

The Annotated Letters of Nicholas Vachel Lindsay to Sara Trevor Teasdale

Chapter 5 (Letters 107-138)



(Censers over the Abraham Lincoln Home: see Letters 111 and 133.)

These letters are collected among the Vachel Lindsay Papers. Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

107) “have bull-roared around till the roar is about gone . . .”

Bloomington Ill.
 Tuesday Evening—
 [May] 19, 1914.¹
 or probably—
 Wednesday A.M.

Darlingest of Saraphims:

Well I have been rushed to the limit—and have bull-roared around till the roar is about gone. I went to bed and kissed the pillow and sent up a small prayer for you and acknowledged to myself if I didn't get up and write this I would probably be rushed for another 24 hours, so here I am up again setting^ cross-legged on the floor writing on a foot-stool. I have not a thing to say except that you are the darlingest of Saraphims and for you please to hold your breath till I get home about Friday, and not mind skimpy letters.

The *Santa Fe Trail reads ever so much better. I have added [~~four~~] five more lines at the end that paralell^ the Rachel Jane song. Write them on your copy:

(. . . Prophets out of paradise . . . then . . .)
 Harken to the wonder
 That the night-air carries—
 Listen to the whisper
 Of the prairie fairies
 Singing oer^ the fairy plain
 Sweet sweet sweet sweet
 Love and glory, stars and rain
 Sweet sweet sweet sweet.

I seem to be very strong with the *Vrooman's, and it looks like Mrs. Carl will get me up a recital in Charlevoix if she is there this summer (August perhaps). I gave her and Mrs. Scott your respects and they speak of thee with the greatest esteem.

I start for Galesburg tomorrow morning. I hope to preserve a sort of incog up there. I have had enough hunk-punk here to last me till Gabe blows his trump.

Your lovely picture came. That is—it wasn't a masterpiece as a photo—and all, - but it showed the Real Sara—the outlines of her strange fairy face—with a proper forehead with corners and all—. And I brought it with me—and here it is before me, a star for the picture. [Drawing of a star.]

It is getting later and later.

Mrs. Vrooman suggested I give a recital and alternate your poems with mine at Charlevoix, reciting 'em for you, if you are too bashful.

Well—here is where I bid you Goodnight.

I really think that even Charlevoix has romantic possibilities as a meeting place—if we work it right.

Now whose girl ar[e] you? Mine or J.H.W.'s?² Here is a [drawing of a star] for you—if you like me the best.

With love

N.V.L.

Notes

¹Misdated “April 19, 1914.”

²*Wheelock, John Hall.

108) “it looks like the Platform is inevitable . . .”

Springfield Ill.
Sat. night—
May 23, 1914.

My Dear Saraphim:

Everyone grand to me—at Knox and Bloomington.

It is late as can be tonight and there are a lot of details in your letters I want to chatter about—but it is too late.

THE NEWS is that Monday evening June 1—I recite for Mrs. Charles Parson's[^]Pettus.¹ Between now and then I must get the *Chinese Nightengale ready. At least near enough to read to you. If I don't come down with something new—I will feel like a loafer—a fidget—a Sentimental Tommy. I must bring my work in my hand. I give you my love—and tomorrow morning I will write a letter below. [Arrow pointing down.]

Sunday A.M.

A lovely letter came from you to Galesburg.

But—I have not yet decided to go to New York. We have three chances to meet and argue before that time. (1) Monday week, when I go to see Mrs. Pettus. I will arrive about noon, report to and settle with her then call you up by phone from her place and see how the land lies with you. And I suppose I can hang on a day around there and get in a visit.

Next—on June 5—you may stop over with me and Mary *Humphrey here.

Next—on June 13th it is possible you may be in the Friends of Our Native Landscape Party²—if you can get up some excuses to stay in Chicago till then. There are three chances to argue and change our minds.

If you want to go to New York just to study your spiritual Barometer in regard to *Wheelock weather—I do not see what business I have around—disturbing the observation station.

And must I leave Illinois—as Antony left Actium—because Cleopatra’s ships are sailing away? Must I take my boats out of the worlds^ great battle—all for silken sails on the horizon? All because I love an Egyptian’s witch-eyes?

Here I am—to make the heart of a continent to sing or die in the attempt—and what am I offered in exchange? What great battle? The opportunity of watching you under me very eyes show agitations over somebody else! Saraphim—I clutch my brow. I clasp me forehead in wonder and amaze. I can watch girls show solicitude over somebody else right here at home. I have no doubt have your own way every minute,³ and do not allow your sweet youth to be defeated. I am truly sure that is best, if it can be done.

When I think of the ever-burning venom and bitterness I have out-grown in regard to my people—till only Love is there—I cannot be in despair over the mere sickness of yours—though I do wish I could be by to steady you.

Sara—dearest—the applause was so clean-cut and strong in Bloomington and Knox this week—it looks like the Platform is inevitable. I must not allow myself to be hurried though—it must fall like a ripe apple from a tree. I want to win a few big audiences, and keep the time for writing. I do not want to be a gad-about. The audience gets what I have been, while the person I am at present is but a drum—a shell. I do not want to be guilty of living on past performances.

Sara dear—I am thinking so much of you—and I suppose I shouldn’t say it—so happy in spite of all your troubles—you are my play-doll and my fellow-chatterer—and -now I will tell you a secret. It has just set my head spinning. Like that [Drawing of arrows in a circle.] *Judith the dancer scored a big success this week—and got most of the applause. Well—I must go to breakfast—then I will write you my scheme.

Do you see the outline of Judith’s little pale green-grey slipper she autographed for me last evening? I keep it now right by the picture of Buddha.⁴

While she was autographing this slipper, a scheme suddenly laid hold on me. I am going to have her dance one of my poems—while I chant it in my new fashion. She extemporizes her dancing in much the same way I invent a sort of tune to my chant. She is strong for it—and now that Springfield is at her feet we can command an audience to practice on—with all scoffers excluded. And my head has just been going round with the possibilities this morning. She thinks maybe we can dispense with all other music but her feet on the floor and my chants. Really—I am just shaking with it—I can hardly wait to begin—and I can see she is that way too. She is something of a singer, and the more delicate *Rachel Jane refrains she can take up—singing sometimes while dancing but not enough to get her out of breath. I am thinking of the Potatoes dance first.⁵ I will repeat in endless refrain fashion the musical lines—and use a clean cut descriptive tone of voice—rather quickly through the rougher places. Then if we get a real dance out of it maybe we can dress up some of Lucy’s little boy pupils for potatoes—and the biggest one for the

sweet potato—and then if we can get an improviser [øñ] with the flute to join us now and then—we will beat the *Irish players—b-gosh.

Howeer^—it be—I am just busting to try it. I will sit somewhere in the rear—wrapped up in a rug or a wizard’s mantle or a mackintosh or something—or preferably—sit behind a screen, and be the band!

It looks infinitely more attractive and less cumbersome than attempting any kind of Synge Sangamon County plays.⁶ It is so elastic. We can add performers just as they come in in a perfectly natural way, and no one needs to be nagged or driven. They can bring in their dancing as a free-will offering—. And all the scenery needed will be more primitive than the *Yeats brand. A coal-box to throw the sweet Potato into, for instance.

And if it works just look at the stunts we can pull off in the town! Its^ so much more stirring and decorative than just a plain recital of N. V. Lindsays roaring poetry—such as I give in the methody^ church tonight.⁷ And also—I can spring it on wild dancers like the Mrs. Charles Parsons Pettus—for instance—once I have developed a method—and make myself an orchestra for select dances! Of course it sounds perfectly - mad but once it works, Lord the fun of it! We will humanize the dour and slow—for sure! We will make the whole world dance and chant! Its^ much better than pounding on the table—boom boom boom!⁸

With love

Nicholas Vachel Lindsay

Notes

¹For “Mrs. Pettus,” see Letters 86 and 88.

²For the “Landscape Party,” see Letter 104.

³The confused syntax is VL’s.

⁴For the “Buddha,” see Letter 31.

⁵For VL’s “The Potatoes’ Dance,” see *Poetry of VL*, pp. 57-59. VL’s “scheme” is the beginning of his thoughts for the “Poem Games”: see “The Poem Games,” published in *The *Chinese Nightingale and Other Poems (Poetry of VL*, pp. 935-936).

⁶For the *Irish players, see Letters 66 and 73.

⁷For the Methodist Church performance, see Letter 111 (note 7).

⁸VL alludes to his poems “The Kallyope Yell” and “The Congo.”

109) “I must not think about being a platform success . . .”

Springfield Ill.
May 2[4], 1914.¹

My Dear Sara:

It is 11:30 and I must write to you, if I am to be myself. I hope you can get used to me again.

I have been thinking about America today—all America—the mystery of the personality of this land. Whatever America is I want to be—if America were a sea—I would want to have the same salt in me. I want blood-brotherhood with my fellow men—not necessarily the weak or the down trodden—but just my fellow-Americans, especially those that are healthiest—sanest—closest to the soil. America and art so far apart—that is—when we follow the art currents we run so counter to the American currents. To be Americans we must store up our art sense within us—and then make a great expedition as people store up provisions to reach the north Pole.

Our task is—with beauty in our hearts to go forth and strike a real blood-brotherhood with Democracy! I must not think about being a platform success. That can wait. I should make my visit to New York next January and February be about my last public appearance for some time. I should then start out to really get America incognito. I should have just one rule—to keep on going till I lose my nerve. With that simple and elastic principle—I ought to get some ways along. It is certainly a wonderful thing to feel man's life and labor flowing through you like a great stream, on the open road—it is a mighty refreshment and invigorator—and it looks to me like my only hope—to keep me from being utterly spoiled and demoralized by vanity. I must take my discipline, if it kills me. I cannot bear to be a trifler or a foolish person—or feel that I am succeeding[^] in the conventional sense.

I must go bankrupt and break my heart and learn to love my fellow men. Help me to think it out—dear friend—hold me to it—keep my conscience awake, whip me when I think only of my success and my silly songs. I want so much to be a real citizen, a real part of the spiritual daily life of America. I was in the Immaculate Conception church a long time today—praying about it.²

I am in deadly danger of being entirely preoccupied with the game of making myself heard—rather than the game of being true, personally to my message. Let us begin again—dear girl, thinking about real things. You can help so much.

Let us be good Americans. That is—you are to be a good American not so much by being one yourself, as by making me into one. You are the woman—the man maker. Name yourself Columbia—. You have no idea how this American Earth cries out to my heart and my heart cries back to it. Yet I am not true to this affection. When I am not actually writing I am reciting for Sister Pettus as it were.³ Once is all right—but that must not be my goal, nor my direction. I want to be as American as firecrackers and fourth of July and the Mississippi river are American. And I want to be as human as a spade or a shovel, and a lover of men like a Franciscan at his best. You must hold me to my highest ideal—you are the hardest person to refuse anything I ever dealt with—that you set your thoughts upon, and I pray you to ask of me the deepest and most serious things I used to ask of myself before I became the vanity and strut I am today.

No doubt this St. Louis *pagent[^] will be full of patriotic suggestions and hints and thoughts that start us back toward[^] real brotherhood and the soil.

Writing the review of *Kindling*⁴ today I realized how much it had moved me twice—once as a play—and then two years later—reading the book. This great stirring up it gave however—I reflect—was very futile—for I did not do one thing for humanity as a result of reading it—I remained—after all—a sentimentalist. I do not want to be a fanatic—neither do I want to be futile. I want to be a good American—a good citizen and a genuine lover of men.

Let us think of these things dear good Sara,

With love
and earnest friendship

N.V.L.

Notes

¹This letter is dated “May 21, 1914,” but it is clearly all or part of the “unsabbath letter” (Sunday, May 24) that caused ST and, in consequence, VL much distress (see Letters 112, 113, and 115). VL was at Knox College in Galesburg on May 21 (see Letter 107).

²For the Immaculate Conception church, see Letter 44 (note 2).

³For “Mrs. Pettus,” see Letters 86 and 88.

⁴For more on VL’s review, see Letters 89 and 116.

110) “I love you dearest of Saraphims . . .”

Springfield Ill.
[May 25, 1914.]

Dearest of Saraphims:

It has taken me most all morning for Bread-and-Butter notes—for my half-week’s jaunt. It is mid-day—a little after lunch in fact—but I can’t wait any longer to write to you—though this is in haste. I will write more tonight.

First—I give you my friendshiplove.

Then I announce that the *Macmillian book is positively accepted.

Next—*Judith the dancer is all paniky^ lest it get out she is practicing dancing my poems. So don’t let it out till it happens—if [~~ever~~] it ever happens.

