

**LETTERS OF C. F. TUCKER BROOKE**

IV. Oxford, 1905-1906<sup>1</sup>

*Very small envelope, heavy stock :*

**UNION SOCIETY,  
OXFORD.**

OXFORD  
[?] AM  
NO 12  
1905

*Received stamp is at edge of paper.*

Mrs. St. Geo. T. Brooke,  
Morgantown,  
West Virginia,  
U.S.A.

**UNION SOCIETY,  
OXFORD.**

Nov. 11, 1905.

My dear Mamma,

As I have got rather behind this week in my letter writing, and have more than I shall probably get through with to-morrow, I am trying to make a good beginning by writing you a few lines tonight. I have just received your last week's letter – a longer one than usual, as I was delighted to find. I hope you may often find time to write me so much.

As for myself, there is not very much to tell about since last week. I am now living my usual Oxford life with twelve or fifteen disconnected lectures a week, two tutors for whom I write papers, and enough regular work of my own to keep me occupied without preventing me from enjoying the mild frivolities of Oxford. The frivolities for the last week have been almost wholly tea-parties and other equally harmless enjoyments and it would hardly be worth while<sup>2</sup> going over the list, even if I could remember exactly what happened on each day.

The principal excitement in life for me lately has been associated with Tandy's and my search for “digs” or lodgings for next term – a search which we have been carrying on vigilantly for two weeks or more in our unoccupied moments, either singly or together. Our industry has been rewarded at last by the discovery of several very acceptable places and I don't think we shall have any trouble in choosing upon a very suitable joint abode. We have had any number of councils of war on the subject – the last one took place yesterday afternoon. We are both quite convinced of the advantage of living in lodgings after the first year or so, for, besides being a great deal more economical, the life in “digs” is infinitely more independent and peaceful. I, with only seven or eight months now before my examination, am very fully alive to the desirability of peace.

Yesterday afternoon I went – by bicycle – to Bicester, a very interesting little town twelve miles from here, which I had never visited before. Bicester is an old Roman town and was in ancient times a very important place as it lay on one of the Great Roman thoroughfares. At present it is a

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<sup>1</sup> 1905 letters were scanned and edited in 2016 from typed transcripts, and compared with originals as needed.

<sup>2</sup> Written on two lines without hyphen.

very quaint place, with a fine church, picturesque old-fashioned houses and shops, and a large population of cur-dogs and dirty faced children.

My friend Lowry, who was in Devon with Cady and me last Easter, left Oxford yesterday morning and took a Cunard steamer this afternoon from Liverpool back to New York. He had meant to go back at the end of the summer, but seemed to be unable to tear himself away from Oxford, though he had no regular work to keep him here. He lives in Philadelphia and has given me a very warm invitation to visit him there as soon as I get back from here. His family are the most strait laced of Quakers, but I am afraid Lowry has somewhat fallen from grace during his travels. He put himself, however, through a strict course of training during the last two weeks, so as not to feel the change too much when he gets back and has to abjure beer, tobacco, and the pronoun "you". With much [*continues sideways across top of first page*] love as ever,

Tucker Brooke.

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*Raised blue oval seal with black wax seal :*

OXFORD UNION SOCIETY 1823

OXFORD

6.30PM

NO 19

05

4

MORGANTOWN, W. VA.

DEC 2

1 ---- P

1905

RECEIVED

Mrs. St. Geo. T. Brooke,  
Morgantown,  
West Virginia,  
U.S.A.

*Raised blue seal :*

OXFORD UNION SOCIETY 1823

Nov. 19, '05.

My dear Mamma,

I don't know whether I owe you or Nan this letter, but address it to you in virtue of the nice long letter I got from you last week. I hope you may both find as much to say every time you write. Thank Nan for her letter and for the fine lot of papers which she sent me. I read Papa's article on dancing with interest and, of course, agreed fully with everything it said. It certainly in its tenseness and pointedness offered a contrast to most of the other contributions on the subject, especially those of our friends the enemy, who display a most remarkable ability to wander off the subject and dilate long-windedly on the horrible creations of their own imaginations. Dr. Compton's effusion I had the pleasure of reading twice as Nan provided me with two copies. It is a little peculiar how much he says and insinuates without at all trying to support his own position that dancing is in itself wrong. His elevation of his parishioners to the moral plane of the great people who have danced shows, of course, a most intense satisfaction with his own efforts towards their uplifting, but certainly could not have any

application to the question under discussion unless someone had tried to force the Methodists, etc. to dance as a necessary means of salvation ; in which case only there might be some justification for his testimony (which when he compares Washington and the average Morgantown brother, as he does, might be the better for a little proof) that people who don't dance are as good as those who do morally, not intellectually or in points of polish. He might have spared himself the trouble of elucidating this fact, which nobody but himself apparently had thought of denying.

However, I have no desire to contribute to the mass of literature already spent [?] on the subject, particularly since I never have a chance of dancing myself in Oxford and could hardly do so in the English style anyway.

Wednesday night I heard Lord Roberts deliver an address here at the Union on the Indian frontier and incidentally on the condition of the English army. He advocates a large increase, as I suppose you know, in view of the possibility of a war with Germany, or Russia, and the whole country is indeed a good deal agitated by the expectation of a German war, which I should think, to judge from the hostile feelings of the two countries, must come sooner or later.

On the twenty-fourth the Rhodes Trustees are to have a big dinner for the scholars at the Randolph Hotel and on Thanksgiving Day I am invited to take dinner with my friend Cady and his family. I have, of course, mentioned him often before, having seen a great deal of him in the English school and out of it since we both came over together on the "Ivernia". His mother and sister came over in September, whether because they thought he needed looking after or because they wanted to see England on their own account or for both reasons, I don't know. They are very comfortably settled here now and find it costs not a bit more than at home, which statement you can consider in connection with your trip next summer. They have all been very nice to me and the other acquaintances of Cady, and had me there last night to participate in the making – and consumption – of fudge, the very taste of which recalls home, for it is quite unknown in this benighted country.

I had almost forgotten what was most important. Cousin Harry Tucker and his most recent wife were in Oxford yesterday from half past eleven till four, having run up from London. They sent a telegram to Bev. T., who tried to find me, but failed, as I was out. He left a note but I just missed them. I am very sorry, but I shall make a point of looking them up in London when the vacation begins. Cousin H. is here, you know as president of the Jamestown Exp. He is going to Germany on business in a few days, but will be back before Xmas.

With much love for all, your affectionate son,

Tucker Brooke.

STRATFORD-ON-AVON  
DE 11  
1905  
MORGANTOWN, W. VA.

DEC 21  
1905

RECEIVED

Dr. St. Geo. T. Brooke,  
Morgantown,  
West Virginia,  
U.S.A.

*Waxy paper :*

10 Guild Street,  
Stratford-on-Avon,  
Dec. 10, 1905.

My dear Papa,

I got through with Oxford yesterday and, leaving there at half-past eleven, got here two hours later – in time to see a good deal of the town before dark. Stratford at this time of the year is an exceedingly sleepy little town of about 6 000 inhabitants, but the extraordinary number of hotels, inns, boardinghouses, curioshops, etc., most of them looking very woe-begone and deserted now, shows what hordes of tourists descend upon it in the summer. I read somewhere in a guide-book the number of summer visitors, but have forgotten it now and am afraid to guess at it, for it was enormous ; over a fourth of the Stratford pilgrims are said to be Americans and the place seems to have a reputation throughout England as the happy hunting ground of the American traveller. The English themselves seem to take very little interest in Shakespeare's birth- and burial place – which is hardly complimentary to them – and the whole town is filled with offerings from America, such as a fine fountain presented by a Philadelphian and a memorial window in the church.

I went to the church this morning and was rewarded for staying through the litany and a long sermon, by having a chance afterwards to see the graves of Shakespeare and several members of his family in the chancel and the other interesting monuments in the church. Shakespeare's birth-place, the old public school, the house in which John Harvard was born, and several other Elizabethan buildings are kept in the best possible repair and give a very old-fashioned appearance to this town ; the modern buildings are mostly of red brick and anything but impressive. The house in which Shakespeare died, New Place, is no longer standing, but the foundations are still to be seen and the site on which it stood is now a public park. The Memorial Theatre here is said to be very interesting and is connected with a museum, picture gallery, and library of books on Shakespeare ; the School for Scandal is to be given there Thursday night and I think I shall go. Stratford is, you know, almost the geographical centre of England. It is surrounded on all sides by historical places. Warwick is eight miles away, Coventry and Kenilworth about fifteen each ; many of the villages in the immediate neighborhood are connected in an interesting way with Shakespeare's family. I walked this afternoon to Shottery, only a mile away, and saw Anne Hathaway's cottage. There are also seven or eight celebrated battle fields<sup>3</sup> within twenty miles ; among them Bosworth, Edgehill, Marston, and Tewkesbury. I have brought my bicycle with me and expect to have a very good time exploring the neighborhood.

