

Letters from T.S. Eliot to Emily Hale

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BY AIR MAIL
PAR AVION



Miss Emily Hale.

1418 East 63rd Street.

Seattle, Washington

U.S.A.

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G.P.O. N.Y.

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TELEPHONE: MUSEUM 9543
TELEGRAMS: FABBAF, WESTCENT, LONDON

24 RUSSELL SQUARE

LONDON, W.C.1

My dear Dove,

3 July 1931.

You cannot possibly conceive my delight when I found the gay barber's pole envelope with your letter in it. It was very sweet of you to think of sending it by Air Mail - that made me very proud - and the letter took no longer than most from Boston! The 21st June to the 1st July! I should never have thought of Air Mail - you see how old-fashioned I am; but now I shall enquire at the Post Office to find out whether I can have my letters (some of them, because I still think of aeroplanes as unreliable means of transport, and nothing would induce me to trust myself in one, even if I was coming myself to see you instead of a letter) aired from New York to Seattle.

Well, your letter made me, for the most part, very happy. Not hearing from you for a fortnight, and not knowing where you were at any moment, was more of a strain than even I should have expected - it induces in me a queer moral torpor or listlessness - no doubt it is good for my humility to know how very frail and dependent I am! but I don't want such admissions to impose any burdens upon you. I am happy to think that you are with people so congenial as your aunt and uncle. I am only afraid that your summer courses, which sound like very concentrated work, combined with domestic work, will give you very little summer rest. I suppose the climate of Seattle (I have never even known exactly how to pronounce it) is a very good one. But do not, I pray, allow yourself to lose that ten pounds - I wonder if it is ten pounds since I last saw you, as well as since those in Milwaukee last saw you. And do you get any sort of outings - garden, sea, country. Do you ever ride a horse, I wonder; and whether you can drive a car (I can, and am very proud of myself, but to tell the truth motoring bores me consumedly, and the only activity I enjoy is walking tours) (I should love to take you walking in the South, in the beautiful country between Limoges and Toulouse, and about Périgaux, where there is a lovely town every fifteen miles or so, and good food and paté de foie gras and local vintages) there's two brackets in succession.

BY AIR MAIL
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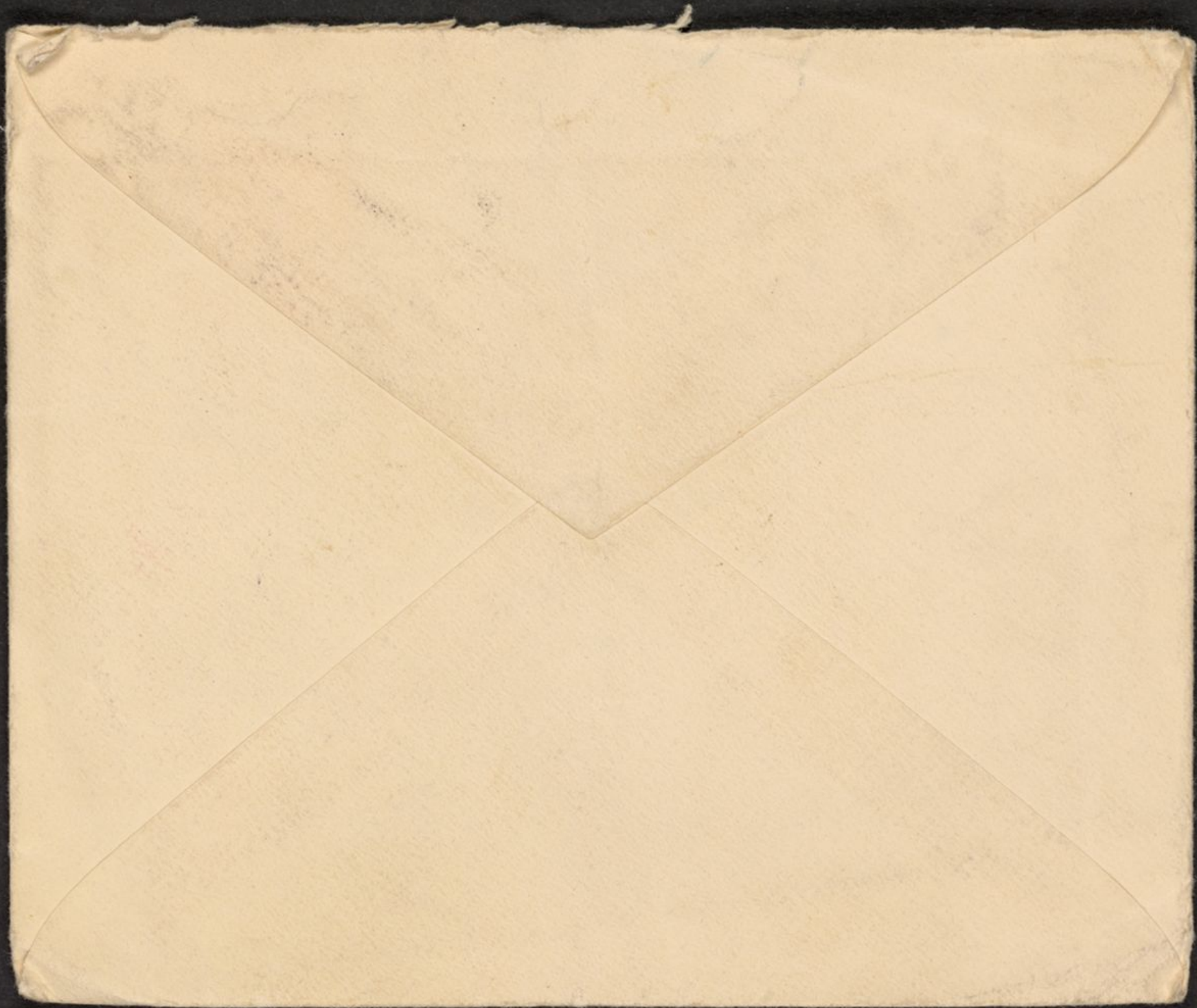
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1418 East 63rd Street,

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U.S.A.



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24 RUSSELL SQUARE

LONDON, W.C.1

7 July 1931.

Chère Dame (non pas sans merci) (A)

(I had to type that, because I am proud of my machine having the accents on it). It is exasperating to have just had a most satisfying long letter from you - June 27 to July 6 - that is not at all slow, and makes me bless the aeroplane - and not have time to answer at once. Yesterday morning I had to spend with James Joyce, in discussion of both his private and public affairs - lunch with Professor Louis More, Paul More's brother, about some publishing projects of his - and afternoon in committee. And this morning I have had a number of dull business letters that could not wait. So until the next mail - what can I say in five minutes, Well-Beloved? That nobody in England knew of "An Adventure" either, only a few people; that I am gratified that the Rothenstein drawing is not wholly unacceptable to You, and that you may cut it out to offset the puddings - that I may see some pictures of You within the summer; I am pleased that you are learning to Swim, though shocked that you do not know already - will you appear, I wonder, in one of the gay Beach Costumes advertised now by Jaeger, all wool, the popular "sunback" model only 10s.6d. as so it should be, there seems to be so little material - perhaps I may have a photograph of you poised on a diving board? - do get brown all over and don't lose the 10 pounds in housework or dramatic study. And I am glad you tell me of your finances, and of course it makes me very sad and angry, and I wish, I wish, that there was something I could do, were it only an introduction - it is maddening - you of all women. But I will write more fully on

(A) See Keats, whose letters to Fanny Brawne seem to me very tepid stuff.