She is practicing The Potatoe’s Dance—and The Master of the Dance (see *Rhymes to be Traded for Bread.)¹

*Harriet has taken The *Fireman’s ball—with wild enthusiasm—without one amendment.

I shall go straight to Mrs. Charles Parson Pettuse’s^ early next Monday afternoon—June 1.² After settling all details and letting her get a good look at me—why I will try to call

you up in the course of the afternoon. But we rather ought to expect to get in our visit Tuesday. How shall I get you and her together? Do some maneuvering now—Saraphim.

I have written her please to invite you Monday evening. If she makes up to you before that time—sound her in regard to William Marion *Reedy. I would like her to ask him—but didn't venture on the suggestion myself. Make it a topic. And make her love you, so she will be romantic about us.

It is so warm my thoughts do not coordinate. I will be moving down stairs pretty soon. Right down to that desk where I wrote you all that Tommyrot about Mary Fuller's picture, last summer.³

I love you dearest of Saraphims and I want you to be happy every minute.

Don't take my visit to the Pettus household too seriously if you are all torn up at home. Remember we have two other chances to meet soon—and the chief charm of the Pettus affair is the chance of a return engagement—next fall.

Very Sincerely
With friendship and love and companionable thoughts
N.V.L.

Notes

¹For VL's "The Potatoes' Dance," see Letter 108; for "The Master of the Dance," see *Poetry of VL*, pp. 119-122.

²For "Mrs. Pettus," see Letters 86 and 88.

³See Letter 1 for Mary Fuller and Springfield's summer heat; also see the next letter.

111) "I want to break away from the net before it chokes me . . ."

Springfield Ill.
May 25, 1914.

Dearest Saraphim:

It is getting so hot that if I am to write you night-letters—I must needs move down stairs in a night or two.

When I wrote my bread-and-butter letter to Mrs. *Vrooman today I copied off three of your poems on which I had aired myself to her: (1.) Spring Night (North American Review[]). (2.) Anadyomene. (3.) September Midnight—from the *Poetry Magazine.¹ They are three of me^ favorites.

Here is the *Chinese Nightengale on the table. Not one line written today. I shall be at it tomorrow—first thing. I must have it ready for you [~~Tuesd~~] Monday if possible.

I am glad George Lee is back in town.² I took a walk with him tonight. We saw one picture show—had a phosphate together, settled the politics of the state and nation, -

and then he took me home and read me some Swedenborg. That is the one change in him that I notice. With an equal devotion to Swedenborg and Henry George, he always talked Henry George before he left town. Evidently he has decided that Henry G. needs a rest and its^ time to bring forward the real hero.³

Well—I'm glad he believes in both of them—and I take in some of it through my skin. Its^ certainly better than the flat skepticism materialism and cynicism of the languorous rea[c]tionary beautiful daughter of *Lysippus. I want to deal with some one who believes in more than I do—not one who believes in less.

Now that the Lees are back, the radicals will be getting together again and I will be a bit more content in Springfield, and less irritated by me friends, the enemy.

Ask me the story of the “Cup of Paint” when we meet. Its^ a funny Story.⁴

All the radicals were at the Methodist church last night and a mass of people who wanted to hear me for the first time, whose faces for the most part were strange to me. Few of the cohorts of privileg^ were present. For instance nor Mary *Humphrey nor her friends. Even George Lee is getting deferential. This will not do. Saraphim—my only hope is the road. Sooner or later—the road. And I am not going to receive any of this mail I am now getting—on the road. Perhaps I shall write to you and Mama—but to no one else. I want to break away from the net before it chokes me. This time next year I should be making my plunge. I will go to New York in January and February and have that over with and teach people to chant my verses—and then begin life again.

I want to be barked at again.

But I love you well—little singing red-bird,⁵ and I wish you would tell your most secret misgiving about it.

Very much yours

N.V.L.

[Enclosure: Church bulletin from the First Methodist Episcopal Church for VL's May 24, 1914 performance. VL writes on the first page: “The house was jammed, Galleries packed. The first big crowd I ever drew in Springfield unassisted. See inside.” Inside he adds: “The last 600 of my 2000 Soul of the City Pamphlets were distributed.”⁶ The bulletin announces: “This evening you and your friends will have the pleasure of hearing Nicholas Vachael^ Lindsey^ give interpretive readings of four of his masterful poems. Mr. Lindsey reads at the urgent request of the Pastor.”⁷

Notes

¹For ST's three poems, see respectively Letters 9, 3, and 81.

²For George Lee, see Letter 26.

³Henry George (1839-1937) was the foremost proponent of the single-tax idea, especially in his famous *Progress and Poverty* (1879). For George's influence on Springfield's “radicals,” see VL's “*Adventures While Preaching Hieroglyphic Sermons,” p. 969, and Letter 26.

⁴VL's "The Cup of Paint" (*Poetry of VL*, p. 25) was published in *The *Tramp's Excuse*, with the following end note: "Souvenir of my first and last visit to Sam T. Jack's [burlesque] Theatre, Chicago." "The Cup of Paint" was one of two poems VL tried to sell on the streets of New York City in March 1905.

⁵For ST as "red-bird," see Letter 100 (note 1).

⁶For the "Soul of the City," see Letter 13. One page of the pamphlet is reproduced on the title page of this chapter.

⁷The pastor was A[lba] C[hampers] Piersel. For VL's account of the evening, see "*Adventures While Preaching," p. 964; and Letter 105. VL was invited to Pastor Piersel's church for a return performance, on December 28, 1925, this time with Elizabeth Conner Lindsay in the audience, her first visit to VL's beloved Springfield: see Letter 233.

112) "I humbly apologize for all things said and implied . . ."

Springfield Ill.
May 26, 1914.

Oh Queen-Live forever:

I humbly apologize for all things said and implied, in my unsabbath letter of Sunday May 24th and promise to strive never to say such things again, and draw the attention of the crowned queen of the seven seas of song to the hope that I cherish deeply within me that the next time I say something real mean she will cut it out and send it right back to me to mine own confusion and repentance, as she did this time that the matter be cleared up at once. Also I tenderly petition that you write at once instantly and say you're not mad any more—at least not so very mad any more.¹

Now—having extended my sentiments—I hereby open a certain envelope I have been holding to the light and postponing—and behold—it contains a curled leaf from a tree of gold in the valley of the Many-Colored-Grass. I certainly love that color—it is real real sun-gold. So much more shining than I ever saw it. Please have it just this way next Monday, if you have to sit by the same cold spring all Sunday morning to get it into such a shining glory.

I just want to show this curl to everybody and I don't dare show it to a soul ever. So I will just have to write some kind of a song about it.²

A little leaf was blown to me
On a wind of pain and whim and love—
A curled soft leaf from a tree of gold—
A tree that grew by a hill—spring cold—

[Its branches] In the wind it shook like an aspen tree—
The wind of pain and whim and love—
It was blown to me oer^ a hundred miles—

And it found its way by the wind of whim.
 At sight of the gold mine eyes are dim—
 At thought of the love—mine eyes are dim.
 At though[t] of the pain mine eyes are dim.

Well—I am afraid that song won't interest anyone but us.

Be sure to bring *Felsing Monday night to the Pettus³, if he manages to get asked. While he is about it, tell him I said I would like to have him work an invite for *Reedy.

This Pettus business may not have much in it for us—but now the ball is started rolling and I will see it through, really expecting very little. It probably won't be half as much fun as our Saxon⁴ visit, but something amusing or profitable may turn up, if we don't hang too much on the moment, remembering there are 365 days in the year.

With love and esteem

N.V.L.

I like That Felsing all right—and I shall be POLIGHT[^] but I hope he stubs his toe.

Notes

¹The “unsabbath letter” is 109.

²For the “curl,” see Letter 29 (note 1).

³For the “Pettus business,” see Letters 86 and 88. “Felsing” is VL's misspelling of Ernst *Filsinger.

⁴That is, Saxton Farm: see Letter 100.

113) “Some day I will have to sieze you roughly, or renounce you . . .”

Springfield Ill.
 May 26, 1914.

My Dearest Sara:

It is an awfully hot night—and I sit down just for a word at midnight in me pajamas. I have moved down stairs to my regular summer resort—the library sofa—with one sheet and pillow.

The Roe's are still all up stairs.¹ I don't know how they will stand it up there unless they sleep on the floor.

Sara—never have I been cross in my mind with you, however my words seemed, nor did I intend for a minute to scold you. But I do not offer this as an excuse my dear. I have used rude strong language too lightly and I humbly crawl. And my misplaced wit was too light. I assure you dear I have thought of you with nothing but kindness and

respect. I take back everything I said and acknowledge it was most inconsiderate and thoughtless.

Remember that Maude *Humphrey, equally charming, is with her sister Mary. I have known them since they were ten and thirteen years old, and I see more of Maude than Mary sometimes. But you will be amazed at the fancy picture they paint of your humble servant. They have never had letters from me, to find me out, for better or worse. (And they couldn't possibly read or understand such letters as we write.) I told them of your fathers and mother's sickness and they havn't^ the least idea of exacting anything of you, but are in a glow of properly gentle hope, and properly gentle trusting to luck. Really Sara—I called on them tonight and they are very sisterly and sweet about it, you seem to be quite the literary heroine with them, and I know you will find them very gentle and pliable to your mood whatever it may be, and your opportunity to get together, however brief. Mary will amuse you at the way her report of something you both see, differs from yours; though you be a poet, she paints the universe in queerer colors than you or I ever chose. They are really quite sturdy little characters with lots of granite at bottom—and a credit to the Baptists as well as to us poets—you and me. I know you will all have fun discovering each other.

Saraphim of Saraphims—Its^ a pity we can't be just angels of God for six months—and just fly to each other and be kind and preen each others wings and be social and gentle.

But alas you are a woman, and all femininity—and one more golden hair is wound round my heart every day. Some day I will have to sieze^ you roughly, or renounce you—I suppose.

(over.)

But this is not what I started to say. I was going to say that so often it does seem that we approach the state of the angels of God—and whatever snares of sweetness encompass us, let us remember that under it all is the winged immortal soul—that will some day fly. I want to unbind your hair today and in the midst of it I want to be worthy of you, worthy of your best self, and always able to call it forth to greet my own, forever and forever. And I hope we can kiss like two birds, every Spring—besides. Please receive cordially this one star [drawing of a star].

Goodnight

R.S.V.P.

N.V.L.

Note

¹For unbearable summer heat in the Lindsay home second floor, see Letter 1; for the Roes, see Letter 101.

114) “Write to me at once . . .”

[May 27, 1914.]

Dear Gloriana:

Write to me at once!

N.V.L.

115) "I have a chance to see you—and b-gosh I'll take it . . ."

Springfield Ill.

[~~Tues~~] Thursday, May 28, 1914.

My Dear Friend:

When you ask me to do things it is awfully hard for me to refuse and I havn't^ a bit of sense left.

Of course I want to come Sunday—but to see you—not the *pagent. But I'm dreadfully afraid of imposing. You musn't^ ask me to do things that I oughtn't to do for my refuser just won't work. I wouldn't be an imposition on your sick house for anything in the world.

Yet I don't want to borrow trouble. I have a chance to see you—and b-gosh I'll take it. The Pagent be hanged. Its^ the Pagent of your thoughts I want, and your forgiveness.

The explanation of that letter is very simple.¹ Its^ a forgery. Who wrote it—I don't know. He had a devilish way of getting me in bad—and misrepresenting my thoughts. He used my ink and paper too—the limb of Satan. If I catch him prowling in my rooms I shall kick him into the fourth of July.

The next time he writes, don't wait. Send the letter back at once. Don't keep it hanging fire—and me full of puzzlement and uncertainty, and wondering what can be the matter! I guessed everything except that I was capable of such ill assorted language. Its^ a forgery.

I remember writing a part of it too—the part that you kept—I guess. Well—its^ a forgery anyway, even if you didn't send it all back.

Now I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll call you up from the Main Depot Sunday noon. Don't wait lunch for me—simply because the Interurban is so uncertain. Then you can tell me over the phone if your folks are all right. If they are not—we can meet somewhere down town and make shift—to see the Pagent or not—as you please—but certainly to see each other, and I can go to the hotel. You see I am not quite so dead broke as I was, owing to the Bloomington affair and can actually pay a hotel bill cheerily.

The daughter of *Lyssipus (Mary *Johnson) is quite anxious to entertain you two or three days if you come to Springfield. I told her you and Mary H. would meet at the Pagent—and Mary would probably have first claim on you, but I expected that she—the Daughter of Lyssipus—would be the third person you met—if you met anybody outside the *Humphrey's.

