

SECTION V: 1889

LIFE

The highpoint of 1889 for Sharp was his first visit, in late summer, to Canada and the United States. His interest in North America increased as he edited in late 1888 and early 1889 a collection of American sonnets for Scott's Canterbury Poets, and he came to view the States as a market for his work. In January he offered the Century Publishing Company in New York the American rights to *Children of Tomorrow* which was scheduled for April publication by Chatto and Windus in London. Also in January, he proposed two articles for publication by Lippincott's Magazine in Philadelphia. Later he thanked Thomas Wentworth Higginson, the New England man of letters and friend of Emily Dickinson, for a book of poetry which he would try to mention favorably in print. The anthology of American Sonnets was nearly ready, and he would hold a copy to present in person when Higginson arrived in London. In July 1889, he sent copies of the sonnet book to Frank Dempster Sherman and Clinton Scollard, both represented in the anthology. The accompanying letters express his hope that he will meet them in America in the fall when he will "pay a short visit to E.C. Stedman and one or two other friends in New York."

Stedman was a New York banker and, more important, a poet, anthologist, and critic. Having fashioned himself a man of letters, he exerted great influence over publishers and editors, especially in New York which had supplanted Boston as the literary center of the United States. Sharp could not have chosen a better advocate in the American publishing world. His contacts with Stedman began in 1887 when he wrote to say he was a Scotsman, not a colonial. Relying on the Australian poems in Sharp's first volume, *The Human Inheritance*, Stedman had placed him among the colonial writers in the chapter called "British Song" in his *The Victorian Poets*. "Since you are so kindly going to do me the honour of mention in your forthcoming supplementary work," Sharp wrote, "I should not like to be misrepresented." Stedman replied warmly: "Something in your work made me suspect that, despite your Australian tone, etc., you did not hail (as we Yankees say) from the Colonies. So you will find in my new vol. of *Victorian Poets* that I do not place you with the Colonial poets, but just preceding them, and I have a reference to your Rossetti volume" (Memoir, 129).

This exchange, EAS noted, "led to a life-long friendship" with Stedman who had "so genial a nature that, on becoming personally acquainted in New York two years later, the older poet laughingly declared that he adopted the younger man from across the seas as his 'English son.'" That off-hand comment contains an important insight. Sharp's father had disapproved of his son's interest in literature and his desire to become a writer, and then he died when Sharp was twenty-one. From that point forward, Sharp sought out older literary men, attempted to gain their friendship and approval, and depended on them for advancement, not an unusual pattern for young people making their way in the world. But the list of such men in Sharp's life – Dante Gabriel Rossetti, John Addington Symonds, Walter Pater, George Meredith, to name only a few of the most prominent – is notably long, and the son/father trope pervades his correspondence with them. Of all these, his relationship with Stedman, conducted mainly through trans-Atlantic correspondence, was the most intense and long-lasting. After their initial meeting in 1889, when

Sharp stayed with the Stedmans in New York, Sharp's letters become increasingly familiar until Stedman becomes both a father confessor and trusted comrade. Most of the surviving letters are among the Stedman papers at Columbia University. The first of those was written in the summer of 1889 shortly before Sharp left for North America. Excepting the short quotation from an 1887 letter EAS included in the Memoir, earlier correspondence between the two men has not surfaced. But Sharp surely corresponded with Stedman in 1888 as he prepared his anthology of American Sonnets. His dedication of that volume to Stedman – “the Foremost American Critic” – was probably not only an attempt to ingratiate himself, but an expression of gratitude for Stedman's help in choosing the poets for the volume and the poems that represent them.

In the Spring of 1889, Sharp decided to stand for election to the Chair of Literature at University College, London which was open following the death of Henry Morley. Included here are his requests for supporting letters from Edward Dowden, Hall Caine, and Richard Garnett. EAS reported that his candidacy was supported also by Robert Browning, George Meredith, Walter Pater, Theodore Watts (later Watts-Dunton), Alfred Austen, Professor Minto, Sir George Douglas, Aubrey De Vere, and Mrs. Augusta Webster. Despite this impressive list and the security of income that would accompany the post, Sharp withdrew from consideration after his doctor advised his heart might not withstand the strain. Whatever the reason, he was greatly relieved, according to EAS, when he was left “in possession of his freedom.” The impressive list of supporters and the fact that he would be nominated for this position, despite having spent only one year studying at Glasgow University, suggest he had learned a great deal about English literature through his editing and reviewing and gained respect within the London literary establishment for his knowledge and accomplishments as an editor. Word of his standing there had spilled across the Atlantic where, in late summer and fall, he was treated, both in Canada and the United States, as a literary celebrity. Stedman's sponsorship paved the way, but many he met read British periodicals and knew Sharp's name from the articles and poems he published there. His handsome appearance, his charm, and the desire of the new world's literary establishment to forge close contacts with that of London also worked in his favor.

In late April, Sharp asked James Mavor, editor of the *Scottish Art Review*, when he needed the manuscript of “Pt. I of [H. P.] Siwaarmill's ‘Emilia Viviana’ for the July No.” In a postscript, he asked him to “be sure and preserve the secret of my identity with H. P., Siwaarmill.” Although the “Emilia Viviana” piece seems not to have been published, the letter is interesting for its demonstrating several years before the emergence of Fiona Macleod Sharp's predilection to disguise his authorship with a pseudonym. In 1888, he had used H. P. Siwaarmill, an anagram of William Sharp, for epigraphs in *Romantic Ballads and Poems of Fantasy* (1888) and for bits of supposed wisdom in *Children of Tomorrow*.

In May, the Sharps went to Paris so Sharp could write reviews of the salons for the Glasgow Herald. From there he told Richard Le Gallienne he was going to America for October and November and hoped to meet him there. In mid-July, Sharp responded in a letter to Louise Chandler Moulton to the poor critical reception of his *Children of Tomorrow* by saying his friends liked it and those who didn't were unable to see it as a “herald of a new movement.” He had written it as an artist “and someday, if not now, it will gain its measure of recognition.” About that, time has proved him wrong for the novel is even less readable today than when it appeared. By mid-summer, plans for North America crystallized. Mona Caird asked EAS to accompany her to Austria for “the Sun-cure at Veldes in the Carthapian mountains” (Memoir,

149-50). When they left in mid-July, Sharp went to stay with George Meredith, returned briefly to London, and sailed for Canada in early August. On 27 July, just prior to leaving, wrote to Stedman: "Since my wife's departure for Austria, I have been staying with George Meredith in Surrey, and am now feeling much better, having again regained my power to sleep: yet it shall be thankful to get away, and to see no proofs, letters, or MSS for ten days at least." Of the American trip, EAS remarked, "Going by himself seemed to promise chances of complete recovery of health; the unexplored and the unknown beckoned to him with promise of excitement and adventure" (Memoir, 150). Sharp's health had not been good. He was prohibited by his doctor from lecturing during his visit. Yet he began to sleep well again as soon as Elizabeth left for Austria. There is no mention of ill-health during his tour of Northeastern Canada despite the rough conditions he encountered while exploring wilderness areas. These comments are the first indication that the Sharps' marriage was beginning to inflict strains that intensified and prolonged their frequent bouts of ill-health.