Thursday and Friday, and will now affix the little blue slip to carry messages unspoken as well as spoken.

Your grateful
Tom.

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STATIONERS

11, MARKET STREET

BERLIN

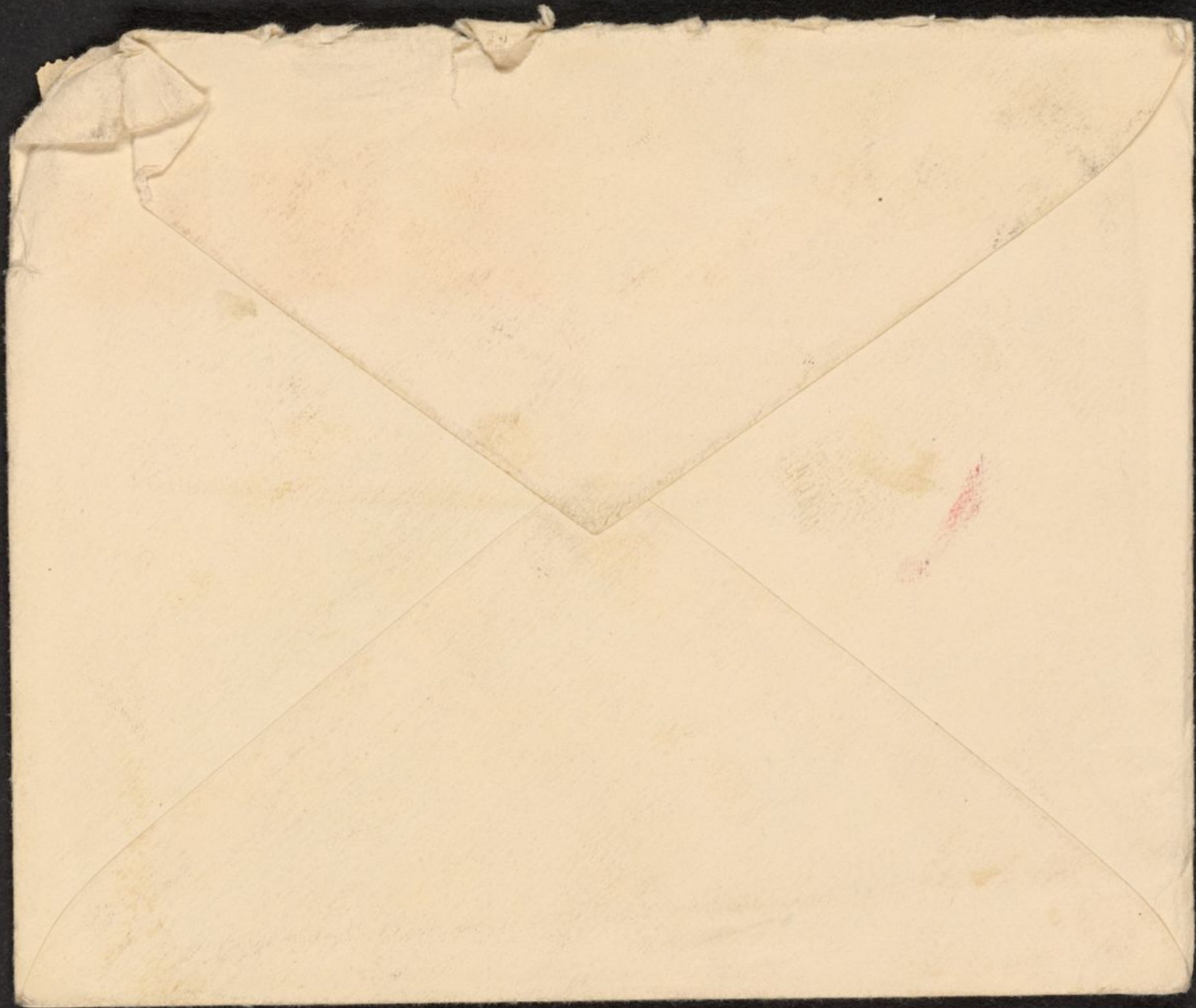
SOLE AGENTS FOR THE EAST INDIES



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PAR AVION



Miss Emily Hale.
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24 RUSSELL SQUARE

LONDON, W.C.1

TELEPHONE: MUSEUM 9543

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Emilia Ben-Amée -

9 July 1931.

I am feeling very tired this morning, having been very busy in every way during the last fortnight, and shall be for the next week; I hope August will be very quiet. We dined with Osbert on Tuesday; the company being Osbert, Edith, Sachie and his Canadian wife, whom I had never met before and who is much nicer than I expected, and Adrian Stokes, a very brilliant young art critic who has written a book on the Renaissance which we are about to publish, and Robert Byron, another young man who writes about Byzantine art. I was shocked by Edith's appearance: she not only does not look like your photograph but does not look at all as I remember her. I knew that she had fallen out of bed, about a year ago, and had concussion, but I fear the consequences are serious - she is unhealthily fat, which does not suit anyone so tall, and seemed to me a little "simple" and wandering, and Vivienne found out that she has taken to giving money away foolishly to unworthy applicants - altogether, she was dreadfully pathetic. (All of this is extremely confidential of course). They are a most unfortunate family: their mother, Lady Ida, was not only intemperate but was sent to gaol at one time for swindling; and I admire very much the brave front they put up in making the best of a bad job; and they are extremely kindly and well bred people. Otherwise, the dinner party went off extremely well.

Otherwise, I have been busy with private financial worries - Income Tax is my chief nightmare there - and with the negotiations for obtaining Joyce's new work for publication - but that I hope is nearly completed.

I send herewith, with some diffidence, the first proof of my Ariel poem. It is to be reset in better type, and the statistics - which are the figures of the war material handed over by Germany at the Armistice - are to be spaced closer together, as they are not meant to count as lines of verse. It is the first movement of "Coriolan". Why Coriolan? not so much because of any resemblance to Beethoven as to hint that it is not meant to be quite the same conception as Shakespeare's! My Coriolanus is not to be essentially the man of action - but the man who essentially seeks to be something - first through the pride of action and public activity - the "hero" - then

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through the pride of asceticism - the wrong aspiration to saintliness which is no better really than the aspiration to heroism - and finally the complete surrender of self as the most intense form of being. Of course I very likely shall never manage all this, or it may become something else. The first part is what the title indicates, only the anachronisms and mixtures of place are intentional - so that it should be in any way a reconstruction of a Roman triumph, and I did not want to localise it in London or America or anywhere, so I mixed French references in - reference to the typical absurd medley of straggling organisations that take part in processions in France. The dust and light refers to the Nicene Creed (Light of Light) a theme to be used later; and unless young Cyril turns out to be of use later - he may be Arthur Edward Cyril Parken, a telephone operator later on - he shall be cast out. It would be an impertinence to try to explain any other allusions to You; but I only ask you to reserve judgment on this as merely a draft of one part of perhaps too ambitious a poem.