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<sup>3</sup> *Sic.*

You have been very non-committal about your trip to England this summer, but I hope you are making your plans for it as I have been making mine. I am expecting you, Mamma, and Nan together and want you to have ten weeks here at least. It would be very foolish to miss so good an opportunity of seeing England and it is by no means so expensive or difficult an undertaking as you are likely to believe before starting on it. The travelling expenses from Morgantown to Liverpool and back for three people (via Philadelphia) will be about \$300. Apart from this, the expenses of living will be no more than at home, if so great. I am paying here thirty shillings (\$7.50) a week, which includes the rent of two big rooms, four meals a day, fire, gas, and everything else. This is rather expensive, but even here the expenses of four people would be proportionally much smaller, as we should not need two rooms apiece and as, according to the usual English custom, we should be charged only with the actual price of the articles which we consume at the table, in which case the expenses of four persons are not by any means four times as great as those of one. I am sure our actual living expenses would not amount to more than a pound or twenty-five shillings apiece a week, which would be in all, if we take the higher estimate five pounds a week or fifty pounds for ten weeks for all of us. I shall have, of course, seventy-five pounds from Wylie for the summer, apart from what I may have been able to save, which, you see, ought not only to pay the living expenses of all of us, but also the travelling and incidental expenses. Of course, it would cost much more if we stayed less than a week at a place and in large hotels, but we should not be by any means so comfortable at hotels, I know, or as independent as in lodgings and for lodgings I know that an average of five or six dollars a week a piece is very liberal.

My friend Cady and his family, he tells me, have spent in Oxford this year only sixteen shillings apiece per week and I know that they have been very comfortable. So \$300 or \$400 is all you require for a summer here for all of you and I definitely expect all three of you. To let this opportunity pass for any reason short of absolute necessity would be hideously provoking, for it may not occur again. At least a dozen of the Americans here have had their parents in England during the winter or last summer and they have all got on very easily. With much love,

Tucker Brooke.

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GREENWICH  
DE 26  
1905  
MORGANTOWN, W. VA.

JAN 5  
1906

RECEIVED

Not for Route No. 6  
Mrs. St. Geo. T. Brooke,  
Morgantown,  
West Virginia,  
U.S.A.

Royal Naval College,  
Greenwich,  
Dec. 24, 1905.

My dear Mamma,

I feel very repentant at not having written to you last week, but was so busy at Wolverhampton from Friday till Tuesday and for the rest of the week in London that I had no chance to get a letter off. I had a very pleasant stay with the Taylors and was occupied every minute of my stay in one way or another. On Saturday night they had a rather large party – a very English concern where the conversational short comings of the guests – which were very great – had to be covered by impromptu songs, music, the playing of games and the other substitutes for small-talk known to anxious hosts. I had a very good time there myself, not only on Saturday night but during the whole visit. The entertainment, by the way, began at 6.30 and lasted till twelve, so that it is not astonishing if the supply of possible remarks on the weather, etc. was exhausted before the evening was over. The Taylors have several relatives in California and seem to have imbibed from their letters a curious idea of the “States”, though their impressions, if not always true, are very favorable.

On Tuesday morning, my friend Taylor, his younger brother, and I took a very interesting bicycle ride of twenty-five miles. We went first to the house in which Charles II was concealed after the execution of his father from the pursuing Parliamentarians. The “Royal Oak”, in which he first hid himself stands a hundred yards or so from the house and is surrounded by an iron railing. We saw the house which is called Boscobel pretty thoroughly, being shown the secret entrance and the hiding place under the garret floors where the prince took refuge, while the house was being searched ; I descended into this place and found it anything but cheerful.

From Boscobel we went a couple of miles further to an old convent, now ruinous, where the unfortunate Charles is said also to have been hidden several days, during this same unsuccessful attempt to reach Liverpool. From this very interesting ruin, called the White Ladies Priory, we went three or four miles to the village of Tong, mentioned in the “Old Curiosity Shop”. The church there is very interesting, with an interesting old theological library, brasses and tombs of the Vernons and other old families, and a chapel connected with Catherine of Aragon. From Tong we hurried back to Wolverhampton by a different and more direct road, getting there a little late for lunch. On the same afternoon I said good-bye to the Taylor family, all of whom had been most cordial to me, and who invited me to come back next summer. However, I expect that we shall be otherwise occupied – all of us – in the summer.

I got to London Tuesday night and stayed in the city till yesterday (Saturday) afternoon. I went to the theatre three times, went Friday through two settlements in the East End (the slum district), and went through a very fine art gallery, besides seeing several other interesting places and doing a lot of walking about new streets. The streets of London are fascinating, you know, because they are so quaint and so full of all kinds of life and bustle, especially at this Christmas season, where the gay shoppers and the long line of hawkers make them doubly attractive. I found half a dozen Rhodes scholars staying near my lodging house and so was not at all lonely.

Yesterday afternoon Bev. Tucker and I came out here together, according to arrangement. We were very pleasantly welcomed and set to work at once on the Christmas decorations by Maud, the only person at home. Her brother, Alfred, is working this year in Guy's Hospital, preparatory to becoming a doctor, and being on special duty this week will not even get home for Xmas day. It seems rather a pity, when he is only six miles off with trains, street-cars, and everything imaginable every five minutes. Doctor Ewing, who is very nice, was, of course, at the Admiralty on business when we arrived, but got back in time for dinner, for which we dress here with all possible

formality ; he (the Dr.) is now at work at a big table in this room, with a huge pile of papers, notwithstanding that it is Sunday, and I am trying to disturb him as little as possible. Cousin Annie, to conclude the catalogue of the family, had expected to be here to receive us on our arrival, but was detained in the city by shopping misfortunes and, after losing some of her purchases for Xmas, got here very much exhausted at six o'clock, after the rest of us had had tea. She tells me to send you her love. She has been very nice to Bev. and me and is as warm-hearted as possible.

I must stop now and go to tea, which has just been announced. With much love and best wishes for you all for the New Year, your loving son,  
Tucker Brooke.

P.S. - 11 PM - They keep very early hours here ; we have all separated for the night and I am writing now in the palatial apartment assigned to me. The house is very large and beautifully arranged, but, of course, can hardly be said to be inhabited at all by the small family of three. I have the whole third story to myself and feel very luxurious, having all my wants, real or imaginary attended to most carefully by the servants – even to the packing and unpacking of my baggage. To-day we went to church twice and Bev. and I took a walk in the afternoon. I expect to have a very pleasant Christmas tomorrow ; we both have been made to feel perfectly at home already.

With much love to all,

T.B.

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GREENWICH  
JA [...]'  
'06  
MORGANTOWN, W. VA.  
JAN 13  
1906  
REC'D

Miss Annie W. Brooke,  
Morgantown,  
West Virginia,  
U.S.A.

Royal Naval College,  
Greenwich.  
Dec. 29, 1905.

My dear Nan,

I got your very nice Christmas presents a few days ago and am delighted with them. Please thank Mamma, Papa, and Frank for their share in them. I had a very pleasant Xmas here with the Ewings, who made both Bev. and me feel as much at home as we could possibly feel at this distance. They have been so nice to us, indeed, that we have both made our visit rather longer than we originally had intended. Bev., however, got off just ten minutes ago, as he has an engagement of long standing with some people in London for to-night. I am going to stay over, however, till Monday morning, as they have pressed me very cordially to do so. On Monday I expect to meet Bev. in the city and we are going straight to Stratford, – where we have arranged to spend the remaining weeks of the vacation together in quiet and, I hope, in industry. There has been too much going on here, of course, for either of us to get much work done, and my time for preparing for the examinations in June is getting short.

We have still a small party. Only cousin Annie, Maud, Bev. (till to-day) and I are here all day long. Dr. Ewing spends the day always at the Admiralty but is at home for dinner (at 7:30) and breakfast. The last few days, Alfred Jr., who is hard at work at the hospital, has come out in the evening with a friend of his, likewise a medical student, and they have both gone back again by the first train after breakfast.

We live in great style here, dressing every evening for dinner, and having so much attention paid to our imaginary needs by the servants that I expect to find myself very much spoiled when I leave. Just now Maud – who I believe I said is a couple of years older than I – and I are the only ones at home. We and Bev. had lunch all by ourselves, as Cousin Annie is in the city shopping. The others, except Bev., will all be back for dinner.