Upon arriving in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Sharp was met by Charles G. D. Roberts, a poet and Professor of English Literature at King's College in Windsor, Nova Scotia. He remained in Canada about a month. During that period, as chronicled in letters to his wife, he was taken to remote areas of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia by Roberts, his brother-in-law, Bliss Carman, an aspiring poet and editor, and by James Langley, the Attorney General of Nova Scotia. Having delayed his arrival in the United States longer than expected, he apologized to Stedman in a letter written from Montreal on or about September 20. On the way to New York, he stopped for a few days in Boston which he thought "a beautiful place — an exceedingly fine city with lovely environs" (Memoir, 153). Arthur Sherburne Hardy, his host, took him to Harvard, introduced him to faculty and other notables, and drove him to Belmont to visit the novelist W. D. Howells whom he had met in Italy in 1883. He arrived at the Stedman's house in New York on Tuesday, 24 September, and made it his base for about ten days. He spent the weekend, 28 and 29 September, with Henry Mills Alden (editor of Harper's Magazine) and his family in Metuchen, New Jersey. In New York, he met several eminent "men of letters," was "elected an honorary member of the two most exclusive clubs in N.Y., the 'Century' and 'The Players,'" and attended a special meeting at the Author's Club where he was "guest of the evening." Prior to sailing from New York on 3 or 4 October, he left instructions with a florist to deliver on Stedman's birthday (6 Oct) both a bouquet and a letter. That letter, reproduced here, was the first of Sharp's many annual birthday letters to Stedman.

Sharp returned to British shores in mid-October and went on to Germany at the end of the month to greet his wife and accompany her home. Buoyed by his reception in Canada and the United States, he set to work with renewed vigor. When Browning died on 12 December, Sharp produced and had published two elegiac poems, began a biographical/critical study of Browning for the Great Writers Series, and set about writing a series of what he called (18 December letter to Gilder, his new friend at The Century in New York) "Imaginary Journals." These projected works — among them "The Crime of Andrea dal Costagno | A fragment from the Journal of this murderer painter and successful hypocrite, written not long before his death" -- exhibit the influence of Browning's dramatic monologues which Sharp had reread in preparation for the elegies and the biographical study. This project, outlined in detail to Gilder and like so many others Sharp invented for himself, was never completed.

LETTERS: 1889

To The Century Publishing Company,¹ January 11, 1889

Wescam | Goldhurst Terrace | So. Hampstead | London, N.W. | 11:1:89

Dear Sirs

I write to ask if you would care to purchase the American rights of a one volume novel by me.² It is to be published by Messrs. Chatto & Windus in the late Spring (probably about the end of April). That firm commissioned the book, on what I consider very good terms, without

¹This letter is included in a collection of letters written to Richard Watson Gilder (1844-1909), who edited the *Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine* from 1881 until his death in 1909, and Robert Underwood Johnson (1853-1937), who worked on the magazine under Gilder and served as editor from 1909-1913. A notation in the upper-left corner of the manuscript “ansd. 2/17/89” is in the same handwriting as similar notations on later letters addressed personally to Gilder. Gilder’s editorship began when the Century Publishing Company bought out the Scribner interest in *Scribner’s Monthly* (1870-1881) and renamed the magazine *The Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine*. By 1885 the *Century* had a huge circulation (over 200,000), but it began to decline in the nineties with the rising interest in feminism and the new photo-engraving techniques used by the competing ten- and fifteen-cent periodicals. Gilder’s publications include *The New Day* (1875), *The Poet and His Master* (1878), *Lyrics and Other Poems* (1885), *Lincoln’s Genius for Expression* (1909), and *Grover Cleveland: A Record of Friendship* (1910). Following his editorship of the *Century*, Johnson established the Hall of Fame at New York University and directed it from 1919 until 1937. In 1920 and 1921, he served as Ambassador to Italy. His works include *Poems* (published in 1902, enlarged in 1908, 1919, and 1931) and his memoirs, *Remembered Yesterdays* (1923).

² The novel was published as *Children of Tomorrow: A Romance* (London: Chatto & Windus) in April 1899. It was issued in the United States in 1890 by F. F. Lovell & Company.

having seen a page of it or even knowing its plot, or what it is about. They only know that it is a romance upon which I have expended great care, and for which I hope much.

Its present name, and the name I prefer, is Sanpriel (from the name of the heroine), but as Messrs. Chatto & Windus seem to think that a more attractive title to the general reader would be better I think of calling it *The Labyrinth of Love*.

To a certain extent it is a romance of artistic life, but its main motive is the inexorableness, what Guy de Maupassant calls the brutality and indifference, of Fate; and, over and above this, the tragic play of the passions in two fine natures. Sanpriel herself is racially of the Jewish people (not religiously), and the central idea is the struggle on her part between the Judaic passion and an overpowering love, a love that involves sacrifice of everything save love's own reward. The close of the book is, so far as I am aware, unlike anything narrated in English fiction.

I have to deliver the completed MS by the middle of March at latest. I am not willing to arrange about stereos, for reasons into which I need not enter, but if you entertain my proposal and your terms seem to me reasonable I shall send a type-written copy of my MS to you for publication very nearly contemporaneously with the English edition, though of course the latter, for copyright purposes, must have nominal precedence. It is only fair to add that I have written by this mail to two other American houses with a similar proposal. Requesting the favour of a reply at your earliest convenience.

I am, Gentlemen, | Yours faithfully, | William Sharp
Author of *Life of Heine*, Monograph on Shelley, *Rossetti: A Record and a Study*, *Earth's Voices: Sospitra etc.*, *Romantic Ballads*, *The Sport of Chance*, and three serial romances. Editor of *Sonnets of This Century*, etc. etc.

Messrs. Roberts Bros | Boston

I forgot to add that the novel is not a long one, about 250 pp, widely leaded and spaced.

ALS Huntington

To the Editor of Lippincott's³ Magazine, January 26, 1889

Wescam | Goldhurst Terrace | So. Hampstead | London N.W. | 1/26/89

Dear Sir

Would you care to have an article from my pen upon

(1) Two New English Poets (W. E. Henley and Mathilde Blind)

(2) The Prose Writing of William Morris.

I daresay my name as poet and critic is known to you, and will be sufficient guarantee.

Lippincott's is the only American magazine I take in regularly: as apart from the [function?] of illustration, I find it the most generally interesting, hence my wish to be one of your contributors.

Yours faithfully | William Sharp

Author of "Life of Heine," "Romantic Ballads," etc. etc. etc.

Editor of "Sonnets of This Century"

³ James Marshall Stoddart (1845-1921), who Sharp met when he visited Philadelphia in 1892, began editing *Lippincott's Magazine* in 1889, succeeding William Shepherd Walsh who was probably the editor when this letter arrived.

If your reply be in the affirmative, please state when the MS would be wanted, and maximum length.

ALS State University of New York at Buffalo

To Mrs. David Octavius Hill, [late January, 1889]

Wescam | Goldhurst Terrace | South Hampstead | N.W.

My dear Mrs. Hill

This is a line to introduce to you my friend Sir George Douglas,⁴ who is anxious to make your acquaintance. He is not only a lover of art and literature, but himself a poet and author, and I know that you will find much in common.

I am going to stay with him (near Kelso) in the latter part of February, and hope, when passing through Edinburgh from St. Andrews (whither I am going on Monday or Tuesday next) to look in upon you. I was very sorry to hear about the Patons'⁵ fresh troubles — how unfortunate they are.

Lillie joins with me in love.

Ever your affectionate friend | William Sharp

ALS New York Public Library, Berg Collection

To James Mavor,⁶ [February 8, 1889]

Friday

My dear Mavor,

Are you to be in Edinburgh next week?