As I am uncertain of tomorrow, I think I had best end this off and post it to-day; and write a few words tomorrow if there is time. I have been thinking a great deal about your affairs, my dear, and I wish I could do more than think. But I sometimes write to you, and insist on being able to write to you, about problems of mine about which there is so little to be done that there is nothing for you to say in reply; and I shall want you to keep on telling about all your difficulties about which I can do nothing. To me the confidences are so precious in themselves; and certainly I worry less if I think you tell me all your troubles (instead of thinking "why worry him with that? he can't do anything about it") than if you tried to be bright and cheering - that would rob the whole thing of true intimacy, wouldn't it, dear?

Tom

TRIUMPHAL MARCH

Stone, bronze, stone, steel, stone, oakleaves, horses' heels

Over the paving.

And the flags. And the trumpets. And so many eagles.

How many? Count them. And such a press of people.

We hardly knew ourselves that day, or knew the City.

This is the way to the temple, and we so many crowding
the way.

So many waiting, how many waiting? what did it matter,
on such a day?

Are they coming? No, not yet. You can see some eagles.

And hear the trumpets.

Here they come. Is he coming?

The natural wakened life of our Ego is a perceiving.

We can wait with our stools and our sausages.

What comes first? Can you see? Tell us. It is

5,800,000 rifles and carbines,

102,000 machine guns,

28,000 trench mortars,

53,000 field and heavy guns,

I cannot tell how many projectiles, mines and fuses,

13,000 aeroplanes,

24,000 aeroplane engines,

50,000 ammunition waggons,

now 55,000 army waggons,

11,000 field kitchens,

1,150 field bakeries,

What a time that took. Will it be he now? No,

Those are the golf club Captains, these the Scouts,

And now the *société gymnastique de Poissy*

And now come the Mayor and the Livermen. Look

There he is now, look:

There is no interrogation in those eyes

Or in the hands, quiet over the horse's neck,

And the eyes watchful, waiting, perceiving, indifferent.

○ hidden under the dove's wing, hidden in the turtle's
breast,

Under the palmtree at noon, under the running water

At the still point of the turning world. ○ hidden.

Now they go up to the temple. Then the sacrifice.

Now come the virgins bearing urns, urns containing

Dust

Dust

Dust of dust, and now

Stone, bronze, stone, steel, stone, oakleaves, horses' heels

Over the paving.

15

That is all we could see. But how many eagles! and how
many trumpets!

(And Easter Day, we didn't get to the country,
So we took young Cyril to church. And they rang a bell
And he said right out loud, *crumpets.*)

Don't throw away that sausage,
It'll come in handy. He's artful. Please, will you

Give us a light?

Light

Light

Et les soldats faisaient la haie? ILS LA FAISAIENT

T. S. ELIOT

BY AIR MAIL
PAR AVION

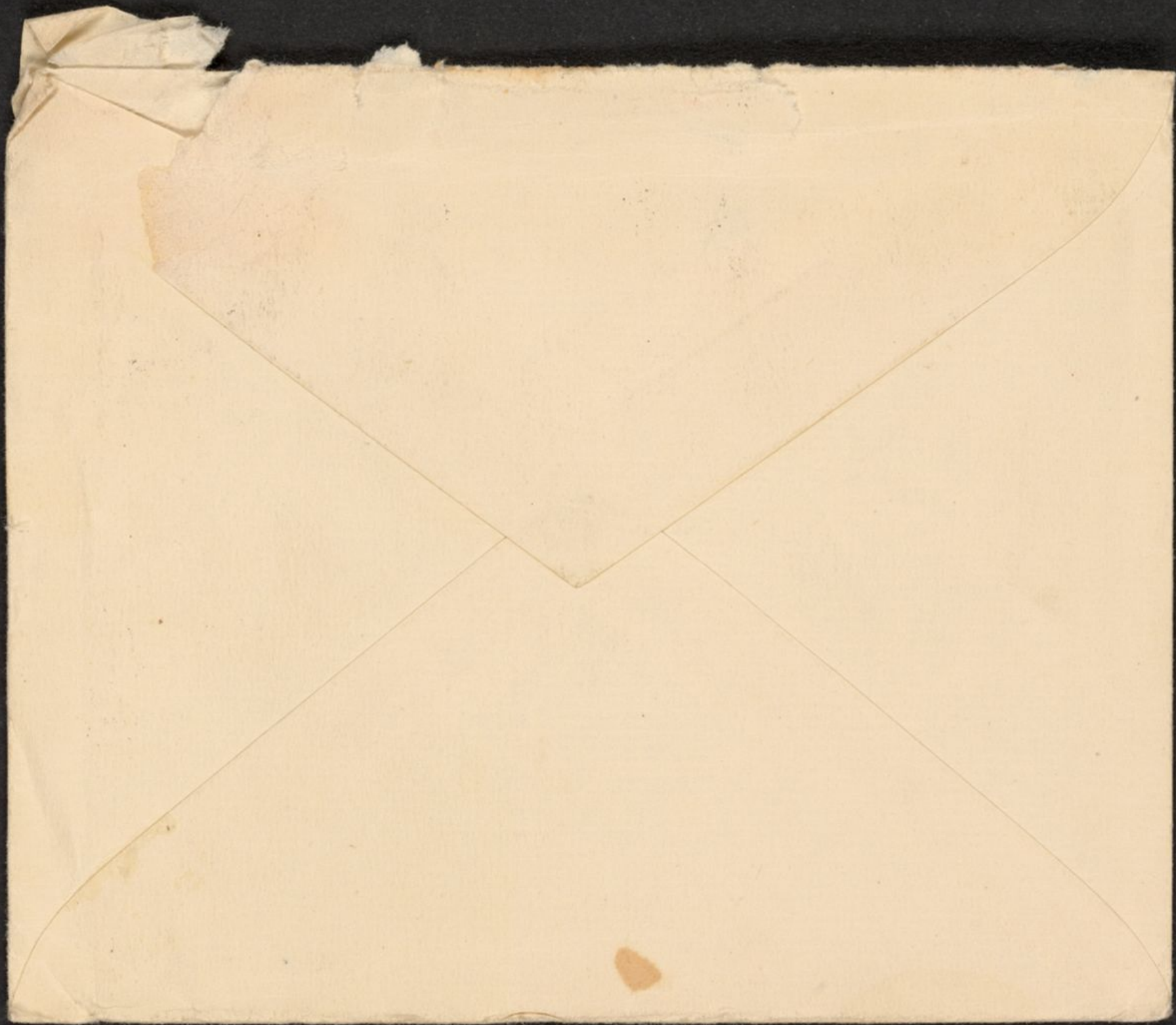


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24 RUSSELL SQUARE

LONDON, W.C.1

16 July 1931.

Dear Lady Emily,

I am extremely annoyed at not having got a letter off to you by the Tuesday mail - this is the first week that has ever happened, and I hope it will not happen again, unless I should be ill or away, and neither is likely. Monday was a very busy day, and Tuesday, owing to an unfortunate combination of circumstances, I did not get to my office at all; so I found your letter waiting yesterday. They have been taking ten, and sometimes nine days, with great regularity; and it seems to me a remarkably quick delivery. In the present circumstances, you need not now go to the extra expense of air mail - now that I know where you are, and how you are, and know that my letters reach you - though I am thrilled with pride and pleasure by your caring to do so - I do not like to think of your walking just to save carfare.