Her hospitality is very genuine—there is no doubt on that score and I told Mary H. to ring her into the circle at the first occasion when it seemed anyone was to come in.

And it may come about that you really want to accept her invitation. She and her little reading club would be your set here—if you had one.² I want you to have a natural stamping ground here.

The girls seem to think getting acquainted would be quite a glad adventure.

I am glad you are lofty with me. You ought to stay lofty a month.

Yours—very humbly
N.V.L.

Notes

¹See Letter 109, the so-called “unsabbath letter.”

²This is the Avonian Club, which VL addressed on several occasions. See “*Adventures While Preaching Hieroglyphic Sermons,” p. 964.

116) “I am anxious indeed for Sunday . . .”

Springfield Ill.
May 29, 1914.

My Dear Sara:

This letter must be mailed at once if it reaches you tomorrow for sure. A midnight letter might miss you.

You have probably met the good little *Humphrey ladies by now and are more pleased with them than you expected to be.

Today I have finished and mailed to the *Chicago Evening Post two reviews “Kindling”¹ and “The Poems of *Untermeyer.”² Don’t tell him. If it comes out—I want it to ’surprise him. I tried not to praise him up or down much, but give him due space, and let him speak for himself.

My favorites are no doubt “The Stirrup-Cup” “On the Birth of a Child” and “The Shell to the Pearl.” I am not sure but what that last is his rarest. He doesn’t know how rare it is—and overestimates the rhetoric of his longer pieces. That is the substance of my comment. But space—and quotation is the great thing. Comment is a secondary matter—as a general thing, if we quote enough. (over)

As for you, good little Sara, I will not be quite happy till I am sure I have your entire good will and heart’s-kindness again, and I am anxious indeed for Sunday.

I shall wear my black temperance pulpit clothes—as a sign of penance (and because they’re about all the daytime clothes I have left!)

Very sincerely

Nicholas Vachel Lindsay

Notes

¹For *Kindling* (Doubleday, Page & Company, 1913), see Letter 89. VL's essay, entitled "The Spirit of 'Kindling,'" is in the *Review* for June 5, 1914. VL concludes: "'Kindling' remains one of the most artistic records of the winter of 1911-12, when the ingenuous America rose for a little while to the religion of heart-break. Let us hope for the coming of other such seasons, bringing much repentance, and fragments of real beauty, such as this, in the midst of the shout and the storm."

²VL's essay, entitled "A Poet Interprets 'Challenge,'" is in the *Review* for July 3, 1914. Stepan Zuroff had already written on Untermeyer's *Challenge* (The *Century Company, 1914) in an article for the **Review* (April 24, 1914). Zuroff concludes: "Thank you, Mr. Untermeyer, but see that you do better next time." In VL's estimation, Zuroff's review, and others like his, had been "too perfunctory." VL quotes liberally from *Challenge*, as he relates to ST here, and concludes: "Finally let us consider for just a moment what kind of a person wrote these verses. It is plain that he is a lover of God and man and a good citizen, in general drift and intent. To use some Springfield slang, I am always glad when a man can write good poetry without telling us what a real 'heller' he is, whether he be one or not. I hold that whatever kind of a mood expresses old world art best, the natural poet of our democracy is just naturally a good citizen." For Untermeyer's "On the Birth of a Child," see Letter 42; for "The Shell to the Pearl," see Letter 88. "The Stirrup-Cup" (a poem of farewell) is in *Challenge*, p. 69.

117) "Gold flowers—to the Golden Lady . . ."

Tuesday-morning.
[June 2, 1914]

Gold flowers—¹

to the Golden Lady—

With moon-gold and sun-gold and flower-gold thoughts of her.

N.V.L.

Goodby till—the 5th.

Note

¹This note accompanied flowers that VL sent ST upon leaving St. Louis: see Carpenter, p. 198.

118) "I am just sending you my love and my hope for Thursday . . ."

Springfield Ill.
June 3, 1914.

Dearest Sara:

Thank you for your beautiful words about *General Booth.

One thing I omitted in the note about the flowers. You will find in Stevenson's poems a rhyme about somebody's golden shoulders?¹ Well—remember it or [~~and~~] else reread it—Oh pillar of gold—all of it.

I am just sending you my love and my hope for Thursday.² I must correct Margaret *Andersons delayed proof.

Very Sincerely
With esteem over—
N.V.L.

[P.S.] Good wishes to your Papa and Mama—and many many thank you's^ for their kind hospitality—and that of Mr. Wheelless³.

Notes

¹VL remembers poem “VIII” of Stevenson's *Songs of Travel and Other Verses* (1895), which begins: “To you, let snow and roses / And golden locks belong.” The second stanza closes with: “The hue of heather-honey, / The hue of honey-bees, / Shall tinge her golden shoulder, / Shall gild her tawny knees.”

²VL refers to ST's planned stop in Springfield on her way to Chicago, although the visit was to be Friday, June 5.

³Joseph Wheless had married ST's older sister, Mary (“Mamie”) Willard, in 1904.

119) “this letter is just to greet you—honorable darling . . .”

Thursday Morning—
June [4], 1914.¹

Dear Sara:

I am just going down town to typewrite the new form of the *Santa Fe trail for *Macmillan.

Also the Pettus people asked for a copy.²

I will see you tomorrow noon.

I shall spend tomorrow morning cutting the grass so that our place will look grand when you pass by it in the *Humphrey wagon.

Last night Mrs. Francis P. Ide and Husband had the Spauldings—the Lees and some survey people and your servant.³ We had a lovely dinner and an earnest conversation. I am so glad the Lees are back in town. Mrs. Ide will be one of your hostesses, no doubt—if ever you are here long. She is an Anti-Ruster.⁴

*Reedy is going to publish some moon Poems—Friday—I think. I will bring the Mirror with me to the train if it arrives. [~~Also~~] The Spoon River Epitaphs, in the Mirror now, are wonders. I hope there will be some of those.⁵

Well—this letter is just to greet you—honorable darling, pillar of gold, slender cypress tree.

With esteem

N.V.L.

[Enclosure: Letter from Edward C. *Marsh, Vice-President of The *Macmillan Company. The letter begins: “I am writing you in the first person because I have undertaken to see your MS prepared for the press and I wish to a certain extent to give you my personal impressions with regard to it. When we first read the MS one of our readers—a man in whom I have great confidence—suggested that some of the poems were too extreme and sensational and should be omitted. With this advice before me I wrote you that I might wish to suggest some omissions. I have gone over the MS, however, in a first hurried reading and have found nothing that I should care to leave out” (VL adds: “compliment for Sara!”)].

Notes

¹This letter is misdated “June 5, 1914.”

²For “Mrs. Pettus,” see Letters 86 and 88.

³Francis P. Ide was one of five sons of Adelaide Pierce and Albert D. Ide, founder of Springfield’s Ide Engine Works and one of the city’s most prominent citizens. For the Spauldings and Lees, see Letter 26; for the Russell Sage Survey, see Letter 80.

⁴For the “Anti-Rust” society, see Letter 14 (note 5).

⁵The first poems from Edgar Lee Masters’ (1868-1950) *Spoon River Anthology* (1915) were published in *Reedy’s Mirror on May 29, 1914, under the pseudonym “Webster Ford.”

120) “I hope to win your heart and keep it . . .”

Springfield Ill.
June 5, 1914.

My Dear Sara:

I will come to New York—shortly after you do—if it can be financially arranged.

For as mulish a person as I am to consider such a change is a far more eloquent tribute than a letter full of stars.

There are two ways to arrange it. I need at least 200 dollars to do it right. Perhaps *Harriet will advance 100 or so on the *Fireman's ball—for the July or August number, and the *Santa Fe trail.

All right. Then I will need at least 100 more. I am not going to go to New York unless I can move about in freedom and peace of mind for the length of time I am there. And I shall make it my one business to recite as much as I can—well—that comes later.

The last 100 dollars might possibly be raised thus in Chicago, 4 recitals in 4 parlors at \$25. an evening—for the week following the friends of our Native Landscape.¹ If you can talk it over with Harriet and get her to lay siege to the 4 largest and loudest private parlors in Chicago—wherever they are. I do not want her to overstrain herself attempting this—if it cannot come about in a perfectly natural way. This parlor method—for some reason or other—seems to work better and easier than anything I have ever tried—is the reason I suggest it. Once the hostess is secured—the rest takes care of itself. And it can be worked on short notice—without advertising etc.

Once I am in New York I shall make a bee-line for *Macmillan's—and try to get them to do something of the same thing for me—but I put not my trust in Princes²—and I want to go armed with the sinews of war if I go. For thy sweet sake—I will change my theory of life to this extent. If you and Harriet can work this in Chicago for me—perhaps you and your friend *Jessie Belle can do the same in New York.

After while the large public audiences will come. But it seems to me in order to get as solid a standing as a reader as I have as a rhymer—I ought to meet the real people of brains—face to face. It is a matter for diplomacy—and the kind at which I am the least skilled.

I will assume it is wise that Mac and all the little MacMills hear me at once in a preliminary way, then be allowed to think it over through the fall—so that in January and February they will have some real engagements for me. I have prepared their minds by enough press-clippings from Bloomington and Galesburg³—to make my appearance in New York on this mission—somewhat reasonable.

The only rule I could suggest would be to make for those hostesses who have the writers and men of real weight in their crowds—so that once catching the spirit of these things—they will not hesitate to discuss them in print.

I do not want a falsely distended Chatauquaesque^ reputation as a speaker,—but one that is built from the center out. [~~But~~] I have come to the point where I am willing to make a considerable sacrifice of my plans to be with you a little while. It looks like a little to you but it is an enormous step for me. Please take it as seriously as possible.

And if—through this—my only [obvious] possible source of real income that shows at present on the horizon—I can come anywhere near the income that can keep you safe and happy and living your life as life has been for you—I shall certainly ask you for your heart forever. But I am afraid my dear—you are rather versatile—and if after all your wanting me to take life and happiness in June seriously—you do not—want any more progress—well—it will be very very hard for me.

I was only going to say—I hope to win your heart and keep it.

And this business of public appearances—[H] our only hope—neither you nor I can be shrewd enough to work very well. Put it before *Harriet in Chicago—and be as plain as you please.

You see—I cannot go on writing forever—like a machine especially poetry. But I can go on speaking forever once I am carefully established. And one should not marry till he is doing something that he can do every day the year round. And I am perfectly willing and able to work at this for you—the year round, if it can be made to pay.

Well—I am getting off the original question of going to New York.

I am still very selfish—but love you enough to change a great deal for you.

(over)

If we can make going to New York pay for itself—then we will be in a position to talk further plans with some confidence.

So be very frank with *Harriet and—if you think well of it—your Jessie—and tell them I am coming courting to you just as seriously as my meagre^ income permits—and if I ever do see a steady income—(and you increase in faithfulness—!) I am yours till death.

With love

Nicholas Vachel Lindsay.

[Two margin notes on the final page: “And yet I am quite sure you are going to New York to see *Wheelock. I love you well enough to almost forget that.”

“Remember—some day you may have to choose—and choose forever. But we will not cross that bridge till we must.”]

Notes

¹For the “Native Landscape,” see Letter 104.

²See Psalm 146.

³For VL’s Bloomington-Galesburg trip, see Letters 107 and 108.

121) “I only know I am happy and serene and at your service . . .”

Springfield Ill.
June 6, 1914.

My Dear Sara:

When I think of you—of course I think of my last letter. Read it over to save the trouble of writing it again. I am tempted to write it again:

L.L.R.

That stands for last letter reaffirmed.

I cannot for the life of me decide whether I am wise as Solomon or foolish as Simple Simon. I only know I am happy and serene and at your service.

L.L.R.

With love and all
proper admiration—
and esteem—

Nicholas Vachel Lindsay

122) “You have completely disarmed my heart . . .”

Springfield Ill.¹
June 8, 1914.

My Dear Sara:

Everything I have to say to you I said in a long letter this afternoon and then I tore it up and promised myself to talk to you about it in Lincoln Park.

Let us have our tryst by the statue of Lincoln—if we have [~~one~~] a tryst in the Chicago rush. Let us try out everything in the presence of Father Abraham.

You have completely disarmed my heart. I am bare and open for any hurt or cruelty you may do to me. So deal gently.

Well—I hope Father Abraham stands me in good stead. I hope you are his daughter—you are the one person on earth for whom I could cheerfully and even joyfully betray him. I hope that by being true to you I can be even more true to him. I shall see half the world through your eyes henceforth—if I continue in this gentle slavery.

Goodnight—pillar of gold, and ivory and moonlight.

With love and respect

N.V.L.

