

Letters from T.S. Eliot to Emily Hale

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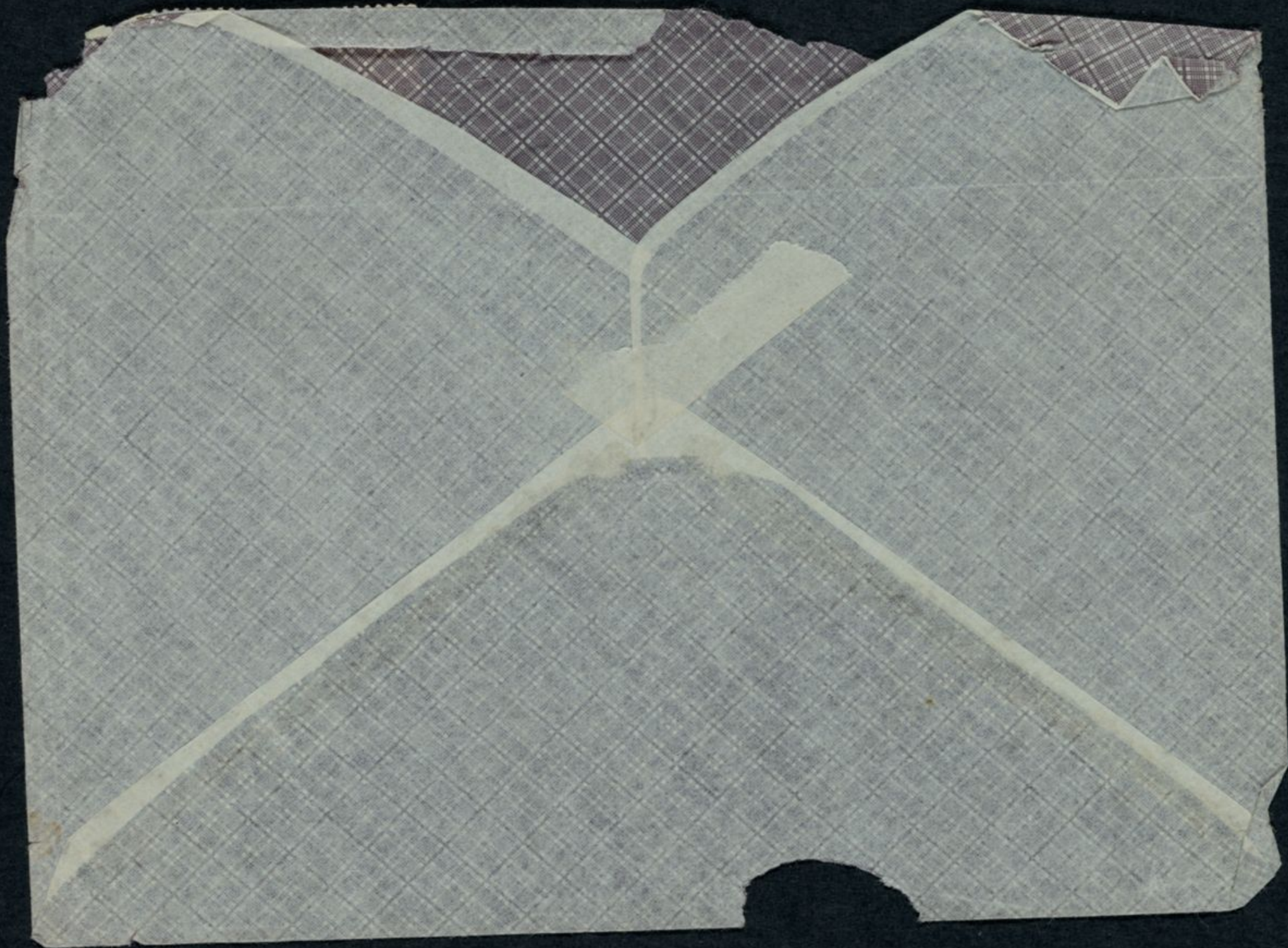
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Surrey.



Miss Emily Hale,
c/o The Revd. J.C. Perkins, D.D.,
90 Commonwealth Avenue,
BOSTON,
Massachusetts,
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.



Shamley,

Letter 22.

1 January 1943.

Dear

I was more happy and relieved than I can tell you to receive your two last letters from Grand Manan, the 15 and the 25 of November simultaneously. I was rather glad that the first was delayed so as to arrive with the other, because, in spite of your cable, I should have been distressed at reading of the long period when no letters arrived. I hope that my Christmas cable arrived in due time: I thought of sending another, for New Year's Day, to let you know of the receipt of these letters; but I understand that so many cables were being sent this year that there might be considerable delay, and it did not seem right to add to the volume with which the post office and the censors have to cope.

I am also glad to see your handwriting gradually returning to normal. We must expect, I fear, that letters will be very slow for some time to come, though three weeks for air mail no longer seems surprising, in view of some of the delays I have heard of. My writing to Boston was due to a doubt whether you would find Grand Manan the right place, and might leave earlier than you expected.

To say that your second letter made my happy does not seem quite the right expression, except in so far as one means by happiness the best that is possible in the circumstances. There are things that one will say in a letter when there is a definite prospect of meeting in the future at some probable date, even when it may be a year ahead; but, especially at the beginning of the war, which I felt would probably be a long one - with the prospect of increasing restriction of movement, and knowing also that I should not feel easy in conscience in leaving England for any time unless in some public service, I was apprehensive of creating, or increasing, any misunderstanding which only conversation could clear up. On the deepest level, as you should know, my feelings remain always unchanged. But the sense of happiness (on balance) and pride, and of all the benefits reaped, has to be felt to be to some degree mutual; and when one fears that they have been only on one's own side, the fountain dries and the flowers fade and one suspects that it has all been an illusion. The worst nightmare is that in which it appears that ~~XXXXXXXX~~ what one had thought was give and take (not that this quantitative, measuring way of putting it is at all adequate) was all taking and no giving, or giving of something which was not the best thing or the thing wanted. But in any case, you must be sure of my love which no change of aging or maturing can alter.

*I am so glad to know you have
made up a little weight!*

*Your loving
Tom*

from T.S. El...
Shamley Wood,
Shamley Green,
Guildford, Surrey



Miss Emily Hale,
c/o the Revd. J.C. Perkins, D.D.,
90 Commonwealth Avenue,
BOSTON,
Massachusetts,

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

EXAMINER 6265

51-400. L.B. (A-u-L) Ltd.

P.C. 90

OPENED BY

Shamley,
10 January 1943.

Letter 73.

My love,

Since I last wrote I had two days in bed with a cold, not as severe as usual, because no temperature, just an acute cold in the head with much catarrh. How I caught it I don't know. It was enough to keep me away from London all the week, because if I am not able to get up by Wednesday it is not worth while going at all. I shall go again tomorrow: an additional reason for not going up last week with a cold was that the Fabers were not to be there, which would have meant going out for my dinner in the evening. Of course I forgot the charwoman's address (to put her off) and of course the telephone went out of order so that I could not ring up the Fabers to ask, and of course the person who took my telegram to the post office sent it to the wrong address: but I finally got the address I wanted (Rialto Road, Mitcham, pronounced Ry-al-to), I hope in time. Since I have been up, I have been toiling to clear up various long arrears of private correspondence; and, for the first time since I can remember, I think I am at present square; but have probably forgotten some, and I forgot important points in two letters, & I shall have to write again; and anyway, there will be a great accumulation waiting at the office, including answers to some of my letters of last week - such as the headmaster who wanted me to come and talk about Reconstruction, and the other master who sent me his scheme for the foundation of a new kind of public school, etc. I hope that the copies of "Little Gidding" which I sent off to America in November have arrived; for until you have seen that you cannot form any opinion as to the title to be given to the four poems when Harcourt Brace publish them as a book together in the spring. You know I wanted to call it "Kensington Quartets", but nobody I could consult, or Morley on that side, likes "Kensington". Some said it suggested Peter Pan, others that it suggested shabby genteel respectability, some found it distinctly comic. I still like it, and I say that Kensington is what I choose to make it, and these inconvenient associations in people's minds only matter for the first few months anyway. I have given way, but I refuse to accept Morley's suggestion "Night Music" which is too fancy. I want something reserved and demure, with no pretense about it. Morley says his eldest boy is already wanting to join the Canadian Air Force. It is appalling to think that one can begin to be a pilot so young, and that most men are too old at thirty.

The gaps between writing and receiving letters seem longer than ever since you went to Grand Manan, whence came your last letters; it is now a fortnight since Christmas, and I know nothing of your movements since you returned to Boston. I suppose that you saw your doctors at once, and that they have formed some opinion about your improvement, and consequently about what plans you can make for the rest of the winter. My dear, I wish that I knew enough to advise, but very much more that I could help; that at least, I could be near you from time to time, and see you engaged, and a little participate, in the active and useful life you need; though what I most like to think of, is not so much your directing dramatic activities in a girls' college, as directing and meddling in all the affairs of a village (preferably

of course as the lady of the Manor) and taking that kind and helpful interest in everybody's affairs (especially the lame ducks) which you exercised so beautifully at Campden. The impossible sometimes seems very little to ask.

Did you ever receive the second copy of Kipling which I sent you?

with tenderest thoughts

Tom

of course as the lady of the house and taking care of her and children
in it in everybody's interest especially the little ones who you
referred to recently at London. The important question there
was this in fact.

Did you ever receive the second copy of the book which I sent you?

