

## **John Steinbeck Signed Books to Mary Morgan**

### **1. John Steinbeck Signed Book - The Pastures of Heaven**

Signed book: *The Pastures of Heaven*. Later printing. NY: Bantam Books, 1951. Signed and inscribed on the title page in fountain pen, **“For Mary, Las Pasturas del cielo contienen—(¡que lastima!), una vibora, John Steinbeck.”** Autographic condition: very good to fine, with chipping and tape repairs to the edge of the signed page. Book condition: G-/None, with the spine crudely repaired with tape, and some wear and creasing to wrappers.

### **2. John Steinbeck Signed Book - The Wayward Bus**

Signed book: *The Wayward Bus*. Later printing. London: Corgi Books (Transworld Publishers), 1952. Signed and inscribed on the title page in fountain pen, **“Dear Mary—No need to be wayward just because this book is—but it’s fun! John Steinbeck.”** Autographic condition: fine, with light toning to the signed page. Book condition: G-/None, with the spine crudely repaired with tape, and textblock separated from the binding.

### **3. John Steinbeck Signed Book - Cup of Gold**

Signed book: *Cup of Gold*. Later printing. NY: Bantam Books, 1953. Paperback, 4.25 x 7, 198 pages. Signed and inscribed on the first page in fountain pen, **“For Mary, a lousy book, John Steinbeck.”** Autographic condition: fine, with a small edge tear to the signed page. Book condition: VG-/None, with light wear, minor creasing to wrappers, and uniform toning to textblock.

### **4. John Steinbeck Signed Book - Sweet Thursday**

Signed book: *Sweet Thursday*. First edition. NY: The Viking Press, 1954. Hardcover with dust jacket, 5.75 x 8.25, 273 pages. Signed and inscribed on the first free end page in blue ballpoint, **“Dear M. M., Having deloused Wednesday, leave us face the future with courage, humility and money. John Steinbeck. Si no quieres volar—cuidado con las alas.”** Autographic condition: fine. Book condition: VG+/VG, with an edge tear to the rear panel of the jacket.

### **5. John Steinbeck Signed Book - The Long Valley**

Signed book: *The Long Valley*. Later printing. NY: Compass Books (The Viking Press), 1956. Paperback, 5 x 7.75, 303 pages. Signed and inscribed on the half-title page in fountain pen, **“For Mary Morgan, If this Valley had been any longer there would be no paint in it. Or is there? John Steinbeck.”** Autographic condition: fine. Book condition: VG/None, with an ownership inscription inside the front cover and subtle creasing to wrappers.

### **6. John Steinbeck Signed Book - The Pearl**

Signed book: *The Pearl*. Later printing. NY: The Viking Press, 1958. Hardcover with dust jacket, 5.5 x 8.25, 122 pages. Signed and inscribed on the first free end page in fountain pen, "**For Mary Morgan, who, to quote an authority is 'delightful, brilliant, gorgeous, talented, etc., etc.'** I have tested this product and certify that the claims made for it are accurate. The understatement is undoubtedly due to the sly and maidenly modesty of the subject. I suggest that she is also gurglic, teneflied, protogarlion, and squip. John Steinbeck. (and pretty, too, J.S.)." Autographic condition: very fine. Book condition: VG+/G+, with heavy wear, paper loss, and dampstaining to the jacket.

### **7. John Steinbeck Signed Booklet - Acceptance Speech for the Nobel Prize in Literature**

Signed booklet: *Speech Accepting the Nobel Prize for Literature*, Stockholm, December 10, 1962. Limited edition of 3,200 copies. NY: The Viking Press. Softcover, 5.75 x 9, ten pages. Signed on the title page in blue ballpoint by John Steinbeck. In fine condition, with creasing to corner tips.

## **John Steinbeck's Letters to Mary Morgan**

### **1. John Steinbeck - Typed Letter Signed - 4/5/1958**

TLS signed "John," one page both sides, 8.5 x 11, personal letterhead, April 5, 1958. Letter to Mary, in part: "**You will now see how I use the new typewriter and I rather hesitate to go on record with an expert like you.** The week has been fairly hectic. Tom has been an angel but even an angel in a very small house has its disadvantages. He is going in tomorrow or the next day or the next. His mother is not back yet and he can't go in until she shows. But we have had some good weather and he has been busy running around in a boat. Also we have been painting boats and all such things and there are literally tons of leaves to get out of the garden. Tom doesn't care much for sustained work. I can't remember liking it very much at his age either. I wonder whether I do now.

I am not going to send the typewriter in with him in the interest of the typewriter. His brother brought him a stuffed alligator about three feet long and he will have a suitcase in one hand and a stuffed alligator in the other and I just don't feel that the added mental as well as physical hazard of the typewriter would be a good thing. Someone will be going in to take it to you. Maybe Shirley Fisher or maybe some guests who are coming out next week end. The Walstons they're the ones who will do it and then you will surely get it.

**Quite naturally I haven't got any work done. There is so much to do getting ready for spring that I run from one thing to another.** But the diet continues and the weight continues to go little by little but slower and slower. For a few days none left. One of those plateaux I guess and then it went on.