I expect to be there all the week, (& to arrive on Monday evening next). If so, perhaps we could arrange to meet.

My address will be | 2 Coltbridge Terrace | Murrayfield | Edinburgh

Yours in haste | William Sharp

ALS University of Toronto

To James Mavor, [February 10, 1889]

The Marine Hill | St. Andrews | Sunday

⁴Sir George Brisbane Douglas (1856-1935) was a poet and a lecturer in Scottish literature at Glasgow University in 1911. His publications include *Poems* (1880), *The New Border Tales* (1892), *Diversions of a Country Gentleman* (1902), and *The Pageant of the Bruce* (1911).

⁵Sir Noel Paton.

⁶“James Mavor (1854-1925) was a social activist in Glasgow who participated in a number of socialist organizations including the Fabian Society, the Social Democratic Federation, and the Socialist League. He was acquainted with key figures in the socialist scene including George Bernard Shaw who in 1898 named one of the lead characters in *Candida* James Mavor Morell. In 1898 and 1899, he edited *The Scottish Art Review*. In 1892 he was appointed Professor of Political Economy at the University of Toronto where he chaired the Political Science until his retirement in 1923. He was active in establishing the Toronto Art Gallery and the Royal Ontario Museum, and wrote government reports on immigration, wheat production, workmen’s compensation, and *An Economic History of Russia*.

Dear Mr. Mavor

I gather from your kind note that you took the trouble to call at the Central to enquire for my lost “Lareg”. Many thanks for your courtesy. I wrote to the Manager, and he forwarded it on to me. (Better luck than I deserved, you will doubtless think.) I return to Edinburgh on Tuesday night. On Wednesday afternoon, unfortunately, I am engaged to “sit” to Mrs. D. O. Hill⁷ from 3 till 4:30 — and at 4:30 some friends are to drop in to meet me. So, I am sorry to say, I shall be unable to look up Mr. Geddes⁸ when you are with him. (Before 3 I am engaged.)

How long are you to be in Edinburgh? I wish you could give me the pleasure of dining with me. Could you and your friend Mr. T. C. Martin⁹ dine with me at 7? (I understand that the Waterloo Hotel is one of the best places to dine at, but as I know nothing of it, it would be best to arrange to meet at the portico of the General Post Office a couple of minutes or so before 7.) Failing your being able to do this could you look in at Mrs. D. O. Hill’s about 5 o’clock. You would probably meet Sir Noel Paton, Mrs. Traquair,¹⁰ Joseph Thomson (the explorer),¹¹ J. M. Gray,¹² & one or two others there — and Mrs. Hill would give you a hearty welcome. Her address is Newington Lodge, Mayfield Terrace. Take the Powburn car from The Post-Office, and ask to be put down at the opening for Mayfield Terrace. Mrs. Hill’s house is the last on the right, at the gates opening upon Dalkeith Road.

⁷ Mrs. Hill’s maiden name was Amelia Robertson Paton. The sister of the well-known painter and poet Sir Noel Paton, she was an accomplished sculptor and deeply involved in the artistic and intellectual life of Edinburgh. Writing to Frederick Shields on September 7, 1886, Sharp said of her, “No nobler-natural woman was ever born.” She was the second wife of David Octavius Hill (1802-1870), an Edinburgh landscape painter.

⁸ Sir Patrick Geddes (1854-1932) was a man of many talents and interests. He established the Outlook Tower at the head of Edinburgh’s High Street with its *camera obscura* and oversaw the building of Ramsay Gardens, a group of flats, a student residence hall, and artist studios near the Outlook Tower and the Castle. He was the central figure in the Scottish contingent of the Celtic Revival that began in the 1890s. Although Sharp was unable to meet him during this visit to Edinburgh, they met soon after and in 1895, Geddes made William Sharp the literary editor of his Celtic oriented publishing firm, Patrick Geddes & Colleagues. Geddes went on to become an expert city planner and to gain a great deal of fame for his work in that field.

⁹ Unknown

¹⁰ Phoebe Anna Traquair was married to Ramsey Heatly Traquair (1840-1912), a naturalist who published over 130 papers on zoology and paleontology.

¹¹ Joseph Thomson (1858-1894) explored much of Africa and was a rival of Sir Henry Morgan Stanley. His most famous book was *Through Masai Land* (1885). His explorations ruined his health, forcing him to return to England and eventually causing his death.

¹² John M. Gray, Edinburgh friend of Sharp’s who died later in 1894. See Sharp letter to Watts-Dunton of 11 October 1894.

Does Mr. Martin reside in Glasgow or Edinburgh, & what is the Leader address? If in Edinburgh, I might call on him. I am indebted to you for your suggestion and friendly offices, and like the idea.

Please drop me a line by return to 2 Coltbridge Terrace | Murrayfield | Edinburgh

Yours sincerely | William Sharp

I cannot attempt anything of the kind for several weeks at earliest — but how would Théophile Gautier do to start the “Villon series”? His personality and such books as his “Mlle de Maupin” and “Emaux at Canées” would give satisfactory scope.

ALS University of Toronto Library

To Theodore Watts [-Dunton], February 16, 1889

Sir George Douglas, Bart | Springwood Park | Kelso, N.B | 16/2/89

My dear Watts

What do you think of Caine’s new play? From what I hear privately (from my wife, Cotton, and others) I gather that it is a very third-rate affair though with some strong melodramatic situations. I am sorry he should have Barrett¹³ for a collaborateur as I am convinced the man has little in him.

I have left the coast and am now staying with my friend Douglas for a fortnight or more, where I am working hard. This is a beautiful old place — near the junction of the Teviot and the Tweed, both of which flow through D.’s property. The Teviot is but 200 yards from my window, and some 300 yards away is the picturesque mound-set ruin of the ancient Roxburghe Castle. Last night I fell asleep to the hooting of the owls blended with the brawling undertone of the Teviot. I hope you are well and hard at work. The second edition of my “Romantic Ballads” will be out next week.¹⁴

The prefatory remarks have been considerably added to: and there are many important alterations in the list of the poems, besides the inclusion of a new poem, a short one-page lyrical piece called “The Isle of Lost Dreams”. “The Death-Child” and the last verse of “Michael Scott” (Part I) have, in particular, been improved. I do not know how the book has been got up, as it is the publisher’s affair and not mine.

I am a little hurt (after what he wrote to me) that MacColl¹⁵ has not printed a review of it. It was published ten months ago, and other vols. of verse, Mary Robinson’s, Henley’s etc., which

¹³ Hall Caine’s *The Good Old Times* was produced by Wilson Barrett at the Princess’s Theatre in Oxford Street in February 1889. Barrett (1846-1904) was an actor, dramatist, novelist, and theater manager. His plays include, *Now-a-Days* (1889), *Pharaoh* (1892), and *The Sign of the Cross* (1896). Barrett adapted several Caine novels for the stage, among them *Ben-my-Chree* (from *The Deemster*) (1888), *The Manxman* (1894), and *The Bondman* (1893).

¹⁴ Sharp’s third volume of poems, *Romantic Ballads and Poems of Phantasy*, was published by the Walter Scott firm in 1888 as a favor to Sharp. Its sales exceeded expectations, and a revised edition was issued in 1889.

¹⁵ Norman MacColl was editor of *The Athenaeum* for which Watts served as literary editor. See Sharp’s letter to Watts of 23 May 1888.

had subsequently appeared, were all reviewed ere the summer was over. However, it does not much matter.