My dear wife
Love

~~My dear wife
Love~~

~~My dear wife
Love~~

~~My dear wife
Love~~

~~My dear wife
Love~~

from T.S. Eliot,
Shamley Wood,
Shamley Green,
Guildford, Surrey



Miss Emily Hale,

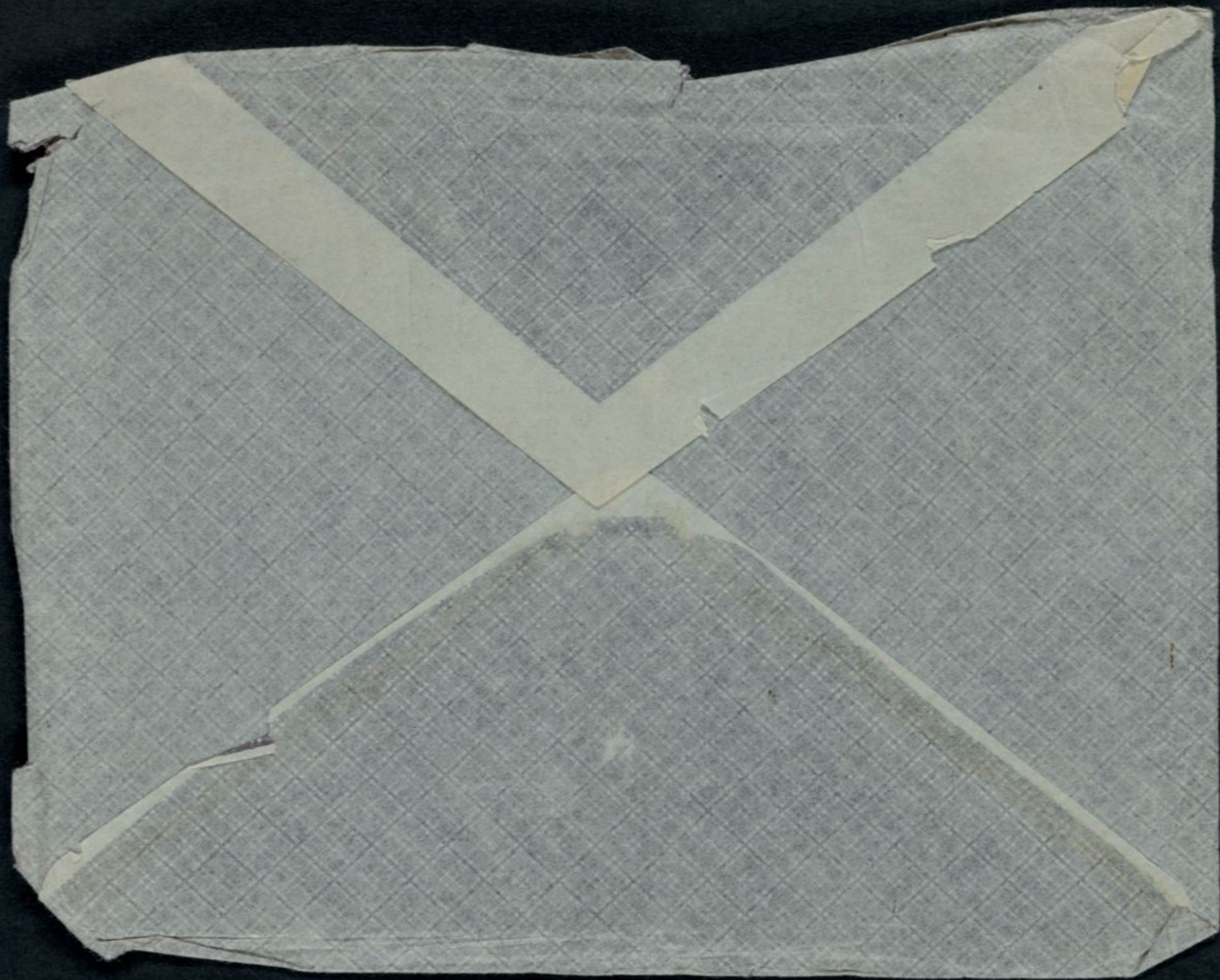
c/o the Revd. J.C. Perkins, D.D.,

90 Commonwealth Avenue,

BOSTON,

Massachusetts,

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.



Letter 24.

Shamley,
24 January 1943.

Dearest,

I have had a rather crowded fortnight, especially as last weekend I was hovering on the verge of a cold or chill, so spent a good deal of the time in precautionary resting - and in replenishing my quinine bottle in London learned that I might soon be unable to get any more, so I must be all the more careful; and having two very full periods in London - one morning spent with an ecclesiastical meeting, another visiting Cheetham, whom I found just recovering from a chill of his own, but just as loquacious as ever - and having an important deputation to Lambeth next Thursday which I do not want to miss, I refrained from going to church this morning - the morning walk in the dark on a winter's morning, though it is hardly more than a mile each way, is sometimes an extra fatigue on an empty stomach - and having three speaking engagements at the end of the month crowded together. I mean, at the end of February: the first, and easiest, I have just written out, a talk on Poe for the Indian Broadcast (I only do this because I think it is worth while to show friendliness to the Indian public at the present time); the second, a talk to the Norwegian Institute on The Social Function of Poetry (the subject their own choice), is another task which one would not undertake in normal times; the third, involving the most careful preparation, is a lecture for Reading University - this was the first of the engagements to be made, and was undertaken because I know one of the professors there and had declined the same invitation a year ago: that is to be on The Poetical and the Prose Use of Words - they inform me that Dorothy Sayers talked on the same subject, but they don't mind, and I don't mind either, because I do not see that Dorothy Sayers can know very much about the subject. And only when these three jobs are prepared can I get back to the essay I want to write, or the small book, I mean.

I have been much concerned about Ada lately. She has had some trouble with her back, which has been very painful and kept her altogether on her back. They call it arthritis, and seem to be fairly sure that it is not a recurrence of the cancer in a different place; but I fear that at her age an additional ailment may lower her general resistance. She is evidently not able to write letters: all that I have had is Sheff's of the 24 December. I hope that you will be seeing (that you have already seen) Henry and Theresa, though I am not sure that they are very good judges of illness.

I have had your first letter since your return from Grand Manan: I am not quite sure that I have received every letter you have written. Letters from Massachusetts will no doubt be quicker. Your letter was from New Bedford, and I gather from it that you will have been there about three weeks (it was postmarked "South Dartmouth", I did not know there was a Dartmouth in Massachusetts). It is very distressing to me to think of your having to lead such a nomadic existence - I don't consider that you need any "lesson" of the sort!) so that since last June I have never been sure where you were at the moment of writing any letter to you. I, at least, have a regular routine, though I know no more than you what I shall do when the war is over. The present prospect is that small flats are very difficult to secure; also servants. When I do take a flat, I shall be limi-

21 January 1942

Letter 24

Dear

I have had a rather crowded fortnight, especially at last week - I was involved on the night of a job at Hill, so went to bed at the end of the week, and in consequence I have not had a chance to write to you for some time. I have been very busy in London - one evening spent with an ecclesiastical meeting, another visiting Gurney, whom I found just recovering from a chill of his own, and just as I was about to go to bed I had to get up to see to the arrangements for the next morning - the morning with which I have been so busy for some time. I have been very busy in the last few days, in connection with the arrangements for the next few days, and in consequence I have not had a chance to write to you for some time. I have been very busy in London - one evening spent with an ecclesiastical meeting, another visiting Gurney, whom I found just recovering from a chill of his own, and just as I was about to go to bed I had to get up to see to the arrangements for the next morning - the morning with which I have been so busy for some time. I have been very busy in the last few days, in connection with the arrangements for the next few days, and in consequence I have not had a chance to write to you for some time.

I have been very busy in London - one evening spent with an ecclesiastical meeting, another visiting Gurney, whom I found just recovering from a chill of his own, and just as I was about to go to bed I had to get up to see to the arrangements for the next morning - the morning with which I have been so busy for some time. I have been very busy in the last few days, in connection with the arrangements for the next few days, and in consequence I have not had a chance to write to you for some time.

I have had your letter about your return from David's house. I am glad to hear that you are all well, and I hope you will have a very successful year. I have been very busy in London - one evening spent with an ecclesiastical meeting, another visiting Gurney, whom I found just recovering from a chill of his own, and just as I was about to go to bed I had to get up to see to the arrangements for the next morning - the morning with which I have been so busy for some time. I have been very busy in the last few days, in connection with the arrangements for the next few days, and in consequence I have not had a chance to write to you for some time.

ted, probably for some time to come, to a furnished flat; for I have no furniture, and there is none to be bought. If, however, I could find something in the country, a small cottage, the flat at 23 Russell Square would do for two or three nights a week as at present, but it is too cramped for a whole time abode. And small cottages are not going to be easily obtainable either. So it is just no use looking ahead.

In your letter you refer to the death of Miss Sunderland-Taylor. I wrote so long ago about it, enclosing a cutting which Meg sent me, that it seems very strange that you should not have had my letter. I imagine that the delays now, must be due to the immense quantity of mail that probably goes by air. I am indeed glad that we had that last weekend with her: it gave me such a very pleasant impression of her, and of her tact and understanding.

It is good that you have gained weight; you could no doubt do with a good many more pounds. And I wish that you could be where you could have Børre with you.

I was only rather puzzled by the "self-centredness": I don't imagine that I am any more immune to that fault than anybody else, and when it appears I want to be reminded of it, but I did not understand it in that context - I mean, the suggestion, as I understood it, that my religious feeling was of an egotistical kind. If so, it is to that degree a false devotion and something that needs correction. I know that my temperament is a rather sombre one, so my faith may take a sombre tinge - that has been criticised, in recent poems, by one or two men who must be a good deal farther advanced in the religious life than I. Perhaps it belongs more to the faith of my seventeenth century ancestors than to the form of Christianity to which I adhere! And you must remember, my dear, that what pain I felt was so inextricably involved with the feeling of your pain, and of pain I might be giving you, that I could not tell which was which. That being so, you must not be afraid of causing me pain by anything you say. However one knows a person, and however much one cares, there is always more to learn, and something unknown; and anything that helps me to understand you better, is always a precious experience.

Your very devoted
Rosa

... probably for some time to come to a finished thing for I have
no finished, and more in hope to be finished. If, however, I could
find something in the country, a small cottage, the first at least
I would like to see or three or four a week as at present, and
is foregone for a whole time. And small cottages are not
likely to be easily obtainable. So if I have no more looking
ahead.

In your letter you refer to the death of Miss Sumner-Taylor.
I wrote as long ago about it, and having a cutting which had sent me,
that it seems very strange that you should not have had my letter.
I imagine that the delay was due to the fact that you had
of mail that probably goes by rail. I am indeed glad that we had
that first evening with her. It was a very pleasant occasion
of her, and of her face and understanding.

It is good that you have found what you could do with
a good many more people. And I wish that you could be where you could
have more with you.

