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4-8-1890

## To Arthur R. Gledhill - April 8, 1890

Edwin Arlington Robinson

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TO ARTHUR R. GLEDHILL

Gardiner, Me., Apr. 8 1890<sup>a</sup>

Dear Friend Art;--

Why the devil dont you send that tobacco-box along that you were speaking of a while ago? I need it badly and have been expecting it every day for the past month. Possibly you may have taken up the dirty habit again and nipped my hopes in the bud; if so, you will have to ~~by~~ buy yourself a new one for League oaths must be expected.<sup>b</sup> We swear by the Styx—even as the gods.

Have you heard anything about Prof. Stuart's leaving his place in Lewiston? Rumors are afloat that the old ox has been either invited to ~~†~~ vacate or else greener pastures have laid open for him to browse in. Wonder if he will take his cane with him.

I am writing this in Gus' private office and I can hear the old master [?]<sup>c</sup> snoring behind me "for ay! The hour is late." He says that he

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will write off a few friendly phrases when I get through but I have fears that his languorous attitude will hold him fast. <B> And then, it won't make much difference—he would only write "Say boys!" or \$5.49. The old man is not very conversational lately: something is weighing on his mind. He bought a new pipe the other day and is cursing himself for a damned fool—metaphorically speaking of course. He keeps the meerschaum in the pump-house like a cosset.

Gus says that he is coming to Boston next summer during the G.A.R. encampment<sup>1</sup> and asks me to tell you that if you want to see him he will meet you on the Post-office steps. If I thought you would come back to your old self and come up to me with a big chew [chaw?] in I might possibly come up sometime soon myself.--"Methinks I see thy cheek distended now." Do you think you

<sup>a</sup> This line of the heading, except for "Apr. 8," is part of the letterhead (see WA's note below). However, the original letterhead has "1880" for the year, over the "8" of which EAR has written a "9".

<sup>b</sup> WA reads "respected".

<sup>c</sup> WA appears to be questioning the identity of the "old master," though the context and EAR's subsequent remarks lead one to assume that it is a humorous allusion to Gus Moore.

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could work it? or do the ~~unwritten~~ unwritten laws prevail to such an extent that the thing would be impossible?<sup>2</sup> Where is that photo that you were going to send me? I have been intending to pack off a round from that settee we demolished once on a time. I think it would make a fine ornament for your sleeping room: You would wake up in the morning and feast your eyes upon it while visions of \$4.00 would float like ghosts of vanished years before your eyes. "I am sorry to mistrust you boys!" "Git out o' this or I'll knife ye!" All in the silver moonlight.<sup>1</sup>

Don't forget that box and write when you get a chance

Very truly yours  
E.A. Robinson

HCL Written on letterhead of Wiley & Moore, Tin and Sheet Iron Workers, Plumbers and Water Pipers. . . . No. 89 Water Street, Gardiner, Me.

#### NOTES

1. The Grand Army of the Republic (G.A.R.) was a fraternal and advocacy organization comprised of military veterans who served on the Union side in the Civil War. The G.A.R. was established in 1866 and dissolved in 1956, holding large "Encampments" or reunions in various cities every year from its founding until 1949. The 24th National Encampment (to which EAR is alluding here) was held in Boston on August 14-16, 1890. See this letter's "additional files" for images of various memorabilia from the 1890 Encampment. (SL)
2. One can speculate that Gledhill had sworn off tobacco due to the "unwritten rules" of his recent ministerial aspirations, as well as his courtship and engagement. EAR seems to be gently teasing his friend about this here. (SL)
- 3.<sup>d</sup> One cold night the League of Three broke up a settee at school to fuel the Franklin stove in the laboratory. They were caught and had to pay \$4.00. For one account of the episode see Hagedorn, p. 42. A slightly different version is given by Neff, p. 9.

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<sup>d</sup> This is WA's note 1.