But first I must thank you for the photographs. My dear, the period portrait is intoxicatingly beautiful; I am thankful that Mrs. Perkins did not succeed in dissuading you from sending it - of course it is a little haggard, and I am glad to think that your collarbone is better covered now - please don't ever get so thin again - but perfectly lovely. And as you must know, madame la duchesse, that particular style of 18th century dress is a very difficult one - very few faces could stand it! but you come right out of the French dix-huitième. I am very proud of this portrait. The other is so very different - it is one of those which would convey least to those who do not know you, but a very great deal to those who do. I treasure it in a way more than the ~~other~~ grand one; but I cannot say much about it, because, to me, it is simply heartbreaking. I am quite insatiable for photographs of you, remember; and I should like at least one snapshot taken this summer.

As for my third - I have to confess that I have not yet ordered it. Chiefly out of wilfulness, because I wanted a good one of you first; and partly because I really think it the most unflattering, though others prefer it. However, it shall be ordered.

I do hope that your anxieties about your uncle - which must be also of course, anxieties about your aunt - are now at an end. It was very fortunate for them that you were there. But what a very

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busy life you are having! so I am a little worried that you may not have enough rest. It is very difficult to learn to rest. But I do believe that it can and should be practised - so far as duties and interruptions allow; and that one should practise relaxing quietly, by oneself, for a few minutes at a time several times a day. It is surprising what a quantity of foolish frivolous thoughts do scamper through one's head all the time, if one lets them! and to empty one's head of everything (which is by no means easy) and relax all muscles, and breath deeply and regularly, is most valuable, especially in a busy life. I am preaching what I practise only very imperfectly - for it is very hard for me to keep still. I did learn once, in 1922 when I was out in Lausanne for a month under Dr. Roger Vittoz, a very fine nerve doctor now dead, to control myself a little, and for a time I was able to fall asleep for a few minutes at will. Insomnia, I think, so far as it is not due to physical (usually visceral) causes, is largely a matter of lack of self-control; and of course the persistent use of sleeping drugs weakens self-control all round. Many insomniacs drug because they have not the self-control to be able to lie awake, rather than because they need the sleep, and they come actually to crave much more sleep than the ordinary person needs.

I am tired at present because we have had rather a more active social life than usual the last few weeks. I think it is good for Vivienne, up to a point, to see as many people as possible, and that it keeps her more nearly normal. We had eight people to dinner on Tuesday - the Morleys, the Joyces and the Hutchinsons, and the McKnight Kaufers came in after dinner - it went off quite successfully, and V. arranges dinners very well. Tomorrow Osbert and Edith - whom I saw again the other day, and who seemed much more herself than the first time - and Father Martin D'Arcy, who is the cleverest Jesuit in England, a very able philosopher, to lunch. I saw him again the other day at lunch at Mrs. Stuart Moore's (Evelyn Underhill). And this afternoon we have to go to tea at Lady Ottoline Morrell's - she is an old friend, but more V.'s friend than mine

I am relieved to hear that your finances are a little better. I am afraid that the business depression hits the market for lecturers very badly. We shall probably have a better idea in a month or two of what the winter will be. Things look very dark here, and all over Europe. I was talking to Geoffrey Faber about it this morning - the uncertainty in stocks and shares is worse than it was in August 1914. I take a very gloomy view of Europe myself; only a very close working together of Britain, France and Germany can save things; I don't feel that Italy counts much. Altogether, it is a very sad world now. But if my sweet Bird can keep well, and not too unhappy, there will always be some happiness in the life of her adoring

Tom -

BY AIR MAIL
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21 JUL
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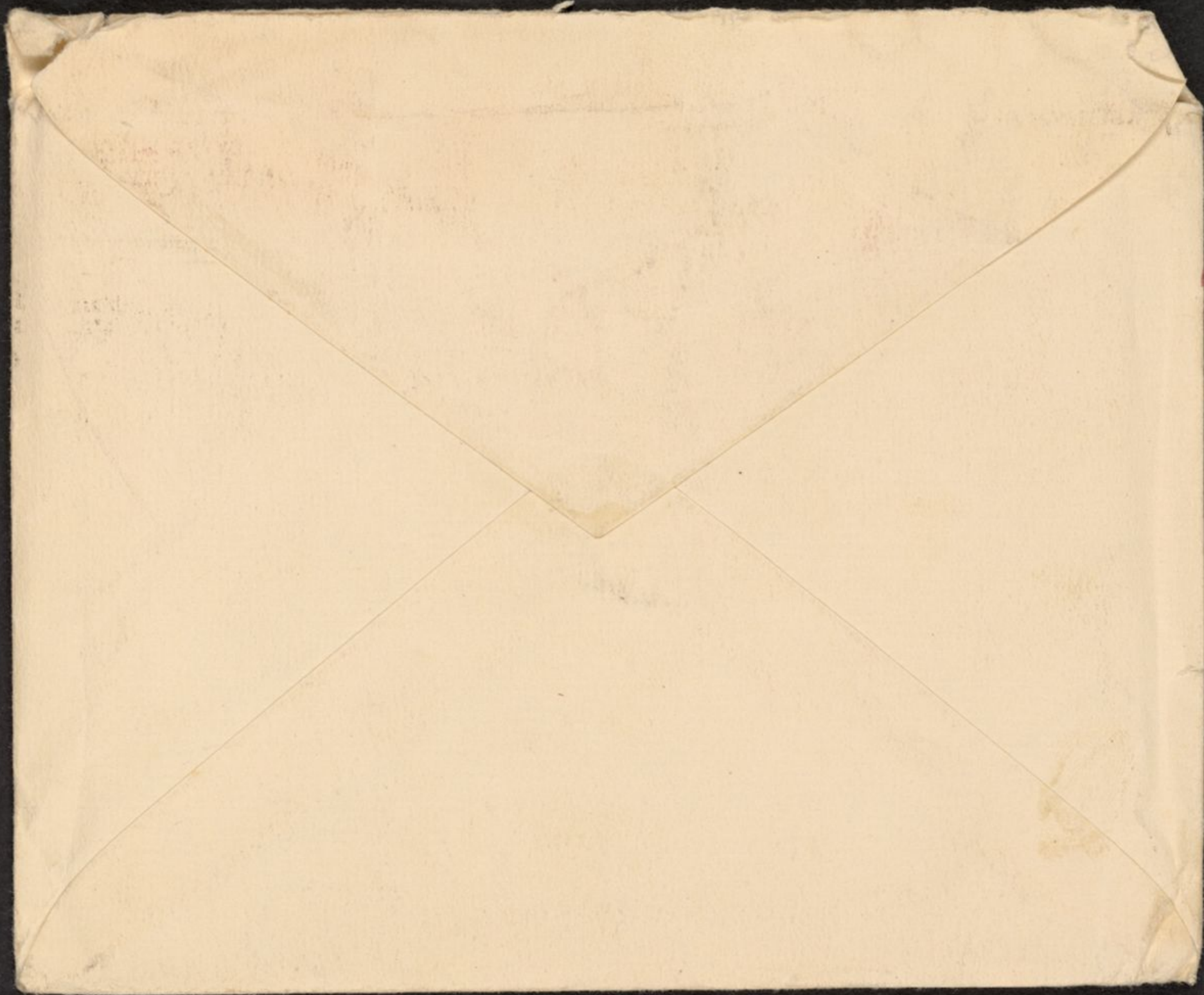
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10 11 AM
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24 RUSSELL SQUARE