Let me take this opportunity of saying that I do not expect you now or at any time to exert yourself about anything of mine. Your remarks about me and your reviewing of me duly came round to me — and I should be distressed if you should feel our friendship to involve any bond, however informulate. I think you were unjust in your remarks about me, but through misapprehension, I feel well assured, and from no other cause — and so I dismissed the matter from my mind, after the first surprise and chagrin. Friendship would be worthless indeed if it could not stand save on a “reviewing” basis.

But as a paragraph is sometimes helpful and does not involve any expression of opinion, perhaps you could kindly send a para to MacColl saying that the second edition of my *Romantic Ballads & Poems of Phantasy*, with some alterations and additions will be issued shortly (week after next at latest) by Walter Scott. But just if not either in the least inconvenient or disagreeable to you.

I hope to see you again when I return in March. I have felt for some time as if something were coming between us, and for this I should be very sorry.

Yours affectionately | William Sharp

ALS University of Leeds, Brotherton Library

To [James Mavor¹⁶], [March, 1889]

. . . the Muhrmann¹⁷ article & what length & what illustrations are to be in it.

She had so set her heart upon getting regular art-criticism (of contemporary art) to do, that she has let her feelings carry her away.

Overlook it, like a good fellow.

Have you made up your April poetry-sheet yet? If not, would you care for the enclosed song? If you don't care about it, let me know. If, however, you like it, it would be of no use to you, I fear, unless pubd. in April number, for it appears in my romance “Children of Tomorrow” (Sanpriel) which Chatto & Windus will publish somewhere about April 20th.¹⁸

Don't forget you are pledged to stay with us when you run up to town — & come soon.

Your friend | William Sharp

ALS (Fragment) University of Toronto

To Hall Caine, [March 4, 1889]¹⁹

¹⁶ Although lacking a salutation, this letter is from the Mavor Collection in the University of Toronto Library and is clearly addressed to Mavor.

¹⁷ Henry Muhrman, an important impressionist painter best known as a watercolorist, was born in Cincinnati in 1854. He trained there and in Munich and died in Meissen, Germany, in 1916.

¹⁸ This reference dates the fragment as sometime in March 1889.

¹⁹ This incomplete letter is reproduced from a transcription/summary made by a staff member at the Manx Museum.

. . . I am delighted to hear it²⁰ is such a financial success though I honestly admit that you, with your high abilities, should be working at more enduring stuff than ordinary melodrama. We need a true dramatic writer, and you have it in you to be the man — but! I have your reputation so truly to heart that what you yourself say is good news to me. Still, it is always something to have achieved so great a financial success in these difficult days — though the financial aspect, with a man like you, ought to be — and in your case is — of secondary import . . . Douglas²¹ believes in you — but dislikes what he calls Wilson Barrettish²² melodrama: and he expressed an earnest hope the other day that your next play would be, in truth, a big thing. I'm delighted to hear what you say about your prospective novel and play. Some day after the middle of March I'll run down to Bexley, and have a chat over these and other matters. If you are to be in town next Saturday afternoon you might be able to find your way out here. Some seventy to eighty literary and artistic friends have been asked — and probably somewhere about 40 or 50 will come. If you can come you will be welcome . . .

ALS Manx Museum, Isle of Man

*To Edward Dowden, [March 18, 1889]*²³

Wescam, | 17A, Goldhurst Terrace, | South Hampstead. | N.W.

My dear Dowden,

I am writing to ask you if you will do me the great favour, if you conscientiously can, of a testimonial as to my fitness in your opinion for the post of Professor of English Literature. I am a Candidate for the Chair at London University which Prof. Henry Morley has just resigned.

Excuse such a succinct note, but there is very little time for the obtaining and remission of Testimonials. It is as a literary man, and as one who has also been much engaged in what may fairly be called educational literature (General Editor "The Canterbury Poets," Editor of the "Literary Olympic" in *Young Folks Paper* — a periodical which circulates over quarter of a million weekly — Editor of "Sonnets of This Century," now in its 30th thousand, etc. etc.) that I mainly base my claim, though my philological studies will no doubt stand me in good stead.

It will materially add to my indebtedness if you will let me hear from you at your earliest convenience.

²⁰Sharp is referring to Caine's play *Good Old Times* which was running in London.

²¹The Manx's transcribed summary indicates this is Douglas Sladen, but Sharp was surely referring to Sir George Douglas with whom he was staying in Scotland when he wrote to Watts about Caine's play on 16 February 1889.

²²"Barrett's features were cast in a classic mould and his presence was manly and graceful. Hence his predilection for classical impersonations . . . [H]is method of acting was usually stilted. In melodrama he presented heroic fortitude with effect. His dramas made no pretense to literature. They aimed at stage effect and boldly picturesque characterization without logical sequence or psychological consistency" (*DNB*, Supplement 1901-1911, p. 103).

²³Date from postmark on envelope. Sharp became a candidate for this position in the spring of 1889, but he withdrew his candidacy before the election after consulting with his doctor (*Memoir* 149).

Sincerely yours | William Sharp

ALS TCD

To Hall Caine, March 19, 1889

Wescam | 17a Goldhurst Terrace | South Hampstead | N.W.

My dear Caine

I am writing to ask you to do me the great favour, if you conscientiously can, of a Testimonial as to my fitness in your opinion for the post of Professor of English Literature. I am a candidate for the Chair at London University which Prof Henry Morley has just resigned.

Excuse much a succinct note, but there is very little time for the obtaining and remission of Testimonials. It is as a literary man, and as one who has also been much engaged in what may fairly be termed educational literature (General Editor “The Canterbury Poets” — Editor of the “Literary Olympic” in the *Young Folk’s Paper* — a periodical which circulates over quarter of a million weekly — Editor of “Sonnets of This Century,” now in its 30th thousand, etc., etc.) that I mainly base my claim, though my philological studies will no doubt stand me in good stead.

You will naturally add to my indebtedness if you will let me hear from you at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely yours | William Sharp

ALS Manx Museum, Isle of Man.

To Richard Garnett, [Spring, 1889]

Wescam. | 17A. Goldhurst Terrace. | South Hampstead. | N.W.

Dear Garnett

I am writing to ask you if you will do me the great favour, if you conscientiously can, of a testimonial as to my fitness in your opinion for the post of Professor of English Literature. I am a candidate for the Chair at London University which Mr. Henry Morley had just resigned.

Excuse such a succinct not but there is very little time for the obtaining and remission of Testimonials. It is as a literary man, and as one who has also been much engaged on what may fairly be called Educational Literature (General Editor “The Canterbury Poets”— Editor of the “Literary Olympic” in *Young Folk’s Paper* — a periodical which circulates over a quarter of a million weekly — Editor of “Sonnets of this Century”, now in its 30th thousand, etc. etc.) that I mainly base my claim, though my philosophical studies will no doubt stand me in good stead. It will materially add to my indebtedness if you will let me hear from you at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely yours | William Sharp

ALS University of Texas at Austin

To Thomas Wentworth Higginson,²⁴ [Spring, 1889]

²⁴ Thomas Wentworth Higginson (1823-1911) was a New England essayist, poet, biographer, historian, Unitarian minister, and abolitionist. He was also, notably, colonel of the first black regiment in the Union army from 1862-4 as well as the “discoverer” of Emily Dickinson. His publications include *Harvard Memorial Biographies* (1866), his only novel, *Malbone* (1869),

Wescam | 17A Goldhurst Terrace | South Hampstead

My dear Sir

I am much obliged to you for kindly sending me your charming “Afternoon Landscape.”²⁵ I have read the volume with much interest and sincere pleasure, and find that it is one I shall go back to again – a rare thing with a hardened critic like myself. I hope I may be able to say a few words about it in print. It is not only musical and poetic in a high degree, but it has the note of distinction. I wish it all success both here and oversea.