I am having trouble waiting for the new boat to be ready. Lord I am looking forward to this. It is a real full life red letter day. I've had fine cars and they don't move me but this boat is everything I have dreamed of. And I am going to make the most of it.

**Also in the evenings I built a little model of a tiny work room I want to build out on our point. It will be like a small lighthouse, six sided, windows on all sides and it will have nothing in it except my work things.** You see there are only two small bedrooms in this house and when we have guests or children here I have no place to go. But I will build most of this thing myself and it will be only for work. And I can leave my typewriter and books out there and won't have to push things in drawers all the time. It will be off limits to everyone. Unless specially invited I mean. This is a silly kind of letter. I just wanted to show you why I need you to do my typing. Hope you got off to Canada."

## **2. John Steinbeck - Typed Letter Signed - 4/7/1958**

TLS signed "John," one page, 8.5 x 11, personal letterhead, April 7, 1958. Letter to Mary, in part: "They say that stuff like this brings May flowers. It had better bring something because it is damp. I must tell you one thing, though. **The birds are coming back, the quarrelsome, mean selfish birds. And the peepers are heard at night—those tiny frogs no bigger than the tip of your little finger. They are singing like mad at night.**

It is still raining. By my rain gauge it is two and a half inches for the storm and for here that is considerable rain. If the sun should by chance come out the green would spring up. Meanwhile I am fixing things inside.

Tom went back last night. Before he went I had a small talk with him. He knows all about the ladie's sickness, probably more than I will ever know. I told him that it was not his responsibility and that he or his brother should phone me immediately if any violence broke out. If it does, I am going to get them out of there, come what may. He said to me rather plaintively, 'What could you do from way out here?' and I told him I could and would do something and that immediately. I'll simply have my attorney get a cop and go over and take them out, and meanwhile I will start for town. It takes three hours to drive so I will need help on that end. I'm not sure Tom would phone me but I rather think Catbird would. Meanwhile I feel very out of touch. **I wonder if you would mind phoning Tom now and again, just to maintain a contact...**

I have registered both boys at a big Catholic camp just across the bay from us. It is boys and girls and lots to do. We went out to see it and Tom was delighted with it. They have horses and boats and swimming and theatre and movies. But as Tom said, 'Mainly they have girls.' And it is only about twenty-minutes from here. That does leave part of June after school lets out. I will be in England and I don't want them wandering lonesomely about New York...I think you have my phone number out here but if you don't it is Sag Harbor 1064. That's two years before the Norman conquest. That's the only way I can remember it. The Walstons are coming out next week end and I will send the typewriter in with them. It is really a little jewell. I think that is all for

now, but do please check on Tom by phone. It would reassure me a great deal to know that someone is in contact with him.”

### **3. John Steinbeck - Typed Letter (Unsigned) - 5/4/1958**

Unsigned typed letter by Steinbeck, one page, 8.5 x 11, personal letterhead, May 4, 1958. Letter to Mary, complaining about keeping up with his own correspondence and discussing his childrens' struggles with school.

### **4. John Steinbeck - Typed Letter Signed - [no date]**

TLS signed “John,” one page, 8.5 x 11, “Wednesday,” [no date, c. 1958]. Letter to Mary, in full: **“I haven't had time to type out the whole story for you, but the enclosed is the slightly rearranged ending of the story. It is the story of an elf in Algiers during the preparation for the Italian Invasion. You may make any use of this you wish. The book will be called Once There Was A War, and it will be published in the Early Fall by Viking Press. It is a compendium of all of my war pieces with a new introduction. Well we're off to England. I expect you to hold the fort. We'll be back the second of July and will soon after that go to the country where I will start to work. I do hope that by the end of the summer you will be able to come back to King Arthur because I am going to go to work hard on it. Meanwhile hold the thought and thank you very much for the Tom matter. He is very fond of you, and so am I.”**

### **5. John Steinbeck - Autograph Letter Signed - 6/15/1958**

ALS signed “John Legree Steinbeck,” one page both sides, 8 x 10, The Dorchester letterhead, June 15, [1958]. Handwritten letter to Mary, in part: “Your letter came in yesterday and caught us between gallop. You are very sweet to flush Tom out of the brush. Thank you. Will you please find out subtly what he wants for his birthday. He'll know what you are doing but he won't tell. You tell me. We're coming in Wednesday. We've been in Somerset. Vinaver came in last night, we go to Essex and Winchester for three days in about an hour. Trip fabulous. I'm so excited. I can hardly stand it. Please don't go away. **I'm going to need you dreadful on this work and it's pure magic.**

**I corrected the Labatt's spelling. Book is to be called 'Once There Was a War'—Viking in the early fall. And I do hope they don't embarrass me with ale. I'm very shy and easily startled. Finally I have my form. Strange it was there all the time. I was the last to know. I made a funny and wired it to Figaro but they are timid about it. Remembering Soustelle, Masser and Mallet my dry little yada goes—'DeGaulle in tres partes divisa est.' Like it? I'll bet Bob Hope doesn't steal it. In a rush now, honey, but take care of your fingers. I'm going to require them as well as your head. That I.B.M. is baited like a mouse trap, Mouse.”**

### **6. John Steinbeck - Typed Postcard Signed - 7/22/1958**

TLS signed "J.S.," one page on a 5.5 x 3.25 postcard, July 22, 1958. Letter to Mary Morgan, in part: **"Stop jittering! You want to work on the Arthur—I want you to work on the Arthur—where is the proble[m] that's an 'm' that went off the page. There is no hurry. I'm going to be on this for a long time. I'll just accumulate translated pages and when you are ready in the fall, there will be a back log.** It is going slowly now but probably will speed up later. But believe me, there is no hurry, and as far as I am concerned you are the one to do that job, and others."