LONDON, W.C.1

21 July 1931.

My dear Dove,

I have exactly minus five minutes to write - but I should feel very unhappy and humiliated if I did not get off one line to you today - I shall be back after lunch but may be called away at once - I shall explain in a letter later in the week. I love your photographs - the grand one is (now dont suppose that I am thinking of the dress, well as it does become you, but of the pose and expression) the Emily of whom I always have and always shall be, in awe - from whom a contemptuous look or reproving word would be crushing (I only regret that the ear is rather mixed up with the curls, so that its form is not clear - I should like the ear completely exposed and outlined); the other is rather the Emily whom I should like to support & protect from the world). I can't even type this morning; I have spent the whole morning trying to persuade Joyce to be more businesslike, and have to go to lunch with Ogden to talk about gramophone records; so, my dear Lady, goodbye till Thursday or Friday. I enclose three samples of the letters of bores. Your

Tom

Kansas City, Mo.,
July 8, 1931.

T.S.Eliot,
c/o Faber & Faber, Ltd.,
London, Eng.

Dear Mr Eliot-

For several years I have been reading your verse and enjoying it more and more. Aside from the long poem "The Love Song of J.Alfred Prufrock", my favorite is your "Prelude". I like to reread it often; it is just such a description of a winter evening that I would give anything to be able to put on paper as you have.

Inasmuch as I enjoy this verse so much and if it is not imposing upon you I would greatly appreciate your writing it out for me that I might frame it and hang it up over my desk. It would certainly give me a whole lot of enjoyment !

Assuring you of my gratitude for this favor, I am

Yours sincerely,

John L. Naylon

John L. Naylon,

P.O.Box 1121,
Kansas City, Mo.

... ..
... ..

... ..
... ..
... ..

Dear Mr. Elliot -

For several years I have been reading
your verses and enjoying them and more. As for
the long poem "The Love Song of Alfred Hardy"
of favorite to your "Prayer". I like to read it
because it has such a description of a winter even-
ing that I would give anything to be related and on
paper as you have.

Thank you very much for this
and it is not surprising that you would readily
accept my writing to you for me that I might
know you and that you would be kind to read it.

Truly give me a whole lot of enjoyment!
Thank you for your attention to this
favor, Yours

Yours sincerely,

John C. ...

P.O. Box 111
Lansing, Mich.

WALTON DOUGLAS

1, Oakhill Road.

Putney
S.W.15

Friday

Dear Mr Elot,

Could you tell me from which
play of Beaumont & Fletcher's you have
taken the following lines:

"Wilt thou, hereafter, when they talk of
me,

As thou shalt hear nothing but infamy,
Remember some of these things?....."

Upray thee do; for thou shalt never see
me so again." ?

(Quoted in your essay on Benfoussa
in the Sacred Wood)

Quoted them in my English finals
with misrepresenting remarks on the
significance of them in their context,
I do not ~~know~~ know what their
context is.

I am having my own on Tuesday
[21] & I am afraid I may be asked
awkward questions. I cannot find
the time myself.

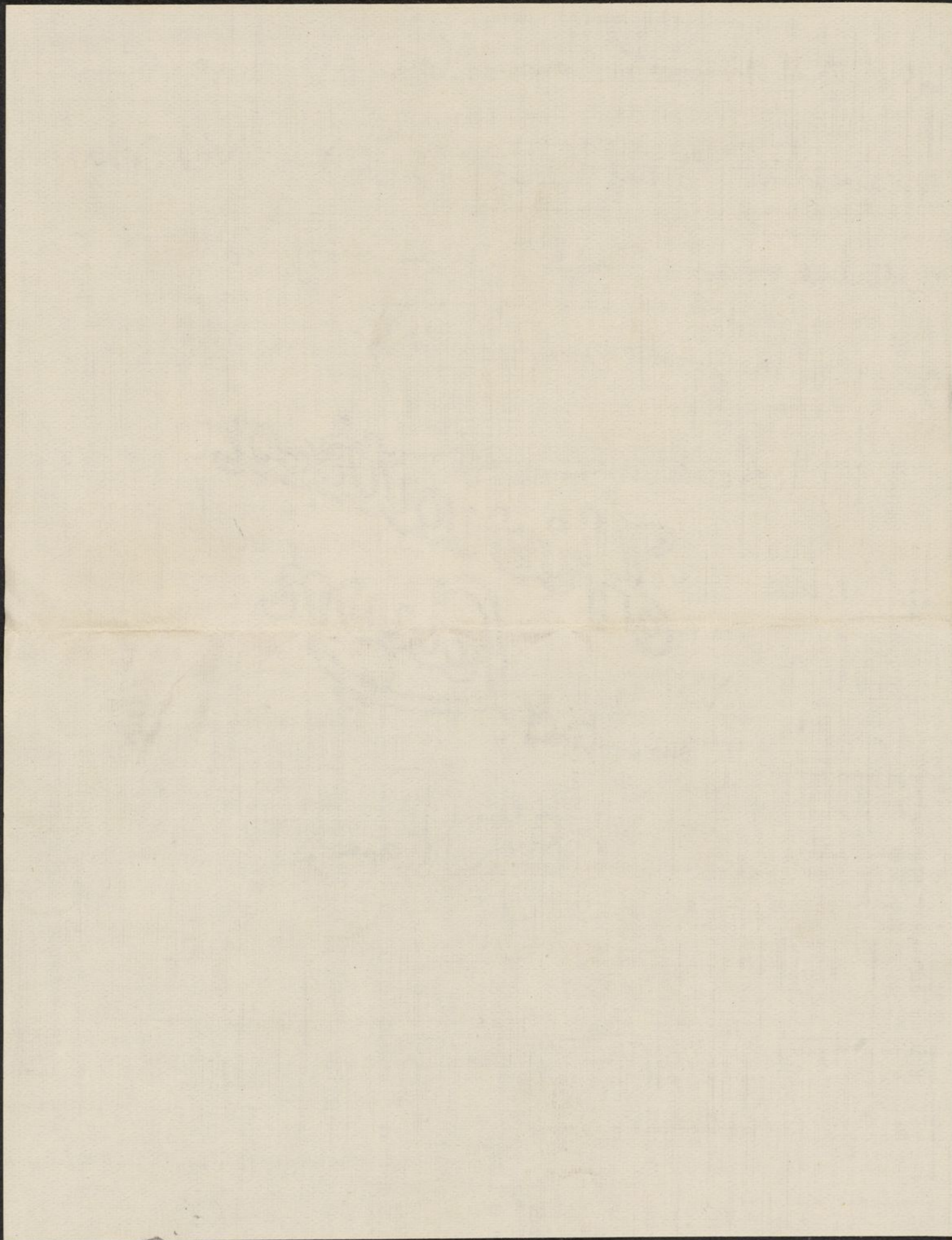
I should be extremely grateful, if
you are going to tell me, if you

could do it by Monday morning;
I have to start for Oxford Monday
evening as the train is at 9.30
am. The following day

I hope I am not greatly
bothering you.