My anthology of the best American Sonnets²⁶ is almost ready – but as I notice in an American paper that you are coming to London ere long I shall retain the copy I intend for your acceptance till you arrive. If you will call on me when you do come it will give my wife and myself much pleasure (Monday afternoons and Sunday evenings are best for us), and also, please, bring your collaborateurs in A.L.²⁷

Where will your address be in London?

My wife and I will be in Paris from the 1st till about the middle of May C but thereafter at home.

With kind regards, | Sincerely yours, | William Sharp

T. Wentworth Higginson Esq.

ALS Pierpont Morgan

*To James Mavor, [late April, 1889]*²⁸

London

My Dear Mavor

I have returned to town — but have mislaid your letter: will you kindly send me a line mentioning again the latest date on which you wish to receive Pt. I of Siwäärmill’s²⁹ “Emilia Viviana” for the July No.

I don’t wish to worry you about what may be only in nebulous — but is there any better basis than before³⁰ [unreadable] to the Scottish Art Review’s passing into the hands, editorially,

Young Folks History of the United States (1875), and Carlyle’s *Laugh and Other Surprises* (1904).

²⁵ *The Afternoon Landscape: Poems and Translations* (1889).

²⁶ *American Sonnets*, selected and edited and with an “Introductory Note” by William Sharp, Canterbury Poets series, (London: Walter Scott, 1889) was dedicated to E. C. Stedman, “the Foremost American Critic.”

²⁷ *Afternoon Landscape*

²⁸ The letter must have been written in late April 1889 since Sharp’s *Children of Tomorrow*, referenced in the postscript, was published on 20 April 1889.

²⁹ H. P. Siwäärmill is an anagram of William Sharp.

³⁰ Several words are obscured and illegible at this point.

of Henley?³¹ The Tomsons³² were at our house last night, and informed us that they had been authoritatively told by R. A. W. Stevenson³³ that Henley is to take over the editorship of the S.A.R. two months hence?

Half an hour ago I saw Gleeson White, and he also told me that “Henley has arranged to edit the S.A.R. two months from now.”

In both instances I conditionally contradicted the statement: but I should like to hear definitely from you, whichever way the matter lies. If there is no truth in it, I think you should take some steps to put an end to a chronic rumour which has undoubtedly something malicious in it.

Please let me have a line from you.

Sincerely Yours, | William Sharp

I am getting on with “Emilia Viviani” and think you will like it. Be sure and preserve the secret of my identity with H. P. Siwäärmill. I hope you will like my “Children of Tomorrow.”

ALS University of Toronto Library

*J. Stanley Little, May 4, 1889*³⁴

Letter to hand just as I am starting for Paris (for 2 or 3 weeks): & only time for a hurried P/C.

It is a shame about “The Breaking Morn.” Taking everything into consideration I should advise trying *Olympian*. It may attract all the more notice as a refusé. But first could yr. brother not see if either Gonfils or the Fine Art Socy (Bond St.) would take it, either outright – or on view & sale.

Thanks for Pioneer. I hope to read in transit.

W.S.

ACS Princeton

To Richard Le Gallienne, May 9, 1889

³¹ William Ernest Henley (1849-1903) was an important poet and critic who edited *London* (1877-1882) and the *Magazine of Art* (1882-1886). In 1889 he became editor of the *Scots Observer* and continued in that position when the magazine was transferred to London and re-titled the *National Observer* in 1890. He resigned that editorship in 1894. Among his publications are *Book of Verse* (1880), *Views and Reviews* (1890), *Poems* (1901), and *In Hospital* (1901).

³² Arthur Tomson (1858-1905), the landscape painter, was introduced to the Sharps by Andrew Lang in the mid-1880s and through them he met his second wife, Agnes Hastings, a childhood friend of Elizabeth Sharp's. The Tomsons remained close friends of the Sharps.

³³ Robert Alan Mowbray Stevenson (1847-1900), cousin of Robert Louis Stevenson, was a painter and art critic for the *Pall Mall Gazette*. He wrote *The Art of Velasquez* (1895), *Peter Paul Rubens* (1898), and *Velasquez* (1899).

³⁴ Date from postmark.

Paris | 9/5/89

Dear Mr. Le Gallienne

Your note has just reached me (I have a packet of letters sent over only once weekly). I shall not be at home again for a week or so: but when I do return I shall read your book³⁵ with interest.

I did hear, at the time, of your arrival in Hampstead, & once or twice (when Mr. Cotton³⁶ or someone has mentioned you) have wondered why you did not call at Wescam.³⁷

I hope you will benefit (you know the sense I mean) by your new life. In the autumn, by the way, we may meet in America, as I am going there for October and November.³⁸

In great haste, | Yours Sincerely, | William Sharp

ACS University of Texas at Austin

To James Mavor, May 10, 1889

Paris | May 10th

Dear Mr. Mavor

I herewith send the very short — according to your instructions — notice of the Sculpture at the Salon.

Mr. Sharp will be writing in a day or two and will then give our next address — we leave Paris tomorrow.

Yours sincerely | Elizabeth Sharp

Miss Elia A. Sharp | May 10th, 1889

ALS University of Toronto

To Frank Dempster Sherman, July 9, 1889³⁹

Wescam | Goldhurst Terrace | So. Hampstead | N.W.

Dear Mr. Sherman

I have much pleasure in sending you a copy of my *American Sonnets and Quatrains*, wherein you figure to such advantage. The book is going well, and you have been quoted several times, particularly the Quatrain on the Quatrain.

³⁵ Probably Le Gallienne's second book of poetry, *Volumes in Folio* (1889).

³⁶ James Sutherland Cotton.

³⁷ The reference here, and in the next paragraph, is to Le Gallienne's move to London, as secretary to Wilson Barrett, which took place in February 1889.

³⁸ Asthma prevented Le Gallienne from accompanying Wilson Barrett on his American tour in October 1889.

³⁹ Frank Dempster Sherman (1860-1916) was a poet, architect, mathematician, and genealogist. His publications include *Madrigals and Catches* (1887), *New Waggings of Old Tales* (1888), *Little-Folk Lyrics* (1892), and *A Southern Flight* (1905). Date from Postmark

Perhaps we may meet in the Autumn? I am going to pay a short visit to E. C. Stedman & one or two other friends in New York in October, and I should be sorry to miss you.

A friend lent me your “Madrigals and Catches” — a delightful volume.

Best regards, | Yours sincerely | William Sharp

ACS University of Texas at Austin

*To Louise Chandler Moulton, July 13, 1889*⁴⁰

My dear Louise

Thanks for your kind note. I am glad you find something in my book⁴¹ to attract you. It has been, on the whole, badly received by the press — as I, of course, fully anticipated: but I have been gratified beyond words by the letters I have had from authors whom I look to as masters, from many friends & acquaintances, and even from strangers. Nothing I have ever done seems to have aroused so much enthusiasm. But quite apart from praise and blame, I am vain enough to believe that with all its faults & demerits it is not altogether a book of “today.” I have written it as an artist — and someday, if not now, it will gain its measure of recognition. At the same time, it is only a tentative effort, or a herald rather, of a new movement. I see the *Athenaeum* of today passes it by with “damning indifference” — and, on the other hand, *Public Opinion* has a long & sympathetic (tho’ fault-finding) review beginning “a remarkable book by a remarkable man.”⁴²

Well — time will solve this and all other small matters as efficiently as the great events of this “forlorn little star of earth.”

