

New College.

Oxford.

Feb. 7th 1905.

My dear Prof.

Thank you for your kind long letter. It came to me in Paris and I was very glad to hear from you all and particularly about the affairs of the College of which as you surmised I had previously heard very little. I forget whether I learnt from you that it was bad policy to begin a letter with an apology but some worldly wise person has given me that tip so I'll save mine till the end.

I was very glad too to get the papers you so kindly sent but I am ashamed of the paper that published such a libel

on Oxford as that exchange from
a New England paper, probably I
should think that Boston rag which
heads it editorial column every night
with the remark. "It is the duty of
every American citizen to strive for the
annexation of Canada." I showed
the paper to Brown of this College,
Rhodes scholar from New Hampshire
and Paterson of Balliol who hails
from your 'Varsity'. They both thought
it the falsest and most absurd
thing they had ever seen. Nobody
finds time drag on his hands and
one can do any quantity of work
one desires for the schools and
as for regarding blue blood, and
wearing glad rags, going to "social
functions", ignoring Americaness

and all that sort - it is absurd. I am sorry that such lies are abroad in the United States particularly for they must do harm amongst people only too glad to believe such things. Please give McClurdy my compliments and tell him to use his head before he publishes such stuff without a word of comment. From the very beginning the men here were as kind and cordial as possible. They make no discrimination between people for nationality or Rhodes scholarship or anything of the sort and some of the nicest fellows are they young lordlings, Rouse, etc.

I had a very good vacation. The first week or so I stayed with Gerrie here. Then we met her spouse at

Devonport and all went to town together where we spent Christmas with the hockeyists. Lady L. is a delightful person.

She is very kind and they all like her so much. So does Gerrie and she makes all the difference in the house.

Soon after Christmas I went to Paris, at night via Newhaven & Dieppe for your information. I found a room in the grand hotel de Haute-boire, Boul't Raspail, near Boul't & Gare Mont-parnasse. Just in the heart of the Quartier Latin, not far from St. Sulpice and L'Eglise de St. Germain-des-prés. a sort of St. Matthew's-in-the-fields. The Slayter's apartment au troisième, 25 rue Boissonade is just a little bit out Raspail and overlooks an old convent garden. There is a new novel all about the very house they are in.

But I regret to say I have forgotten its name. Their rooms are small but they are very comfortable and generally get breakfast & luncheon at home and dine at a little artist restaurant called Garnier from its former proprietor. Whistler's atelier used to be only about a hundred yards from my hotel and I found when I got back to England that Castlake had lived there for some time.

We went about a lot and sampled nearly everything, from the Louvre to the Mollin songs, which is now a most proper and rather dull music hall. I went there one night the day after had gone to a dancing class where Nikka distinguished herself by asking a youth whom she wanted to speak more slowly. To parler plus long-temps. One other day speaking of a clever thing

she nearly effected - she said "it would have
been a lice in my bonnet" meaning as at
length I guessed, a feather in her cap.
When I got back from Paris where
I was for a fortnight I went and
stayed two days with Stanley Mackenzie
in Cambridge and had a fine time.
The colleges and docks are ripping
but the town as a town is not in it
with Oxford. I liked him immensely
and so enjoyed meeting him. Then
I was there week end with Mrs Bor,
my morrow cousin, near Portsmouth,
and Sandwich in between then an
evening with Dick Temple at the Junior
Club & Military Club, Piccadilly W.
He is a sound fellow I think and I like
him very much. He is still on sick
leave and lately went to Osborne.

I must to ball now, more anon.

Before tackling Magna Carta I shall just finish this off - to continue
The vac. was finished up with four days in London. I lunched and
dined out every day and enjoyed seeing some of my friends. One day
I lunched with the boxtyers, another with Mrs. Browning, and another I went
to Blackheath - to see the Stairs Duffuses. They are very well and have a
comfortable little house. The business is well under way now and
Will is quite cheerful but he had a long up-hill fight handicapped
by a fire year when he had established himself and gotten orders.
Graeme and Winnie were in town but I didn't see them. However one night
I met Major Bursell at dinner. He was Harry Stairs subaltern in W. Co.
for a while you may remember, and he told me that Jack Oland was dead.
At times I was very sorry to hear.

Since coming up I have been rowing in our third "toggler". The races
begin tomorrow week and we, the 3rd, must do a bit better before the coll.
will enter us. Several men have croaked today and it may mean that
we are taken off but I hope not. We have been in training for over a
week now, early and regular hours, meals etc and no smoking. I never
really trained before and except that it cuts ones day short at 10
I don't mind it. My work is harder this term as I have begun my
foreign period, 1715-1815, and I have a lot of lectures, and a new tutor, one
R. S. Reid, an Cambridge man before he came to New College.

Gerrie has just got into a new house. She is a paying guest at present
but takes the house over furnished from 15th June to end of July. It will
be splendid then for it a nice little house and awfully prettily furnished. I
expect Charliee sometime in March or April and shall be able to put
him up. I must do a little work now so good-night.

Please tell Mrs. Archie that I consider that she owes me a letter,
and with love to her and to the three demoiselles, and many thanks
and very best wishes to yourself - sir.

I am yours very sincerely Gilbert S. Stairs