#### **7. John Steinbeck - Autograph Letter Signed - [no date]**

ALS signed "Yours, John," two pages both sides, 8 x 12.5, [no date, c. 1958]. Lengthy handwritten letter to Mary, in part: **"After all the turmoil and fuss and feathers of research and travel I have finally got to work at the translation and do you know—I like what I am doing and I think you will like it too.** And I want to find out some of your plans because I hope you are going to want to help me with it. Do you still? You said you would. I believe you said you were going to spend August in Nantucket. Good for you. You will love it there. It is a fine place for children too and cool.

Now let me tell you my plans so that we can see whether they match yours in any way. **I am doing my translating with pencil in my horrible hand writing. Then I shall read what I have written on the dictaphone. Then I can send both the handwritten copy and the belts to you so you can check my handwriting against my miserable voice with mumbling and vice versa.**

Now this need not be terribly soon because I would like to get a good swatch of it done before I set you on it. Also I want to lay out here just as long as I can. But do you still want to work half days with or for me come—say September?...

**I don't know anyone else I can trust with this very special material. Besides, in typing the notes, you became familiar not only with the subject but with my working methods. Only you have never seen me work at completely high speed and full concentration.** The first type script will be only a working script made for change and correction. And only when it is all done and checked and rechecked will we go into a final draft. So the first typescript need not be perfect by any means. Only the final.

**If you have any change of plans or desires or directions, such as love or marriage or homesteading in Alaska I will be very sad because I like working with you, and so far you have not had to defend yourself although I can't absolutely defend that immunity.** You see I don't want to have to find someone else but if you have other plans, I will have to. Will you let me know?

The English trip was perfect. It did just what I wanted it to. I am full up with it. Vinaver was a darling man to us. He travelled with us and I learned so much from him and he did me the honor of saying he learned from us but I don't see how that can be.

Catbird is acting up at camp. I must go over this afternoon and try to straighten him out. Maybe I can and maybe I can't. But, good lord, how I would love to have a year without complications, family or otherwise. In fact I am going to demand it...

Would you do something for me, Mary. **Will you go by Jackson's stationery store, you know the one on Third Avenue where I have an account. I want them to order and send to me here at Sag Harbor—4 dozen pencils thus specified and no other kind—Eberhard Faber Mongol 480 No. 2 3/8 F. These are round pencils. I write so much that the octagonal pencils tear up my fingers.** They have got the pencils for me before and will do it again. Also I want two packages of yellow legal pages like this one. I think they come a dozen to a package...You know, when you write a great deal by hand, the quality and texture of the pencil becomes terribly important. I sharpen about a hundred pencils a day when I am really going. And I am really going.

Not much in the way of Friday right now but later I hope you can come out with your friend as we planned and go fishing with us...In England with all the bread and potatoes and beer I gained 9 pounds. And I had been real slim. You haven't seen me since I lost 35 pounds. Anyway, I have taken off eight of the 9 pounds in one week. Before I set myself at 170 pounds, I will have lost 43 pounds. And I have only 8 more pounds to go to make that weight. Then I will try to set it at that. You wouldn't know me. I have a waistline and hip bones and all such things I had forgotten were under the layer of blubber. And I feel much better with less weight. None of my clothes fit anymore but who cares. I don't wear much but army pants or a bathing suit out here. Please let me hear from you, Mary, at your earliest. I enclose the dust jacket for the new book. It will be out in the Fall.

Incidentally the inscription to my sister is being done on ancient vellum by a scrivener in middle English script with illuminated capitals. Vinaver is having it done. I will give it as a scroll to my sister, Mary, but I think a copy of it would be very pleasant as end papers for the book."

#### **8. John Steinbeck - Typed Letter Signed - 9/27/1958**

TLS signed "John," two pages, 8.5 x 11, September (about the 27th), 1958. Letter to Mary, with several hand-corrected typos within the text. In part: **"I came back from England so full of the Arthurian subject that it was running out of my ears. That was the first of July and I had the childlike confidence that I could sit right down and turn on the tap. Well, that was that. I couldn't! I have been fighting it ever since. Oh, the reams of yellow pages that have found their way into the wastebasket. Like autumn leaves they are.** You see I forget every time that I always have trouble starting and in this case with the mass of information it is even worse. Finally I went into town to consult with Elizabeth Otis because I felt that I was butting my head against a wall. She is a very wise woman and a great critic not only of writing but of people. **She suggested what I had suspected and did not quite trust, that I should back off and get my writing muscles strong by trying something else for a while that is entirely different. It is kind of like trying to remember a word or a name. The harder you try to**

**more it eludes you. If you just think of something else for a while, sometimes it comes to you without warning.** It just happens that I have something else that is ready to go and in fact is already going a little short and a natural book full of all of the exercises and imagination which should make my writing muscles strong. It should go very fast, If it does not, it would not be valuable for me to do it.