I was only partly satisfied by the "self-contradictions" I don't imagine
that I am any more than to the fact that I don't understand it in that
sense I want to be reminded of it, but I did not understand it in that
context - I want, but I don't know, as I understand it, that it is
nothing was of an emotional kind. It is to be understood as a
developed and something that needs correction. I know that my temper-
ment is a rather soft one, so my Latin way is a serious thing - that
has been criticized, in some cases, by one or two men who must be a
good deal further advanced in the religious life than I. Perhaps it
is a sign of the fact that I am not a very serious person, and
the form of the matter, so which I don't know. And you must remember,
that what I said was so imperfectly involved with the fact
of the fact, and of course I don't know you, but I could not
tell which was which. That being so, you must not be afraid of say-
ing me what you say. However, one knows a person, and how
ever much one says, there is always more to learn, and something un-
known; and anything that helps me to understand you better, is always
a precious experience.

Yours very truly

John

EXAMINED BY

Tom T.S. Eliot,
Hamley Wood,
Hamley Green,
Windsor, Surrey.



Miss Emily Hale,

c/o the Revd. J.C. Perkins, D.D.,

90 Commonwealth Avenue,

BOSTON,

Massachusetts,

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

14555

Letter 25.

Shamley,
February 1. 1943.

My Dearest Emily.

I have your letter of December 19. I am very sorry to learn that you received no letters between those written on Oct. 26 and Nov. 24, but almost sorrier to find you entertaining the conjecture that I had let a month go by without writing. I find from my diary that I wrote at least two letters in between; possibly they will arrive out of order. As for the cables, they are sometimes garbled by the housekeeper (though I must say she is pretty good at it, and has practice in the past in taking down cables in French, which she doesn't understand); but my interpretations were based on the confirmations arriving from the postoffice the next day. In these days, one doesn't like to ask to have a cable repeated unless it is absolutely essential, and even then I don't know whether one would get it. Owing to the present situation in the traffic, I fear that we must reconcile ourselves to irregular mails and unintelligible cables for some time to come; and with other parts of the world it is still worse. I wrote to the Perkins's to thank them for their cables, when I did not cable in reply. I will cable you from London this week; it seems more reliable than from a village postoffice..

I can reassure you again about the warmth and comfort of the Russell Square flat. With that, and my office, I have really a more equable temperature than at Shamley; for the drawing room there is apt to be rather too hot (as the old ladies need it) and a bedroom with a northern exposure, on the top of a hill, even though sheltered by larches, is not easy to keep at the right temperature. (there are now five dogs in this establishment, one for each lady and one for the housekeeper, and it is too many for tranquillity. All the dogs are wholly spoiled except Margaret Behrens's). I have not had another cold lately. I am, however, wondering whether or not to go to Cambridge next weekend but one, to see the performance of "The Family Reunion" which the undergraduate Dramatic Society is doing. It might be an intelligent production (by George Rylands, a fellow of King's, whom I don't like), though the main parts are of course much too mature for such young folk. I had intended not to visit Cambridge this term, as it is so cold there; and my pleasure in going now would be less, so far as seeing John is concerned. Since her husband's death (as well as before) Mary Hutchinson has been living in the Rothschild house where John is, and as I have known her for ten years longer than John, she is likely to think that she has a prior claim on my time: besides, she is just as goosy as ever, and is likely to have her fashionable (pseudo-intellectual and sometimes somewhat parvenu) friends about. You may be pleased to hear that the Film is not quite dead: Mr. Hollering came to see me last week, and is coming again on Wednesday to run through the scenario with me. I shall have another shot at it - though I have other things to do which seem much more important to me - simply because Hollering is such a nice man, and so well meaning, and there isn't any other contemporary play about which would suit his purposes: and I could not bear to tell him that the film as an art form simply bores me.

I go now and again to a film with the Fabers out of complaisance, and I do enjoy a good "documentary"; but I can't take films any more seriously than detective stories - except that I can forget a detective story the moment I have finished it, while a film goes on for a long time filling one's memory with scenes that I should prefer to forget - and I always have the unpleasant feeling of having stored my mind with rubbish.

My dear, I hope that you feel more serene - as I am beginning to - in respect of the correspondence which we carried on under such great practical disadvantages. I am sure - and happy to have you say so in this letter - that the result should be a closer understanding and bond: and surely, the important thing is that mutual understanding and sympathy should go on developing to the end of life, rather than that it should be at any moment perfect - whatever is really established cannot be lost. At moments like those, I am perhaps more acutely aware of my own dependence upon you, when the support seems temporarily to have disappeared - like those nightmares in which one is lost in a familiar house which has somehow rearranged itself into a different shape.

I wish that you could go somewhere in the South for the rest of the winter. I know how difficult anything of the sort must be under the present conditions: but is there no one you could be with (for I don't think it is good to be quite alone except when one is busy) in a warmer climate. Oh dear.

You loving
Tom.

W. H. ...

I am very glad to hear that you are well and hope you will continue to be so. I have not much news to write at present.

I have just received your letter and am glad to hear that you are well. I have not much news to write at present.

I wish that you could be here for the rest of the winter. I have not much news to write at present.

Yours truly,
W. H. ...

Shamley,
9 February 1943

written

I have still no letter from you since before Christmas, but no more recent news of America from any other source, so I suppose that eventually I may receive several letters at once; and no doubt the mails westwards are equally delayed. I have been anxious also for news of Ada's illness. But this year, when your plans have been so unsettled and uncertain ever since the summer, I should particularly have wished to be in regular communication with you. In your last few letters, long ago as they were, you have said little or nothing about your health; and I have nothing to judge by except the ratio of your handwriting to "normal". I hope that at least you are by now assured that I write regularly, even though all of my letters are late, and some may not turn up at all.

I go from London, at the end of this week, to pass the weekend in Cambridge, where the Amateur Dramatic Club of the university is producing "The Family Reunion". I dread the climate, and shall take every precaution possible. I shall stay in college, and dine with John (I hope alone) on Friday, lunch with the A.D.C. committee on Saturday, dine with a company for the theatre on Saturday, and in Hall on Sunday. After a rather heavy day on Friday - an x-ray in the morning (another precaution simply, not having had one since 1941), then to the BBC to address the Indians on the subject of Poe, then to a meeting of a group to start a kind of church mission at St. Anne's Soho vicarage. It will be interesting, however, to see a production which is pretty sure to be very different from Kenneth Brown's: I have perhaps seen both the plays too exclusively through his eyes. In normal times, when one was less likely to catch cold and when it mattered less if one did, I should have been glad to visit Cambridge just now; the weather must be in bloom now and perhaps a few crocuses. Here, the birds are beginning their spring activities: a swarm of linnets has been flitting about the garden, and I heard a chiff-chaff in the woods. There will no doubt be much winter still, but meanwhile one feels from time to time the melancholy stirring of spring.

By the way, you have not received little tidings by the time you get this letter, please let me know. If one of my copies has reached America, no doubt all have; but I have heard from no one. So far it has sold about 12,000 copies; a laudatory review in the Sunday Times by Desmond MacCarthy ought to be good for a couple of thousand more.

Because of going to Cambridge, and because of having to write a lecture (which I have just finished) to Reading University for March 2, I returned last week on Thursday, and only go to town tomorrow (Wednesday). I shall remain here for the night on Monday, and then again spend two nights in town instead of three; for the following week I have to talk to the workmen on Tuesday evening, go to a musical party at Stephen Spender's on Wednesday (he is now married to a young half-Russian pianist named Wajana, lives in Hampstead, and is in the first brigade as his wartime occupation) and take the five watch on Thursday.

I have read up all my normal sized Swedish air mail paper, and as I can't get any more am using up these foolscap sheets. Mr. Hollering did not turn up last week to discuss the film, being in bed with a cold; he may appear on Thursday morning.

The possibility of the end of the war being in sight is, somehow, very unsettling. I do not believe it myself - I do not see how, with the most sanguine prospects, it could possibly end until some time in 1944 - but of course there are many people who have that expectation. At times when it is some near home - as in 1940-41 - one only lived

Letter 26.

Shamley,
9 February 1943.

My Dearest,

written

I have still no letter from you/since before Christmas, but no more recent news of America from any other source, so I suppose that eventually I may receive several letters at once; and no doubt the mails westwards are equally delayed. I have been anxious also for news of Ada's illness. But this year, when your plans have been so unsettled and uncertain ever since the summer, I should particularly have wished to be in regular communication with you. In your last few letters, long ago as they were, you have said little or nothing about your health; and I have nothing to judge by except the restoration of your handwriting to "normal". I hope that at least you are by now assured that I write regularly, even though all of my letters are late, and some may not turn up at all.

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If, by the way, you have not received Little Gidding by the time you get this letter, please let me know. If one of my copies has reached America, no doubt all have; but I have heard from no one. So far it has sold about 12,000 copies; a laudatory review in the Sunday Times by Desmond Mac Carthy ought to be good for a couple of thousand more.

Because of going to Cambridge, and because of having to write a lecture (which I have just finished) for Reading University for March 5, I returned last week on Thursday, and only go to town tomorrow (Wednesday). I shall return here for the night on Monday, and then again spend two nights in town instead of three: for the following week I have to talk to the Norwegians on Tuesday evening, go to a musical party at Stephen Spender's on Wednesday (he is now married to a young half-Russian pianist named Natasha, lives in Hampstead, and is in the Fire Brigade as his wartime occupation) and take the fire watch on Thursday.

I have used up all my normal sized Swedish air mail paper, and as I can't get any more am using up these foolscap sheets. Mr. Hollering did not turn up last week to discuss the film, being in bed with a cold; he may appear on Thursday morning.

The possibility of the end of the war being in sight is, somehow, very unsettling. I do not believe it myself - I do not see how, with the most sanguine prospects, it could possibly end until some time in 1944 - but of course there are many people who have that expectation. At times when it is acute near home - as in 1940-41 - one only lived

from T.S. Eliot,
Shamley Wood,
Shamley Green,
Guildford, Surrey.



ans March 13

Miss Emily Hale,
c/o the Revd. J.C. Perkins, D.D.,
90 Commonwealth Avenue,
BOSTON,
Massachusetts,
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

EXAMINER 7906

51-569

P.C. 90

OPENED BY

Letter 26.

Shamley,
9 February 1943.

My Dearest,

written

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I have used up all my normal sized Swedish air mail paper, and as I can't get any more am using up these foolscap sheets. Mr. Hollering did not turn up last week to discuss the film, being in bed with a cold; he may appear on Thursday morning.