The College is now, of course, almost empty as the students are all away for the Xmas vacation. The College proper is very interesting, as they have among other naval curiosities, a very large and valuable collection of Nelson relics, besides a big picture gallery and a naval museum.

Please thank Ida for her present, the W.V.U. banner, which I ought to have acknowledged a long time ago. I have had almost no time lately for writing and must stop this now, as I am to go in a few minutes for a sort of walk and shopping expedition combined with Maud, who is now taking a nap, I believe.

I expect to see Papa and, I should think, all of you this summer. With much love and thanks again for the much appreciated Christmas presents.

Your loving brother,

Tucker Brooke.

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STRATFORD-ON-AVON

15 JA

1906

MORGANTOWN, W. VA.

JAN 28

1906

RECEIVED

Miss Nan W. Brooke,

Morgantown,

West Virginia,

U.S.A.



10 Guild Street,  
Stratford - On - Avon,  
Jan. 14, 1906. <sup>4</sup>

My dear Nan,

I have received so few letters from any of you lately, that I have quite lost count in regard to which of you I ought to address this to. I have answered your last one twice over already, I am sure. I suppose I shall get a few lines at any rate from some of you to-morrow, but so far I haven't had two respectable sized pages of news from the whole family in the last month. You all seem to cultivate the art of writing as large as possible on the smallest sheets of paper you can find. I should like to ship over to you some like this and get the family to "promise and vow" to fill three or four pages of it, individually or together, every week.

I begin to feel as old as M. – (the name is unspellable, so you can look it up for yourself). Have all my contemporaries died off of old age that there is never the suggestion of a mention of them? I should think there must be a few not yet too decrepit for dancing, and if you are spending your days and nights in such frivolities, you might look out for them and record their names. Or if they have disappeared, please let me know where they have gone to. I haven't heard a syllable for years untold about the Chollets, or the Marleys or the Pattersons or the K.A.'s (e.g., Jimmie G., Marcum, the Hervritzer, etc.), the French Club, English Club, Mrs. Frazer, the Col., the Marshalls, Jimmie - surely you ought to have volumes to write about the charming Jimmie. Have you heard his French song, and his English one? – he has only two and neither is, except by courtesy, either English or French. And I should be delighted to hear something about Foxie, the Stewarts, Whites, Grants, Jim Stewart Jr. goes to Fairmont and I will promise to be interested.

Why I could make out a regular catechism for you to answer every week, which would furnish pages of valuable and interesting information. For example :

Q. What is Foxie doing?

A. Chasing chickens out of his garden.

Q. Mrs. Stewart? A. Discussing weather with postman.

Q. Maxey? A. Trying to look impressive in pea-green suit of clothes. And so forth.

And surely there are lots of your special friends – excluding Fitch, Smith, etc – that I am interested in. Talk about them or my fraternity or yours, but please don't stop your letters, all of you, before you have finished the introductory paragraphs about the weather.

I have just written to Patterson (the first time since I have been here) and to Marley, but don't know whether I shall ever get an answer from either. I have hardly heard from anybody during the last two weeks and am anxious to get some news from somewhere. I should not object if you wrote the same sort of idiocy that I have devoted a sheet and a half to already and surely you couldn't do worse.

I have been by myself here since Friday morning, when Bev. flitted off to London to stay with some friends of his there till Tuesday. He will be back Tuesday afternoon and a few hours before Taylor of St. John's, whom I stayed with in Wolverhampton, is coming to spend one night on his way to Oxford. Bev. and I are going to stay here till Friday, the very last minute allowed us. We unite in congratulating ourselves on our landlady; she is as nice as possible and, what is much more, a delightful

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<sup>4</sup> "Letter to Nan and to [Tucker's] mother were in the same envelope." – Typist's note, *ca.* 1970.

The three letters of January 14 and 21, 1906 were scanned from typed transcript. Other 1906 letters were transcribed in 2016 by George S. Blackburn from photocopied originals.

cook. I will give you the menu for to-day, which I enjoyed, of course, in solitary state : Breakfast 9:15 : Soft boiled egg, sausages, coffee, a warm sort of roll about the size of a pin cushion, marmalade, butter. – Dinner (dinner in middle of the day because Sunday) : Soup ; chicken, potatoes, Brussels sprouts (a sort of greens you fortunately are not acquainted with) ; plum-pudding, two mince pies (both of which I consumed together with everything else mentioned ; you need not be horrified, though, for the mince pies here are made the size of tarts) ; cheese, bread, butter. Tea, 4:30 : Tea, a sort of hot buttered toasted bread that I can't describe better, cake. – Supper, 7:30 : Cold meat pie, bread and butter, cheese, baked custard.

I hope you will be able to read this ; my pen wont<sup>5</sup> write on this paper. With much love,

Tucker Brooke.

P.S. The letters came this morning, (Monday), so I feel more at peace with the world again. T.B.

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10 Guild Street,  
Stratford  
Jan. 14, 1906.

Dear Mamma,

It is already half-past ten and I keep early hours here, but I want to add a few words to you, having discovered that I have said nothing to Nan that I ought to have said, and perhaps a good many things that I ought not to have said.

I went to church this morning – in the church, of course – and stayed after the service to have a good look around. I know it very well now, of course, having been in it five or six times. After dinner I went to Alcester, a wretched little place to the west, without even any history. Yesterday afternoon I walked to Indington, a little village where Shakespeare is said to have been married.

On Thursday Bev. and I went to Coventry, as I told Papa in a postal I sent him from there. We passed through Warwick and Kenilworth on our way and stopped about half an hour at the latter place, as Bev. had not seen it before. I send you a leaf from the wall. The so-called “Kenilworth Ivy” seems not to grow there as far as I noticed, though I have seen lots of it elsewhere in England.

Coventry is a very easy place to see. There are two fine old churches with high towers, that make two of the “three spires” which characterize the city. There are a great many old houses and quaint but disreputable streets, and a big statue in a public square to Sir Thos. White, who founded St. John's Coll. in 1555. There is also a fine old Guild Hall, which we saw.

On Wednesday we saw the fine Worcester cathedral and an interesting guild hall and then after getting lunch, came back to Evesham for a couple of hours and thence to Stratford. We started out for Tewkesbury, but decided while sitting in the car waiting for it to start that we should rather see Worcester and so rushed out and changed our tickets.

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<sup>5</sup> *Sic* in original.

I am looking forward to my new venture at Oxford. Tandy, I know, will be congenial and I expect to be much more satisfied than when in college. My Oxford address is now : 10 Wellington Square. Please write to it often. Of course I shall get letters sent to St. John's, but the other address is more direct.

With much love to all.

Tucker Brooke.

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OXFORD  
JAN 21  
06  
MORGANTOWN, W. VA.

FEB 2  
1906

RECEIVED

Dr. St. Geo. T. Brooke,  
Morgantown,  
West Virginia,  
U. S. A.

Jan. 21, 1906

My dear Papa,

I am so glad to hear from Mamma that you have definitely decided upon your trip to England next summer. I hope you will be able to get away pretty early and am making plans as to how to use our time best. I am gradually collecting from my own experience and that of my acquaintances here a number of places all over England where we can set up our head-quarters for a week or so at a time and I know we shall be very comfortable. Bev. tells me that he is expecting his father over in July and we have agreed that, if you get tired of our society, you shall have a chance to amuse each other. You would like the Union here of which I will have you entered a temporary member, as I can do, while you are here. It is a splendid refuge for the unemployed and swarms with Oxford alumni, very many of whom – being curates of the Church of England spend most of their time reading the magazines and newspapers in the easiest of the easy chairs. It is the most luxurious club I have ever seen with a fine library, all the papers and magazines (including a great many American ones), writing-rooms, smoking rooms, lounging rooms, coffee-rooms, billiard rooms, and all kinds of other comfortable places. I shall have to be in Oxford sometime in the summer I suppose to take my degree and you will be interested, I imagine, in seeing that ceremony, as the conferring of degrees is accompanied by an immense amount of ancient ceremony and everybody connected with the university wears the most gaily colored gowns and robes imaginable.

Of course we shall go to London and I suppose to the Lake Country, which I have never seen. Then I should think we ought to see the south-western coast – perhaps the Isle of Wight or Lyme Regis, a beautiful place where Tandy and Fleet have been living luxuriously at a total cost of 25 shillings a week. However, we can fix the itinerary later ; there will be no lack of places to go to and there can hardly be any difficulty anywhere in getting very comfortable quarters and good board for less than 30 s. a week.