**Now, if you are back in town, would you be willing to start first drafting it in type? You have my Italian typewriter and the first typescript would be very well on that.** I am going to stay out here all of October and try to get a big swatch of it done. Do you think you could take it from the little red belts of the dictaphone if I should send them to you. If you had any difficulty with words you could simply leave a space because it is only a first draft. And I could send you the belts as they are done and I would be very careful to speak slowly and clearly. It is a funny book and also a timely one and I think you would enjoy hearing it even if you did not enjoy typing it.

I brought the dictating end of the machine out here. The receiving end is in my room in New York and if you are willing to do that, all you have to do is to call Ruth and she will let you get it. Then you could do the typing in your apartment. When I come in, and I plan to officially move in the first of November, **I will of course bring in this angel of a typewriter which, as you will see, I still don't use very well.** We would have it gone over and made in perfect condition and then you could slo final draft on it. Please let me hear from you about this at your very earliest convenience. The necessity for sending you the material might goose me to work even harder and more voluminously than might otherwise do. Do please let me know, Mary.

**The little book Once There Was a War is now in type although I have not seen it yet. I will ask Pat Covici to send you a pre-publication copy so that you can see the ale ad well in advance of publication. I can't imagine many people wanting to read this old book of old reminiscences and Viking has no idea at all whether they can sell any at all.** It is one of those wild gambles. I would have been against it because I never think I am going to sell many copies of anything. But some things surprise you. I wrote a little thing about the Spevacks for the American Medical Journal and it has been picked up everywhere, now in Readers Digest. Have you seen it. I was afraid it might embarrass the Spevacks but far from it. They are pleased to death. And as I said, you can never tell what is going to take hold...

**Both boys are in school now, and as it must be to all men, homesickness is upon them. It is not true that you are only homesick for a good home. You are moved to agony by change.** Thom is at the Forman School, Litchfield, Conn. and John at Eaglebrook School, Deerfield, Mass. If you feel the urge of kindness, please drop them a card. Right now they are holding onto any contacts with the old life and while I am not giving them any sympathy because I think that is bad, I am writi[ng] to them very often so that they may have a feeling that the old life is not dead just because a new one is starting. That is the natural feeling of course. I remember when it happened to me and I remember how it hurt. Do you?

I think one of the great crimes american parents commit against their childre[n] is trying to protect them from things that are going to happen anyway and the later the harder. The second american crime is trying to make everything fun. This is nonsense and I have never done it. Latin grammar and basic arithmetic is not fun. It is a deadly dreary chore but it has to be done. Only after it is over can you have fun with it—the joy of Vergil or the pleasure of using a formula the learning of which was terrible. I have never lied to my kids about this. I think that is as bad as telling a kid the dentist is not going to hurt. When he does, the shock is much greater than if they knew it was going to hurt but that the hurt doesn't last long. But then I highly disapprove of American parents in nearly everything including their sense of guilt toward their children. It is saturday and I am going on and on. Do let me hear from you, Mary. The work is begging to be done.”

#### **9. John Steinbeck - Autograph Letter Signed - 10/7/1958**

ALS signed “J.S.,” one page both sides, 8 x 12.5, “Tuesday” [October 7, 1958]. Handwritten letter to Mary, in part: “The recording station is held up due to circumstances beyond control like rewriting and the delay in certain source materials. **But I have tried my barber shop soprano out on the squawk box and it sounds just as mellifluous as always—like the rattle of bones in a garbage can. And you should hear me pronounce those California Spanish names. Anyway, I hope to get some belts off to you toward the end of the week. You'll be sorry. Viking has done it again—spelled it La Batts. Well all I can say is screw them. I shall personally correct any number of copies you wish and by hand. If they can't do any better than that, I hope they die of parched throats.**

Elaine is in town. Coming back tonight. I stayed up and worked last night. She worries about not sleeping. To me it's a state of being. And sometimes, I like it very much. I wrote an essay and a 20 page psychoanalysis of someone I barely know, two poems and a plate of hors d'oeuvres.

**I just looked at your letter again and I think you should get your mind off marriage and think of something a little more elevated like sex.**

First good white frost this morning. Now I begin to live. Let's see—manuscript. Three copies—double space two copies on good sturdy paper and the third on thin paper simply for filming. When I really get moving I will send both the belts plus the manuscript so you can check one against the other but I will send them separately in case either gets lost because I have no carbons. **When I come in I will bring the I.B.M. and I don't think I will bring it back out here. Too much trouble moving it. I'll keep this Olivetti out here. The I.B.M. is going to need a checking over and oiling etc. That's for you to take care of, old girl.** You've had your fling. Now it's back to the slave quarters. And the mail—that lousy stinking mail that is always the same. You had better start thinking up 250 ways of saying no and draft some form letters. **Well enough of this silly love making.** I must to the village for papers and to post this and others.”