The possibility of the end of the war being in sight is, somehow, very unsettling. I do not believe it myself - I do not see how, with the most sanguine prospects, it could possibly end until some time in 1944 - but of course there are many people who have that expectation. At times when it is acute near home - as in 1940-41 - one only lived

Shamley,
9 February 1943.

Letter 26.

written

I have still no letter from you since before Christmas, but no more recent news of America from any other source, so I suppose that eventually I may receive several letters at once; and no doubt the mails westwards are equally delayed. I have been anxious also for news of Ada's illness. But this year, when your plans have been so unsettled and uncertain ever since the summer, I should particularly have wished to be in regular communication with you. In your last few letters, long ago as they were, you have said little or nothing about your health; and I have nothing to judge by except the restlessness of your handwriting to "normal". I hope that at least you are by now assured that I write regularly, even though all of my letters are late, and some may not turn up at all.

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Because of going to Cambridge, and because of having to write a lecture (which I have just finished) I have finished the Reading University for March 5. I returned last week on Thursday, and only go to town tomorrow (Wednesday). I shall return here for the night on Monday, and then again spend two nights in town instead of three; for the following week I have to talk to the Norwegians on Tuesday evening, go to a musical party at Stephen Spender's on Wednesday (he is now married to a young half-Russian pianist named Watsana, lives in Hampstead, and is in the first brigade as his wartime occupation) and take the first watch on Thursday.

I have used up all my normal sized Swedish six mill paper, and as I can't get any more as mine up these foolish sheets. Mr. Hollister did not turn up last week to discuss the film, being in bed with a cold; he may appear on Thursday morning.

The possibility of the end of the war being in sight is, somehow, very unsettling. I do not believe it myself - I do not see how, with the most sanguine prospects, it could possibly end until some time in 1944 - but of course there are many people who have that expectation. At times when it is acute near home - as in 1940-41 - one only lived

from day to day with very little thought of the more distant future; and perhaps it will be so again; but now the war has been going on so long that one wonders what it has done to one, and what the period immediately after will be like. My first thought, of course, would be to take the immediately post-war time for a visit to America; to avoid bitter disappointment, we must remember the possibility that transport may be very difficult for some time after the war - so that if I could, when that moment comes, have some academic or official reason for coming it might make all the difference. I should fly to see you first of all, wherever you were; I pray God to keep my dear Emily well and in comfort until then.

Your devoted Tom.

My old friend Francis Underhill, the Bishop of Bath & Wells, is dead. Also Philip Morrell, Ottoline's husband, a few days ago.

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Your devoted friend,
Philip Morris

My old friend Francis Underhill, the Bishop of Bath & Wells, is dead. Also Philip Morris, Octavia's husband, a few days ago.

Letter 26.

Shamley,
9 February 1943.

My dearest,

written

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Shamley,
9 February 1945.

written

I have still no letter from you since before Christmas, but no more recent news of America from any other source, so I suppose that eventually I may receive several letters at once; and no doubt the mails westwards are equally delayed. I have been anxious also for news of Abe's illness. But this year, when your plans have been so unsettled and uncertain ever since the summer, I should particularly have wished to be in regular communication with you. In your last few letters, long ago as they were, you have said little or nothing about your health; and I have nothing to judge by except the revision of your handwriting to "normal". I hope that at least you are by now assured that I write regularly, even though all of my letters are late, and some may not turn up at all.

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EXAMINER 2418



Miss Emily Hale,
c/o the Revd. J.C. Perkins, D.D.,
90 Commonwealth Avenue,
BOSTON,
Massachusetts,
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

from T.S.Eliot,

24, Russell Square,

London W.C.1.

P.C. 90

OPENED BY

Letter 27.

Shamley,
19 February 1943.

My Dear,

Your cable had to be forwarded from Shamley to Cambridge: I found it in my room after returning from a busy day and an evening of "The Family Reunion". I was of course very much disturbed, and needed time to think it over: I was also disturbed to think that if such a grave report had reached you in Carolina, no word should have reached me direct from those in Cambridge. I finally cabled to Henry merely to ask for a report, and to Frank Morley to ask him to try to find out - this because of what you said about Henry himself: I am worried also wondering whether the condition of which you speak is because of the bad news of Ada, or that he has had a break-down himself. "Critically" usually means a matter of days; and I want to know whether it is worth while even trying to set machinery in motion. It is extremely unlikely that I could get exit permission, and that alone might take several weeks; at the same time I should have to find out whether it is possible to get the Treasury to release any of my money, either here or in America, for use in America. Otherwise, I should arrive, if I arrived, with hardly a penny, and should be dependent upon my relatives (who cannot afford the expense, either) both for support while there and for the price of my return fare. If I could get to America at all, it might be six weeks or two months from the time I started trying. If I were the "next of kin" it might be more possible: but to say that I was needed, when my sister's husband and brother and sisters are all about her, would not carry conviction to the official mind.

Of course, when people go on official missions, their expenses are cared for by the local Embassy or Legation: I did not take a penny of my own to Sweden, but was given pocket money, for cabs, local fares etc. while there.

If the situation is really critical, it is likely that I should arrive, in any case, too late.

Your letter of the 19th January, speaking of your departure almost at once for Tryon (where I see from your cable that you arrived) was very welcome. (Incidentally, I was immensely pleased that you should have liked the Kipling essay). I am very glad indeed that you have gone south - though letters will now take longer than ever - and do hope that it will prove satisfactory in every way - better than Grand Manan - and that there will be pleasant people - of whom you may be able to have just enough and not too much - at the hotel there. I have never been so far south as that. It will be lovely in the early spring. Even here the birds are now in song, and one expects an early cuckoo at almost any moment.

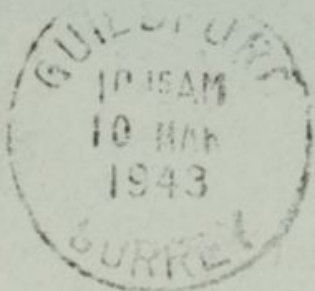
I could normally have written at some length about Cambridge - the performance, by undergraduates of both sexes, seemed to me a very good one: perhaps intelligently trained, educated amateurs, are better

for a play by an amateur than professionals - they are more appreciative of the things that I can do well, and less put out by the faults, which are of a structural and theatrical nature. The weekend was arduous: in addition to the play, the college, and the people I had to see - the Innes's (Christina Morley's parents), the Trevelyans (the Master of Trinity) the Pickthorns etc. there is the college chaplain, who always pounces on me to meet and talk to some of his Christian undergraduates - which I am glad to do, but fatiguing. I could also give a curious description of the strange household in which John is living, and in which he manages to support a difficult role with dignity. But I feel too distracted for that. My old friend (I might say, my oldest friend) Harold Peters is dead - a letter from Leon Little - had enlisted apparently as a common seaman in the Coast Guard, and fell from a dock to shatter his skull and lung. Your sweet letter brought a little relief. I hope for cables by Monday. I am told that Western Union is the quickest, but I did not have time during the week to get to that office in London. A Requiem for Philip Morrell yesterday at All Saints' - Ottoline's husband, he died very suddenly a fortnight ago. Not many people there, out of all who ought to have come, for Ottoline's sake as well as his.

Ever
You devoted

Don

EXAMINER 1997



Miss Emily Hale,

~~Thousand Pines Inn,~~

~~TRYON,~~

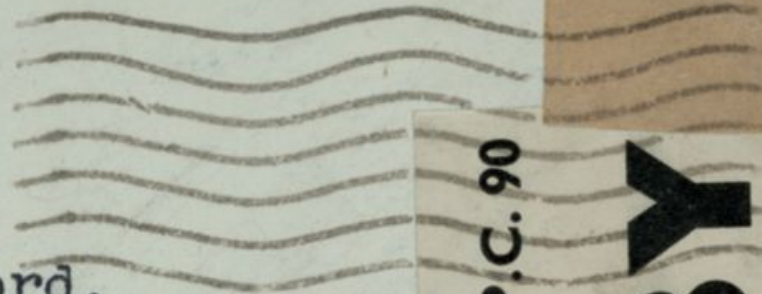
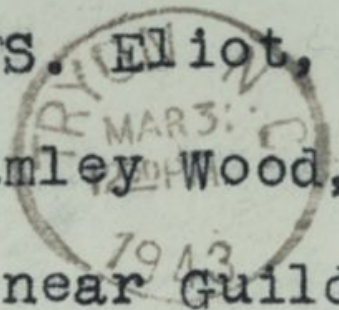
~~North Carolina,~~

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

*90 Commonwealth Ave
Boston - Mass*

apt 17

from R.S. Eliot,
Shamley Wood,
near Guildford,
Surrey.



P.C. 90

OPENED BY

*W. B. ...
R. S. Eliot*

Letter 28.

Shamley,
9 March 1943.

Severe.

Two weeks have elapsed since I last wrote, which represents ten days in bed with influenza, or one of the current ailments which passes for it. It is not a severe form - very little temperature, and a painful throat for a few days and slight ear ache. Purely an infection, as I had not been chilled, but I think that I had got very tired on my visit to Cambridge and was therefore more exposed. Treatment with one of the "M. & B." varieties works very quickly; but catarrh lingers. So I am only to go up to town for one night (Thursday) this week, and hope to be normal next week, when I have to talk to the Anglo-Swedish Club at lunch: it is run by a man named Semphill, whose wife I used to know. My lecture at Reading has to be postponed until May.

I was very glad to get your letter of January 30 from Tryon, with the awaited information about that place. It sounds, on the whole, very satisfactory, except for your unfortunate neighbour - a familiar and commonplace type - I understand how disturbing to one's serenity the presence of such a person can be. Actual disturbance, of course, noise and offensive behaviour can only be dealt with by firm complaints, if at all: the more subtle form of disturbance to one's peace of mind, merely from the presence, one has to fight out and control in one's own mind - an inner withdrawing which must yet be not without a human compassion - very difficult, I know, but one's own private problem, and not society's. Of course there are personalities from which one has just to remove oneself bodily: but they are usually more positive than that one! and usually one is more involved when with them. That strong combination of physical and moral loathing I have not experienced with many people, I am glad to say.