Yours truly

Betty Fairis.



18 Chiswell Road,
Oxford

19 July

T. S. Eliot, Esq.

Dear Sir,

Pray forgive me for approaching you thus, but being a keen autograph-hunter ("fiend" though I may be) I feel that my collection is incomplete without your signature.

Would it therefore be troubling you too much to ask you to autograph the enclosed card, and to return it to me in the stamped-

addressed envelope also
enclosed? Thanking you
very sincerely in anticipation,
and trusting not to be
disappointed, I beg to remain,

Yours faithfully,

Louis B. Frewer

BY AIR MAIL
PAR AVION



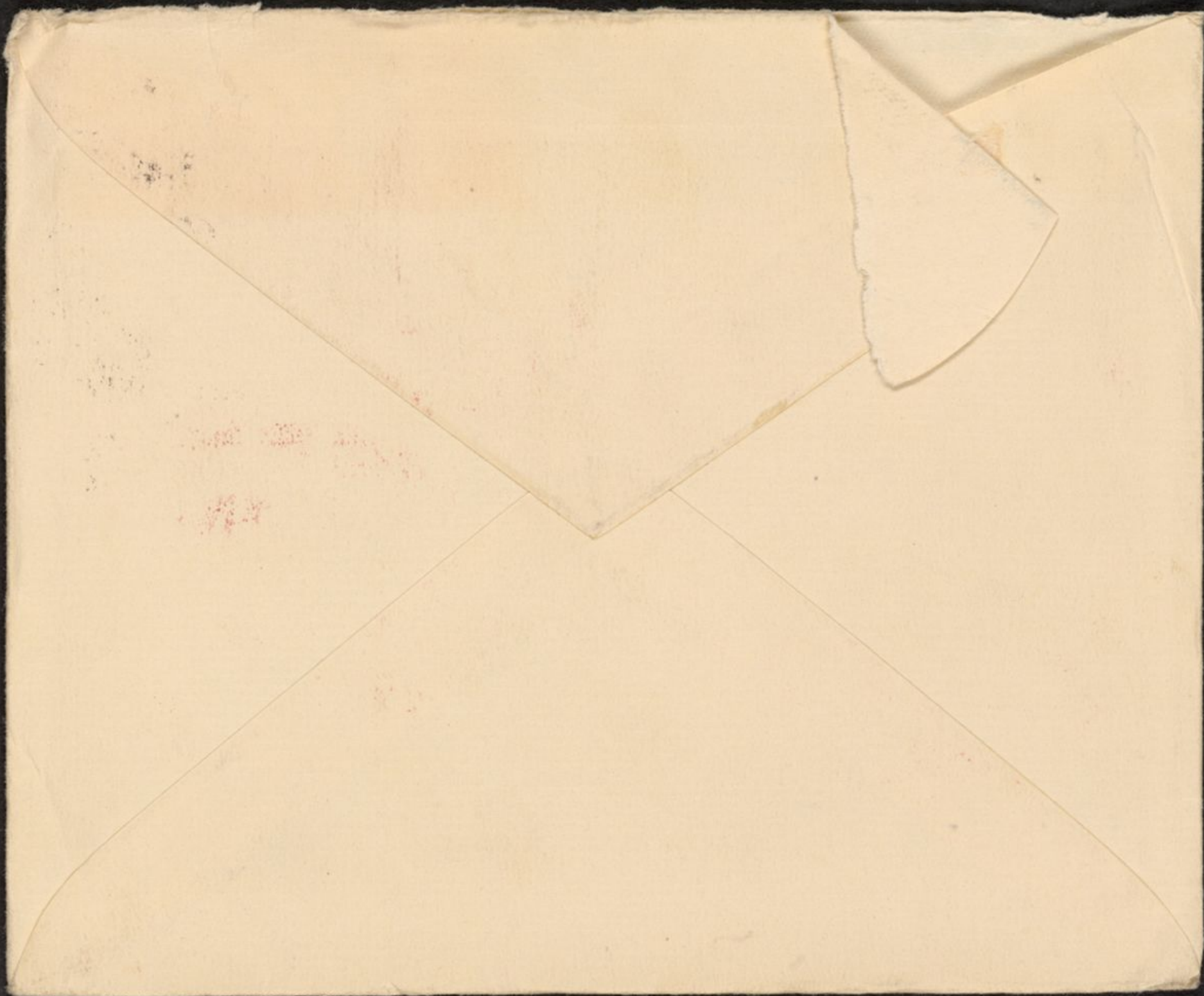
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24 RUSSELL SQUARE

LONDON, W.C.1

21 July 1931.

My dear Lady,

I have got back from lunch, and have not yet been called away, so, not knowing what time I shall have on Wednesday Thursday or Friday, I am starting a letter to you, having got off my note by the air mail at 1:20. I am waiting because V. is or should be with her doctor in Harley Street, and he may ring up to say he wants to see me too. (There is no particular crisis, only the visit has been postponed for a long time, and there is the usual question of excessive quantity of sleeping draught - as the cook had taken sudden leave yesterday in a quite unjustifiable temper - a good ridance though a very good cook - and as the w.c. cistern had gone out of order over the weekend, she rather overdid it last night and I found her during the night on the kitchen floor, having suddenly decided to shell all the peas for today, and fallen off a chair putting them away). Then we are supposed to go to Virginia's for tea; tomorrow Lady Ottoline comes to tea to meet Mrs. Joyce, Thursday my nièces to lunch with Lucia Joyce and Barbara Hutchinson, who are the nearest contemporaries of theirs we can muster. I have been lunching with C.K. Ogden to discuss Joyce's gramophone record with him - a wholly disinterested activity on my part - Ogden had the record made (a recitation by Joyce of Anna Livia Plurabelle - if you have a gramophone at 41 Brimmer Street please let me know and I will have a copy sent to you, it is very good); they are two of the most disorderly and unbusinesslike men I know, and accordingly they both complain of each other for being unbusinesslike, and I cannot make head or tail of it. Ogden's rooms are probably the most amazingly littered in the world, books and papers everywhere, letters to be answered usually skewered to the wall with pen nibs, photographs of everyone under the sun, three or four wireless sets (at least one going all the time), any number of gramophones, and various strange electrical inventions supposed to reproduce the human voice, and looking very dangerous and explosive, and all sorts of charts, diagrams etc. dealing with something called Basic English. He is a friend of Richards, looks like Mr. Pickwick, and behaves like Mrs. Ellaby.