#### **10. John Steinbeck - Typed Postcard (Unsigned) - Columbus Day 1958**



Unsigned typed letter by John Steinbeck, one page on a 5.5 x 3.25 postcard, "Columbus Day" [October 12, 1958]. Letter to Mary, in part: "Old false start JS is up to his tricks again. The stuff finished wasn't worth recording. Another start is necessary and has been made. It was too fancy and not what I wanted as I soon found out when I heard it back and burned the belts. I always make these boobos and I never remember that I do...If I should get decent stuff today I will send it on."

#### **11. John Steinbeck - Autograph Letter Signed - [no date]**

ALS signed "Yours, J.S.," one page, 8 x 12.5, "Monday" [no date, c. 1958]. Handwritten letter to Mary, in full: "Here are three belts of possible nonsense for the typing. When you have finished at your leisure, please keep two copies with you and simply send me the original. Be sure to keep a list of your expenses, mail, paper, carbons etc. It's a cold and wintry day today. I'll try to keep it coming now. **And I don't particularly want comment until I'm well along. Also please keep the contents under your mental hat. I don't want my theme to get out.**"

#### **12. John Steinbeck - Autograph Postcard Signed - 10/19/1958**

ALS signed "J.S.," one page on a 5.5 x 3.25 postcard, postmarked October 19, 1958. Handwritten letter to Mary, in part: "Don't type those belts. That stuff is all out. Some new coming next week. Repeat—don't type!"

#### **13. John Steinbeck - Autograph Letter Signed - [no date]**

ALS signed "Yours, J.S.," one page both sides, 8 x 12.5, "Monday" [no date, c. October 1958]. Handwritten letter to Mary from Sag Harbor, in part: "**The reason for the quick change post card is that I'm up to my old tricks of trial and error and what I sent you was entirely error. It never fails. I can't seem to operate without hundreds of false starts.** I think I have the proper key now and am going ahead on a new line. But it may be wrong also and I see no reason for rushing it into type until I am a little surer. Since we will be coming into town the 28th which is a week from tomorrow, I am not going to send you any more stuff from here, but will bring it when I come and by that time I should know whether the new method is going to jell. The waste stuff seems to be inevitable. It is always that way.

We are going to Washington over the weekend of the 1st but after that we'll be in residence at 206 and you and I can get to work. I think I finally have the key to this thing. But then I always think so until I'm rereading, often a little lapsed time convinces me that I haven't.

**As you will remember, the whole purpose of the lay off in writing was a kind of invitation to Renaissance. I think I have it now, or at least a glimpse of it. And it is important enough for me to work hard on, no matter what the smallness of the subject. The new trial piece, is light I know but, being a trial piece, it must contain all the elements of the change or it isn't worth doing at all. There is no question that is a puzzlement, but puzzlements are the heart of the venture. So if you will just stick around and be patient, we'll**

get together soon...After so long a lay-off from writing I feel like an amateur. But that was the reason for the lay-off so who am I to complain. Anyway, just sit on your hands for a while and maybe together we can find the structure together. The stuff I sent you was lousy."

#### **14. John Steinbeck - Autograph Letter Signed - [no date]**

ALS in pencil, signed "Yours, John," one page, 8 x 12.5, "Thursday" [no date]. Handwritten letter to Mary, in full: "Here is some more of that dreadful manuscript for you. I hope it is not too difficult and that you won't have too much trouble with it—Isn't this the most beautiful weather you ever saw. We're coming in about the first and I'm sure I'm going to resent it for a while, particularly if it stays as nice as this clear and crystalline. On the other hand I'll probably get more done in town. **Out here there is quiet surely but also there are eight million other things to be done besides writing. And I damn well just have to get some writing done—maybe a lot. My time of fallow is over.** I've indulged myself all I can afford for now. Your account of Jennifer going over the house is very funny. Let me know if you can't make these belts out. Sometimes a change of power affects the belts terribly."

#### **15. John Steinbeck - Typed Letter Signed - 12/1958**

TLS signed "With love, John," one page, 8.5 x 11, personal letterhead, December 1958. Letter to Mary, in part: "**In 1850, as I may have told you often, my great grandfather Dickson moved his whole family from Leominster, Massachusetts to Palestine his purpose being to convert the Jews to Christianity. He was a hard-bitten Yankee, Perhaps he thought that Jesus had used wrong methods or had come along at a wrong time and with all respect, Dickson was not one to accept Christ's failure as final. My grandfather Steinbeck was in the Holy Land for quite a different reason. He had ducked the Army of the King of Prussia, in which all of his brothers but one had been killed. The Junker spirit was not in him.** He had dropped his von and his two-penny title and was become a cabinet maker and a good one. In Palestine he met and married young Almira Dickson, and of that accident of time and place—I am one of the less respectable results. One night there was a great thunder storm over Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives was struck by lightning. In the morning my grandfather climbed the hill and found one of the ancient olive trees riven by lightning. By his account the tree was well over two thousand years old and because of his trade, he knew his wood. He carried off a piece of it. In our family it has been customary for us to make little crosses of this wood for our children and for certain few others. I still have a few fragments, as hard and brittle as coal. And so I have made this little cross for you...You will find that it takes kindly to your touch...I don't know what you think or feel about symbols or talismans, but of one thing you can be sure. If there was indeed an Agony in the Garden of Gethsemane and a Betrayal—the tree from which the cross was made was there."