Note

¹A substantial part of this letter is in Carpenter, p. 201. One of the famous creations of sculptor Augustus Saint-Gaudens, the “standing Lincoln” statue’s dedication ceremony was held on October 22, 1887. In VL’s day, the statue was located just east of the Chicago Historical Society building.

123) “I sit here and think and think . . .”

Springfield Ill.
June 8, 1914.

My Dear Sara:

The *Humphrey address is 725 South 7th.

But Springfield Illinois will get them any day in the week.

I will postpone answering the rest of your letter till we meet. I suppose the particulars of the party will be in the morning's mail.

It is nigh midnight. I have had my third cold soak for today this minute and my head is clear as a bell—and I might write on forever.

But I will not.

I sit here and think and think. I will only say I have been tearing up letters too.

There's not a bit of use in another word.

Except that I am very happy in the thought of you.

Yours with esteem
and respect!

N.V.L.

[P.S.] Whatever else, I am quite quite sure you are a very good and honest and kind little maiden, and a real true thoroughbred lady. And it is [~~its~~] very fine to be that kind of a person—or be the boy to know some one that is.

[P.S.S.] *Harriet's kind letter comes this morning. Please tell her I will be in time for her party—probably arriving early Thursday afternoon—if not—then a little later. I will call-up when I get there. Please express to her me^ heartfelt—well I will write her a note.

124) "I am only marking time till I see you again . . ."

Springfield Ill.

June 9, 1914.

My Dear Sara:

A bunch of Joy-riders have gone just ripping and shrieking by.

It is 11.P.M.

I spent most of the morning making up a dummy of my book¹ from odd carbon copies of my verses—leaving out those known by heart. If I have to recite in Chicago I want to give them things they have not heard—and at the same time sort of break in the new volume. So I will choose the less known pieces in the new Book for recitation—that is those that are adapted to such rendering.

This afternoon I was mostly with the dentist.

Then I dug out all your poems I could find and pasted them in your Book.²

Then I did a little memorizing and the day is gone.

I saw Annette Kellerman in the movies tonight.³ Ask me about her. There is much, pro and con.

A superbly Healthful human animal untroubled by a soul—.

But my—the health of the creature, and her pride in it. And her real mermaid power and breeze and grace!

I am only marking time till I see you again.

This does not pretend to be a letter.

Just a greeting.

With love and respect and admiration and loyalty—

N.V.L.

[Enclosure: *Chicago Daily Tribune* article, with photograph, about Frances Frazee,⁴ who is appearing with the Northwestern University Thespians in George Bernard Shaw's one-act play *The Shewing-up of Blanco Posnet*.]

Notes

¹That is, *The *Congo and Other Poems*.

²For ST's book, see Letter 3.

³Motion-picture actress Annette Kellerman is perhaps best known for her starring role in William Fox's *The Daughter of the Gods*, directed by Herbert Brenon. Springfield's *Illinois State Register* (June 7, 1914) features an advertisement announcing: "The Perfect Woman with Form Divine and a Company of 1000 players in 'Neptune's Daughter,' a gorgeous and thrilling spectacle in seven parts—The film masterpiece of the world." The ad continues: "Measurements That Almost Surpass Belief" and includes a chart comparing Kellerman's body measurements with those of Venus de Milo and Diana. Kellerman's traditional three measurements are given as 33.1, 26.2, and 37.8. The film will be in Springfield one week, beginning June 8. For VL's discussion of *Neptune's Daughter* and Kellerman, see the **Art of the Moving Picture* (1915), pp. 80-83.

⁴For Frances Frazee, see Letters 16, 74, and 79.

125) "I gave you my soul with my kisses . . ."

[Letterhead: POETRY

A Magazine of Verse

Harriet *Monroe, Editor

Henry B. *Fuller

Edith Wyatt

H.C. Chatfield-Taylor

Advisory Committee

William T. Abbott

Charles H. Hamill

Administrative Committee

543 Cass Street, Chicago]

Wed. Eve. 1914.
[June 17, 1914]

My Dear Sara:

It is 10:40. I am writing in my cot. The company broke up early this evening.

Agnes Lee and her husband Mr. Freer were here.¹

Last night Dr. Favril and Tiffany Blake.²

This morning *Harriet went over my book and started on the Preface to it. This afternoon I began to look over hers.³ I shall not suggest many changes.

This noon I had lunch with Mrs. Hamill.⁴ She insists on entertaining me next time I am in town.

I took *Eunice [for] a walk in Lincoln Park this afternoon. Tomorrow evening I eat with Hooker at Hull House.⁵ Friday I spend with the *Hendersons. Sat. Evening I go out to the Fetchheimer's and Sunday or Monday start for Springfield.⁶

I am impatient to be home and back to work—but have accepted all these invitations.

You want to know if I love you enough.⁷ The only possible test for a show-down is the practical one. I must start the bank-account. My zeal in this matter is my real sacrifice for your sake—certainly well worth making, and I am willing to stand or fall on this test. It is the hardest possible test to which I can be put [~~but~~]—as a general rule I certainly hate money. But you make the attempt [~~to get it~~] a happy enterprise. I want to alter the course and motives and point of view of my life enough to get you and keep you safe and happy. I am by no means certain I will ever get there, but I am dearly loving the attempt. I want you, and that is all there is of it,—I want you for keeps. I gave you my - soul with my kisses.

As for an establishment Papa and Mama in their way are truly generous in an - emergency, for more than day by day, which is natural. They would certainly do their best to set us up in housekeeping right—and they are very anxious for me to get married, as Mama has written of late, and she has said over and over. So, Practically speaking What I need to provide for us is not so much an establishment, as a sure income—for the day-by-day expenditure. I see that plainly. Creative work will never get it—it is too exhausting. Reciting is about my only chance for I can recite the same pieces day after day, till new ones come. I can approximately recite for every meal I eat. Whatever ones - business, he generally has to do something like that—some routine.

I think when once we see an income that has a reasonable appearance of steadiness we can go ahead. Even a fairly large windfall or temporary success^, or success of one book will not do.

There is a great Peace in my heart when I think of you dear, and whether you decide for me or the other man—I shall dearly dearly love you and never be angry. I cannot but wish him good fortune in general—and a fair field—I do not think anyone but

a thoroughbred could have written the Human Fantasy.⁸ It is the wise thing for you to marry, and just from the standpoint of Physical welfare a woman of 29 should marry—soon, all things being equal—and I have no right to ask you to wait very long on my uncertain fortunes. But certainly if you are undecided you ought to wait till Christmas, to see how my next book goes—and if you truly truly care—you darling Sara—you ought to wait till I get at least^ one reciting tour going in the East—Jan-Feb, and March—to see if there is a reasonable hope of me having an income. If there is no hope by this time next year—you certainly ought to give me up. I shall love you dearly till I die, whatever you do.

I love you very tenderly and devoutly^—and want you very very much. Please send for the ring—the minute you can honestly put it on.⁹

With love

N.V.L.

Shorthand letter:—

June 17, 1914.

- (1.) Ring
 - (2.) Wig
 - Yea, Gold Wig
 - Long Golden Moonlight
 - kind of a wig
 - (3.) White shawls
 - Yea Seven white shawls.
 - Monday—Cherub-border.
 - Tuesday—Rose-border.
 - Wednesday—Moon-border.
 - Thursday—Star-border.
 - Friday—Pansy-Border.
 - Saturday—Wren-border.
 - Sunday—Seraph-border.
 - (4.) Botticelli-Lady
 - (5.) A Star for your forehead.
 - (6.) A Star for your heart.
 - (7.) Prayers properly said.
 - (8.) Resolutions for great deeds
 - and high ambitions properly made.
- And they lived happily ever after.

N.V.L.

[P.S.] Written and sealed while *Eunice was on the other side of the room.

Notes

¹Minor poet Agnes Lee and her husband, Dr. Otto Freer, had come to Chicago from Boston after their marriage. They were neighbors of Harriet *Monroe, and Lee published

occasional works in *Poetry Magazine*. Monroe discusses Lee's work in the essay "Voices of Women," *Poets & Their Art* (rev. ed., 1932), pp. 147-148.

²VL probably refers to Dr. Henry B[aird] Favill (1860-1916), chair of the Rush Medical College Department of Clinical Medicine and a prominent activist in Chicago civic affairs. Tiffany Blake (1870-1943) was the chief editorial writer (1908-1939) for the *Chicago Tribune*.

³*Monroe's *You and I* (New York: The *Macmillan Company, 1914).

⁴For "Mrs. Hamill," see Letter 53 (note 1).

⁵In a letter to Jane Addams (October 15, 1916), VL cites George Hooker as "a very good friend of mine," and adds: "I have often dined with him at Hull House" (Chénétier, *Letters of VL*, p. 133). George Ellsworth Hooker (1861-1939) was a graduate of the Columbia University Law School (1885) and an editorial writer for the *Chicago Tribune* (1899-1902, 1904-05). From 1903 to 1919, Hooker served as Civic Secretary of the City Club of Chicago.

⁶For the "Fetchheimers," see Letter 128 below.

⁷A substantial part of what follows is in Carpenter, p. 200.

⁸See *Wheelock, John Hall.

⁹While they were in Chicago together, VL purchased an engagement ring for ST. See Carpenter, pp. 200-201.

126) "I am so happy I could cry like a girl . . ."

Thursday Eve.
June 18, 1914.

My Dear Sara:

This morning I looked over *Harriet's second choice poem-bundle and put my O.K. on about 2/3 of them or 1/2.

Meanwhile she wrote the preface for my book—making two points (1.) That I come from Springfield Ill. (2.) That my poems are intended to be read aloud by the reader and that I recite them. All this decorously done.¹ Also at me^ urgency she wrote to the J.B. Pond lecture beureau^,² New York about my reciting my verses. I was anxious to have her start this at once. So that letter is on its way.

I cannot pretend to be certain about our future. I only know that you fill my heart—that the very thought of you is like a breath of high mountain air.

It is a very very sweet and happy thing to love you—no matter how it turns out. Your name is Peace, and Quiet and long-thoughts.

Well—I must finish today. This afternoon Harriet and I did the pictures in Mrs. Potter Palmers house—a regular Opera-House of a place—THE LIMIT, in fact—but all the pictures good, and no end of them.³

In most oppressive heavy gilt frames—as usual.

It was open house for the Woman's Convention, and scads were there—including several of my friends the enemy, from Springfield—who palavered to our dear Harriet.

Then we ran into the Monroes by accident and they took us to the Goethe statue in their machine. (Its^) Just fair. Harriet says its^ Punk.⁴

This evening Hooker⁵ ate with Harriet and your servant at Harriets^ then Harriet put on her prettiest dress and we went to the Woman's Press Club where she read her poem on Woman.⁶ Certainly they all respect and like Harriet. They sure stand around for her. Never get excited, yet stand around and act respectful all the samey^. I should say lots of respect with a touch of affection.

(As for our dear Harriet) She surely loves Sara—and who wouldn't. She has just one word for you, "Darling" she calls you. Thats^ her verdict. "She's a darling." Thats^ the way she sums up Sara. If I were you I would get down on my knees and thank the Good God for so much human love. Not but what you deserve it. But its^ a real gift to be loved by so many, especially by a fastidious person like Harriet. And lots of people starve for a little love.

Tomorrow I bid Harriet Good by—and the Monroe's, and take the train to the *Henderson's place which is half way to Winnetka. Then on Saturday and Sunday—Winnetka—and on Monday—home again where I hope for a letter from Sara. Please have one or two piled up to welcome me to Springfield.

I suppose that about half the time I am in a trance of desire for you—and the rest of the time or even all the time there is a great Peace in my heart in the thought that I love you—a strange trance of gentle happiness—that comes above the fire I may say—and is such a very very different thing from the fire your beauty makes.

There is one thing of which I am so sure that nothing will ever change it—that you will always be exquisitely loveable—whether I win you or not—I have given my heart to one of Gods finest creatures—that every thought and memory of you will be sweet and gentle—if we keep together or part. You are so exquisitely fine—such a thoroughbred, such a tender heart—such a gentle lady, I have done myself the highest possible honor in giving you my heart. I am so happy I could cry like a girl.

N.V.L.

Notes

¹Monroe authored the "Introduction" to VL's *The *Congo and Other Poems*.

²The Pond Lecture Bureau sponsored VL's spring, 1915, lecture series, as well as several others afterward. See Letter 186.