I hope particularly to come to see you soon — if possible early on Tuesday — but I am frantically engaged at present, every afternoon & evening, besides much work. At the end of the week we are to stay with George Meredith for a little, & then make a flying visit to Grant Allen. About the beginning of August we both go away, Lillie to the Tyrol, I to Canada and afterward to the States.

Did I ever tell you by the by that my “Romantic Ballads” was exhausted almost immediately upon issue — and that the second edition (much improved) is going well.⁴³

So far as I have read, I like your new book⁴⁴ extremely: but I shall write when I have read it. As yet I have enjoyed the two first stories only.

⁴⁰ Date from postmark.

⁴¹ *Children of Tomorrow* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1889).

⁴² *The Athenaeum* notice appeared in the issue of 13 July 1889. I have not located the review in *Public Opinion*.

⁴³ The first edition was published in 1888 and the second in 1889, both by Walter Scott. A “Postscript to the Second Edition” indicates the edition contained one or two textual variations from the original readings and that a short lyric, “The Isle of Lost Dreams,” appeared for the first time.

⁴⁴ Probably *Miss Eyre* from Boston, and *Others* (1889).

Ever yours affectionately | Will: Sharp

P.S. Your Sonnets in my “American Sonnets” have been much admired, and have several times been selected for quotation.

ALS Library of Congress, Louise Chandler Moulton Collection

*To Richard Garnett, [July 13, 1889]*⁴⁵

Rudgwick

Have been away from home: hence delay in receipt of book,⁴⁶ for which I am most grateful. Shall write in a day or two: meanwhile, cordial thanks.

W.S.

ACS University of Texas at Austin

*To Clinton Scollard*⁴⁷, July 19, 1889

Wescam | Goldhurst Terrace | So. Hampstead. N.W.

Cher Confrère

I have had pleasure in sending you a copy of my “American Sonnets,” containing your own beautiful examples. The book is going very well here, and in the Colonies, & one or two of your sonnets have been noted several times.

Perhaps we may meet in the Autumn. I am going to pay a short visit to Mr. Stedman & one or two other friends in New York in October. It should add much pleasure to the prospect if I thought I should meet you.

Yours sincerely | William Sharp

A friend lent me your “Old & New World Lyrics,” with which I was greatly charmed.

APCS University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Library

*To Edmund Clarence Stedman,*⁴⁸ July 27, 1889

⁴⁵ Date from postmark.

⁴⁶ In 1889 Walter Scott (London) published Garnett's *Life of John Milton*.

⁴⁷ Scollard (1860-1932) graduated from Hamilton College in 1881, studied at Harvard and Cambridge Universities, and served as Professor of English Literature at Hamilton College from 1888-96. He published many volumes of poetry, among them *Pictures in Song*, 1884; *With Reed and Lyre*, 1886; *Old and New World Lyrics*, 1888; and *Ballads, Patriotic and Romantic*, 1916.

⁴⁸ Edmund Clarence Stedman (1833-1908), banker, poet, and critic, was born in Hartford, Connecticut. After opening his own brokerage office in New York in 1864, he became known as the “banker-poet” and exercised considerable influence over the American literary establishment in the eighties and nineties. He became William Sharp's best friend in the United States, and Sharp's letters to him became increasingly intimate. Their relationship varied between that of a father and son and that of two brothers sharing their most intimate experiences in coded language. Excepting the few letters or portions of letters EAS used in the Memoir, we have only Sharp's side of the correspondence, but Stedman's is often reflected in Sharp's responses. Stedman produced many books, among them *Poems Lyrical and Idyllic* (1860), *Poetical Works* (1875),

C/o Prof. Chas. G. D. Roberts⁴⁹ | Kingscroft | Windsor | Nova Scotia | 27/7/89

My Dear Stedman

Although I put the above address to this note I do not arrive there till somewhere about the 15th of August. I am still in London, though I leave in a few days now. Since my wife's departure for Austria, I have been staying with George Meredith in Surrey, and am now feeling much better, having again regained my power of sleep: yet I shall be thankful to get away, and to see no proofs, letters, or MSS, for ten days at least.

You will ere this have received my reply to your last letter, saying how much I appreciated your kind invitation, and how eagerly I look forward to my New York visit, and to meet Mrs. Stedman and yourself in person.

I shall stay with Roberts for some time, and then go elsewhere in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Upper Canada, throughout August and September. Early in October I hope to be in New York. But I do not wish to be in any way a drag upon any plans you may have entertained. I shall trust to your letting me know if my visit might prove inconvenient.

Meanwhile I am going to ask you to oblige me in a small matter. Will you kindly direct your bookseller to send me, at above address, to await my arrival, the two following books (the first of which will save me carriage of books — for I am engaged to write something on Swinburne soon: and the second of which will be helpful for excerpts, for another matter): and I can either remit amount to him or to you as may be most convenient.

It seems like going to see an old friend — to see you: and I am already impatient to be at 44 East 26th St.!

Cordially Yours | William Sharp

Roberts' will be my letter-address for most of the time — at any rate until I write to you with another.

ALS Pennsylvania State University

To Edmund Stedman, [late July, 1889]

I am a student of much else besides literature. Life in all its manifestations is of passionate interest for me, and I cannot rest from incessant study and writing. Yet I feel that I am but on the threshold of my literary life. I have a life-time of ambitious schemes before me; I may perhaps live to fulfill a tenth part of them

Memoir 150

To Edmund Clarence Stedman, August 17, [1889]

August 17th

Victorian Poets (1875), Hawthorne and Other Poems (1877), Lyrics and Idylls: With Other Poems (1879), Poems Now First Collected (1894), and A Victorian Anthology (1895).

⁴⁹ Sir Charles G. D. Roberts (1860-1945), a writer of poetry and fiction, was a professor of English Literature at King's College, Windsor, Nova Scotia, between 1885 and 1895. His works include *Orion and Other Poems* (1880), *In Divers Tones* (1886), *New York Nocturnes, and Other Poems* (1898), *Barbara Ladd* (1902), *The Heart That Knows* (1906), *The Vagrant of Time* (1927), and *Selected Poems* (1936).

My dear Stedman,

I have just arrived in Halifax, and have been met by Roberts, who wants me to go off with him at once for a short trip to Prince Edward Island and elsewhere, so I have only time for this hurried P/C in answer to your kind note. We return to Windsor about Friday or Saturday next.

Yes, I shall be in N.Y. early in October. Sorry as I am not to see N.Y. in the season, I have perforce to depart so as to get home by the end of October at the latest — so I find meanwhile at any rate. But your friendly hospitality and courtesy already make me look to N.Y. as “home” over here — and to see you will be to meet the American author I most wish to meet. I shall write you again from Windsor, when my movements are arranged, and also (when I return) about the books etc.