#### **16. John Steinbeck - Handwritten Letter Draft (Unsigned) - 12/1958**

Unsigned handwritten letter draft by John Steinbeck, two pages, 8 x 12.5, December 1958. Handwritten draft of the preceding letter with comments on his family history in the Holy Land

and the resulting olive-fragment cross, addressed to Mary and his agent, Elizabeth Otis, with minor revisions. For instance, the original draft closes: **"If there was indeed a Sermon on the Mount, the tree from which this cross was made was there to hear it."**

#### **17. John Steinbeck - Autograph Postcard Signed - Postmarked 1959**

ALS signed "Love, John," one page on a 5.5 x 3.25 postcard depicting St. Mary's Church in Bruton, postmarked 1959. Handwritten letter to Mary, in part: "This is our town. The cottage is fine. I'll write at length pretty soon. I never heard from Thom. Did you? Great business here and I'm sure it's right. Address us please at the Cottage, Discove, Bruton, Somerset. And do it soon, will you? **We are settling in nicely, and by George, the words are beginning to roll! And they will too!**"

#### **18. John Steinbeck - Autograph Letter Signed - 3/26/1959**

ALS signed "Love and I do wish you would write again, John," one page, 8 x 9.75, March 26, [1959]. Handwritten letter to Mary from "Discove Cottage, Bruton, Somerset." After opening with a line from the prologue to Chaucer's Canterbury Tales (**"Whan that Aprille wip his shoures soote—The droghte of March hath perced to the roote"**), Steinbeck continues: "This is proper country to do my work. I had thought not to start for at least a month but it has started already, sweetly and quietly as it should: Are you there? (telephone type talk) Now—it is in handwriting but will be as clear as I can make it. One thing has worried me. There is only one copy and if it should get lost, there is no second. But I have just thought of an answer. **London is sending me a tape recorder. Before I send you the m.s. I will read it on tape and that will be my copy. Then, when you have received the manuscript, and advised me, I can scrub the tape and do some more on it.** You still want to do it, don't you?"

Did Thom ever take the table and the typewriter to you? I have never heard from him. It is about time for him to be back at school. If he did not, will you get someone to help you take them to your house? When I send copy, I will also send instructions about how to type it. Now that's all the business. **How are you? How is your love life.** How's Jennifer? The Beechers? How are you? If you are near my house will you please look on my address wheel and send me the address of Frank Laesser and also of Leslie S. Brady in Washington. He may be listed as Lee Brady. How are you? I am fine. Elaine is having the time of her life. She helped clean the Bruton church, a 13th century Perp. Her favorite kind. She scrounged out the ears of the reclining figures on the tombs...

From my little work room I look out on fields and meadows and hills and forest. **A few houses are in sight but there is absolutely nothing that wasn't there in the 15th century except some new cows.** So you see why this is such a good place to work. Please write—write please. Please to write. Would that you might write. **Want to hear my first English aphorism? It goes—'if there were no such things as Brussel sprouts, the British would have had to invent them.'**"

### 19. John Steinbeck - Autograph Letter Signed - 3/27/1959

ALS signed "love, John," one page, 8 x 10, March 27, 1959. Handwritten letter from "Discove Cottage, Bruton, Somerset," in full: "Your long and amusing letter arrived this morning. What a goy of a job! Please remember every detail for retelling to me. It should be fun! May I give you a bit of advice out of my own experience? **During the war certain generals used to ask me to look over their speeches to be broadcast and wanted them put in my hands, an illiterate fuzzy headed mess. I wanted them to completely rewrite it so that the finished product had no relation to the original.** But I soon learned that this had to be my secret. I had to tell the generals that I found very little to change—just a word here and there. And do you know, they believed it? They actually thought they had written it even when they couldn't pronounce it. I don't know whether you should tell miss Blondell this or not. A publisher will soon enough. **The use of a pseudonym and other names is no defense against libel action if the people and events are in any way recognizable. Besides, a libel suit is rarely won in America but it costs a hell of a lot to defend yourself.** And people sometimes pay off rather than defend.

I do hope you will have time to do my typing. Let me know whether you will or will not. It is not going to come fast and there is no hurry about it so maybe you can. I should hate to have anyone else do it. **This morning I find to my horror that I have lost my favorite ball point working pen.** Will you help me with this. It is a Cross—an all metal pen and I use a fine line. They even come in gold color and steel colors. I want the steel color. Would you go to Jackson's and get two of them with four refills. They should be labelled 'unsolicited gift' and should come to me here by air mail. Do you mind? I love them because they are so thin and because they write better than any others.