³The Chicago home of hotel-owner/financier Potter Palmer was legendary in its own time. In *Chicago Renaissance* (1966), Dale Kramer notes: "The lowest might look upon the battlements of Palmer Castle, showpiece of the Gold Coast on the lake. The average mind boggled at the newspaper visions: Louis XVI salon, Gothic-pillared hall, Spanish music room, Moorish ballroom, Flemish Renaissance library, English drawing-room.

Word had been let out that Mrs. Palmer washed her hands in a basin inlaid with mother-of-pearl, soaked in a sunken tub formed like a swan, and took her repose in a King Louis bed under a silken canopy ten feet high” (p. 5).

⁴For “the Monroes,” see Letter 54. The *New York Times* (September 28, 1913) reports the unveiling of a new statue of Goethe, just cast in Bavaria at the Royal Bavarian Foundry. The German Societies of Chicago have purchased the statue for the city’s Lincoln Park, the same park where Saint-Gaudens’ Lincoln statue stands (see Letter 122).

⁵For “Hooker,” see Letter 125 (note 5).

⁶“The Woman” is in *You and I* (1914), pp. 73-84.

127) “The money is the point, God send us enough—and soon . . .”

Friday 1:[A] P.M.
[June 19, 1914]¹

While waiting while *Harriet packs I write a line. The man is waiting at the door for her trunk. When it has gone we have lunch. Then I see her to the 3’o clock^ train. I told the Monroe’s Good-by this A.M. Then I read the Page Proof of the July *Poetry² and headed off a roast on *Untermeyer’s book by *Eunice.³ I have offered to review it myself. But don’t tell Louis about this.

Eunice has just come in. Harriet says she makes a better secretary than her predecessor.

This morning I spent awhile in McClurgs enjoying the books illustrated by Rackham and DuLac.⁴ Then I had a talk with *Jensen. First time I have seen him since the picnic. He insists I lunch with him Monday and go out to his country-place overnight. Then I will start for Springfield. Then I will write reams of golden verse. I am just as full of music as a street-piano. I feel it coming. Well—this afternoon at 5:10 I go out on the Northwestern to the *Hendersons.

Mrs. Hamill⁵ insists on entertaining me the next time I come to town. I feel like a terrible loafer. But it is so grand to be really wanted. I can’t resist it. Jensen is certainly a rare personality. I must always keep him for a friend. I am honored to have such men as Hooker⁶ and Jensen care to know me. It is a thing to thank the good Lord for. Now I have written a whole page—that isn’t love-letter.

If I did not feel sure of doing a heap of work—once I am back home—I couldn’t stay here another day. But it positively dazes me for people to want me about. I give right in.

(Harriet says Poor Vachel—sitting there waiting and waiting! I am in excellent company but I ain’t saying so out loud!) Eunice is helping Harriet pack.

Our fate—is more or less in the hands of the American People. I keep thinking about it. I want you. But I can’t do much, after a reasonable effort to recite for such folks as Pound⁷. I never got anywhere trying to make money. All that I ever made came when

I didn't think about it. I can't be shrewd or contriving worth a cent. I have to do something that is paid for by the yard, like speaking, and doesn't involve much schemeing^.

I want you very much—but I must not put you under a strain by courting you very hard or dragging you into a marriage that will put you on the rack. I have got to keep on being myself—and submit to that fate—for when I try too hard to change I only bounce back again.

I went through such a horrible nightmare when I was younger—trying to make money—and not making it—that I do not want to exhibit myself before you in that character. Never do I appear to less advantage. I must just let my work unfold itself to a certain extent—or else I will just go crazy. I want you to be happy and quiet and serene all along—spared from a flabbergasted courtship and a flabbergasted marriage.

But somehow I am very hopeful. It is hard to say—“move slowly”—when one's heart is afire. By this time next year we ought to know all about it. Please wait for me that long child—maybe the Great American People will take to me by then. I ought to be pretty well started by Jan. And we can see what the bank account looks like.

Please let me know how soon you will take the ring.⁸ That means—how soon you are willing to risk me. Please remember that I love you dearly and very tenderly and want you very much and keep trying to think the best way, all the time—every minute.

I always win credit and standing—a little more very year. That's dead sure—though I suppose I shouldn't say it.

The money is the point, God send us enough—and soon, honestly earned.

N.V.L.

Postscript:

Written in the R.R. station while Harriet gets her ticket.

I am sure that aside from all other things of sense—our experience and training gives us an exquisite mutual adjustment.

I am exquisitely happy remembering you.

Notes

¹The opening of this letter is likely missing, perhaps censored by ST. VL could be more than a little enthusiastic when addressing a letter to a woman he loves.

²Monroe's July 1914 issue of *Poetry Magazine* features VL's “The *Santa-Fé Trail,” “The *Firemen's Ball,” and “The Black Hawk War of the Artists” (see Letter 104). These three poems earned VL the \$100 he used to be with ST in New York during the upcoming July.

³That is, Untermeyer's *Challenge*: see Letter 116. Harriet *Monroe finally reviewed *Challenge* for *Poetry* (August 1914), giving a very mixed evaluation.

⁴In *Homecoming* (1933), Floyd Dell lists “McClurg’s book-store” among his “FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF CHICAGO” (pp. 181-182). For illustrators Rackham and Du Lac, see Letter 23.

⁵For “Mrs. Hamill,” see Letter 53 (note 1).

⁶For “Hooker,” see Letter 125 (note 5).

⁷That is, the J.B. Pond Lecture Bureau. See Letter 126.

⁸For “the ring,” see Letter 125 (note 9).

128) “I want to stick to my dreams in a fashion . . .”

The Fetchheimers^
Saturday Night.
[June 20, 1914]

Dear Sara:

This is 11:30. I have had a grand evening with the Fetchheimers^. I am very happy and all in a glow. I was very anxious to please them—they are such good friends of *Harriets—part of her family. They had in just two neighbors and a big fire in the fireplace. A night like ours at Mrs. Monroe’s.¹

Yesterday late in the afternoon I went out with Mrs. *Henderson to Lake Bluff. Miss Roullier (daughter of the great print-merchant of Chicago) and [~~another~~] a man I forget came out to dinner. We had a grand dinner and a big confab till 12:30 around Henderson’s Studio fire. Lucian Cary (now editor of the *Dial) and Augusta Cary—now editor of [a] two Moving Picture periodicals came in.² Also the leading lady of the Little Theatre³—I believe and her husband. Cary tells me my review of Louis *Untermeyer’s book is set up—he has seen the proof.⁴ I suppose it will come next week. Not much praise of a red hot sort—but certainly an effort to be fair on my part.

We had a great confab around Henderson’s fire—and a host of opinions.

Here let me say I am strong for Henderson the painter. There is no discount on him. Not a drop of commercial blood in his veins. His pictures are high exquisite art from first to last and his copies of the masters show him [tø] (incidentally) [~~the~~] to be the strongest and most thoroughgoing kind of a student from way-back.

Harriet hinted to me you might be asked to take the place of *Eunice if Eu[n]ice accepts the invitation of her mother to take a trip around the world. I am deeply pleased at the idea. Because if you can’t stand for Springfield I want you to Consider^ St. Louis or Chicago—or the Illinois region. And this Chicago set looks to me mighty fine and true-blue. And the Henderson’s are in the heart of the works. They are often at sword’s points with some of the older crowd in Chicago—etc, but you can keep on terms with them all and get good from them all, and they are full of the Western theory if not the Western Practice—and will help to keep your mind and enthusiasm more in my channel without really straining it or forcing it—and I certainly want you to think in my “New Localism[”]⁵ direction as much as you can without busting your convictions all up or

doing your enthusiasms violence. I want to weave a net all about you that will make you more my own—and as the Assistant in the *Poetry office I see you learning and expanding a heap in the Western direction.

Today I spent most of the morning alone on the Beach with that darling Henderson child, then was joined by Alice and Miss Roullier. She sang some pretty French songs to the sound of the waves.

I spent most of the afternoon with Henderson in his studio. He showed no end of good things. (Henderson is now doing big work with Frank Lloyd Wright.)

I dreamed last night that I had taken to the road—and was so happy.

But I believe now I ought to go home—clear up my mail—and walk over Sangamon County. I will cut my boarding house for a week or so⁶—walking all day in some direction every day and getting in by dark each night—turning around at noon. I want to learn every road in the County. [~~Now~~] I laid out the plan long ago. Now I must go to it, to get the sugar of all these flatteries out of my system. I want out of doors and dogs barking—yet a little different task than before. A spiritual map of Sangamon county appeals to me at this juncture, I want to approach my home from a new angle. And I want to develop a method of road-work that will not make you anxious if we are married, and I want to get away from the beautiful flatteries of Chicago—and the mixed flatteries and spites of Springfield. And I want to stick to my dreams in a fashion.

Sara Darling—I love you with my whole heart and I want you, and I am full of happy happy allegiance. I want our lives to be one roof one pillow one kiss—[~~and~~] one life-work-of-song for America, one glory—one sadness—one mutual loving and praying. And I am full of hope and peace and faith tonight—you darling darling lady.

N.V.L.

Notes

¹For Mrs. Monroe, see Letter 54. Edwin S. Fechheimer was one of the guarantors of Harriet *Monroe's *Poetry—A Magazine of Verse*. "Miss Roullier" is likely the daughter of Albert Roullier, owner of Albert Roullier Art Galleries, Chicago, and publisher of numerous art booklets.

²Critic and novelist Lucian Cary (1886-1971) succeeded Floyd *Dell as editor of the **Chicago Evening Post Friday Literary Review* in October 1913. Cary had married Augusta Stromme in 1906. Cary left the *Post* in May 1914 to become acting editor of the **Dial*.

³VL refers to actress Ellen ("Nellie") Van Volkenburg Browne, wife of Englishman Maurice Browne, founder of Chicago's Little Theatre (November 1912). Nellie Browne was co-director of the Theatre, as well as a leading performer.

⁴For the review, see Letter 116 (note 2).

⁵For the "new localism," see Letter 6 (note 6).

⁶While his parents were in China, VL ate his meals at a boarding house across the street from his home: see Letter 101.

129) “I want to keep you always divine, in my memory . . .”

Second letter.¹

Sunday afternoon

[June 21, 1914]

Just after sealing my letter to you I found this grand special delivery on the table—with so much news in it. A grand Sunday morning surprise and delight.

So I save out the other letter—to mail them both [~~this~~] tomorrow.

Sara dear—I would love to come to New York. If you and I were just playing it would be grand.

But the bank account expresses my hopes a great deal more—and I am going home to start it. And going home to think our affair out if I can, and to write some grand poetry (I am just jam full of new poems) and walk in Sangamon County and correct the proof on the *Macmillan book already piled waiting for me.

I may be mistaken but I sort of feel that from the standpoint of my business Springfield is the place for me just now. From the standpoint of the heart it is the only - right place—till you take my ring.² And I want you to thresh it out with *Jack. I want you to take my ring and I don't care who knows it—though of course I am not telling it 'round.

I see all the risk and all the sorrow for both of us—yet I want you to take it and be brave. I think in a year if I do not try to “hustle” my fortunes with undue speed—the Great American People will begin to come across. I shall send Macmillan my *Kennerley Papers and I am quite sure by their tone they can work it somehow without much of my help. And M.K. is not so deadly important—for if he requires much fooling with I could write a newer and better couple of books while I fiddled with him. And my income will not be from books.

I love you child for your impetuous fire and eagerness.—

Now be fair to friend *Wheelock and give him a square chance. No one but a thoroughbred could have written The Human Fantasy. Tell him I said so. Also that I want to give you a ring. Also that I wish him well and am sorry to do anything that might cross him but in this case cannot help it—since we can't both have the red-bird Sara. I would much prefer him as a friend than a rival and I only wish Sara were twins—but you are not. I want the only Sara there is.

Beginning of a Sunday Evening Sermon.

Whatever happens—I hope never to lose the vision of you. Please be a very grand and noble lady with me to the very last minute I ever see you. A woman has a perfect human right to be cross and below par and all that, once in a while. But I love your noblest image so—it is such a gracious figure I want to carry it always in my heart. I take

the liberty of being human with you—of course—but I want to keep you always divine, in my memory!

A strange way to talk I presume. But truly you are a dear creature to think about—and I do not [~~ever~~] want the place where you stand in my brain ever to be a dim or empty space. End of Sermon.

I am always haunted by the 90 million Americans. They are your deadly rivals—more than any one woman—is, and their mighty chaos—compared with your golden star-like unity is a strange antithesis. Half my ambition and love given to a mystic Chaos and half to a girl-jewel that I could hide under a shawl. It is a strange rivalry. It is no literary affectation with me. The 90 million haunt me day and night. I wonder if I ever could make you feel as I do about them.

