am placing hopes in the weather tomorrow night, for the sake of the moment under the yew tree.

Lovingly & impatiently

Tom

Miss Emily Hale,

Stamford House,

CAMPDEN,

Gloucestershire.

MUSeum 9543 (4 lines)
FABBAF, WESTCENT, LONDON
G.C. Faber, chairman
C.W. Stewart
R.H.I. de la Mare
F.V. Morley (U.S.A.)
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24 RUSSELL SQUARE LONDON W.C.1

My Dearest.

24 July 1939.

Your letter was very welcome, and a surprise although expected and looked for. I was very tired on arrival - in spite of Campden; but I had a very busy day on Friday - the Portuguese DID turn up, as you said they would, and therefore I had to do one or two things on Saturday morning that I should otherwise have done on Friday - and got here just in time for dinner on Saturday - then had a long nap on Sunday afternoon and had no time to myself in which to write, after dealing with some urgent business correspondence about the catalogue and about the Portuguese. This is a great change from the Cotswolds, and as Southwold is on the sea, there is some of the sordor that seems inevitable at the seaside - a long line of shabby or ugly bungalows outside the town and along the beach. The domestic architecture is inferior to that of Gloucestershire; but there is a magnificent flint and rubble church: the tower not comparable to Campden, but the inside very beautiful and well kept up, glittering with colour and gold, and a glorious fifteenth century rood screen. This morning we walked to Walberswick to see a rather fine little church there; and tomorrow, if the weather is not too foul, we take a car to see Lavenham, Long Melford, Framlingham, and perhaps other famous towns and churches. There are I think enough bus excursions to fill the other days; and I am glad to say that Marian needs a rest after lunch when she can get it, so I shall have plenty of rest. The weather is incessantly showery, with "bright intervals", but these very short.

I wish very much that you could be here instead, or even with, of course, and it seems absurd that you cannot be here and share the new scenery and architecture and sea air; but I did feel that they would feel defrauded unless they had a spell with me alone. You have been very patient about this necessity of the summer, and I hope you realise what a deprivation it is for me! My fortnight provided some very happy hours, as you know, and more of the experiences that cannot be forgotten: among excursions, the Hayles Abbey day, with the walk across the meadows to Winchcombe, will be one of the very best. (By the way, I have not forgotten to write to Mrs. Perkins, but I will do that tomorrow. I approve of your writing to Mrs. Seaverns. She is a spoiled child, but with spoiled

children of her age the only thing is to go on spoiling them, as far as is compatible with a proper attention to one's own interests. The sad thing about old people is also the irritating thing - that very rarely can they be changed or change themselves. As a general rule, it seems better to make deliberate sacrifices than to yield to impositions: they must be coddled and resisted.

I shall write again while here. I look forward to Monday evening. And I was very happy at Campden.

Your devoted

Tom

COLNE VALLEY

PARCHMENT

MADE AT CROXLEY

Miss Emily Hale,

Stamford House,

CAMPDEN,

Gloucestershire.

26 July 1939.

Dearest Sue,

Marian was very pleased by getting your card. The sun shone beautifully all day yesterday for them, and I hired a car for the day. We drove to Hadsleigh, Lavenham, Long Melford, and back by Needham Market and Framlingham Castle: getting a good conspectus of Suffolk scenery at its best, and seeing some beautiful things. Lavenham village is one of the most beautiful in England, and as for the church, there is nothing to surpass it. I was quite unprepared for its loveliness and its state of preservation. Campden tower is more majestic, but the church, as well as the church at Long Melford, surpasses anything that I have seen in the west. The wood carving of the roofs of the Suffolk churches are very fine and very well preserved; in the Lady Chapel, of peculiar design, at Long Melford, there are more than traces of very jolly colouring. I more than ever regretted that you were not with us; I hope that I may some day take you to these same places, or alternatively (a poor alternative) that you may see them even without me. The inland country of the county is undulating, less spoilt by bungalows, cabins, caravans and litter than the flat seacoast, and to my mind more pleasing. To-day is dull, and after lunch we go for the afternoon to Lowestoft.

Bother and more bother. Dodo is coming up to town with me on Monday to go to the dentist, and stopping the night for a final visit to him on Tuesday. I shall tell her that I am engaged for Monday evening. But on Monday also my other niece, the one I hardly know and don't so much care about, is arriving with her husband, and I shall have to ask them to tea at the office one day, and to dinner one evening. What a complicated summer this is. But I shall count upon seeing you either at lunch or tea every day. It is a nuisance having to go to Cambridge for the bank holiday weekend; I hope that you have been able to arrange to visit Maura Gwynne then. I try not to be impatient, and to make the best of the situation. I hope for another letter or note from you tomorrow.

Your loving
Tom