Bev. and I left Stratford Friday afternoon and got to Oxford two hours later. Since then I have been busy getting settled in most comfortable and I feel greater relief than I had anticipated in

getting out of college. I know so many people now – Americans and English – that there is no danger of becoming a hermit and Tandy is as congenial as anybody could possibly be. I am very glad to be back in Oxford and am looking forward to this as the most pleasant and much the most industrious term I have ever had. No lectures begin before next week – as usual here – and as yet I have heard nothing from my tutors. That, however, is the slightest part of the Oxford work, and I have plenty to occupy myself with, without much outside interference.

Tandy and I had two guests to breakfast this morning in honor of our change of abode and so I didn't get to writing till later than usual. It is now nearly one and I must get back to lunch.

We are just in the midst of a Parliamentary election here, as you will have seen by the papers. Instead of having but one day, as we do for presidential elections, the various constituencies vote at different times, the whole election occupying at least a week. It is now nearly over and the result has been a land slide for the Liberals, which they say is unparalleled. Balfour himself has been defeated and most of his cabinet. Only Chamberlain, who brought on the down fall of the party, I suppose, by attempting to substitute protection for free-trade, has escaped because of his personal popularity in Birmingham.

Campbell-Bannerman, the head of the victorious Liberal party and present prime minister was at the Union last year, where I heard him make a pretty poor speech, as I suppose I told you. He is regarded as an exceedingly capable man. With much love,

Tucker Brooke.

I have had to write with a quill pen (!) as with an ordinary stilo one hardly makes a mark on this paper.  
T.B.

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*Raised blue seal :*

OXFORD UNION SOCIETY 1823

Sunday, Feb. 15, '06

My dear Mamma,

I was delighted yesterday to get long interesting letters both from you and from Ida., and very much conscience smitten at the same time at not having written to you last week, especially after having written such a Jeremiad the week before about the shortness of your letters. I didn't get a single letter written last Sunday, but hoped for a chance to write you a few lines during the week. However, it is always Sunday or never with me in regard to letters – especially at Oxford. There are so many engagements and distractions of different kinds during the rest of the week, that I never get any spare time for writing.

My failure to write last Sunday was due to half a dozen other special frivolities that took up my time. I went out to breakfast with Taylor and stayed talking till after eleven when I went to hear Stopford Brooke preach at Manchester College ; it was the last of his series of four sermons in Oxford and was very eloquent, though rather frivolous, I suppose, from the theological point of view, and decidedly the reverse of extemporaneous as he read it from a pretty little gilt-edged volume of his printed discourses. Bev. Tucker and his brother St. Geo. went to Manchester and came back afterwards to dinner with Tandy and me. St. Geo. had come to Oxford only a day or two before and left the day after for Naples via Paris. At Naples he was to get a boat back to Japan. I saw him only twice but liked him very much.

The Tuckers stayed till nearly four and then I went to tea with a Mrs. Burch, who has charge of a sort of school for younger girls, principally Scandinavians and Germans and very funny, in North Oxford. Mrs. Burch had asked me to a party the night before, but I had not been able to go, as I am secretary of a college literary club – the Sphinx Society – which met on the same evening. On my way back from Mrs. Burch I paid a short visit of ceremony on my tutor, Mr. Powell – one of three who have charge of my mind, body, and soul, Mr. P's special department being my soul. This duty over, I rushed to chapel at six o'clock, not having gone in the morning and when the evening service, which lasts about three quarters of an hour, was over, I had only quarter of an hour before "Hall" ; that is, of course, figurative for dinner in hall. Then a few minutes I spent looking over magazines in the Junior Common Room, the college club for undergraduates — a debating hall at which I occasionally speak on Monday nights and a general loafing and writing place the rest of the time.

It is not compulsory at St. John's, as at Exeter for example, to take a certain number of dinners in hall each week, after moving into lodgings, but I usually go there on Sunday night, as we get a pretty good dinner for a shilling and ten pence and it gives me an opportunity to see the other undergraduates of the college, with nearly all of whom I am on very good terms, despite their Englishness. Of course, I have described "hall" to you and you have read dozens of other descriptions, so I shall only venture a few more words. Dinner is the only meal, except Sunday breakfasts, at which all the college congregates. It is a peculiarity of St. John's that breakfast is served there also on Sunday, the idea being to save the scouts the trouble of carrying the individual breakfasts to the various rooms. In a great many colleges no hot breakfast is served on Sunday and the men have therefore to scramble their own eggs or take something cold. Therefore the American Club started the practice of having breakfasts on Sunday for those who wanted it and the practice was very much liked, though it has been given up for the last couple of weeks because of some trouble about the arrangements with the landlady.

To return from this long digression to the hall dinners, I suppose you know what the halls are like. All are built on pretty much the same plan with high vaulted roof and wainscotted walls covered with paintings of old college dignitaries ; at the far end is a sort of raised dais on which is the "high table", the seat of the dons ; this runs parallel to the end walls so that it faces the entrance door. The lower parts of the hall, below the doors, is taken up by three long lines of tables – all of black oak and with black oaken backless benches for seats. These undergraduate tables are at right angles to the dons' table, being parallel to the longer sides of the room. The three lines form two aisles running up to the high table from the main door & there is a small entrance for the dons near their table. Nobody dresses but the dons, but gowns have to be worn. The freshmen sit at the tables on the dons' left (to the right as one enters), the college scholars on the other side and the second, third, and fourth year men in the middle. The scouts wait on the tables. Dinner consists of three courses and desert for which you pay a few pence extra. – I shall have to finish my account of my doings for the week in my letter to Ida. [*Continues sideways across top margin of second sheet.*] I was delighted to get papers and the picture of Morgantown quite took me home again. I had forgotten the town was so pretty. I am going to have the picture framed.

With best love  
to all,  
Tucker Brooke.

10 Wellington Square, Oxford,  
Mar. 4, 1906.

My dear Papa,

I got your letter a few days ago ; I have been unusually fortunate during the last few weeks in getting a great many long and interesting letters from home and cannot tell you how much I appreciate them. I hope you will have time often to write me so much. I got long characteristic letters this morning both from Aunt Lizzie and from Virginia Lucas. Aunt L. said she had just had a long letter from you and was rejoicing in the unusual piece of good fortune. Virginia wrote from Charleston, S.C. she seems to have been very busy reading and sightseeing since Christmas. Uncle Dan, she says, is comparatively speaking, very well, still playing cards and having Pope's *Odyssey* read to him. Virginia herself, as penance, I suppose for these un-lenten avocations, is studying the *Rise of Presbyterianism* and frequenting grave-yards in search of interesting and moth-eaten inscriptions.

I am working pretty hard now and with more or less satisfaction to myself, but shall be relieved when the term comes to an end – in two weeks from yesterday – and I can settle down somewhere by myself for uninterrupted work out of the way of tutors and tea-parties. Of the latter and of similar gayeties of the minor sort I have had rather more than usual this term. I feel very much at home in Oxford now and quite in accord with the general manner of life as I have made a good many very congenial friends and acquaintances. However, I don't feel the irresistible attraction of the place to the extent that it is said to affect people making them dissatisfied with life elsewhere. Whether that will prove the case with many of the Americans or not I can't say, but for myself I have no such fear. I am already looking ahead to my return home and my entrance upon a more logical and useful form of life.

I won't know whether you find my disquisitions upon prospective domiciles for the vacations interesting or not. I always have some difficulty in deciding where to spend my holidays as there is so much that is interesting to see and so little often to make one locality more attractive than another as I have no ties of acquaintance to draw me to any one place and the expense of living is about the same everywhere. As I wrote to you some time ago, my intention has been to spend this coming Easter vacation in the Lake country in the north-west of England. The country there is said to be the finest in England and the reminiscences of Wordsworth, Coleridge, De Quincy and others are very interesting. It is said, however, to have the worst climate in the island and as I am sick of rain and fog here I hardly feel that I have courage to face the prospect of six weeks more liquidity. Instead I think I shall to go to the channel islands, Guernsey & Jersey, where the weather is said to be very fine and where everything is very picturesque. The scenery is splendid according to all accounts and the people very interesting, as they still speak a sort of Norman French among themselves and have kept up many of the customs of the old duchy of Normandy in regard to law and politics ; they have a curious sort of government and were a separate copper currency system.

Tandy and I are as comfortable here together as possible. He is at present working very hard over one of the minor Oxford examinations, vulgarly called Divers, technically Divinity Moderations, which takes place next week.