Even in this Chicago set tho they are finding Beauty—and God—but are in a sense missing the 90 million. Yet the people of America walk through me, all the people walk through my veins as though they were in the streets of a city, and clamor for voice. The 90 million are your rival—just as Wheelock is mine.

Sweetheart—it is a strange coil—but this at least stands clear—we respect and love one another and hold each other dear in a clear eyed fashion—and we must not borrow trouble. I hope my letters do not sound that way. Please understand this letter as - thinking and not worrying. For I am smiling and thinking of your flower hands and golden eyes all the time, and rejoicing in your beauty, and walking the lake front with you.

Let us be happy in the past and in the present. We have many lovely memories to count—fine thoughts and sober deeds and many pretty and unexpected adventures, and mutual friendships—we have quite a store. [~~I am~~] And I know much of the pleasure of them was that we expected to remember them so let us remember them indeed. When I think of it all I feel like writing out the 23rd Psalm. “The Lord is my Shepherd” “My cup runneth over.”

When I think over this past year—it is surely full of Romance and surprises. We are building up so many mutual friends—for instance—without planning to do it—we will naturally have the same general orbit and that makes us happier—we naturally run into the same people and note the same articles and all—even without money there is much to keep us happy and our lives sweet with adventure.

Well—It is supper-time. I will write a bit more just before retiring.

11:30.

God bless you. God Keep you. I am happy—just thinking that I will always hold you dear. You will always be a Princess in my sight. And so I clasp your knees.

N.V.L.

Notes

¹This letter was mailed in the same envelope as the previous letter.

²For “the ring,” see Letter 125 (note 9).

130) “What else can we do but plunge into one another's arms? . . .”

Monday Evening.
[June 22, 1914]

At Jens *Jensens—Ravenna—North of Chicago.

Dear Sara:

Just a word. I am on the screened-in sleeping porch just before retiring. I have been reciting at the Jens Jensen out-door camp-fire in the woods by a ravine. His house is practically in the woods. The Jensens are a jolly wholesome strong fundamental kind of a family. Sort of campers in their summer-home. It is charmingly and most naturally landscaped.¹

I have had so many adventures today. Jensen had me and Abrahamson (a young Danish Painter) and Hooker to lunch at the *Cliff Dwellers²—and there I saw Shaw, Aldis, *Garland, and several other of our friends.³ Aldis was particularly attentive and seems to want to make a hit for some reason. They tried—(the Aldises) to have me out for a week-end next week—but I can't stay. Theatrical jinks Abrahamson & Jensen combined to get me to let him sketch me tomorrow morning. Then after getting here there was a telephone call from Mrs. William Vaughn *Moody insisting that I call her up if handy—before leaving. So that means I stay over Tuesday. Somehow I was all puffed up over her telephone call waiting for me here—when I arrived.

Sara—I wish you were poor as Job's turkey and used to nothing at all so you would think our house a grand mansion and be puffed up over living there—like the Roe family that are there now.⁴ That would simplify matters so much. Not by the mightiest striving as things are now could I give you what you take for granted in the way of the simple conveniences and services of life.

But I cannot do less than ask you to come to me—I cannot see any other thing to do. We must meet and love and marry if it kills us—we must lay our hearts upon the altar and take the passion the Good God has given—and we must trust Love though it slays us—and endure all things for love's sake.

What else can we do but plunge into one another's arms? I can see or think of nothing else but a mutual complete surrender.

I know I have not said just this before—I do not remember just what I did say. Isn't being true to Love the only possible prudence?

Child—there is nothing for me to do but to keep on asking for your body and soul. I am utterly past philosophy in the matter—at least tonight.

It is now 24 hours later. I am on the midnight train for Springfield—chair-car. Many adventures today.

On the train back to Chicago with Jensen I met the Public Librarian of Chicago. Then I went out to Abrahamson's studio by the stock yards Gate—and he painted my portrait till 3:30 making a good sketch—~~[then]~~ lunching me at the boot and saddle club or something like that. About 4:o'clock Mrs. Moody arrived in her auto with a Miss O'Neil.⁵ She insisted on picking up Abrahamson who was watching with me—and took us a long ride to an Italian's studio⁶—then to tea—then to dinner—~~[taking]~~ then a long ride after dinner in which I recited about everything—received all sorts of invitations from her—~~[made her]~~ while Abrahamson made merry also. There were about six or seven other of the elect scattered about the house etc. Abrahamson whom I have seen only today and ~~[at]~~ yesterday and at the American Landscape Jinks seemed to make himself good friends in the crowd—and it was all a merry adventure for us. I do not give you half of it. The Italian artist and his American wife were at dinner with us—and a most unique couple. The upshot of it is—Mrs. Moody is now a friend, and Abrahamson.

The auto ride was astonishing the Lights of Chicago parks plus the boulevard lights—most brilliant!

Well I am glad to start home and settle down to brass tacks. My pockets are full of notes to be untangled, my mind is full of threads to unravel. I can just see that letter from you—waiting on the table. I shall mail this letter immediately on reaching Springfield.

This train should start this minute. Then my letter must stop. Meanwhile I bid you goodnight for tonight and good morning for whenever the letter arrives. [Drawings of three stars]

It is now 5 A.M. Wednesday. I have just arrived in Springfield.

I sign myself yours with love

N.V.L.

[Enclosure: Flier advertising a VL recital for The Country Life Press on the "Evening of JULY TWENTY-SEVENTH 1914." VL is described as "A wandering poet and vagabond" who "will chant some of his own poems."]⁷

Notes

¹The Jensens' natural landscaping is punctuated in the following excerpt from an unpublished VL letter to Harriet *Moody (April 18, 1916—Barrett Library, University of Virginia): "the last time I went into the woods with [Jensen] in the Summer the woods were soaking—it rained all day—and so I came back with poison ivy to the waist."

²VL likely lunches with Norwegian-born (not Danish) painter Christian Abrahmsen (born 1887). The portrait of VL referred to in this letter apparently has not survived. For George Hooker, see Letter 125.

³VL refers to minor poet Frances Shaw (1872-1937), who had just published the lyric "Little Pagan Rain Song" in **Poetry Magazine* (March 1914), the same issue that featured several of ST's lyrics and Carl Sandburg's "Chicago Poems." Real estate businessman Arthur T[aylor] Aldis (1861-1933) and his wife Mary were friends of the Jensens and of Maurice and Ellen Browne (see Letter 128). Aldis was also Secretary of the Friends of American Art Association and a trustee for the Chicago Art Institute.

⁴For the Roe family, see Letter 101. ST would soon confide to Harriet *Monroe: “I could not live in the Lindsay family home It would kill me” (as quoted by Drake, p. 137).

⁵Elizabeth (“Bessie”) O’Neill had been one of Harriet *Moody’s high school students. She “became a member of the family group and remained in charge of the household as long as Harriet lived” (Dunbar, *House in Chicago*, p. 46).

⁶Italian-born sculptor Alfeo Faggi and his wife Beatrice were among Harriet Moody’s closest friends.

⁷Country Life Press was the printer for the publishing house of Doubleday, Page & Company, where VL’s friend and supporter, Christopher *Morley, was an associate editor.

131) “I am so far past the play time . . .”

Springfield Ill.
June 25, 1914.

My Own Dear Sara:

Your last letter—the third one to Springfield has stated your position so clearly and beautifully, your chain of logic is such I cannot but be bound with it. If I get well I will start in two weeks. I must stop over with a Peoria cousin one day.¹ I swore by high heaven to come there on my way home and I have no excuse except I just forgot. Her feelings are plainly quite a bit hurt.

Yesterday at a High-noon wedding-breakfast at the Country Club I ate the wrong kind of a salad.² Something pizen in it maybe. Toadstools? Anyway, though the worst is over this morning I will be weak as a cat for three days or so. Then I have a lot of business to clear up and think out that I can’t rush—and know well enough I will not tend to in New York.

When I am in New York you must remind me—

- (1.) To keep my shirts washed.
- (2.) Not to say anything I shouldn’t to *Wheelock.
- (3.) To sleep every afternoon to keep up.

When I am in New York I must tell you I didn’t send you the Gladioli—tho it was a darling of a poem about it—I take very cheerfully to myself.³

Where do you want me to stay? *Richards will put me up I have no doubt, the latter part of my visit at his place on Staten Island. But I don’t want to swoop down on him till I find just all about his household affairs. There may be a mother-in-law sick or a Little Stranger just arrived—or something. If my old landlady is alive I may go to 345 West 57th.⁴

I am coming to New York on the terms of your last letter—on probation so to speak. I could not come just to play though that would be very noble and beautiful if it

was with two prayerful self-controlled hearts. But Desire and love have too deep a hold upon me now for me to play any longer without peril. I have no right to kiss you any longer without the hope of a ring.⁵ I know I would do my best to win you and I must win you for a reason—that reason being a lifelong allegiance.

I want to Recite for The *Macmillan staff—the *Outlook staff—the *American Magazine staff—the *Everybody's staff—and the Doubleday Page staff—The *Metropolitan staff. I know I can get some of these—if not all. Doubleday Page have hot-aired me to beat the band—and *Morely wrote me the other day he would be glad for me to recite to the 600 employees of Doubleday Page.⁶

I think a good plan would be to recite for the three or four people interested on each staff first—then recite for the employees if [~~they~~] the bosses are willing.

Then in the running comment on poetry next winter—my work—if mentioned at all—will be discussed as a live not a dead thing.

After getting the talk started—then I can tackle^ the Pond Beureau^.⁷ I shall of course forward them clippings from here. If I work this trip right from a business standpoint I must think it out.

It is hardly right for me to write down my hunger for you. I am so far past the play time. I have been struggling with myself ever since I reached home—and your letter has decided me. My heart fought my head every minute. Now my head is quite convinced.

But I do not think you ought to let *Filsinger put in his bid at the same time if you are considering me seriously. Let him come after I leave New York or [~~come to~~] let him come to Charlevoix, you certainly cannot take us both seriously at [~~once~~] one and the same moment. You will be putting us both on an unnecessary strain.

I have every confidence I can beat the gentleman's game (!) but I don't want to have to do it—in that abrupt way—at least.

Your last letter was the finest you ever wrote. I shall do nothing but read it over and over while I lie here in the half-darkened room all day. There is much in it too sweet and fine to answer—half-sick as I am—and dull as I am.

As for *Untermeyer—I will write more later. There is something I wanted to say about your assistant editorship of *Poetry.⁸

after supper.

I was going to say—if you take that job—I hope you can change the angle of vision of the editorials a little. A chance word will often do it. I think *Harriet is right in endeavoring to maintain the character of a belligerent^ Western Publication—that is not afraid to try experiments. But she is too much concerned I think—she and Mrs. *Henderson, with the factions inside the poetic circle—and does not enough realize that most all of our poets—doing their best are doing infinitely better than the inattentive 90 million can comprehend. And she should devise methods to prod and rouse up the 90 million rather than us poor little hundred poets—who are doing the best we can in an alien time. If she doesn't try for the 90 million—she ought to try for the ten thousand that are more or less aware of the existence of her magazine. I do not compare one poet with

another half as much as I [~~do~~] compare such poetry as is written with such bunk as the public reads. We are here to conquer such of the Democracy as we can, without sacrificing essential dignity or Art.

Now think about it. You yourself know the Eastern set well enough to know our dear Harriet often misapprehends them. [~~And~~] I have no objections to a spicy little controversey^ once in awhile. But meanwhile the 90 million remains utterly unaware of our existence. They had better admire all 100 of us than not admire any poets at all! Now don't say I said so—but remember. Its^ time for a more literal study of the motto "To have great Poets, we must have great audiences too."⁹

Well—I ate a little supper tonight, and will be all right in two or three days. I am well—except I am weak.

The post-card about the *Wheelers came this afternoon. God bless them—and God Bless Sara.

N.V.L.

Notes

¹VL's cousin was Spicie Belle South Chaffee (1878-1940), married daughter of VL's father's sister, Eudora Gray Lindsay South (1852-1918). In his eagerness to meet ST in New York, VL delayed his visit until October 1914, when he finally recited at the Peoria Central Christian Church: see South, *Cousin Vachel*, pp. 55, 64. Also see Letter 162, where VL confirms that he has 'played in Peoria,' so to speak.

²Springfield's *Illinois State Register* (June 25, 1914) reports the late morning country club wedding of attorney William Hughes Diller and Corinne Payne, "one of the most popular young women in the younger social circles of the City."

³Unidentified.

⁴One of VL's residences while an art student in New York (1903-08).

⁵For "the ring," see Letter 125 (note 9).

⁶See the previous letter, note 7.

⁷For the Pond Bureau, see Letter 126.