I am very sorry about Boerre, and sorry that he has had to be so much away from you. I do know that you need a more active life - this part you have only to put up with as a convalescence - and after this, and pending that, some such scheme as you have thought of, to live in a New England village, might be very good: and I have no doubt that in such a place you would soon find yourself very active and important in local affairs. I imagine that in the South, one would always feel a foreigner - much as I do in Scotland, though I am sure that I find Scotland much more sympathetic to my temperament than I could ever find Dixie!

I am now awaiting the letters which Henry and Sheff (and no doubt Frank Morley) will have written to me: I have also written (not cabled) to Dorothea Richards. I wish indeed that I could be sent on a visit to America: that would not only make unnecessary the permission which I probably should not get, the transport for which I should otherwise have to wait indefinitely, and the provision of money for my needs. What is perhaps equally important is that it would make matters very much easier on both sides, to see Ada in the course of some official commission; for one thought has been that it might be more distressing for her than otherwise, to know that I had come solely on her account. But these jobs are not to be fabricated, or had for the ask-

ing. It is ironic that Faber is to be sent over, as one of a small posse of publishers, to confer with American publishers. Of course he has been President of the Publishers' Association, and gained more distinction in that office than any other incumbent, so that he is now really the most prominent figure in the publishing world. I never expect much of this sort of mission myself, but, if there are to be such, then it is worth while that the best people should go on them. This is only an incidental reason why I should not want to leave England during April and the first part of May, which is when he is likely to be absent. I am trying slowly and painfully to accustom myself to the thought of Ada's short term left, but it is almost too painful to dwell upon for long.

My dear, while I am glad that the material conditions at Tryon are so good, and glad that you have a few pleasant neighbours, I know that it is also a lonely and desolate time for you, and that it needs all your strength and self-discipline to bear.

You very loving
Tom

from T.S.Eliot,
Shamley Wood,
Shamley Green,
Guildford, Surrey.



EXAMINER 7475

*Apr 17 — 90 Commonwealth Ave
Boston Mass*

Miss Emily Hale,

~~Thousand Pines Inn,~~

~~TRYON,~~

~~North Carolina,~~

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

P.C. 90

OPENED BY

Letter 29.

Shamley,
15 March 1943.

Dear Emily,

I have had nothing from you, or from anyone else in America, since your letter from Tryon which I acknowledged last week. There is nothing more to be gained by cabling at present; I am waiting as patiently as I can for the promised letters from Henry and Sheff. Meanwhile, I don't quite know how I should write to Ada herself. I am sure that she would wish (as I should) to know exactly what the situation is, and she must know pretty well in any case, so I hope that they have told her without any reserves; but until I am assured of that, I do not know exactly what tone to adopt.

I went up to town for one night last week without ill effect, and am to go tomorrow for the usual time. I am perfectly well again; an x-ray and a blood test have produced satisfactory reports; but at present I seem to tire easily. Partly the ordinary effect of spring, I suppose, and partly that with every spring since the war one feels more tired than the last - though I must say that I am in much better health than I was in the spring of 1941.

I had lunch with the Martin Brownes when in town on Thursday: Martin looking pretty well (considering the life they lead) but Henzie not very well. They asked for news of you, saying they had not heard for a long time from you - Henzie meant to write at Christmas, but had a complication of troubles at that time and didn't write any Christmas letters; they also talked much of their plans for getting the boys home again. They are to give a performance of Yeats's "Resurrection" in the Shamley Church next Sunday, and will lunch here beforehand. They want more plays - though James Bridie has written two for them, with which they are very pleased: but I see no prospect of my being able to write one for them. It took me most of this weekend to prepare my talk to the Anglo-Swedish Society on next Thursday, and I am not at all sure (never having been to one of their meetings) that it is the right sort of thing; and next weekend I must do a short talk on Dryden for India, and after that I think I will write out the talk for the Norwegians which I meant to deliver from notes. Because the same talk will do for the Czechs in Edinburgh. I feel a certain obligation, in these times, to do this international stuff, specialising in small nations including India. A success in the latter interest is that we have (I mean that Dobrée, to whom I appealed, has) got an Indian appointed to a lectureship at Leeds university - a man who is a great authority on Restoration drama, for which there is no demand in India - but the appointment is the first of its kind and ought to do some good in India.

I must write to Frank about affairs in Cambridge. I feel very unsettled about everything, including your being in Carolina. I do hope that the objectionable person will depart: for you do need peace of mind - such as you can get - more than anything except rest and fresh air.

*I hope I shall feel less languid
next week: but always your loving Tom.*

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Shamley Wood,
Shamley Green,
Guildford, Surrey.



90 Commonwealth Ave
Boston, Mass

Miss Emily Hale,

~~Thousand Pines Inn,~~

~~TRYON,~~

~~North Carolina,~~

apt 17

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

EXAMINER 734

TRYON, N. C.
APR 19
12:30 PM
7943



P.C. 90

OPENED BY

Letter 30.

Shamley,
22 March 1943.

Dear Emily,

I have had a letter from Sheff, last week, dated February 16, which would have been my first acquaintance with the facts but for your cable which led me to cable to Henry and Frank. I have no letter from Henry yet, and none this last week from you (that is, I have had only one from Tryon).

In spite of a busy week, with two meetings, and in spite of getting rather chilled sitting in the vestry while Fr. Cheetham explained all his difficulties about the organist and the church music (which I did not want to hear in such detail, as I could do nothing about them, and I wanted to discuss the agenda for the vestry meeting next week) (I also wanted to find out where my mother's tea kettle and your cow watercolour were stored, so that I could get them out) I have had no relapse: the flu~~s~~ has passed on, taking up Enid Faber, so that Geoffrey and I had to dine out on Wednesday and hurry back as we have to be in by 8 o'clock for the fire watching. In addition I had a rather disturbed day on Sunday. The Brownes, who had been invited to lunch, arrived in their pilgrim Players van shortly after 11 a.m. We had lunch at 12.45, so that Martin could hurry down to the church, where Yeats's "Resurrection" was to be performed at 3 o'clock. A party from Shamley attended (Hope M. very nervous lest there should be a religious service, which as a Roman she would not be supposed to attend). The play is a little above the ordinary village audience, perhaps; but the costumes were good, and the children enjoyed it. I was rather doubtful about the play for performance in a church, especially about the moment when Our Lord (Martin himself) has to cross the stage (he doesn't speak, so that apparently the law of the land is not broken); but, although his Greek and his Syrian were not very good actors, Martin had made a very good job in deed, and I felt pretty happy about it, as well as moved by the play. But produced by someone without good taste, it might be painful. Actors are difficult to get, and not always easy to keep, nowadays. I don't know how Martin and Henzie stand the life they lead and have lead for the last three years: always on the move, and not even having the privacy of a hotel, but always stopping as guests of people interested. They have been staying in Guildford, and from there making excursions to fill engagements in neighbouring towns and villages: they were going on to give another performance in the evening. I wish I had time to try to write a little play for them - I know they want me to, as there are few enough plays which are possible for their purposes - James Bridie has written two for them. I thought Henzie looked very tired indeed, although she has no part in this play. They are trying to get their boys back from America, and with that in view, Henzie intends to find a flat in London, and retire from the Players for a time.

I also addressed the Anglo-Swedish Society on Thursday: they seemed pleased. The Swedish Minister was there; and enough blonde Swedish girls were found to be dressed up in peasant costumes to serve what proved a delicious "fork lunch". But this took me two days to prepare; and now (having written a short talk on Dryden for the Indian BBC) I must write out my talk for the Norwegian Institute. I don't know whether I mentioned that I expect to go up to Edinburgh

for two or three nights towards the end of April (probably before Easter) to speak to the French and to the Poles, and perhaps to broadcast on the Scottish Regional. I hope that Geoffrey will get off to America soon, as I want to get that over with, and can't even settle a brief summer holiday (which I want very much) to say nothing of the unlikely visit of my own, until his dates are settled.

I wish I could see even a snapshot of you in your southern surroundings. I do hope that it will prove satisfactory enough for you to be able to stay until it is really high spring in the north, as it might be dangerous to come back from that climate to the New England winter. I know how little the inactive life suits you; and I know how difficult it is, even under the most favourable conditions, to turn it into the contemplative life.

Your devotee

Tom

P.C. 90.

From T.S. Eliot,
Shamley Wood,
Shamley Green,
Guildford, Surrey.

5632

P.C. 90.



5632

Miss Emily Hale,
c/o the Revd. J.C. Perkins, D.D.,
90 Commonwealth Avenue,
BOSTON,
Massachusetts,

P.C. 90.

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P.C. 90.

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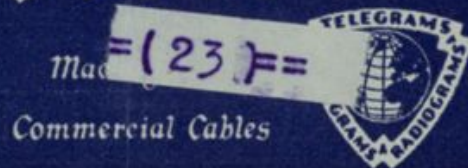
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:THOMAS ELIOT.=:

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Letter 31.

Shamley,
3 April 1943.

My very dear Lady,

Your letter of March 13 was extremely welcome, though I was vexed with myself, on seeing the Boston postmark, for having been writing to Tryon. I suppose I was optimistic, also I assumed that you would be stopping much longer, also I am often tempted to write to the place whence you have written, instead of the place where you are likely to be, because it makes time and space seem less. It is odd to be always writing to the person you were a month ago, and the person who will receive it will be the person you will be a month hence! You know, I have had only one letter from you from Tryon, the first you could have written after getting there; and it sounded, on the whole, very pleasant and restful. I think that you must have written at least one other letter from there, which may turn up some time: for there is such a long gap between the two, and because you make no reference to Tryon, or your reasons for staying such a short time, in this letter.

However, I am glad to know that you had three pleasant days in New York; and I am grateful for your news of Ada. This gives me a real picture, and is the sort of letter that Henry does not write: he gives information, but nothing to appeal to the imagination. Neither Theresa nor Marion is a good letter writer. You have rather an unusual gift in this way. I can also imagine Sheff talking, like an eager worn little bird, about the heating system. They all speak of Ada's fortitude and cheerfulness, and mind triumphing over pain; but your letter makes it real to me. I am glad also that you had a word with Frank Morley (yes, both his brothers always struck me as common and rather coarse, especially Kit, but Kit has a very nice and intelligent daughter named Louisa who was over here in the autumn). (I was talking of the Morleys the other night, with their cousin, Lady Sempill - her husband is the chairman of the Anglo-Swedish Society, and a very worthy person full of public zeal but somewhat lacking in humour - the day happened to be his wife's birthday, so he wrote to me two days before to suggest that I should write her a birthday poem, and giving me some details about her as material!) I wondered, after what you said about Aunt Susie, whether Eleanor realises her mother's feebleness: but I think that this has been a very gradual process, and due partly to her narrowing interests and concentration on her descendents and their worldly success. Ada used to say that when they were young (for they are within a few years in age) Susie had a very alert mind and varied intellectual interests: her later restriction somewhat estranged them, and I think that Susie's lowered scale of values depressed Ada. But I am glad that Eleanor is leading a more active and extroverted life under the war pressure; it will be good for her in general and also prepare her to face the world better after her mother's death.