Ever yours, | William Sharp

ACS Columbia

To Elizabeth A. Sharp, [late August, 1889]

[At Halifax, which he considered] worth a dozen of the Newfoundland capital, [he was met by Professor Charles Roberts who had come]⁵⁰ to intercept me so as to go off with him for a few days in Northern Scotia and across the Straits to Prince Edward Island. So, a few days later Prof. Roberts and I, accompanied for the first 100 miles by Mr. Longley,⁵¹ started for Pictou, which we reached after 5 hours most interesting journey. The Attorney General has kindly asked me to go a three days' trip with him (some 10 days hence) through the famous Cape Breton district, with the lovely Bras D'Or lakes: and later on he has arranged for a three days' moose-hunt among the forests of Southern Acadia, where we shall camp out in tents, and be rowed by Indian guides. . . . I went with Charles Roberts and Bliss Carman⁵² through Evangeline's country. En route I traveled on the engine of the train and enjoyed the experience. Grand Pré delighted me immensely — vast meadows, with lumbering wains and the simple old Acadian life. The orchards were in their glory — and the apples delicious! At one farm house we put up, how you would have enjoyed our lunch of sweet milk, hot cakes, great bowls of huckleberries and cream, tea, apples, etc.! We then went through the forest belt and came upon the great ocean inlet know

⁵⁰ Bracketed sections are EAS's paraphrases.

⁵¹ James Wilberforce Longley (1849-1945), a judge and historian born in Paradise, Nova Scotia, edited *The Halifax Chronicle* and served as Attorney-General of Canada between 1884 and 1896. He was the author of two biographies: *Joseph Howe* (1904) and *Sir Charles Tupper* (1916).

⁵² William Bliss Carman (1861-1929), a cousin of Charles G. D. Roberts, was a Canadian literary journalist, editorialist, and poet. He worked for various magazines, including the *New York Independent* (1890-92) and the *Atlantic Monthly*. After 1889, he spent the rest of his life in the U.S., although he was a frequent visitor to Canada. His reputation rests on his first collection of poems, *Low Tide on Grand Pré* (1893). His other works include *Behind the Arras: A Book of the Unseen* (1895), *Ballads of Lost Haven: A Book of the Sea* (1897), *By the Aurelian Wall, and Other Elegies* (1898), *April Airs* (1916), *Later Poems* (1921), *Ballads and Lyrics* (1923), *Far Horizon* (1925), *Wild Garden* (1929), and *Sanctuary* (1929).

as the Abasin of Minas', and, leagues away the vast bulk of Blomidon shelving bough-like into the Sea. . . .

Memoir 151

To Elizabeth A. Sharp, [late August, 1889]

. . . Mr. and Mrs. Longley were most kind, and so were all the many leading people to whom I was introduced. I was taken to the annual match of the Quoit Club, and was asked to present the Cup to the winner at the close, with a few words if I felt disposed. Partly from being so taken aback, partly from pleased excitement, and partly from despair, I lost all nervousness and made a short and (what I find was considered) humourous speech, so slowly and coolly spoken that I greatly admired it myself!

Memoir 150-1

To Elizabeth a Sharp, September 12, [1889]

(On the St. Lawrence), | 12th Sept.

To-day has been a momentous birthday on the whole — and none the less so because I have been alone, and, what is to me an infinite relief, quite unknown. I told no one about my Saguenay⁵³ expedition till the last moment — and so there is nothing definite about me in the papers save that I “abruptly left St. John” (the capital of New Brunswick) and that I am to arrive in Quebec tomorrow. I sent you a card from Rivière du Loup, the northernmost township of the old Acadians, and a delightful place. I reached it from Temiscouata (the Lake of Winding Water) — a journey of extreme interest and beauty, through a wild and as yet unsettled country. The track has only been open this summer. Before I reached its other end (the junction of the St. John river with the Madawaska) I was heartily sick of New Brunswick, with its oven-like heat, its vast monotonous forests with leagues upon leagues of dead and dying trees, and its all present forest-fires. The latter have cause widespread disaster. . . . Several time we were scorched by the flames, but a few yards away — and had “to rush” several places. But once in the province of Quebec, and everything changed. The fires (save small desultory ones) disappeared: the pall of smoke lightened and vanished: and the glorious September foliage made a happy contrast to the wearisome hundreds of miles of decayed and decaying firs. It was a most glorious sunset — one of the grandest I have ever seen — and the colour of the vast Laurentian Mountain range, on the north side of the St. Lawrence, superb. It was dark when we reached the mouth of the Saguenay River — said to be the gloomiest and most awe-inspiring river in the world — and began our sail of close upon a hundred miles (it can be followed by canoes for a greater length than Great Britain). The full moon came up, and the scene was grand and solemn beyond words. Fancy fifty miles of sheer mountains, one after another without a valley-break, but simply cleft ravines. The deep gloom as we slowly sailed through the noiseless shadow brooding between Cape Eternity and Cape Trinity was indescribable. We anchored for some hours in “Ha! Ha! Bay,” the famous landing place of the old discoverers. In the early morning we sailed out from Ha! Ha! Bay, and then for hours sailed down such scenery as I have never seen before and never expect to see

⁵³ Having traveled from St. John to the St. Lawrence River via the St. John River and overland to Rivière du Loup, Sharp made a side excursion up the Saguenay River for 100 miles to Ha! Ha! Bay before proceeding up the St. Lawrence to Montreal.

again. . . . At Quebec I am first to be the guest of the well-known Dr. Stewart,⁵⁴ and then of Mons. Le Moine⁵⁵ at his beautiful place out near the Indian Village of Lorette and the Falls of Montmorenci — not far from the famous Plain of Abraham, where Wolfe and Montcalm fought, and an Empire lay in balance.

Memoir 152-3

To Joel Asaph Allen, ⁵⁶ [September 16, 1889]

C/o W. D. Lighthall Esq | 913 Dorchester St. | Montreal | Quebec | Monday Mg

My dear Sir

Your son and my valued friend, Grant Allen, has kindly given me the accompanying note of Introduction to you.⁵⁷ I expect to spend a night this week in Kingston (probably Thursday, but I cannot say definitely yet, till I reach Montreal, whither I go from Quebec today) and if it would not be an intrusion upon your valuable time, or in any way inconvenient for you, I should much like to look in at “Alwington” for an hour or so.

Believe me | Yours very truly | William Sharp

J. A. Allen Esq

ALS University of Toronto

To Edmund Clarence Stedman, September 17, [1889]

C/o W. D. Lighthall Esq. | 913 Dorchester St. | Montreal | Tuesday, 17th Sept.

My Dear Stedman

I have had to forego many of my projected visits, for I find that I must return to London earlier than I had anticipated. This involves my going to New York even sooner than the date I mentioned to you in my last.

⁵⁴ George Stewart (1848-1906) founded and edited Stewart’s Literary Quarterly Magazine from 1867 to 1872. In 1879 he went to Quebec where he edited the Daily Chronicle until 1896. A voluminous writer, his chief works are *Canada Under the Administration of the Earl of Dufferin* (1878) and *The Story of the Great Fire in St. John, New Brunswick* (1877).

⁵⁵ Sir James MacPherson Le Moine (1825-1912), a charter member of the Royal Society of Canada, was an antiquarian and the author of *Maple Leaves*, 6 vol. (1863-1906), a collection of short sketches on the general and local history and legends of Canada. The site of a Huron village established in 1697, Lorette is now Loretteville, a suburb of Quebec.

⁵⁶ Joel Asaph Allen (1838-1921) was the father of Sharp’s friend Grant Allen. A resident of Canada, he was the author of *The American Bisons* (1876) and *History of North American Pinnipeds* (1880).