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I like what your friend said about some human relations having their fitness and importance in their place and time. I think too that it always takes time to distinguish the intensity of an experience from its profundity. The intensity may always be related as much to time and place and to one's own emotional and mental state and stage of development as to an essential sympathy; and I think that often nothing but duration of time can tell us how permanently another person matters, or how permanently one matters to any other person. But transient relationships can be of the greatest value. I cannot, myself, conceive of anyone really falling in love twice: but in the most intimate of relationships human beings seem to me to vary so much that I am willing to believe that some people can. But we all, I think, have had friendships which were only possible for particular conditions...

FRIDAY (24 July): this is the first opportunity to continue that I have had; and your dear letter of the 13th has just come - I mean it came yesterday; and a German publisher is coming in to see me, and I cannot be here this afternoon because Edith Sitwell is bringing a Russian painter to tea, so I must write very fast. And I believe the Hinkleys are actually in London - it is rather sudden; I have a letter from Eleanor only this morning. And now your letter makes it necessary to drop all other subjects. First, I admit that I ought now to be less subject to waves of dejection; I admit the weakness, and shall amend. I am and shall be always happy when you reprove me and also when you criticise frankly anything I do or write; because after all your is the only human approval I want in any way, and I like to feel sure that whenever the alternative forces itself you would be candid rather than kind: though no one could be more gentle than you.

Now, I am thankful too that you should gradually - as quickly as possible - ask me about anything that is not clear in your mind. Even in a relationship like ours, and particularly when its only means is correspondence, there is opportunity for misunderstanding; and one is always in danger of taking for granted that the other understands everything without its being said. Well, my dear, your question puzzled me and still puzzles me, and I must try first to understand it. At first I felt hurt, but I know that that can only mean that I misunderstood. So I must fumble about and explain as best I can without understanding what is in your mind. I had been bottled up for a long time. When I fell in love with you was one evening when the Hinkleys had a very small party - Penelope and there must have been one or two men but I forget who - and we acted some impromptu charade in which I stepped on your feet. All I knew at the moment, being very

undeveloped and never having had any such experience before, was that I wanted dreadfully to see you again; and it was only when the "stunt show" was proposed and I knew that I should be able to see you once a week for some time that I began to realise what had happened to me. After that night at the opera I was completely conscious of it, and quite shaken to pieces. All those years I suffered from two notions: first, that I was hopelessly unattractive and ineligible for you (of course that is an adolescent state of mind which is reprehensible, because a man in love should not think about his attractiveness either way); and second, a damned distorted conscience told me that I had no right to make love to anybody until I was in sight of being able to support her. It did not seem to me right even to let you know that I loved you; and I was very depressed about my qualifications for making a living as a professor. Even little things affected me like this: I expected that the best I could get would be an appointment in some obscure provincial college; and I felt that a man with such poor prospects, and no hope of giving you the surroundings that you ought to have, had **no** right to ask you to marry him. There was one occasion on which all this nonsense did nearly break down - I had planned and plotted for some time to see you two days in succession; so I asked you to the football game (and was very much surprised that you accepted) and then arranged a teaparty entirely for the purpose of seeing you. And at the end of the Saturday afternoon, when I took you home, I was so down in the mouth to think those delirious two days were over - it all seemed over - that I nearly spoke to you. I cannot allow my mind to dwell long on such things: a kind of dizziness overcomes me and interferes with my ability to carry on my daily life.

I said, that last evening: "I can't ask anything, because I have nothing to offer". That meant simply "I cannot ask you to become engaged to me, I cannot try to induce you to love me, because I am still so far away from being self-supporting". You should know that my only ambition and goal in life was that I might ask you to marry me.

And now, I ask you in return, what was in your mind in asking this question? Have I answered it or not? Please tell me, because, really and truly, I still do not understand what you meant; and what I have just told you, it is difficult for me not to believe that you knew already.

And now I shall stop at this point; and I shall continue my ordinary letter on Monday. I shall hope, then to have another letter from you telling me that you have received at least one Air Mail letter from me. How soon it will be time to write to Boston again! I dare say you will be sorry - I am not sure whether the Perkins's are to be in Boston one more winter - I do hope so. By the way, what a marvellous carpenter and builder your uncle must be.

My heart is too full of you even to find words of any use, my dear, my dear, my dear, my most beautiful lady.

You say your bewilderment
 question "relates to other things":
 naturally I want to know
 what things.

Tom

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LONDON, W.C.1

TELEPHONE: MUSEUM 9543

TELEGRAMS: FABBAF, WESTCENT, LONDON

27 July 1931.

Dear Princess.

I cannot deny myself, this rainy Monday afternoon, the pleasure of starting the letter, in the ten minutes I have left, which I expect to finish, and despatch "par avion" tomorrow. I should like to write to you a little bit every day, though there is no point in posting more than twice a week. I have been surprised how quickly your letters have reached me, but of course, particularly as I did not have the wit to think of air mails, it is a very long time for replies.

I should like you to get my last letter very quickly. Yes, I am, and have always been, extremely "old-fashioned", and perhaps that is why I was puzzled. And I hope you will proceed to ask your other questions, if I have answered that. And, though I naturally feel that I know you far far better than I have ever known anyone else, man or woman, I think that mutual understanding is something that can go on increasing to the end of life, don't you?

TUESDAY. Now I can get on a bit, and shall post this, however short. I always seem to have more time for writing towards the end of the week than at the beginning. - I am looking eagerly for your next letter, because surely you will have had my first answer to your first from Seattle. I do pray that the air mail West is as reliable as the air mail east seems to be. Yesterday I had to lunch with Orlo Williams at my new club, the Oxford & Cambridge, which certainly has a much better kitchen than my old one; with a voluble French Civil Servant - it is always restful to me to have a chance to talk French with a Frenchman, because they are so much alike - superficially - underneath they vary just as we do, but they have a stereotyped form of behaviour, speech and thought, so that they are much easier to get on with at first meeting than any other people. Williams I must remember to tell you of another time - not at all an intimate, but a distinct English type. Today I have to lunch with Clive Bell - not, this time, the Woolfs also, I am sorry to say, but Harold Nicolson and Francis Birrell. Then the Hinkleys come to tea and Evelyn Underhill and good Miss Harriett Weaver.

The Hinkleys came to tea on Sunday, and were their same selves.

You were not mentioned.

FABER & FABER

We were very happy to have them; and they always seem particularly happy people, as the world goes: most people I know use cheerfulness or gaily as a correct social dress - and it is correct and admirable - but seem sad enough underneath. I cannot help feeling, as I may have said before, that the life they lead does not seem to me to have developed Eleanor's spiritual and emotional capacities as fully as one's should be - but how little one knows about other people.

I hope to understand human beings in general better, by gradually understanding one adored person better. It is wonderful to be convinced that whatever more there is to learn, about one person, I shall only admire her the more, and feel the nearer to her.