Your beautiful gift sent to the ship was saved. Carrying caviar and foie gras to the Liberte is like you know what. So we saved it. And two nights ago we had the lord of the manor and his wife for drinks. It was delicious and assures we are in very solid with them. They may not have tasted such things since long before the war, if ever. Thanks to you, we can have anything we wish now.

The work moves slowly and surely along. I hate to say this as claimant but I think the best writing I have ever done. However, I may be alone in this. It occurs to me that you might like a letter of recommendation to Miss Blondell and I enclose one. I remember the inscription but what would you do if someone sent a book by chauffeur. Let me know anything that happens, but type it on their paper and on her time."

### 20. John Steinbeck - Autograph Letter Signed - 5/12/1959

ALS signed "Yours, John," one page both sides, 8 x 13, stamped 'Pigasus' letterhead with "Ad Astra Per Alas Porci" added in Steinbeck's hand, May 12, 1959. Handwritten letter to Mary, in part: "**You may believe that I have neglected you, and you would be right. I have neglected everyone save Malory. But to that work I have been pouring the cooking oil and I am**

**pleased with my progress. I believe it is good and I have no one to back me up in my belief. But even if it isn't, I still think it is.**

**One thing I discovered early, that I could not let it out of my hands before I had seen it in type.** The wife of one of the masters at King's School Bruton is typing a first draft. Hope you don't feel double crossed. But you know as well as I do that something happens in type. Errors show that can't be seen in my scribbling.

It is much the same as my use of tape. In that regard **I have a wonderful little tape recorder. It only weighs eight pounds, is all transistor and operates on four flashlight batteries. It is not dependent on current and can be taken anywhere and used anywhere.** It is extraordinary sensitive. **I love it and use it constantly for listening back to my own not immortal words. In fact, on listening back many of my words prove very mortal indeed. But it goes on.**

Now off the main theme. Even the inhabitants admit that this is the most beautiful spring in many years—a golden and green spring. I seem to be able to hear the grass grow. The lushness and the flowers are fantastic. This small cottage is just right for us—and the quiet and lack of nervousness here is a poultice. It is going to be very hard indeed to go back to the slings and arrows, pneumatic drills and irritability of New York. However just knowing this is here and that one can come back is enough perhaps. But I will be a spoiled new boy. The people here are so friendly. My sister Mary came and stayed a week with us and then went on. **Our spare room is an ancient cattle byre where cows and pigs once stayed but it makes a pleasant room. We are not encouraging visitors, however. This house is too small and my work too concentrated. This is my selfishness year. I'm going to get this work done in spite of hell and high water.**

I've heard just once from the boys. What little savages they are. But Catbird from failure passed everything in his latest report and got a good in math which is fantastic for him. Maybe he's finally taking hold. Has Tom ever answered you about the money? I'm afraid he learned from his mother to avoid responsibility by ignoring it...Let me know because if he has not answered you, it would be natural for you to tell me about it after all this time.

**Our life here is simple to the point of being primitive and yet very satisfying. How do you like my rubric at the head of this letter. It was designed for me by an old man Count Fossi of Florence after alliance. Some day I will have it cut in steel for a seal ring of magnificent proportions.** Old Fossi is 80 years old, does not use glasses and bounds up and down stairs like a boy. He is a descendent of the great Florentine families of the middle ages and he has their vigor. And all of this leads now to the fact that I have to go to work to finish the section I have laid out to do today.”

**21. John Steinbeck - Autograph Letter Signed - 7/1/1959**

ALS signed "Yours, John," two pages on blue "By Airmail" stationery, 4.75 x 7.75, July 1, [1959]. Handwritten letter to Mary from "The Cottage, Bruton, Somerset, England," in part: **"I was glad to get your long and disreputable letter this morning. It only goes to prove that mice will play. But 'four sided' triangles are even messier than three sided quadrangles. All angles and no corners unless you pitched a few.**

Tom is going through an utterly impossible age. And he is very right. I have had a do with both boys. Tom has a curious idea that he can talk himself out of anything and it is particularly curious because he has never succeeded in talking himself out of anything. Best thing I can do is to stay away from both of them for a while.

**My work, while continuing, is very confused and confusing. And I still don't know what is likely to come out of it if anything. It's a rather unpleasant balancy feeling. Sometimes I get so damned mad at Malory. He writes down nonsense things, doesn't even understand them himself.**

Beginning to rain here. We've had a two month drought. Fine for now since farmers and gardeners clenching their fists and calling for public prayers. The rabbits are coming back fast and I'm very much afraid I'll have to begin shooting. I don't want to but the buggers won't stay out of my lettuce.

Bruton church fete next Saturday. Ours is one of the first 13th century perps...I'm glad you are going west. It will be very good for you. My sister Mary has gone home but her house is rented and she is staying in Pacific Grove with my sister Beth who lives in my little cottage...My head isn't working too well. That's not an unusual situation. Let me know what if any fun you have in the west." Steinbeck addresses the air letter on the reverse, signing his full name ("John Steinbeck") in the return address area.