Last weekend I was busy preparing my speech to the Norwegian Institute, and discussing the future of young Omar Pound - a difficult matter, as the boy is not only dissimilar to other boys but almost wholly mediocre: I have seen his school reports, and in his best

subjects he has been only in the middle of his form. He wants to become an hotel keeper. I had a talk to his housemaster last week and am going to see his family solicitor. It is a most wretched and deplorable case. I broadcast to India again on Thursday, to talk to them about Dryden's tragedies; and have been preparing a speech which I have to make (informal) to a group which meets in Oxford on Monday, about the publication of divinity books for schools: I go in the company of a director of Methuen's, as the project is for some joint publication. I don't think I shall have time to prepare a broadcast talk to deliver over the Scotch Regional, and an address to a group of Episcopalians in Edinburgh too! The controversy over South India has simmered down, but will boil up again sooner or later.

I hope Frank will have the sense to send you a copy of the American edition of "Four Quartets" direct, instead of sending all the author's copies to me here. I think that the four, printed together, will show a satisfactory unity - they are meant to have it. But it was a good thing to have published them first one by one (of course, L. G. has never appeared in the U.S.A. at all) as people have got used to them in that way, and have probably become more familiar with the details than if they had seen them first all together.

I cannot say how relieved I was to hear your Russian doctor's report on your health. I am sure that you assisted nature, by taking the affliction so heroically. But mind, he has said a position "within reasonable requirements", and you must not forget that in considering any offer; also, you will not be able for some time, I think, to undertake outside activities as well. Of course I do not know the extent to which possible positions have diminished in number since the war. I am afraid I grudge Hallie Flanagan her place at Smith. Does Uncle John get irritated with Aunt E.? I used to think that there were times when he would have done, in the old days, but for self-control and natural sweetness of temper: I thought he suffered from spells of depression which he could not share with her - and I thought that the religious side of him was a bit frustrated in life - but I may well be wrong about this?

Thank you again, for your lovely letter. I shall go on hoping that an earlier one will come to fill the gap: and I hope that the 1000 Pines Inn will forward my letters to you.

*With deepest love
Your Tom*

from T.S.Eliot,
Shamley Wood,
Shamley Green,
Guildford, Surrey.



AIR MAIL

Miss Emily Hale,
c/o the Rēvd. J.C. Perkins, D.D.,
90 Commonwealth Avenue,
BOSTON,
Massachusetts,
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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Letter 32.

Shamley,
12 April 1943.

My Dear,

As I thought might happen, a letter from Tryon has followed the letter from Boston, but there still seems to be a gap, for in this letter you say you are just leaving, and say nothing further about your stay there, since the letter written after you first arrived. So I still don't know whether you found it so unsatisfactory that you had to leave sooner than you expected. I was rather fearful of your returning North from that climate so early, but your letter from Boston, of March 29, which has followed hard on the one from Tryon, is fairly reassuring about health. But remember, please, that the decision to lead a "normal" life, without thinking too much of health, is not to mean an "abnormal" life of overdoing yourself! But I am glad to know of your plans for Petersham, and for Wilton (I do not know where that is) and perhaps for Grand Manan for the summer. The little photograph fell out as I opened the letter. I shall treasure it. I thought at first that it was quite recent - perhaps taken in the South - then I thought it too faded to be quite recent - then I decided that your costume was that of a not very recent fashion - then I looked at the back. This shall go into my pocket book with the little oval portrait..

Thank you again for going to see Ada, and for your second report. It really sounds as if the time was very short indeed: I do not see how anyone can linger very long in such constant pain and utter discomfort. What you say of her is what I should expect of her. I had a very touching letter from Sheff, whose devotion is very great: I am so very glad that you like him, and he likes you I am sure. I am glad also whenever you see Theresa: she is a dear - and much easier to get on with than Eliots are!

I had a tiring week - the conference at Oxford, then my lecture to the Norwegians in London the next day, followed by dinner with four Norwegians and a man I know in the Foreign Office - extremely nice men, and very appreciative - they made me feel that the trouble was worth taking. In consequence, I have taken things rather easy this weekend, in preparation for my visit to Edinburgh - writing some letters and drafting an announcement for the Virgilian Society, of which I was, unwillingly, made the first president. Edinburgh is to be preceded by Edith Sitwell's collective poetry reading on behalf of the Free French at the Aeolian Hall on Wednesday: all the old timers are to read, including Masefield, De la Mare, and myself, with probably a fashionable and therefore obtuse audience - looking at us, no doubt, rather than listening. By having my fire watch on Wednesday nights and therefore having to be at the office from 8 o'clock, I escape a cocktail party and a dinner given to the performers by Lady Crewe. I don't like reading to society audiences; they are not appreciative, and they seem to think that they have done something generous in taking tickets, without reflecting that the performers are being generous in giving their time and energy. Edinburgh means a poetry reading to the French on Friday (that will be an odd experience); a reception in my honour by the British Council for the intellectual society

of the northern capital (I can't think why I should have to have a reception) and a lecture (the same as to the Norwegians) to the Czechs on Monday evening. In between, however, I go to the Blakes at Dollar (that pleasant little town) from Saturday night till Monday, so it is not all work. I return to Shamley for Easter.

In the same letter with your news of Ada, your testamentary dispositions of your furniture gave me a dolorous feeling. I can't decide whether, in those circumstances which God forbend, I should take more comfort or distress in living with your furniture. The portrait by Miss Richardson I should certainly love to have; but with that, as with any other possessions or family belongings, the question arises, what would I do for its care after my death? Not that it would not be of vast interest to people in the future - but meanwhile, who would be worthy to hold it? Indeed, I think that I had rather you gave me (since we are on such matters) a life interest in it, indicating some younger person in America whom you think would be worthy to look after it after that. There is really nobody I know to whom I would trust it, except perhaps John Hayward, and he expects, in the normal course (though I have made him my literary executor, with instructions to suppress, rather than to publish, the maximum of my scattered literary remains) to die before me. I think, by the way, of sharing a small house or large flat with him after the war: we should both want complete privacy - separate rooms and separate meals and separate visitors, and also he is a person to whom I think I might be of use - I could trundle him out etc.

I wish that you could see the bluebells coming out in the woods. But I had rather be with you in New Hampshire. Thank you for a very dear letter.

So I shall not be able to write until Good Friday.

Your loving
Tom.

from T.S.Eliot,
Shamley Wood,
Shamley Green,
Guildford, Surrey.



Miss Emily Hale,
c/o the Revd. J.C. Perkins, D.D.,
90 Commonwealth Avenue,
BOSTON,
Massachusetts,

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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EXAMINER 934

Letter 33.

My dearest,

Shamley,
Easter Monday.

Well, I got back from Edinburgh without mishap, though I thought I had caught a chill, before starting, at the poetry rehearsal in the unheated Aeolian Hall: but the change of air to the North seemed to cure that. I find no letter from you, and I think I will cable tomorrow, also for Easter, also in case my letters to Tryon were not forwarded.

The poetry recital consisted of twelve poets, all of us of the "older generation", beginning with Masefield, each reading from our own works for six minutes. Most of them, I thought read rather badly; De la Mare, who read extremely well, yet did so in a voice which could hardly have penetrated beyond the first six rows. (Incidentally, I got high marks from the reporter of the "Evening Standard"). It is very difficult to read for that length of time - one needs about that to get warmed to to task - but the last section of "The Waste Land" just fitted the time well. It would not have done to give that audience anything at all new: they came to look at us and to hear how we recited, rather than from love of poetry; and it was a more or less fashionable audience, what with having the Queen there and all. We were presented during the interval; and in the second half of the programme I had to sit next to Princess Elizabeth. But there was no conversation; she didn't say anything, and I thought that perhaps she was getting too old to be addressed first. I wanted to say that I was as bored as she was; but that might not have been quite the right thing. I must say they were very attentive; and as the Queen didn't have to make a speech, it was perhaps preferable from her point of view to opening a bazaar. I escaped the parties afterwards by having my fire watching duties; but the next day - two interviews in the morning, lunch with Alida Monro, who only comes up to town about twice a year, and therefore has to be treated when she does, she looks thin and aged, and her income I imagine is very reduced, as a house from the rent of which she drew a proportion of it was bombed in 1940; then a young captain to tea, just because he wanted to meet me, and is the son of a director of another publishing firm, then ~~xxxx~~ a tea party given by Edith Sitwell at the Sesame Club (a post-reading party): so that I was thankful at last to be snug in my berth for Edinburgh. The first day there rather full; a lunch with the British Council, a Press Conference (a weekly event there to which any at all distinguished visitor to the City is invited) and a Reception in my honour - dined alone in the hotel and in the evening talking to the Scottish)French House about my poetry and French poetry, with illustrations. But I went from Saturday to Monday to Dollar, and had a quite restful weekend, and a few sips of the almost unobtainable real whisky, with my friends the Blakes, and their two great kilted sons back from camp. It is a pleasing place. On Monday I talked to the Czechs, and spent the end of the evening with Grierson at his house - he is pretty lonely, I imagine, as he has no daughter there, he is retired from the University, and he is crippled in one leg. Tuesday

no event except lunch with the John Baillies' - he is now Moderator of the Church Assembly of the Church of Scotland..

On my return I heard thecuckoo for the first time - a bird very pleasant to the ear at first, if he only knew when to stop, and the spring blooms - fruit trees, wistaria, lilac - fully out. But it is strange to think that Lent is over and Easter past: I miss very much at that season a church with the full liturgy. But plenty of things to think about, and my pamphlet on South India to write for the Council for the Defence of Church Principles. Martin wants me again to write a play for the Pilgrims, but how can I? And one trouble is that I know that the sort of play I want to try to write, when I can write one, is not best written by keeping in mind the limitations of the Pilgrim Players and their audiences - a troupe which, at best, is rather amateur without the freshness which is pleasing in undergraduate amateur performances.