⁸For ST as a possible assistant editor at *Poetry*, see Letter 128.

⁹VL quotes the Whitman motto Harriet *Monroe chose for *Poetry Magazine*.

132) "To marry you without an income of my own would be torture . . ."

Springfield Ill.

Friday 1:30.

[June 26, 1914]

My Dear Sara:

Your telegram has just arrived. It has braced me up wonderfully. The more I look at it—the more I like it. But I am afraid I cannot time my trip for the Dawsons.¹ It will take me a day more to get well—then there are heaps to do. Proof for the *Yale Review—for one thing. And Proof for my book for another.

I am about well—but rather weak. I deserve two days lying still anyway—just to recover from Chicago, let alone that bad Country Club salad.

My linen (?) white suit has just come from the cleaners. I will be wearing it in New York in about two weeks. I hope.

It is my private opinion that you and I are both mad as March Hares.

If you leave tomorrow noon for Cornwall on the Hudson you will probably get my letter before then telling all about my coming to New York. Therefore I will not repeat.

But you must wait two weeks, for me to arrive.

I really enjoy myself here in the quiet in the dark—writing lying on the library settee—the only cool quiet place in Springfield, and the city is absolutely blasted with heat outside.

I am so glad you telegraphed me. A telegram comes like an arrow. It makes one think there is some one alive and kicking at the other end for sure.

I have read through the *Reedy's Mirror that has your poems in it.² It sure is a marvel of all sorts of things. He is a devil and an Ostrich and an orphan child in one. He is certainly a wonder to keep up such a paper month after month.

Now since this letter is to go to you to those wonderful Dawsons—please sit down a moment and tell me who the Dawson's are? Assuming they are very grand indeed I will try to make a visit by letter. So please give my greetings to the Dawsons and say I hope some day to be asked when you are there some other time—and that any friend of yours is a friend of [mind] mine! Or something else—more tactful and appropriate. Now don't get cross at my wit. Remember I'm not quite in form.

Well—I will wait for the mail at 2:00 P.M. Ill^ venture your next letter comes then.

No—I won't wait. Something I made-up my mind last night I must say—comes to me. I am not made of stone and I am nearer mad about Sara than she thinks. But you must not take me till I have the promise of a steady income, for my own pride's sake. I forget everything when I kiss you—and am ready to persuade you to anything. But I must have a steady income—no matter how small. If it comes in from speaking we can marry and trust it to grow—but it must come in steadily enough for us to count on it—no matter how small it is. I think then I can take you in self respect to my heart.

I used to be terribly touchy about money—when my work which never paid, was received only with contempt or coldness. Now that it reflects a certain amount of publicity and alleged credit upon my people—they and I have both greatly relaxed on the question—and it has been less a matter of conscience on either side. For a long time they thought it a matter of duty to whip or torture me by any possible psycholical^

thumbscrew into earning my living at ANYTHING honest—and quit what I was doing. I grew to hate the very name of money as I would hate the face of the devil.

But now they no longer grudge me what I really need—they take a sort of pride in giving it and I have no more heartaches about taking it. But Though^ this attitude may be all very well for a single man and a poet—the only child still left at home—its^ no frame of mind for Sara's lover, who should be grown up. To marry you without an income of my own would be torture. Yet torture will never make me a business man—or it would have done so long ago. I cannot hustle my fortunes. They move slowly like a little deliberate inevitable glacier. Not an avalanche! And so darling Sara—whichever one of us gets the most impetuous must control the other—and God knows which one it will be—things have come to such a pass.

When I think of the place we have come to—I could cry with Joy and sorrow.

Even if I do get my sure but slender income at reciting, and thats^ all I dare hope—it will be bread and cheese and kisses and I will not particularly like the bread and cheese for when it comes to a show down I am like every other brute of a man I want my wife to be luxurious as Cleopatra—if it can be done, no matter whose neck she treads on.

I suppose though, every time young folks marry political economy goes to Hell—and all properly established rules—of socialism and Democracy!

Child—somehow I feel that we can make it—we must make it, if it kills us—, if we have to smash everything.

When I am with you in a company—it seems to me you exactly belong there—when we talk—our words seem to weave together like basketwork—maybe it is your flattering way—but in a general conversation—when I pause for breath—you seem to put in just the right word. And going about with you I seem so much your natural escort I just couldn't imagine myself anywhere else. And you understand the whole world of Beauty from the inside, and never make any mistakes in it, and that keeps us happily together in body and spirit for the Beauty-world is mine.

2.P.M. Here comes a letter from Sara. Hooray! It says on the outside grand things about O. Hara and the *Congo.³

Inside—pleasant things about the *Untermeyers and the *Wheelers.

Yes—I am glad Martha does not appear on the writing paper.⁴

And I am glad you looked in the glass and I know you looked just right.

I am feeling better every minute. A telegram at 1 o'clock and a letter at 2 o'clock. And I don't dare go down in the heat till after sunset, to mail this.

I havn't^ the least doubt I can roll up some credit by my New York visit, as you say. But cashing it in is another matter. The world seldom gives both.

You are my most darling adored sweetums angel-faced angel-hearted aspiring faithful golden hearted Sara.

N.V.L.

Notes

¹For the Dawsons, see Letter 106 (note 9).

²Reedy reprinted several ST poems in the issue of the *Mirror* for April 17, 1914, including “Spring Night”: see Letter 9.

³St. Louis-born poet and translator John Myers O’Hara (1870-1944) was one of ST’s friends. She especially admired his translations of Sappho: *The Poems of Sappho: An Interpretive Rendition into English* (1907). O’Hara was currently working as a broker in New York City and had just published his translations of the works of Léon Laviaux: *The Ebon Muse and Other Poems* (1914). O’Hara’s own books include *Sonnets and Other Poems* (1895), *At Erato’s Fane* (1898), *Songs of the Open* (1909), *Pagan Sonnets* (1910), and *Manhattan* (1915).

⁴ST frequently stayed at New York City’s Martha Washington Hotel and wrote letters on their stationery: see Letter 16 (note 5).

133) “I beg you prepare your chains . . .”

Saturday Night
June 27, 1914.

My Dear Sara:

It is about 11:30 and time I retired I’spose.

I have been rereading all your recent letters and they are most excellent companions.

I have nothing whatever to say that I can say briefly.

Henceforth you shall be my tracts. I shall spend all spare cash upon you—instead of upon tracts. You shall be my *Village Magazine, my Censers are swinging over the town. Seraphs are swinging over the town!¹

It will not be proper for me to spend anything less than my last cent upon you. But I must not run in debt for you. It will not be proper to run in debt for you either.

There is a perfect plague of moth-millers tonight—those that make the army-worm—not the natural indoor kind. I kill one very minute. Poor things. So fuzzy and stupid.²

I have done a big days^ work today letter-writing and I couldn’t wait another minute more than I had to—this evening—thinking of your beauty and your goodness, and so—I telegraphed I was coming, Tuesday or Wednesday evening. My train—if on time ought to be in about 8.P.M. Allowing for slow-coachness—and a chance to clean myself up and dust—I hope to see you about 9:30 Tuesday or Wednesday evening.

I want just as many masques and stars [drawing of a star] as possible for two or three days—then when you just weep for a full breath and quiet I will run away and hunt *Macmillians. But you must plan the sweetest masque that ever snared girl or boy into an engagement. There must be an overhanging *spice-tree, a nightengale on the bough[.]

green grass—a high wall behind, an open river in front—(Riverside Drive park?) It must be three evenings long.

Subject of the First evening: Sara's Wisdom. Second evening—Sara's Nonsense. Third evening—Golden Hair.

Child—I want to unravel all the skein of love this side of marriage—. I say it most solemnly. I do not think it right to put it in words here. I must write my thoughts on your shoulders. I want to be bound hand and foot and I want to bind you hand and foot. So I beg you prepare your chains.

You have no idea how much I think of your little hungers and your fires for me. I want them so much to match my own—each moment fire for fire—when that is the song the spice tree sings—then peace and prayer peace and prayer—when that is the song the spice-tree sings. [Marginal note: "Sunday morning! Reading this over I have written the song of the *spice-tree which I send."] Never for a moment pretend with me—I want to kiss your hand when that is your mood, and your heart when that is your mood, and be sober and a brother when that is your mood, and follow the music of your mood. Yet I want you to have mercy upon mine—there is so much of you that is unplowed prairie soil—that I would sow with kisses and make my own.

We must be dignified before folks—be stern with me there—for I am half-mad with hunger for your young Botticelli self—I think of you everlastingly in your white shawl with the cherub border. There are times when the breathless vision of your earthly physical self seems the very incarnation of your whole self, so very white is the whiteness—so brave with love the eyes. Yet I KNOW behind it all is not Eve or Aphrodite, but my sober master and comrade Sara—whom I desire to obey and respect always—to whom all this is but one wave of the dark strange tide of life.

I must be dignified in company and when we are alone together. If I am not perfectly worshipful—please tell me so every minute—for we are these hours weaving our mutual soul—and in a sense beginning the weaving of our mutual bodily self—and God knows I want to weave both finely—intimately strongly—in the fear of Heaven—so they can never be untangled, yet as much character^ and harmony and pride in our mutual self—as in our best selves separately. We must walk through the fire—not blindly—but with a certain snowiness and dew in the midst of our hearts—as though we were grey sweet philosophers after all, and patriarchs to be—in 1950.

For if we are doing anything worthy of the respect of the angels—we are building our mutual spiritual house—that must come before the real house, and last as long, or longer.

Sara—Sara—you must not refuse me any [drawing of a star] you can give me in honor. Put on all your beauty for me—I want you to think up every sweet way to drive my eyes mad with joy. And I want to be drowned by your unbound soul as if I were drowned by your hair.

When we plan marriage—we must expect as many ups and downs—quarrels—jolts—sorrows and spiritual successes as our parents have had. And in all our loving let us not dream this weaving is the goal or exact it of each other literally forever. If we do as

well at the age of sober old folks—as our sober old folks—we will do as well as mortal clay can expect.

We must see the grey hairs through, it is all a part of the game—and we must not refuse the game because it will not all be the first day of Spring.

We must be true to Love and also to Life, which is another, subtler name. I know not how to say it—except that the thought haunts me—and I must say it.

I am trying to say that a true and not a false eternity must be in our dreams—the eternity of being actually together in 1950. I of course want to sieze^ you and overcome you this minute but there is something in me that prays you to hold me back from fury. I want you to say—“do not overcome me—but let us rather weave each other together like a sober basket or a strong net—rather than creatures that part when the winds grow cold.”

And we must be so happy and sober in the firey^ furnace that when it is gone—there will be left fine fighting steel—the mutual Sara-and Vachel Blade—not ashes or cinders.

Sometimes it seems to me the only differences in all the world in people and work and worth—are the differences between silk and hemp. They can be made into the same sized rope—but for the same size—a silk rope would be infinitely stronger. And so dear golden hair—I pray the dear God that in every sense—I may love you well.

N.V.L.

Sunday A.M. Here is the first draft of the *Spice tree—just written. Pardon the roughness. Moon-Poem no. 50!

This is the song
 The spice-tree sings:
 “Hunger and fire,
 Hunger and fire—
 Hunger for Beauty—
 Spice of desire—”
 And under the spice-tree
 Watch and wait—
 Burning maidens
 And lads that mate.
 The spice-tree spreads,
 And its boughs come down
 Shadowing village and farm and town.
 And none can see
 But the pure of heart
 The great green leaves
 And the boughs descending,
 And hear the song that is never ending
 The deep roots whisper
 The branches say:

“Love tomorrow
 And love today,
 And till Heavens day,
 And till Heaven's day.”

The moon is a bird's nest in its boughs.
 The moon is hung in its topmost spaces.
 And there tonight two doves play house
 While lovers watch with uplifted faces.
 Two doves make home to that nest—the moon.
 It is woven of twigs of silver light—
 With threads of scarlet and threads of grey—
 And a lining of down for silk delight,
 To their eden, the moon, fly home our doves
 Up through the boughs of the great spice-tree—
 The dove-winged kiss I took from you
 And the dove-winged kiss you gave to me!

Notes

¹For the “censers,” see Letter 13 (note 1) and Letter 111.

²ST’s poem “Come,” published in **Rivers to the Sea* (p. 20), reads, in part: “Come, for life is a frail moth flying / Caught in the web of the years that pass” (ll. 5-6).

134) “These proclamations were written in Los Angeles . . .”

New York.

July 27, 1914.