I got a very nice long letter from Mr. Marley last week, written just before he sailed for Jamaica. I hope you will be over next summer for a long time, but it would be very well worth while, I believe if you could come only for a single month. I shall never see even the sights of Oxford itself unless I have somebody people to show about.

I was talking to Prof. Napier of the English school yesterday about the choice of thesis subject for the Bachelor of Letters (B. Litt.) degree if I go in for that next year. There are several other possibilities for me, such as taking the history school or what should be easiest of all for me, the school of German in my final year. It is very usual here to take a second school (i.e. examination of B.A. degree

in another subject) after having secured a degree in the first for owing to the complete system of specialization adopted during the last two years of the course the matter studied in the different schools is not at all the same. With much love to all,

Tucker Brooke

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St. Julian's Cottage,  
St. Julian's Ave.,  
Guernsey  
[ca. Mar. 11, 1906]

My dear Mamma,

I left Oxford Friday at 7:30 P.M. after a very pleasant term in lodgings with Tandy. In many ways it was the most pleasant term I have spent in Oxford. Tandy is still up and is going unless he has changed his mind since my departure, to Ilfracombe in Devonshire for at least part of the vacation. I was there for a few hours last year about this time and may have sent you a postal from there.

To return to myself, I got to Southampton at ten o'clock, and went on the boat at once. When I left Oxford it was blowing very hard and the sky was quite black, so that everybody predicted a bad crossing for me and plenty of sea-sickness. The trip takes only seven hours from Southampton but it is regarded as one of the roughest in the Channel. The boat was not to leave till 2 o'clock and I prudently went to bed at eleven and managed to sleep, with one or two short interruptions, till six the next morning when I went on the deck and saw a magnificent sunrise. The sea was pretty rough, but there was nothing like a storm and I enjoyed the sight of the Islands which were already in view. The sea here is very dangerous because of the many rocks that crop up; there have been several accidents in the neighborhood lately, and the worst rocks are provided with light-houses. At seven we got to Guernsey, the second in size of the islands, and I went ashore to look for lodgings. After walking about the steep, winding stretch of the only town on the island, St. Peter Port for several hours, I lighted upon this place where I am very comfortable and am living as inexpensively as I would desire. Yesterday afternoon I took my first walk. The ground rises very steeply from the water's edge and the cliffs that border nearly all the many inlets are very picturesque. There is so much variety and so much to see that the island doesn't seem small — not as yet at least, and I expect to have plenty of occupation for my afternoons during the next two weeks in exploring it.

The government of the islands is very peculiar. They still retain much of the old Norman procedure and Norman French is still the court language. They have their own currency corresponding to the English penny and half-penny, which they call 8 double and 4 double pieces respectively. Otherwise the coins are the same as in England. The duty on tobacco in the islands is very low and cigars are so cheap in consequence as almost to make me wish I were a smoker.

The names of the people here seem to be mostly French as are most of the street names. In the interior of the island — if it can be said to have any interior the people speak only Norman French according to the guide books and I heard two fishermen chattering away in an unintelligible tongue yesterday. However, there are a great many English residents and the signs etc are nearly always in English which is certainly the ordinary commercial language. The sailors and farmers, though, look very French indeed.

The streets of the town are very narrow and winding and nearly all run up hill at an angle of thirty degrees. There are a great many nice looking houses evidently belonging to well-to-do English people and the whole aspect of the town is prosperous. There don't seem to be any slums and

the people all look comfortable. There is a great deal of commerce with France and England and immense quantities of fruit are exported. There is a big market in the centre of the town, which I have only peeped into so far ; the displays of fruit and vegetables, Baedeker says, are very fine, so I shall go to see it and some of the other curiosities of the place to-morrow. Among the curiosities is the house where Victor Hugo lived for about twenty years, while exiled from France. His book *Toilers of the Sea* is about Guernsey and I am going to read it before I leave. When I get to Jersey I shall read again the *Battle of the Strong*.<sup>6</sup> To be on the spot makes novels of this sort infinitely more interesting, as I found when I read *Westward Ho & Lorna Doone* in Devonshire last year and a German novel about Holstein called “*Jörn Uhl*”<sup>7</sup> which was at Hanerau. It seems rather a long time ago now since I was talking and thinking and eating in German.

By the way, a good deal of the Icelandic I have to read for my special subject is the part of the *Edolas* which deals with the Norse mythology. I don't know whether you have lost your interest in it or not. I thought of “*Over the Tea-cups*” when I was translating the “*Twilight of the gods*” last night – the part about the last fight and the death of Odin and Thor.

I suppose you have read of the death of Read, the Louisiana Rhodes scholar ; he died of cerebral meningitis after an illness of about three weeks, during a good deal of which time there was no hope of his recovery. There was a funeral in Christ Church Cathedral (he was at Ch. Ch.) on Friday morning. I turned out in cap and gown like most of the other Rhodes scholars and marched through the mud to the cathedral and, after the service, to the station. The Rhodes Trustees, who have been most generous towards us in all ways, are sending the body home at their own expense. With best love to all –

Tucker B.

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St. Peter Port,  
Sunday, Mar. 25, '06

Dear Mamma,

I got your letter last Tuesday ; it was the first I had received since leaving Oxford and I was doubly glad to get it. I am sorry you didn't get a letter from me one week. I don't think I failed absolutely to write one, though I got very much behind with all my other letters last term. I probably wrote to you and failed to mail the letter in time for the boat. I don't in the least know how the mails go from Guernsey relatively to the trans Atlantic boats, so can't tell whether you will get this letter and the one I wrote last week on time or not.

I have had a very agreeable week, as I have felt pleased with the amount of work I have been getting done and have appreciated the possibility of resting myself after breakfast and knowing that nothing but the advent of dinner or a miracle could occur to interrupt me. – A propos of which, dinner is even now making its advent so I shall have to wait till this afternoon to finish. – –

Yesterday afternoon I went to see Hauteville House,<sup>8</sup> which was the house of Victor Hugo for over 20 years<sup>9</sup> during his exile in Napoleon III's time, and which now belongs, I believe, to his grandchildren. It stands in the upper part of the town and is reached by an almost perpendicular climb up

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<sup>6</sup> Gilbert Parker, 1898.

<sup>7</sup> Gustav Frenssen, 1905.

<sup>8</sup> See <http://maisonsvictorhugo.paris.fr/en/museum-collections/house-visit-guernsey>. (12-22-2016).

<sup>9</sup> From late 1855 to 1870.



a very narrow and dirty land. The exterior of the house is plain and funereal – just a door and some square-column windows looking out of a Puritanical yellow-gray wall. The inside, however, is very different. There are four stories and the rooms are large ; nearly every room shown to visitors is decorated with old carved oak, collected, they say, by Hugo, presumed from old peasant houses in Guernsey & Brittany ; or with tapestry given him by various potentates and plutocrats of his admirers. He seems to have been a good deal of an artist, for there are any number of drawings and paintings done by himself. In one of the show-apartments, an immense room made out of two by the removal of a partition, and wholly decorated with the ghastliest of black oak panelling cut into an infinite number of monsters and demons and old oaken furniture with the same demonic adornments, is a bed prepared by V. Hugo for Garibaldi. The bed is also black oak and even fuller of grinning black fiends than the rest of the room. Garibaldi, the guide said, failed after all to come to the island, so the bed was not used, nobody being found courageous enough, I suppose, or colossal enough, to occupy it. Certainly, though, I should think that Garibaldi's renunciation of the visit to Guernsey saved him an infinite deal of nightmare. Victor Hugo's study is in the very top of the house. Part of the floor and the whole of the walls and roof of the room are of glass and the view down into the pretty garden of the house and then over the harbor of St. Peter Port to the island of Sark about ten miles off is perfectly magnificent. Hugo stood up to write and had a little folding shelf in one corner at which he stood and composed with his face, of course toward the sea.

He must have got very tired, I should think, before he came to the end of some of his sentences, an idea which is especially borne in upon me by the perusal of his Guernsey work, *Les Travailleurs de la Mer*. The book is especially interesting, of course, when you are on the scene of its action, as I am ; I wind up the day with it, reading it from 9:30 P.M. till bed-time, as a solace after hard work and as an exercise in French.

I must have told you that I got a letter while I was in Oxford from Mr. Marley – a very delightful, but rather pathetic one written just before leaving for Jamaica. I wrote to him in reply last Sunday to Kingston and hope he will not have left before it gets there. Tell me how he is when he gets back.