Well, I want more news of you quickly. I write to Ada regularly: if there is anyone to whom one can write naturally, under her present conditions and sentence of death, it is she: but whatever I say, I feel exhausted after writing. Then I am feeling the depression of spring, which is all the sadness, without the anticipation, which I felt before 1940.

Your loving
Tom

P.
rom T.S.Eliot,
24, Russell Square,
LONDON W.C.1.



P.C. 90.

BY AIR MAIL
PAR AVION

P.C. 90.
Miss Emily Hale,
c/o the Revd. J.C. Perkins, D.D.,
90, Commonwealth Avenue,
BOSTON,
Massachusetts,
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

P.C. 90.



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Letter 34.

Shamley,
May 3, 1943.

Dear Emily,

Still no letter from you. I hope that you received my cable last week, as I feared that there might be a long gap if my letters to Tryon were not forwarded promptly to you. I have had no letters from America lately, and so am without news of Ada: Sheff is a very rare correspondent, and so I depend upon you and upon Henry. Enid appears to have had a recent letter from Geoffrey, however, mentioning flights apparently covering the whole continent. I should be amused to hear, if you have seen any mention of his journey in the papers: though every mention of it reminds me that I should like to be in his place. To add to the irony, I shall probably be sent off myself for a short time, but not to America. I have mentioned this in writing to Ada yesterday, and shall mention it when I write to Henry: but I asked Ada, and shall ask you, not to mention it to anyone else at this stage, as advance publicity is not desirable - once I get there, there will probably be a newspaper note. You will remember that when I went to Sweden I was scrupulous not to speak of my destination to anybody in advance - with the result that the information reached you and others through other sources, which made me feel rather foolish. Still, I don't want any publicity until it comes of itself through official channels - especially as there is always a possibility of postponement. The destination this time is Iceland: no longer a journey, and a safer one, though I doubt whether the place will prove as interesting - at least, its interest should be sooner exhausted, though at the present time it should present, as Sherlock Holmes says, "some curious features". The usual literary line. Whether these activities are really useful I am not sure: but the only way to find out is to accept them; and in these times one does not feel it right to depend upon private judgement altogether, as to how one can be most usefully employed - though I regret having to suspend my work on the South India Scheme, which I do consider urgent and important, but which at present interests very few people. I was intending to go to Oxford to confer with the Superior of the Cowley Fathers, and hoped to combine it with a conference there about the long-discussed subject of divinity books for schools, which I may have to miss. I do not expect to be away for more than three weeks altogether. For part of that time I had designed to take a holiday at the place in the New Forest to which I went last year: I shall try to do that later on if the landlady can have me, as, in my present life, I feel the need of a regular period of solitude. Whether I shall then turn to consider Mr. Hollering's long-postponed film, to say nothing of the play Martin wants, I make no promises. Meanwhile, I devoted a couple of hours yesterday to re-drafting an appeal for contributions to a testimonial for Fr. Cheetham on the 25th anniversary of his coming to St. Stephen's - which is to be sent out by some of the parishioners, not by the Churchwardens, but I am always appealed to for polishing up documents of this sort: tonight I have to take my godson to see a detective play highly recommended, called "Arsenic and Old Lace" (there are two new plays by Noel Coward just begun, but I don't think they would

be so much to either his or my taste); give a small dinner for Sergeant Harry Brown, editor of YANK, a weekly for the American forces in Britain, and his wife - including Captain Perry Miller, who is I believe a professor at Harvard in civil life, Lady Colefax is bringing him; interview Canon Sparrow Simpson, and lunch Bro. George Every on Thursday; and next week take the chair at a lecture at St. Anne's House, Soho, a new religious centre of which I am one of the sponsors, and lecture at Reading the following night. I shall give you notice when the moment arrives at which correspondence may be interrupted - though if I can send postcards I shall do so, but I have no idea how long they will take.

The spring is now at the full, so far as birds and flowers can make it so. I wish that you could ever be here at the season to see the bluebells in the woods, particularly fine in this neighbourhood: the ground under the trees all a bright blue carpet. My dear, I do hope that a letter will reach me this week.

Your sister

Tom

from T.S.Eliot,
24, Russell Square,
London W.C.1.



Miss Emily Hale,

c/o the Revd. J.C. Perkins, D.D.,

90, Commonwealth Avenue,

BOSTON,

Massachusetts,

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

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Letter 35.

Shamley,
11 May 1943.

Dearest Emily.

Your letter of April 17, from Peterborough, arrived and was very welcome. The photograph of "Bleak House" ("Breakhouse" on the letter paper, is very pleasing, and reminds me a little of Lexington, and some of the other old houses of the same type associated with my mother's family. I see that you have marked the window of your room. And everything you say about the place (except the weather) is satisfactory. Yours news, of course, is not happy: but you know that in the long run you give me much more comfort by telling me frankly what the position is, in your own affairs and those of others, than by passing over the more sombre facts. It is a horrid truth that academic degrees are overrated, and consequently lead very often to the wrong people being preferred. It wouldn't be so bad if people genuinely believed in them as evidence of ability and qualification: it is more often that the people responsible for choosing candidates merely want to play safe: they think that they will be less blamed, if they choose the wrong person with the "right" qualifications, than if they choose the right person and have to defend their choice. The result is that natural gifts, experience, and even character count for far less than they should. It is a system of running an educational institution, not like a business (for good business folk would know better) but like a Civil Service - and even a Civil Service ought not to be run quite that way: one is always coming across the wrong type of person in the job. I could fulminate indefinitely. I am very distressed indeed, to learn that your means are now so narrow (and to think that there is nothing I can do about it) and you even have to contemplate teaching little children. You haven't the physique to undertake any whole time war work; yet you need (temperamentally) to be fully active and employed; and you also need (I knew this without any hint on your own part) to live away from Commonwealth Avenue and preferably away from Boston.

Although you have given me to understand that your uncle was in failing health, you have never given me any exact diagnosis: and I did not know that he was now practically confined to his flat. I think I can understand the change: not that I would have predicted it, but that being told of it, it does not seem surprising. I used to think, in the past, that you got a happier relationship and intimacy with him when your aunt was not present; and I wonder whether the difficulties now are not in a way the reflection of a deeper difficulty which may have always been present (though he may not have admitted it to himself) in his life, which has nothing to do with you. Charming as he always was, on the surface, I always thought that there was something better still in him, which was not so obvious, and which had to be divined sympathetically rather than observed. I may be quite wild and wide of the mark: but I know that my guesses are only guesses. But he always seemed to me a very lonely man.

Your evening with the Hinkley's seemed just what I should expect. I haven't felt, when with them, that I knew them less well than when I was young; but that it was a relationship which might have developed, that it wasn't altogether one's own fault that it didn't, and that now there is only something external. And one feels that Eleanor might have developed into a superior person, if she had had the strength to get out of her environment, but her mother's personality is stronger than hers, and Barbara was a great handicap to her too. I shared the melancholy of the visit in reading your description of it. To be with Theresa is to be in a happier and saner and bigger world; she had smaller gifts, but she has made more of them.

I am interested, as always, to have news of Jeanie. I should have liked to think that Frank and Christina would have made more effort, as I think they should, without my expressly asking them to. You complain of never having had a Cotswold poem for yourself; but what else, please, is "Burnt Norton"? You don't suppose that I did write a poem for Lady S., do you? Perhaps, indeed, if I had had a little time with nothing to do, and had been more amused by the notion, and if I believed that Lady S. was quite so simple as Sempill, I might have done: for it is, I assure you, much easier to turn out an elegant copy of light verses to order for strangers or for people with whom one's association has definite formal limits! But except for the verses for your aunt's birthday (and those two sets of verses I did, not for any person, but for Red Cross books) I have never done anything of the sort..

No further news about my projected expedition. Indeed, it seems possible that it might take more time than I can give, so that it might be postponed indefinitely.

Your loving
Tom

EXAMINER 1682

From T.S.Eliot,
Shamley Green,
Guildford, Surrey.



AIR MAIL

Miss Emily Hale,
c/o the Revd. J.C. Perkins, D.D.,
90 Commonwealth Avenue,
BOSTON,
Massachusetts,

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

P.C. 90

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Letter 36.

Shamley,
17 ~~May~~ May, 1943.

Dearest Emily,

It is just as well that I asked you not to mention to anyone my projected voyage, as the fixture has now been cancelled. It proved that the whole expedition might take considerably than they had given me to understand: more time than I was prepared to give to it, though had I known that, long enough in advance, I might have been willing to make my arrangements accordingly. But as it is, I have a meeting in Oxford on the 15th June, and my engagement to give the Prize Day Address at the Methodist School near Ipswich, etc. It is all rather annoying, as the negotiations took considerable time, and everything else has been rather in suspense, and I had taken the trouble to write out my address to the Natives: but I have made my complaints in the proper quarter, and I trust that if and when a similar proposal arises, they will assure themselves, and me, about the travel arrangements in good time.

No letter from you this week: nothing but a bulky letter addressed by Theresa, which proved to contain only a translation of a German poem, from somebody who had asked them to send it to me, and a short note from Henry explaining it. There was no news, except to say that you were going to see Ada; but as the letter came by ordinary post, it refers to a visit of which you have already told me. I keep thinking about your chances of a position, and your straitened circumstances, and everything unsatisfactory and unsettled, and I can do nothing about it. I shall take my holiday in the New Forest after all, but later on: towards the end of June. I may also go down to the Fabers, in July or August, and give a rather feeble hand with the harvesting; but the point of going to the New Forest is to be completely alone. It is true that I am alone now while in London (alone in the flat, of course there are always other people in the building) but I see a good many people during the day, and usually dine with someone at least one of the evenings. Last week was pretty tiring, ending with the night in Reading. That was quite pleasant in itself, and the undergraduates were very agreeable; but the previous night I had had to take the chair at a lecture at the new religious centre at St. Anne's Soho; and I have decided that taking the chair is more tiring than lecturing. For one thing, you have to listen to the lecture, so as to make the appropriate remarks afterwards; and when you have a poor lecturer, and the wrong audience, and the responsibility for keeping going some semblance of a discussion afterwards, it is really very fatiguing. This has also meant only two days in the country this week: I shall come back on Thursday, and not work very hard, this week; and the country is delightful now. I am beginning to feel the need of a rest.