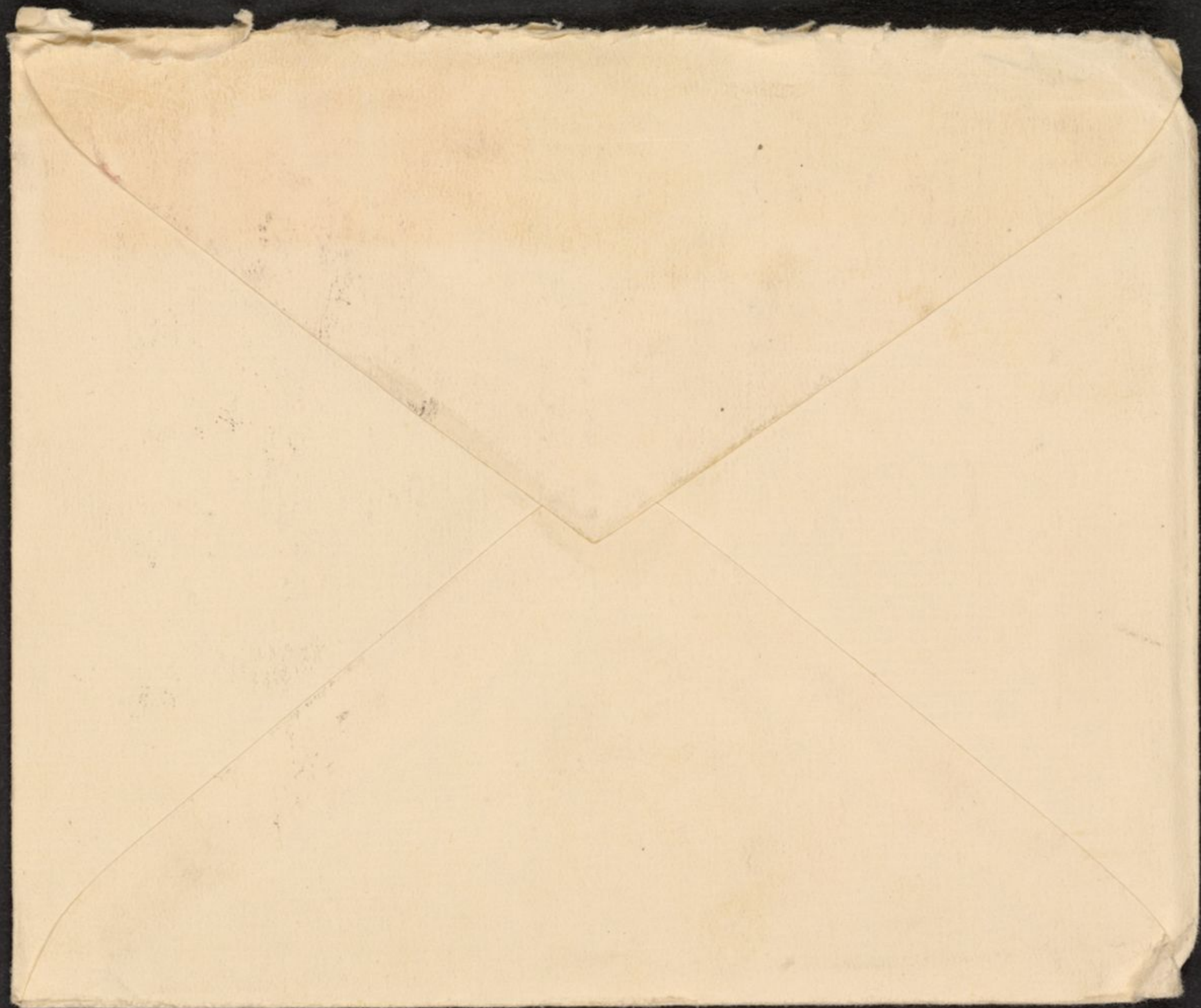
Now I must stop to post this in Holborn in the blue pillar box, and then to Clive's in Gordon Square.

Tom.

BY AIR MAIL
PAR AVION



Miss Emily Hale,
1418 East 63rd Street,
Seattle (Wash.)
U.S.A.



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24 RUSSELL SQUARE

LONDON, W.C.1

TELEPHONE: MUSEUM 9543

TELEGRAMS: FABBAE, WESTCENT, LONDON

31 July 1931.

Dear Lady Emily,

Nothing has come from you this week, and I am nervous partly because you had not yet received any of my air mail letters when you last wrote; but I shall take notice of your reproof and plod away at a letter - though you may at least concede that my letters must be duller when I have not heard from you. I had a pleasant lunch on Tuesday with Clive, Francis Birrell and McKnight Kauffer (the man from Montana who illustrates my verses) mostly gossip of small sorts - much about the Bennetts - everything to Arnold's credit - Birrell said Bennett told him once that when he wrote "The Grand Babylon Hotel" he knew nothing about fashionable hotels, and that he was writing another now that he knew (that was his latest book, which I have not read); but, as Birrell justly observed, Bennett wrote about such things much better when he longed for them than after he knew them. The second Mrs. B. it appears is a very poor actress, and only got parts through her husband. The first Mrs. B. I knew slightly; a Frenchwoman, I did not dislike her as much as most people, but she had a weakness for giving recitations of French poetry, and always explained beforehand that she recited every poet quite differently, but yet she always made them all sound quite alike, and one never knew whether she was doing Hugo or Verlaine. Tuesday afternoon the Hinkleys to tea; I think they liked Mrs. Stuart Moore and Miss Harriett Weaver - the latter is a very old friend of mine, as she was my first publisher. Wednesday nothing particular, except a Board meeting. Thursday we took the Hinkleys to tea at the Morrells; they came here and inspected my office first. The tea went off very well, and I think they liked both Lady Ottoline and Philip very much - there were no very great lions present, unless one counts a Jewish novelist named Rosamund Lehmann, whom I disliked. I must say that the Morrells were both charming, and I do not suppose that they perceived at all that that household, like some others, is very well whitewashed. I am sorry if I seem to have twice spoken rather slightly of Eleanor, because on the whole, I do admire her, and I have a strong affection for her which includes memories of very early childhood.

Now people are going out of London. - my mother in law has just returned from Anglesey, and it is really a considerable support to me to have her near - and things will, I trust, be very quiet; though in the circumstances, quietness is not altogether to be desired.

FABER & FABER

I haven't suggested any book for us to read. It seems to me that you have arranged too full a summer anyway - especially with the domestic work, and Mr. Perkins's illness on top of it - I hope to hear that he is convalescent and at home again, for a hospital is a dreary ambience at the best. I know it has been a blessing to them to have you with them; I don't see how Mrs. Perkins could have got through it without you.

When you return to Boston I will send something: I had thought of Letters as being good for desultory reading; one can pick the book up and read a letter or two at bedtime; there are Keats's, which I have never read, but ought to have - except I have read the ones to Fanny Brawne, which are not interesting, but I believe all the good matter is in the letters to men friends - and Cowper's; or I might find a volume of selected letters of Horace Walpole - all these are things I do not know. My knowledge of literature is very fragmentary; I have never read any Richardson, and don't like Fielding; and I have never read Moll Flanders.

I think I am being rather good, not having heard from you by to-day; especially since it so falls out that Monday is that institution which I dread, a Bank Holiday; and on Tuesday, after surviving that three days, I shall hope for at least ONE letter on my tray.

J'ai envie de te dire maintes choses encore; mais, pour parler des sujets plus intimes, j'ai besoin de la rassurance et la bénédiction d'une lettre de toi.

Tom