Bev. Tucker is spending the vacation in Paris with a couple of other Americans. Tandy, as I think I told you, is in Ilfracombe, Devonshire, with Brooks<sup>10</sup> from Georgia and seems from a note I got from him yesterday to be having a very pleasant time.

On Wednesday I am going to take a holiday and make an excursion to Sark. A boat leaves at ten and gets back at five or six o'clock. The island is the smallest of the important four Channel Isles, being only three miles long, so I shall have abundant time to explore it pretty thoroughly. It is said to be the most beautiful of the islands. On Saturday, which will complete my two weeks in Guernsey, I expect to go to St. Helier, Jersey. You might address your next letter to me there, *poste restante*. I shall be in Oxford again about Apr. 20<sup>th</sup>. I have about given up my French bicycle trip for this vacation.

Don't let Papa fail to come over this summer for a short time at least, if he can possibly do so. I will write to him more definitely when I get back and find out when I have to take my degree, as my plans will be a little affected by that. The official conferring of degrees takes place some time in midsummer and again in October.

With much love to all,  
Your affectionate son,  
Tucker Brooke.

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<sup>10</sup> Spelled with an "s".

No. 3 Tynemouth Terrace,  
St. Helier's, Jersey  
April 8 th., '06

My dear Mamma,

All my letters nowadays begin and end with praises of the weather except for one day when there was a mild rain which, however, didn't at all prevent my walking the whole afternoon without getting seriously wet, the last ten days have been the most glorious imaginable. The whole aspect of the island is that of June and I haven't had a fire since I came – not even at night. I sit and work by an open window the whole day and enjoy the splendid view, and as I am quite free from any idle moments, I don't at all object to the lack of society. It was three weeks Friday afternoon since I saw anybody I knew, and I am so well satisfied with my surroundings and my progress that I expect to stay out three weeks here, that is remain till a week from next Saturday, though that will make me a couple of days late in getting back to Oxford. As I get at least nine hours of hard work every day, without the possibility of an interruption, I am getting over a lot of ground, and expect not to have to work too hard at Oxford, though the extent of one of these Oxford examinations is perfectly immense. I always take a good long walk or bicycle ride after dinner and so keep myself in the best health and spirits possible. It is a very great asset, I think, to be able to enjoy walking alone for it gives an immense amount of pleasure and to judge from my own case, is the best preventive possible of all the ills that flesh is heir to.

This morning I went to church and heard one of the most entirely imbecile sermons I have ever attempted to listen to. I enjoyed the service, though, and found it plenty – though not of a particularly churchly nature – to occupy my wandering thoughts. The church is rather old and very attractive looking with immense stone pillars and heavy arches. The right side was quite filled, as often happens in English towns, by the population of a boys' and girls' school respectively. The children looked, of course, like martyrs, but the youngest of them were allowed to escape before the sermon, and they went out with obvious delight, the procession taking quite five minutes to leave the church. The older children had to stay for all the service and watched the retirement of the others with rather pathetic envy. The most entertaining sight to me was the array of teachers who in their misdirected efforts to keep order made awful nuisances of themselves, as they distracted the attention of the congregation infinitely more than their charges, whose misdemeanors were quite invisible from where I sat. One old lady in charge of the girls was very fully [*sic*] as she sat with her back to the preacher watching the children and would gesticulate most wildly before the face of the congregation when she saw signs of inattention. Between these outbursts she would go quite to sleep herself with her mouth open and her head wobbling so curiously that I was kept grinning, I am afraid a good part of the time. – I have got as far as this since coming back, but shall have to postpone the rest of what I have to say until after dinner, which is just arriving. —

I took a walk after dinner but didn't go particularly far as it was hot and dusty. All the population turns out on Sunday afternoon for a promenade and the result is that the roads near town and the streets and parks are too full of people to be pleasant, unless you wish to study manners, customs and faces which I sometimes do with great interest. I heard a lot of French this afternoon ; it is always the more or less uneducated people who speak it as all the others seem to talk English.

I got a postal from Egypt yesterday from my friend Gabe, who was at St. John's last year. He is now studying at Heidelberg, but is travelling along the Nile with his mother during the vacation. I met his mother, of course, when I stayed a day or two with them in Hamburg. She was very nice to me, but is a most superior person, who will undoubtedly give old Cheops (if that's his name) lessons in pyramid building, if she finds his mummy at home.

I hadn't noticed the account of Miss Frances Miller's wedding, if it was in the papers you sent me, so I was glad to hear of it from you. It was a surprise to me though, and to her, too, I have no doubt. You speak of Papa's smoking. He ought to be here where cigars are fabulously cheap. I would send him some if it were not for the U.S. customs. I think I shall try to take some back to Oxford with me for the benefit of Tandy and other friends, as I believe they allow you to take in less than fifty duty free.

If I have any time soon, I will try to write something for one of the university papers, as I appreciate their everlasting need of copy. For the next week or two I don't expect to have an hour, but I may afterwards, and I should like to have the chance of reminding people at home of my continued existence.

I have been nearly all over Jersey on my bicycle now, that is I have been to the coast in every direction, but I haven't by any means seen all the interesting points and have plenty of sightseeing to occupy my time for the next two weeks.

Jersey, I think, is even prettier than Guernsey, and, having had much better weather, I have enjoyed it more. The coast scenery is magnificent especially the north-east part where you can see the Norman coast for a long distance. The inland too, is beautiful, as there are a good many pretty little villages and any number of lanes with high grassy banks and often with trees joining overhead for long distances.

Your last letter got to Guernsey after I had left, but followed me here, so that I received it only a day or two later. I am always delighted to hear from you.

I wish you could see what a fine evening it is. It is five o'clock and the sun is well up but not glaring ; the tide is in and two or three sailboats are going across the bay. There is a fine haze in the air and the hills rising from the water's edge on my right are quite misty, though only four or five miles off ; nothing could be more peaceful.

With much love for all,  
Tucker B.

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*Raised blue seal :*

OXFORD UNION SOCIETY 1823

Oxford,  
April 22, '06

My dear Mamma,

I have been very lazy to-day and didn't get my usual letter written to you this morning. This evening I went to Magdalen Coll. to see Fleet for a few minutes and now on my way back, have stopped at the Union to send you a few lines, rather than trust to writing at home or later in the week. It is twenty minutes after nine now and the Union shuts up at ten ; so I shall not have time for very much of a letter.

I got back to Oxford late Thursday night and found Tandy already there and everything ready for me. We have a very fine landlord and are as comfortable as possible. It was then five weeks since I had seen any body [*sic*] I knew with the exception of a don and his wife who got on the train at Winchester, twelve miles this side of Southampton and came back with me. I was very glad to be at Oxford again, as I am after every vacation and am enjoying the atmosphere of spring festivity that is already over all the place. I have done almost no work at all during the last three days, though I saw Mr.

Snow, my old tutor last night and talked about what I wanted to do. All my tutors and the college authorities have been extremely nice to me and particularly during the last few months, now that I am approaching my final B.A. examinations, they seem to have spoken to me in an unusually kind and flattering way of my work and my general conduct. The people of Oxford have indeed acted toward all us Americans in the most considerate way imaginable ; otherwise, with our different training and ideas we might have had a very hard time getting settled.

The last four days of my vacation, to revert, were spent away from Jersey – mostly on the Isle of Wight, from which I think I sent you several postals. I left St. Helier on Easter Monday and had a beautifully quiet sea all the way to Southampton, but a most hard featured lot of travelling companions, mostly out for an excursion because of the holiday. Getting to Southampton about four in the afternoon, I crossed over the same evening to Cowes on the Isle of Wight – a distance of only eight or ten miles – and spent the night there. The next day I rode past Osborne House – which is not open to visitors to Newport, the capital, and to the fine old Carisbrooke Castle, where Chas Ist. was imprisoned, and from there to the Needle Rocks at the extreme western part of the island. Then I followed the line of the south coast which is quite rocky and extremely picturesque, to Vintnor, where I arrived about noon of the second day, and from there northward through some interesting seacoast towns and a fine Roman villa (represented now of course, only by the mosaic floors and various coins and other scattered relics) to Ryde, where I spent Wednesday night. On Thursday morning I crossed to Portsmouth and saw there the house where Dickens was born and that in which the Duke of Buckingham was assassinated by Felton. Then I crossed the harbor, the chief naval station in England, to Gosport and went out in a boat from that side to see Nevin's flagship, the Victory which is moored in the harbor. From there I was shown over the ship by one of the sailors on board and enjoyed my visit very much. Everything is kept, of course, almost as it was at Trafalgar.