My Dear Sara:

These proclamations were written in Los Angeles the same time I wrote General *Booth—about two years and three months ago. They were accepted by *Farm and Fireside*¹ almost immediately on my return and appeared the next spring. I was very particularly cheered by their appearing at that time, as being in a sense a vindication and definite expression of a crusade directly a failure, so far as actual preaching afoot was concerned, and far too soon abandoned for my own self-respect.

With love

Nicholas Vachel Lindsay.

[Enclosures: (1) Clipping from *Farm and Fireside* that is an advanced notice of the intent to publish VL’s “Proclamations.” (2) Six VL “Proclamations” from *Farm and Fireside*.² (3) Second draft of “The *Spice-Tree.”]

Notes

¹For *Farm and Fireside*, see Letter 93 (note 4).

²Five of the six “Proclamations” are published at the end of VL’s **Adventures While Preaching the Gospel of Beauty*. The sixth, “Of the Return of the Spirit of Ruskin to the Earth,” suggests that Ruskin’s “noble influence is beginning again in our land.” See *Prose of VL*, pp. 205-210.

135) “God is glad he made you I know . . .”

Starting-Away
Morning. [July 28, 1914]

My Darling Sara:

I am so glad you slept a bit and are better. Be sure to get either a trained nurse or Lady *Wheeler if you get the least bit worse. I woke up at 5 and prayed Christian Science prayers for you, hard. I was just smothered by the idea of you all cooped up alone there, and smothered in the rain. I would have called you up at five if I could have got a wizard to tell me you were awake.

If you had been a bit worse—I would have stayed. I kiss your hands and I kiss your knees and your breast and your mouth and be sure no matter how sick you are I am your natural nurse and guardian, and ask nothing better in the world than being your trained nurse.

That line of yours “More joy in sorrow than you have found in joy”¹ has been with me since yesterday—every hour—you are so game and sweet and such a thoroughbred. And that other verse filled me with strange fear and sorrow

“Oh let me like the birds
Sing before night.”²

You are such a game little Spirit, God is glad he made you I know. Your spirit is worth a hundred other kinds of good health that turn out merely annoying or wasteful. Most good health merely cumpers the ground.

This new book is such a perfect darling—no one but a noble high-bred red-hearted woman-rose could have written it. It will sing its way to all womens^ hearts—and the thought of it brings to me the same kind of perfume you put on your shoulders, and I know nothing more ambrosial than that.

I send you a kiss for your ankels^ and your knees and your heart and your throat and your mouth and your hair.

God bless you and bless you and bless you.

When you are in health and want to serve Love well—who has served us so well—go to Churches where we went together. If I am ever to have a place in your songs—I want your most secret and truthful thought about our going to Churches together.

If we keep God in our love it will last forever—for God is everlasting.

Goodby, singing bird,

from

Vachel—

Notes

¹VL refers to ST's poem "The Answer": "I found more joy in sorrow / Than you could find in joy," **Rivers to the Sea*, p. 107. Also see Letters 137 and 153.

²From "Dusk in June," also included in ST's "new book," **Rivers to the Sea*, p. 48.

136) "I have writing writing writing to do . . ."

Springfield Ill.
July 29, 1914.

My Dear Sara:

I arrived Just[^] an hour ago. The library is all cleaned up ready for me and looks inviting. There is plenty of work to do, and I am going right to that desk to get at it. But I am standing up in the post office now writing this.

I arrived home with 90 cents in my pocket besides your five dollars, so here is that very bill again. I was delighted to find a chair-car on the train, which is just as good to me as a sleeper and costs only 25 cents for a clean pillow and 10 for soap and towel.

I had many semi-phisosophic[^] reflections on the \$5.00. The episode is a sending of the Gods and a warning, just like your sickness. But here's hoping you get back your health the day the five dollars arrives. And may I never need another and may you never need any more cough-drops.

Well—I swear I will not write till evening.

Also—nothing but sudden death or war shall take me from my desk for the month of August. I have writing writing writing to do.

Now get well quickly or you will break my heart.

With love

[Drawing of a star.]

N.V.L.

137) "Springfield is amazingly quiet after New York . . ."

Springfield Ill.
July 29, 1914.
Wednesday evening.

Dearest Lady:

So many thoughts tonight, how shall I send you any? They crowd too fast.

But first—lets^ be practical. In the Rose Kilmer poem I suggest that you omit the 7th & 8th lines:

Where my thoughts etc.
and Sheltered from etc.

The Island is good enough just by itself, and simpler and more childlike.

All your softly gracious ways
Make an Island in my days

is a complete figure in itself.¹ My pen is bad tonight. I will use a pencil.

The pen does not work fast enough. The Rose Kilmer Poem is a dear.

Walking home from George Lee's² some of your perfume came down from the trees in the dark. Put a little of it on your next letter to keep me thinking of your throat right under your ear.

Well lady—so much to say! First—I feel so different—having been to New York. I must thank you and thank you—for noble new friends, and for all that has happened to my external fortunes,—for a changed and refreshed point of view,—for a tremendous head of steam to go at my work—so big I can hardly wait till morning,—and for a new feeling in regard to my life and outlook in general so different from when I left home I hardly feel like the same person, a thousand old cobwebs gone forever,—for tying up my Old New York with my New New York in a strange sort of way:—all these external things which astonish me—for the feeling that New York is awfully close now. For \$270. makes New York closer than St. Louis was when I didn't have a cent of my own—I have a strange feeling I have passed under a great archway in my own personal fortunes—never to turn to the old little ways. All this—besides the great and golden gift of the reality of Sara. And on the other hand I feel more at home in Springfield.

You were certainly completely justified (from the standpoint of one more interested in my fortunes than in your own—) in getting your lad to the city.

And if you only get well I will even admit it was good fortune for me that you caught cold. The very sight of your struggle made me understand the whole vista of your noble exquisite and struggling life, and understand the rare triumph of your concentrated personality against such odds. I have seen such perfectly well and talented people make such messes of their lives.

And I am loving you so dearly—and in such reality—your struggle has brought you home to me as nothing else could—the real you that has triumphed over these things in times past, and will triumph again. You are as real and near to me as this bracelet round my neck.³

Springfield is amazingly quiet after New York. Just the place to write. And I am going to write, you just bet.

The Roe family have taken good care of the place and my misgivings on that score were groundless.⁴

Mr. *Marsh asked to see the *Handy Guide for Beggars, and I sent it to him via *Brett today. Marsh is on his vacation and I put the matter in Brett's hands, bearing in

mind his last and only talk with me which gave the proper openings. I suggested a book of selections to come out Christmas or Before[^]—to be Called[^] “The Man Under the Yoke and Other Sketches.”

The Man Under the Yoke.
 The Gnome—
 The House of the Loom.
 The Old Lady at the Top of the Hill.
 Lady Iron-Heels—
 Near Shickshinny,
 Death the Devil and Stupidity.
 The Old Gentleman with the Lantern.⁵

If they like this selection—by the time they have taken it I will have a bunch of verses polished up that will serve as interludes, and hope to make a book that will overshadow “The *Adventures While Preaching.” Its[^] a great thing to be ones[^] own rival! By Brett’s tone I think it possible. In this case—of course the book will be dedicated to you also. Then your two books can run races and I hope the second beats!

I am so jam full of poems I am like to burst with them.

Sara—you must get well. I just pray about it hard. Please get well at once.

To court you is like courting a snowflake, you fade so easily. That is from one standpoint. Yet from another—you are nearer to an indestructible personality, a walking immortal soul than anything else I have met on this planet, and the real live Sara is with me in this room—no paper-Sara—or St. Louis Sara, or photograph-Sara—or anything but the breathing Sara. I think of you in Church—and on the Rocks at Dawsons.⁶

Life dates forward from those times—nothing important seems to have preceded them. Lady Happiness, if you will only get well I will be the happiest creature under the sun. Get well—at once—and take the guilt out of my heart for giving you such colds. I promise henceforth to take such care as never was, of you.

Goodnight.

Send me the Let me like the birds “Sing Before Night” poem and the “I found more joy in sorrow” etc.⁷

Your new book is going to be a wonder. It stays with me.

I love you—darlingest—

N.V.L.

[Two marginal notes on final page: “I made two meals out of your nice lunch box. And I will be gentle—as you command.” “This letter is confused. The best evidence of how I feel is the poetry I am writing tomorrow.”]

Notes

¹VL refers to ST's poem "To Rose," in **Rivers to the Sea*, p. 88, ll. 5-8. The poem addresses the infant daughter of Aline and Joyce *Kilmer, and ST did not follow VL's advice.

²For George Lee, see Letters 26 and 111.

³The bracelet was a gift from ST: see Letter 148.

⁴For the Roe family, see Letter 101.

⁵All are stories in VL's **Handy Guide for Beggars*, although the penultimate is finally entitled "Death, the Devil, and Human Kindness."

⁶For the Dawsons, see Letters 106, 139, and 148.

⁷VL refers to ST's "Dusk in June" and "The Answer": see Letter 135. Both poems were published in **Rivers to the Sea*.

138) "I look at my life in a dazed way and am lost in wonder . . ."

Springfield Ill.
July 31, 1914.

Dear Sara:

I am writing on the couch cosily—so please excuse pencil.

Are you well yet? Tell me at once. I want you to be well—well well.

I pass the Immaculate Conception church on the way to the library,¹ and so I went in today and put up a little prayer. It hadn't any words. It was just reaching to God—both of us—for I felt you with me.

I do not think God is as powerful or wise as some people think or all-seeing or all-planning. And yet he is a great comforter. Going to him—(you and I together,) is like losing ourselves in a great cool comforting Sea. He is the only complete rest and restorer I know. And he makes one calm to face life—whatever comes—.

If the details of our lives seem contradictory and uncertain—in this at least we can Unite. We are little creatures in the hollow of his hand, like that Adam and Eve in the Rodin marble hand.

I wrote on the **Ghosts of the Buffaloes* today—and on my Grandfather's farm.² Yesterday I wrote the first draft of several Sara poems.

All my little world has so changed and little Springfield has so changed in my eyes—and you have grown so much more wonderful and real—I look at my life in a dazed way and am lost in wonder. To tell you just the change is hard at midnight—in a short letter. I feel the call of the Middle West much stronger, yet I have a much keener sense of just why New York is worth much to you—I see your whole noble civilized little self in its setting much plainer—and the little spiritual nest you have found for your delicate self. And I am drowned in the wonder of my own thoughts about your destiny and mine.

I love you completely—you breathe in my hair and against my cheek and sleep on my heart.— Just as an artist I am all attuned to you and shall write you many songs. Yet most of my thought of you is wonder and groping and glory and prayer.

Sara Sara—we must have nothing less than a Godlike destiny. My thoughts are too wierd^ for words.

And then I think of the war in Europe—and then I break my heart over it. What are all our songs to one dead soldier? Think of the millions of honest peasants hurled at each others throats for reasons they do not understand—fathers as good as ours.³ When I think of the possible European Armageddon^ there is certainly no hiding place for little butterflies like us—but the Rock of Ages. God forgive the wicked war-lords. I cannot. I would be willing to be crucified if it would stop this war. The Idea of Europe—the dominant center of our planetary life going in for panic and riot no better than the nigger-riots of Springfield.⁴ And we poor creatures take our honey at the edge of Death.

Practically every nation in Europe under arms tonight—all the stock exchanges closed all over the world—and one more diplomatic slip somewhere—and then the Avalanche and the Armageddon.

You are the darling of my heart. You have brought only nobility into my life I kiss you and kiss you and kiss you and Goodnight.

N.V.L.

[Enclosure: Article from **Reedy's Mirror*, "Orotundo Poetics" by Angus Lodowis, describing VL chanting "The *Santa-Fé Trail" at a private home during one of his visits to St. Louis. VL writes: "A strange and amusing account of our night at O'Neal's."⁵ Lodowis quotes VL as insisting: "Poetry is not poetry until it is chanted or rather sung in the primitive manner."]

Notes

¹For the Immaculate Conception church, see Letters 44 and 141.

²VL refers to Ephraim Samuel Frazee, his maternal grandfather, for whom he had already written his poem "The Proud Farmer": see Letter 14. This particular poem on the "farm" apparently was not completed. See the next letter.

³Compare VL's "Abraham Lincoln Walks at Midnight" (*Poetry of VL*, pp. 239-240), written at this time: "Too many peasants fight, they know not why" (l. 19).

⁴In August 1908, VL's beloved Springfield was the site of a bloody race riot, some events of which occurred within a few blocks of the Lincoln home: see Letter 40.

⁵Minor St. Louis poet David O'Neil was occasionally published in *Reedy's Mirror* (see September 17, 1915, for example) and at least once in Margaret *Anderson's *Little Review* (April 1915).