## **22. John Steinbeck - Typed Letter (Unsigned) - 8/27/1959**

Unsigned typed letter by Steinbeck, one page, 8 x 10, The Cottage, Discove letterhead, August 27, 1959. Letter to Mary, informing of his impending return from Europe and his hope that she will return to work as his typist. Commenting on his work, Steinbeck writes: "I'm going to need your neat typing and to get back on the coffee routine on the fourth floor. **My work isn't any good but maybe it will be.**"

## **23. John Steinbeck - Autograph Postcard Signed - 12/12/1960**

ALS signed "Love, John," one page on a 5.5 x 3.25 postcard, December 12, 1960. Handwritten letter to Mary, in part: **"Just got home from a 10,000 mile tour of America. Very big, America!** Quite tired I am. Got home to the usual—kids lurching for delinquency. Nothing changed. The book you started to type bought by McCall's, Readers Digest etc. Off, isn't it. Not a pleasant book."

**24. John Steinbeck - Autograph Letter Signed - 3/7/1961**

ALS signed "John," one page, 8 x 12.5, March 7, [1961]. Handwritten letter to Mary, responding to news that she has gotten married to a Montreal lawyer, conveying a sense that he has lost more than a typist. In full: "I wouldn't even consider remarking that Lamb had a little Mary. How often have you heard that. **Anyway I'm glad you're so happy, honey. However, that doesn't change my basic opinion that you are just as crazy as a cow in fly time.** Take it easy with a Q.C. He knows how to cross examine and you're a pushover for that. I'm really very pleased in a nasty sort of way. **Why should you care that both my typewriters are on the blink and I have no one to see that they are fixed. That I have a hundred pages of m.s. in handwriting and no one to type.** That I'm probably going out to the West Coast for Project Mojave on Saturday. Oh! No! You're just interested in yourself. And has it occurred to you that Mary Lamb is a damned lie. Lamb's clothing perhaps, but underneath the loup garou. In due course you will get a wedding present. How would you like a box of sand from 12,000 ft under the sea. Sounds good? I do hope we'll see you on your way through. And we'll probably be here or at Sag Harbor. **Please give my heartiest congratulations to M. Agneau and tell him I lost a damn fine secretary. Are you going to let him know you can type?** In haste. Elaine sends love and will write. And I also send love and felici— — — ."

**25. John Steinbeck - Handwritten Note (Unsigned) - [no date]**

Unsigned handwritten note by John Steinbeck, one page, 8 x 12.5, [no date]. Handwritten note to Mary, in full: "This is a mess. Only these three letters. What a mess is this room. I'll be back as soon as as the dentist springs me. Make some coffee."

**26. John Steinbeck - Handwritten Verse (Unsigned) - [no date]**

Unsigned handwritten verse by John Steinbeck, one page, 8 x 12.5, no date. A playful and humorous handwritten verse, in full: "When all your friends have left you, / And life seems but a wreck / May you tumble through your ass hole / And break your fuckin' neck. / Not you—you!"

**Other items include:**

**1. Twelve of Steinbeck's Mailing Envelopes**

Twelve of John Steinbeck's original mailing envelopes addressed to Mary Morgan, six of which are accomplished in his own hand (the others in type). Steinbeck also pens his last name as part of the return address on one envelope, "Steinbeck, Discove Cottage, Bruton, Somerset, England."

**2. John Steinbeck Typed Letter (Unsigned) to Peter Lisca**

Unsigned typed letter by John Steinbeck to literary scholar Peter Lisca regarding his ongoing work ( "Right now I am lying fallow as far as active writing goes. I am reading rather enormously in the 13th, 14th and 15th centuries to the end of doing a rendering of Malory's Morte d'Arthur,

plus a study of the times which bred it”), plus an unsigned typed cover letter for its draft, sent to Mary Morgan with instructions (“This is a letter of certain length and it goes to one Peter Lisca...Mr. Lisca has for some years been compiling a volume on my past literary work, and he apparently has done a very good job. He has only one small failing..... He has not the slightest vestige of a sense of humor.”

### **3. John Steinbeck Typed Letter (Unsigned) to Putney Nursery**

Unsigned typed letter by Steinbeck to Putney Nursery in Vermont, requesting advice on ferns to be planted in a large terra cotta pot in a shady area at his home in New York.

### **4. Elaine Steinbeck (2) Autograph Letters Signed to Mary Morgan**

Two ALSs by Elaine Steinbeck, one sending thanks for Christmas gifts and discussing their family’s celebration (“John gave David a Knights’ suit of armour, complete with a plumed helmet, and dubbed him ‘Sir David’—and he was thrilled to bits!” and one sent from Bruton, discussing their living quarters and the surrounding village (“The cottage is filled with charm & character & ghosts—in fact its got everything except TV & central heating and all those necessities one really doesn’t need! The floors are stone-flagging, the walls are feet thick...John has made himself a nest in one of the pretty little up-stairs bedrooms, & from the look of it, you’d think he’d been working there since the Norman Conquest. He says he’s never been so content”).