From Gosport I bicycled to Southampton, eighteen or twenty miles and had about two hours there before the train to Oxford left. I wanted to find the church with the inscription which Papa sent me but couldn't locate it, not having anything legitimate to locate it by. I may do better another time.

It is just ten and I must leave. With much love for all,

Tucker Brooke

P.S. Thank Ida and Nan for their letters which I got this morning together with your note.

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*Raised blue seal :*

OXFORD UNION SOCIETY 1823

April 29, 1906

My dear Papa,

I hope I haven't postponed too long writing to you about your visit to me this summer. I have come to the conclusion that you would like best to come to Oxford first and to stay here for some weeks. Of course, we shall go for a week to London and after seeing the large amount of country one can get at from Oxford, we can, before you go back, do some more ambitious sight-seeing. All that can be settled after you get here. I am sure you will like Oxford and find your stay here very interesting. I know a good many people here, of course, and am sure you will like them, as the dons of the colleges will all be delighted to see you and will certainly keep you from feeling solitary.

As to the time, I want you to be sure to leave on the first boat you can conveniently get after commencement. The American Line from Philadelphia, on which most of the Rhodes scholars came over this year, seems to be altogether satisfactory. My reason for wanting you to come early is that the official conferring of degrees takes place here on Saturday, July 7<sup>th</sup>. I expect to get my degree then and the ceremony is an extremely interesting one which you ought not to miss. Though the regular academical term ends June 20<sup>th</sup>, Oxford will still be very gay and you will see the town in a very characteristic aspect with practically all the dons and a large number of the undergraduates still here. Of course, while you are in Oxford, you will share my lodgings and will certainly be quite comfortable. The cost of another bedroom for the time you are here and for your meals will hardly increase my expenses appreciably. In fact it will be quite as cheap for me to live so [,] as to travel about on the Continent from one hotel to another.

I shall have an abundance of work to occupy my spare time in Oxford so long as you feel like staying and shall be glad to see the place myself during the delightful summer months, particularly as I have never yet been here in vacation. I mean to take you out canoeing and punting and to make lots of excursions to neighboring places, such as Woodstock, Abingdon, Windsor, and dozens of others. There are fine steamer excursions on the Thames, too, which I haven't made yet and which we shall do together.

I think you will be so much at home in Oxford and will have so much to do, what with sight-seeing and what with the social life that is so universal here that you will find it interesting to stay at least three or four weeks. I have told several persons that I expect you and people like the Wylies and the dons of my college, besides, of course, the Americans resident here, will be very glad to show you every courtesy possible – both because it is the regular thing to do and because they are always very desirous of meeting Professors from America.

I am waiting for your arrival to see Oxford myself, for, so far, I have not been to half the interesting places here, so we shall do all the sights of the place, including, of course, the big law library at All Soul's College, where Blackstone lectured.

After seeing Oxford and London, with something of Kent, I suppose, I should like to go to the North – first to Stratford, perhaps, and then to the Lake Country and from there to Edinburgh, returning by way of York, etc. All these plans, though, I am leaving to be settled after you get here and decide how long you can stay and what you would best like to see.

I am expecting you to get here thus about the beginning of July. If you come earlier, it will be so much the better, but I should like to have you not later than the seventh. I will meet you at Southampton or Liverpool, as the case may be, and we shall do a little sightseeing on the way. If you come to S. we might make an effort to find the old Brooke tombstone and get a glimpse of Winchester, the Saxon capital. If you land at Liverpool, I should be in favor of spending a day or so in Chester, which I have never seen ; it is said to be one of the most picturesque old cities in England.

You can, of course, regulate your stay here to suit your convenience. When I wrote to you from Jersey, I thought it barely possible that you might feel a little bored if you were set<sup>11</sup> over here with nothing particularly to do but to play the tourist, but I am quite sure that you will find Oxford at least very interesting and will have no lack of society, as I have had several inquiries already as to whether you would be over soon or not. You must come.

If you wish to come over only for a month or five weeks, it will be abundantly worth your while, though I think you had better leave the rest of the summer open, in case you want to extend

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<sup>11</sup> *Sic.*

your stay as I think you will. Your expenses in Oxford will naturally be nil, and for the rest of the time you will find that we shall live luxuriously for six or seven dollars a week. My own financial condition is very good and your being here will not increase my expenditure abnormally, I assure you, as the difference between the expenses of one person and two in lodgings is very little.

I enclose you a money order for ten guineas in partial payment of the money you advanced for my coming to Oxford. If you invest it in securing passage at once for the first week after commencement, you will be sure of getting a good stateroom. – I saw Bev. Tucker to-day. He is looking forward to seeing you.

I must get home to lunch, as Tandy will be waiting for me.

With much love for all,

Tucker Brooke.

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*Raised blue seal :*

OXFORD UNION SOCIETY 1823

May 13, '06

Dear Nan,

We are having very warm weather here and I am feeling much lazier than I suppose I ought to be considering that my final examinations begin two weeks from next Thursday.

I spent nearly the whole of yesterday on the Charles River, which though only about fifty feet broad is a splendid place for picnics and the like. It winds a great deal and has fine trees overhanging it all the way to Islip about seven miles above the intersection with the Thames at Oxford. At this time of the year it is full of pleasure boats of any description and consequently very gay looking. Yesterday morning I went out with an Englishman who is taking the same school as myself and we anchored under a tree and read old notes of lectures to ourselves till lunch time. In the afternoon I went out in a canoe.

The day before yesterday I rode on my bicycle to Burford, a fine old fashioned town in lovely country, eighteen miles from Oxford. I started with a St. John's man after lunch ; we had tea there, and saw the place – particularly a beautiful old church – and then rode back – getting here just in time for dinner.

Lloyd asked me to a sort of picnic breakfast at Wadham College this morning. On Sunday morning they don't serve any hot breakfast at Wadham and a good many of the other colleges, though they do at St. John's. Consequently people have to cook their own things on chafing dishes and the like, unless they are satisfied to have everything cold.

Next Thursday "eights week", the most exciting week of the year at Oxford, begins. On the Saturday of the next week I am going down to stay with my friend Taylor at his home till the commencement of the examinations on Thursday, May 31<sup>st</sup>. It is quite the custom here to stop work several days before one of the long examinations and go away from Oxford ; the authorities always giving permission to have a good time and get the nerves in a good condition, as the strain of examinations is much longer and greater here than in America, where so much never depends on the results and where they never have ten of three hours each in five days.

I am not permitting the future to disturb my enjoyment of the fine weather we are now having and am enjoying the term very much. I am going to a party Friday night, where I expect to have a good time. I see Bev. Tucker very often – almost every day – and was invited, with him, to play tennis

last Tuesday at one of the three or four “ladies’ halls” which more or less take the place of girls’ collages here.

I got a letter from Ida last week, but, except for that, haven’t heard from home for some time. I suppose I shall get a letter to-morrow or the next day. I hope soon to get a letter from Papa, telling me what his plans are and when I am to expect him in Oxford.

Tandy and I both had our pictures taken recently, but I haven’t got mine yet ; when they come I will send you one. I also got a small camera and am going to take some snapshots. I play tennis four afternoons in the week and find the others quite full with my bicycling, canoeing and the dozen other things that there are to do in Oxford in summer. Write to me when you have time.

With love to all,

Tucker Brooke.

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*Raised blue seal :*

OXFORD UNION SOCIETY 1823

May 21, 1906.

Dear Papa,

We are just at the middle of “eights week” today and the town is crowded with visitors – mostly the families of the undergraduates who have come up to see the races and the other gayeties. By races I mean, of course, the eight-oared boat races between the various colleges. St. John’s has done very well so far, having made a bump on each of the three days since the races began and having a very good chance of getting three more bumps by Wednesday when the week of racing ends. To-day, of course, being Sunday, is a day of rest and there is nothing in particular going on.

The past week has been rather gay for me. On Friday Tandy had a sort of luncheon party to which, of course, he asked me. In the afternoon I had a Miss James, who is a friend of the Ewings and at present a student at one of the girls’ colleges at Oxford, to tea on the St. John’s barge, with one of her friends and one of her teachers. Friday night I went to a reception. Yesterday afternoon I went out in a canoe with one of the Englishmen at St. John’s and watched the races from it. The river, except for the narrow passage kept free, was lined with pleasure boats and the jam as they all tried to get back after the race was very exciting. The whole surface of the water was covered and I imagined myself in Venice. Last night I was invited out to play euchre with an American lady – a New Yorker – and her niece. They are the friends of Cox, the Rhodes scholar from Bermuda whom I must have mentioned to you as he knows Mr. Geo. Tucker the Archdeacon very well. He spends nearly all his vacations in Oxford, as he is busy at the Bodleian, so you will be almost certain to find him here when you come to Oxford. To return to the card party, I for the first time in my life won the prize. We played seven-handed euchre, the party consisting – besides the two ladies, Cox and myself – of Tandy, a Scotchman and a South African, both members of Exeter College.

