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2-13-1893

To Arthur R. Gledhill - February 13, 1892

Edwin Arlington Robinson

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TO ARTHUR R. GLEDHILL

1716 Camb. St.,
HARVARD UNIVERSITY,
CAMBRIDGE.

2-13-'93.

My dear Gledhill,

I will now do a rather unusual thing for me and write you another letter before you answer my last. I have just drank a cup of "cocoa au lait" a canned mess ostensibly from Switzerland and very good stuff in its way. The consequence is that I am pretty well warmed up and do not feel like going to bed just yet. I am writing this to blow myself off as it were, so you need not feel particularly honored at getting it. I might have written it under other circumstances, but would not swear to it.

I have been laid up for the past ten

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days with that interesting disease yclept the "shingles". They are fine. It is delicious to get into bed at 10-30 and lie in mortal (or seemingly immortal) agony for nine hours, as I did few nights ago. It leads a man to think—but he is likely to think hell thoughts. Shingles have nothing to do with heaven, and if I have them once more I shall give up all hopes of ever getting there. I do not know what my chances are now but I do not let that worry me much. I feel that I am not altogether a rascal, and if they choose to put me on the coals for my peccadilloes—then so be it. Perhaps the most sinful act I ever did was to lie to his erudition, GA S--t^a once on a time concerning a certain settee.¹ At least that is the thing I feel the cheapest for unless for a little escapade in

-3-

Boston for which Mr. Anheuser Busch was more responsible than I^b--But then, I wel-

^a WA adds periods to the initials, transcribing this as "G. A. S—t".

comed Anheuser, and I suppose he will get off clear. Anheuser (zwei Faust)^c is born hourly in St^d Louis and is sometimes spoke of as the
 with
 good natured gentleman ~~wi~~^e the {?} white hat. A frothy {frosty?} gentleman, in fact, and he comes to Boston in barrels. Jakey Wirth² and others sell him in small f quantities for five cents, and he is very fond of Harvard men. I discontinued my acquaintance with him last fall, however, and now leave him for others.

I have been working pretty hard this year and feel moderately well satisfied, though God only

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knows what I shall do when I get out of here. The midyear examinations are just over, but I was obliged to cut Eng. Lit. and Phil^f I Logic (which is worse than hell itself to me) & Psychology. I shall make them up in the spring. Have not attended any lectures or recitations to-day—have felt too mean. Think I had better take this week off and pull myself together. Should like above all things to have you here with me this evening, but I hardly expect you. It is quite a trip from Canton here and I must not ask for too much.--I am not doing much smoking nowadays, though I have had two pipes this evening to pass away the time. For heaven's sake, don't get married this month. When you do I wish to give you a pipe or a tall hat or something, and the thought of my buying anything in my present financial condition is humorous and at the same

-5-

^b WA adds a period here.

^c WA has a marginal "?" at this point which I can only assume refers to "zwei Faust". I am likewise unable to understand EAR's precise allusion here. "Zwei" means "two" in German, and "Faust" of course is Goethe's famous play (and its eponymous hero). It is possible that both WA and I are misreading EAR's handwriting here, in which case the interested reader may do well to consult the holograph (see scan in the "additional files" for this letter) for themselves.

^d WA adds a period here.

^e WA reads the crossed-out letters as "in".

^f WA adds a period here.

times^g pathet{ic}^h, or at once humorous and pathetic, as the critics say. I supposed you will be harnessed before long, and when you put your neck in the halter you may be sure that my best wishes are with you. I think you will make a good family man. Be sure and have an open fire. Learn to play cribbage (they say that is the best thing in the world to keep a home together) and hang on to your Cooper's Virgil for old time's sake. I feel lonesome whenever I walk by your old home in Gardiner and the High School. I suppose I never shall quite get over {it}.ⁱ Well, that is about the only thing I have to look back to, and why should I forget it—or wish to?

Sincerely,^j E.AR.^k

I shall
not read
this over,
but will
trust you
may de-
cipher I^m {=it}
as it is.

_____ ⁿ

Concerning cribbage,
I believe you
know it al-
ready--^odon't you?
If not learn—
it is the next {best?}
thing to the
belfry.³

^g WA omits this word.

^h WA reads "pathetic".

ⁱ WA has "get out [over?]."

^j WA omits the comma.

^k WA has "E.A.R." and places these initials on the next line, below "Sincerely".

^l In the holograph this postscript is actually written across the top of the page, vertically in relation the main text. I have been unable to reproduce this here, and have followed WA in placing it below the closing. However, I have followed the original line-breaks. See scan of holograph in the "additional files" for this letter.

^m WA reads "it".

ⁿ WA omits this line.

^o WA reads this as a period.

==R.^p

HCL

NOTES

1. See EAR's letter to Gledhill for April 8, 1890 and the one to Smith for November 15, 1891 regarding the episode of the settee and Giles A. Stuart.
2. A reference to the Jacob Wirth Restaurant, established in 1868 by the German immigrant Jacob Wirth (d. 1892) and placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1980. As of 2017, it is still in operation. This popular restaurant, located in the theater district, specialized in German and American cuisine. According to the restaurant website, Jacob Wirth "was the first distributor of Anheuser Busch products." See <http://jacobwirth.com/about-jakes> (accessed April 7, 2017).
3. The belfry of Gardiner High School was the haunt of the "League of Three." (SL)

^p WA omits the double line preceding the initial.