The project for a testimonial to Cheetham on his 25th anniversary has led to complications, and discussion and telephoning with a Mrs. Raymond, who is in charge of it. They want it done one way, and he wants it another; and I don't think the two churchwardens see eye to eye (the other is a lower middle class business man, disliked by the upper middle class part of the congregation, and is

aggressive, touchy, and uncertain of himself - but I want to keep the peace with him, as in these times we should both be difficult to replace!) I try to avoid being drawn into this parochial tangle.

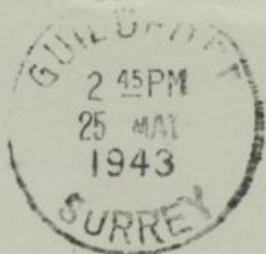
Whom did I see at the meeting at St. Anne's House but Miss Ker-mode, who introduced herself. I hadn't recognised her, but the moment she mentioned her peculiar name I was able to show that I remembered her quite well. She sent affectionate greetings to you and the Perkins's; and reported no change from Campidan except what you know of - I told her that I had had no heart to visit the place during the war. I did not have time to interrogate her about the other inhabitants.

Your devoted

Tom

I have just had a Red Cross Letter from Christine Galitzi, from Bucharest! She asks me to write to her husband, the General Constantin Bratesco, to tell him that she hopes to see him soon. As she gives no address, beyond saying that he was taken prisoner at Stalingrad, I have doubts as to whether any letter will ever reach him; and I have also to find out whether it is possible to communicate, and whether it is even proper to try to communicate, with an enemy who is a prisoner of the Russians. I can at least reply to her, however; though I imagine these letters take a very long time.

om T.S.Eliot,
Shamley Wood,
Shamley Green,
Guildford, Surrey.



Miss Emily Hale,
c/o the Revd. J.C. Perkins, D.D.,
90 Commonwealth Avenue,
BOSTON,
Massachusetts,

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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Letter 37.

Shamley,

24 May 1943.

My Dear

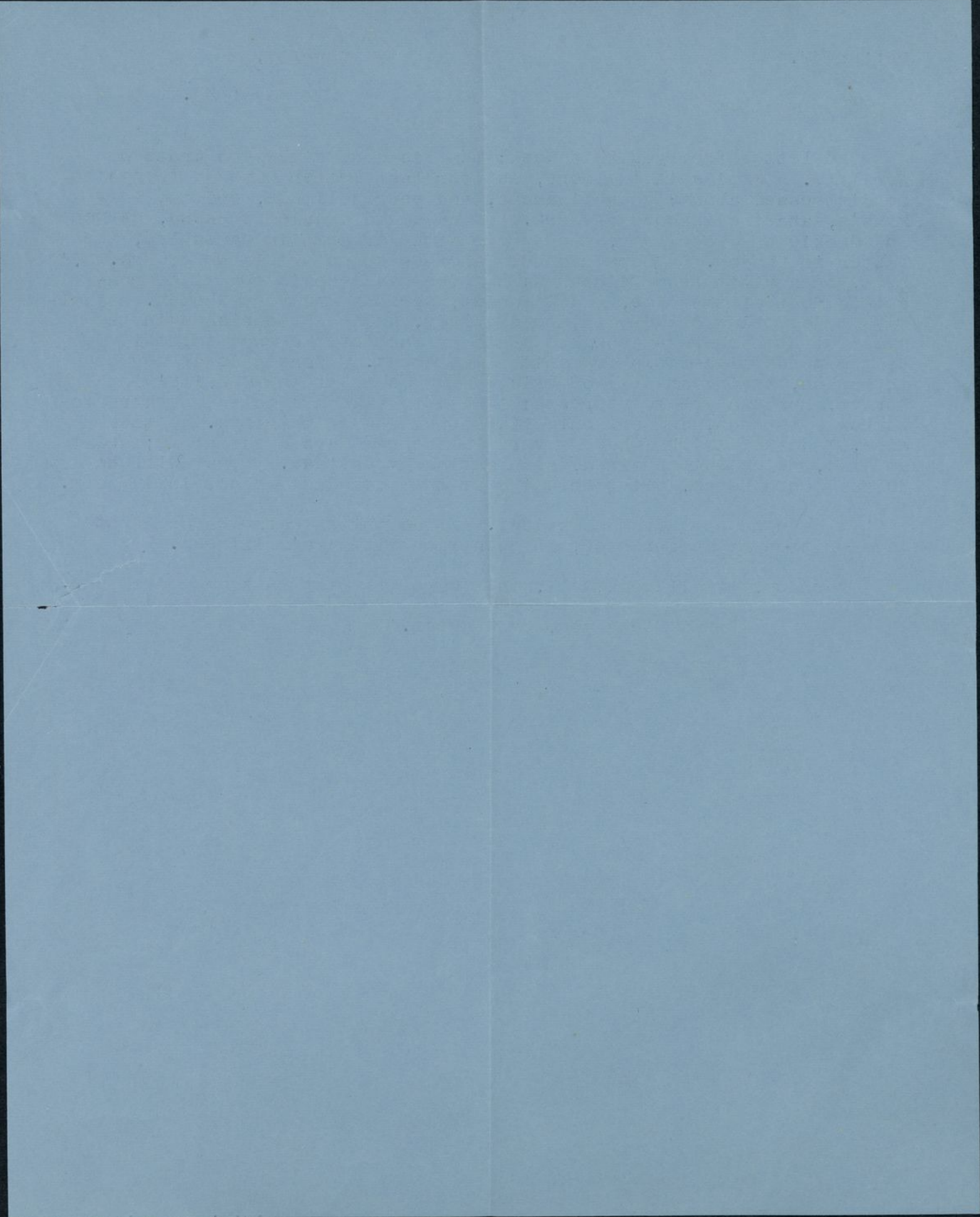
No letter from you this week: that is none since you wrote on April 17. I miss it the more, as your last letter gave me things to be distressed about: your finances, and your solitude, and the Perkins's, and the absence of work. I have had a quiet weekend, as Hope and Cockie are both away, the former with Margaret in Hampshire, the latter in London. There has been another spinster sister of Mrs. M.'s here, on a visit from Edinburgh; but she has been in bed with bronchitis most of the time, and is quiet, serious and very Scotch. I always enjoy being alone with the old lady, and she flourishes in the peaceful atmosphere - though I must say much of the excitement is due to the needs of her own dramatic temperament. Cockie is at her club in London, having an orgy of bridge and Masses at the 'Jesuits' in Farm Street, her two great interests: I have to take her to the theatre tomorrow afternoon, and she only likes exciting crime plays. Otherwise, I do not think I have a very full three days ahead of me; and I am glad, being rather tired, and wanting my holiday. That will be just a month hence, after speaking at the Methodist school in Suffolk.

I have no news from Cambridge. I do think that Eleanor might have written to me for once, in connexion with Ada's illness.

Perhaps, if all goes well, this war will last only one more year.

God bless you, my dearest.

Don



Letter 38.

Shamley,
31 May 1943.

Dear Emily,

I am beginning to be rather concerned at not hearing from you for so long. I have, however, only received this week a letter from Sheff, and one from Theodora, dated the 7th and 6th April respectively; and your last was dated April 17 and came very quickly; so very likely the irregularity is in the mails. If you were to be ill with no prospect of writing for some time, I trust that you would manage to get at least a cable sent to me.

I have had rather a lull in my activities these last few days. I confine my visit to town to Tuesday and Wednesday nights; so, going up on Tuesday morning, I return by the 6.45 train on Thursday evening, which brings me back in time for dinner, and gives me four full days in the country. (In the winter there is more need to spend three nights in town, and Russell Square is better heated than Shamley). Tuesday is apt to be a full day, however. I took an early train in order to deal with some correspondence before lunch, but had to deal with several interruptions, including Dr. Iovetz-Tereshchenko in his usual state of distress and catastrophe: then had to dash off to the Sesame Club to lunch with Cockie and take her to see "Men in Shadow", which proved to be a quite good, and well acted play about English saboteurs in France (she only likes crime plays and thrillers). It is no joke convoying even very spry old ladies about town now (she is 81 to-day) but fortunately a taxi turned up just when wanted, so I got her from the theatre to tea, and after tea packed her back to the Sesame Club and sat down to write a long letter to the Master of Balliol pleading for the said Tereshchenko, which I had to take to Charing Cross to post, as all branch postoffices close, and all collections cease, by 6.30 now: then to the Hyde Park Hotel to have a drink with the Maxses, and so on to Lowndes Square to dine with the Geoffrey Dawsons (the retired editor of The Times) to meet the author of a book on low-priced public schools which we are to publish. (I told Enid Faber the next day that I had "deputised" for her and Geoffrey at the Dawsons, and she replied that Cecilia had never asked her to the house - which, as Dawson is a fellow of All Souls', she no doubt should have done).

However, as I had no urgent piece of writing on hand, I have spent the last few days in a deck chair in the garden, which is now at its best, reading Edmund Burke: it is a luxury to spend time reading some book merely because it is a book one ought to have read, and not for any immediate purpose; and it is even a luxury to spend time over anything that is really well written - I take back several manuscripts to read every weekend, and it is rare to find anything written with distinction.... But the spring and summer passes like a dream nowadays: my memory of these three years is of the winters, which seem, in retrospect, interminable, and of the summers as just a few days in between. This is, of course, the most hopeful summer, with real military accomplishment behind it: and one begins to believe that a year from now will be very different again: though the post-war period may prove to

bring a different kind of abnormal world.

This has been a quiet weekend, with only Mrs. M. and a very scotch sister from Edinburgh, who has been here on a visit, but until now has been in bed with bronchitis, and whom I had never seen before - a quiet, douce body, rather like an old-fashioned New England Aunt, very different both from Mrs. M. and from the irritable Cockie: and Hope has been away too, until to-day, so that the usual psychopathic shouting and shrieking (either to her wretched aged dog, which is deaf as well as half-blind, or to one of the servants) has been absent. I look forward to my own holiday, in the hope that there will be nobody at the hotel who will want to talk to me.

I think constantly of your problems: I have never felt so keenly my inability to be of any use to you.

Ever your loving
Tom