To-morrow night, I am going to dinner with the Wylies. This afternoon I am going to pay two or three calls, but otherwise haven’t anything in particular to do to-day.

My final examinations, as I have told you, begin a week from Thursday. Next Saturday I am going down to stay with Taylor till the following Wednesday, this being the usual procedure here on the eve of final examinations. I shall not get very much work done therefore this term,

but I suppose that doesn't make much difference. If I do as well as my tutors and acquaintances seem to expect of me, I shall certainly be more than satisfied, but the English examination system is a great mystery.

I hope to get a letter in few days telling me that you are going to get to England sometime early in July. Before you come I expect to move out of my present lodgings into those that I am to occupy next year. The people are all ready for you and I will let them know as soon as I hear from you just when they are to expect us.

The various warnings you have sent me in regard to West Virginians who expected to come to Oxford do not seem to have come to anything, as I have seen none at all this year. I should be very glad, indeed, to see any who come over here.

I got several papers this morning, but haven't had a letter since last week. I hope the next one that comes will tell me of our plans for the summer. Give my love to Grandma and Floride. I suppose Grandma at least will be in Morgantown all summer.

With love to all,  
Tucker Brooke

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*Raised blue seal :*

OXFORD UNION SOCIETY 1823

May 29th., '06

Dear Papa,

I got your letter last night and was delighted to find that you are actually coming to Oxford, and that you will be here early. I know that you will enjoy the trip and I shall enjoy having you here exceedingly.

I have been staying in Wolverhampton with the family of my friend Taylor since Saturday and had a very good time. Besides Taylor and myself there is another St. John's man in the party – all of us in for “schools” the day after to-morrow and down here to have a good time in the interim. Mr. & Mrs. Taylor are exceedingly nice and we have had several parties and the like as many of Taylor's friends have invited us out or been entertained here.

Yesterday the three of us bicycled to Bridgnorth and had a delightful day. I sent you a postal from there. We didn't get back till nearly half-past seven and then went to dinner with a friend of the Taylor's<sup>12</sup> who made us have a very pleasant evening.

Now for your trip. I should certainly not lay in any large stock of clothes at home, for they are infinitely cheaper here. My dress suit cost me only four pounds in London and has been thoroughly satisfactory. The English tailors are pretty prompt when one insists and can usually get a suit done in less than a week.

[*A page is missing.*]

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<sup>12</sup> *Sic.*



*Raised blue seal :*

OXFORD UNION SOCIETY 1823

Sunday, June 16th.

Dear Mamma,

I got your letter this morning. I ought to have written to you earlier as the results of the examinations were announced on Tuesday. I was given the only first-class among the men who took the examination. The number of men in the school of English Language and Literature is very small, as the comparative newness of the school and the amount of philology required keep it from being very popular so far. This year only seven men took the examination ; of the other six, excluding myself, one got a second-class, four third-classes, and one a fourth class. Nobody failed absolutely.

Nearly twenty-five girls took the same examination (twenty-two, I think), for they take English much more commonly than the undergraduates who go in in the vast majority of cases for the older schools of Modern History and Classics. Of the twenty-two women candidates, there were two firsts, six seconds, about ten thirds, the rest getting fourths or failing absolutely.

Getting a "first" at Oxford is regarded as so much a matter for rejoicing that I have been kept busy answering notes of congratulation, etc. I have had six or seven offers from teachers' agencies to procure me a place as head-master of various remote little schools, but rejoice that when I have to hunt for such a position, it will not be in Great Britain. I had no idea before of the number of friends I had in Oxford. Mr. Wylie, of course, my various tutors, and the dons of St. John's take a personal interest in my good luck and I have received notes from the Ewings, the Taylors, and all sorts of other people, including even a cablegram from my friend Lowry in Philadelphia. Tandy has always said I ought to have cabled to you and I am a little sorry I didn't as this will reach you after Papa has gone but the news hardly seemed worth such a pompous method of transmission. Possibly the class list was copied out of the London papers into some American ones and you may have seen it already.

I am going to tea this afternoon with Dr. Wright, one of my examiners.

*Sideways across top margin of first page :*

I enclose you a rather gushy note from Miss Aglionby, whom I promised to take Papa to see in London. I will meet Papa in Liverpool on July 4<sup>th</sup>.

With much love,  
Tucker Brooke.

*Enclosed with letter of Sunday, June 16 to his mother.*

Wednesday.

My dear Mr. Brook,<sup>13</sup>

Bev Tucker came out to breakfast this morning & told me the glorious news about you. I could scarcely eat for joy & kept reiterating oh, I am so glad !

How happy this will make Etienne at home. Your parents have just cause to be proud of you ; then to think an American – & a West-Virginian & son of a Virginian did it –, took the only first ; you have honored us all & I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

My brother you will meet in London took a first here in the long ago. How well I remember our excitement over it. Again congratulating you warmly & hoping I may see you in London – & you will let me know when your Father comes.

Sincerely Yours,

Jeanette Aglionby, <sup>14</sup>  
Christ-Church Vicarage  
Victoria St.,  
London.

S. W.  
over.

I am leaving Oxford this afternoon.

J. E. A.

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7, Hope Park Crescent,  
Edinburgh, Scotland,  
August 7th., 1906.

Dear Mamma,

It is a typical Edinburgh day, the air full of a mixture of rain and mist, which makes it impossible to see more than a few hundred yards and makes walking a most irritating ordeal. Papa and I started out after breakfast on a little tour of inspection but soon got discouraged and came home. We have now got a small fire going and are reconciled to putting off our exploration, if necessary, till tomorrow, which, indeed, would not be a bad idea in any case, as we had a very hard day yesterday.

We left York, where we had spent three pleasant days, at ten o'clock yesterday morning and got off the train at Durham. The latter is a beautiful town built mostly on a high hill almost completely surrounded by the little river Wear. The particular attraction of Durham is its fine cathedral, but it has also a very impressive old castle, once used as palace and fortress by the Prince Bishops of Durham, but now turned over to the new Durham University. We saw all that there was to see in the

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<sup>13</sup> *Sic.*

<sup>14</sup> Brother of the Revd. Francis Keyes Aglionby, Vicar

Cathedral, including the grave of the Venerable Bede, who died about twelve hundred years ago, and the tomb to which the bones of St. Cuthbert were moved from Lindisfarne in 995. After the battle of Dunbar in about 1645, Cromwell, not having any place else to put them apparently, locked up all his Scotch prisoners in Durham Cathedral and the canny Scots, who seem to have been all good Presbyterians, occupied themselves during their incarceration by smashing up all the images of saints and apostles, with which the interior of the cathedral was adorned. The old verger, who showed us around told us this with great indignation and made it evident that he still had no love for Scotchmen. We went through the Castle, which, as I have said, is now used for the purposes of the university. It was built by William the Conqueror, who was a very great castle builder, and though it has since been added to and altered many times, parts of the original fortress are still to be seen just as they were in the eleventh century. One of these parts, which we saw, is the chapel situated in what we should term the cellar and with very few advantages in the way of light or air, but I suppose it satisfied William's spiritual requirements and those of his bishop.

We stayed in Durham about four hours and then took a train that brought us through Newcastle, Berwick, and Dunbar to Edinburgh, where we expect to be a week. Last night we walked about the streets a little and got a splendid view of the Castle high up on a crag in the very midst of the town. This morning we were going to climb up to the Castle for the sake of the view which is said to be exceedingly fine, but had to give up the idea because of the foggy weather. The sun is now shining on the mist, which gives everything a very funny appearance.

We found a letter from you to Papa waiting for us when we got to Edinburgh, and were very glad to hear the news it contained. We got a bundle of papers at York. We are speculating a little as to where Dr. Simpson is having the rug you mention sent to and whether it will follow us to the Isle of Man where we expect to be immediately before Papa's boat goes. If it comes it will be very useful to him. He naturally was very cold on the boat coming over and his very first move after getting to London was to provide himself with the heaviest overcoat procurable, which he insists on wearing on days when the people here are complaining of excessive heat.

Nan's birthday will be past before you get this ; I am sorry we didn't think of it sooner. Give her my love ; with very much for yourself and Frank,

Your affectionate son,

Tucker Brooke