⁵⁷ The accompanying note reads: THE NOOK. | HORSHAM ROAD. | DORKING. | July 27. | My Dear Father, | Just a line to introduce our very good friend William Sharp, whom you probably know as the author of a life of Rossetti, and of many graceful poems. He is his own best credential. If you like him half as much as we do, you will welcome him well. In haste (for we’re just off) | Yours affectionately. | Grant.

I now expect to arrive in New York (from Boston) about this day week — that is, about Monday evening or Tuesday of next week. I hope to be in New York for either 12 or 14 days — but I shall not inflict myself upon you all that time, as I am going to spend a night or so with Mr. Alden and probably elsewhere.

However, I won't be a great drag upon Mrs. Stedman and yourself — for the mornings I must spend in correspondence and writing, and in the afternoons I shall have much to see and many friends in New York to “look up”, not to speak of promised evenings.

May I go to you directly on arrival from Boston (either next Monday or Tuesday, probably the latter)? If in any way inconvenient for Mrs. Stedman or yourself, just let me know, of course. I am impatient to be in New York, which I have so long wished to visit — one of the Trinity of Greatest Cities.

I leave hear about Friday of this week for Boston, where (or in Hanover) I hope to see Arthur Sherburne Hardy⁵⁸ and one or two others.

With kind regards to Mrs. Stedman. | Cordially Yours, | William Sharp

ALS Huntington

To Edmund Clarence Stedman, [September 20, 1889]

Montreal | Friday

Cher Ami,

Be merciful and forgive! I see now how inconsiderate I have been — but I had somehow got the impression that you were a “fixture” in town during September and October. I am very remorseful for having been so irritatingly uncertain a factor in your plans. The best way to show that you forgive, will be to tell me frankly just when you had arranged, or when you want, to go into the country: I would not for a good deal deprive so hard a worker of long-looked forward to days of rest. I have other friends I could go to, you know: and, moreover, I expect my stay will have perforce to shrink even a little more yet.

In some justification of what you only too truly call my bewildering changes of plans, I have to plead my anxiety about my wife. She has been at the Sun-Cure in Southern Austria (Illyria), and tho' now in Dresden and somewhat better, seems to have been anything but “cured.” In fact, she has been, and is, suffering from intermittent fever. I have, therefore, been doing all I can to cut off unessential portions of my programme, so that I may get home earlier than arranged, and, if advisable, go out to Germany to meet her. Fortunately her note represents her health as much better. All the same, I must now leave New York as soon as practicable. So to this extent, overlook my inconsiderate changes of plan. A man in love (which I still am, though married nearly 4 years) is not a reasoning animal — not a reasonable one at any rate!!

Cordially yours, | William Sharp

I shall wire from Boston on Monday morning as to my arrival etc. and as to whether on Monday or Tuesday evening (probably Tuesday).

ALS Columbia

⁵⁸ Arthur Sherburne Hardy (1847-1930), a civil engineer, diplomat, editor, novelist, and poet, edited *Cosmopolitan* for two years. His works include *Francesca of Rimini* (1878), *But Yet a Woman* (1878), *The Wind of Destiny* (1886), *Passe Rose* (1889), *Aurélie* (1912), and *Things Remembered* (1923).

To Elizabeth A. Sharp, [late September, 1889]

New York, New York

. . . So much has happened since I wrote to you from Montreal that I don't see how I'm to tell you more than a fraction of it — particularly as I am seldom alone even for five minutes. Last week I left Montreal (after having shot the rapids, etc.) and traveled to Boston via the White Mountains, through the States of Vermont, Connecticut and Massachusetts. Boston is a beautiful place — an exceedingly fine city with lovely environs. Prof. A. S. Hardy (Passe Rose, etc.) was most kind . . . Cambridge and Harvard University are also very fine. I enjoyed seeing Longfellow's house (Miss L. still occupies it) and those of Emerson, Lowell, etc. I spent brief visits to Prof. Wright of Harvard, to Winsor the historian, etc.⁵⁹ On Sunday afternoon I drove with A.S.H.⁶⁰ to Belmont in Massachusetts, and spent [the] afternoon with Howells, the novelist.⁶¹ He was most interesting and genial — I had the best of welcomes from the Stedmans.⁶² They are kindness personified. The house is lovely, and full of beautiful things and multitudes of books. I have already more invitations than I can accept: everyone is most hospitable. I have already met Mr. Gilder, the poet, and editor of the "Century"; Mr. Alden, of "Harper's";⁶³ Mr. Bowen, of the "Independent";⁶⁴ R. H. Stoddard, the "father" of recent American letters;⁶⁵ and

⁵⁹ John Henry Wright (1852-1908), a distinguished classical scholar and student of educational problems, left Johns Hopkins to become Professor of Greek at Harvard in 1887. Justin Winsor (1831-1897), a librarian and historian, was superintendent of the Boston Public Library from 1868 until 1877 when he became librarian at Harvard. His works include *Bibliography of the Original Quartos and Folios of Shakespeare* (1876) and *Narrative and Critical History of America* [ed.] (1884-89).

⁶⁰ Arthur Sherburne Hardy.

⁶¹ Sharp had met William Dean Howells in Venice in 1883 (see letter dated 10 May 1883 to Elizabeth Sharp, fn #3).

⁶² The Stedmans lived at 44 Easy 26th Street; Sharp probably arrived there on Tuesday 17 September as indicated in the previous letter to Stedman.

⁶³ Henry Mills Alden (1836-1919) was managing editor of *Harper's Weekly* from 1863 to 1869 and then editor of *Harper's Magazine* until his death in 1919. His works include *God in His World* (1890) and *Magazine Writing and the New Literature* (1908).

⁶⁴ Henry Chandler Bowen (1813-1896) of the firm of Bowen and McNamee, wholesale dealers in silk, was one of the publishers of the *New York Independent*, a weekly religious journal, from 1848 to 1896 and edited the magazine from 1870 until 1896. Sharp published in the *Independent* between 1889 and 1893.

⁶⁵ Richard Henry Stoddard (1825-1903) was a poet, editor, and critic opposed to literary pretense and "Bohemianism." During the last thirty years of his life, his house was a favorite meeting place for literary men in New York. His works include *Poems* (1851), *Songs of Summer* (1857),

heaven knows how many others. I have been elected honorary member of the two most exclusive clubs in N.Y., the “Century” and “The Players.” Next week there is to be a special meeting at the Author’s Club, and I am to be the guest of the evening. . . .

Memoir 153-4

To Richard Watson Gilder, September 30, 1889

44 East 26th Street | N.Y. | Monday Morning | 30 Sept. ‘89

Dear Mr. Gilder

Have just returned from Metuchen, where I have been spending Saty & Sunday with Mr. Alden, of *Harper’s Mag.* Before I left, I gave instructions about the transmission to you of a copy of my “American Sonnets” – but I forgot that it would have to go without inscription. I shall try and look in some day, partly to rectify that omission, and also for the pleasure of seeing you again. If the fates be adverse to this modest plan, then you must accept the will for the deed – or let this hurried note serve the end.

I understand now the meaning of a para I read somewhere – that Jersey mosquitoes are big enough to spank! That war with America would be justifiable, if she sent us a healthy young married mosquito-couple, is the opinion of the suffering Briton who signs himself,

Sincerely Yours, | William Sharp

ALS Stanford

To Elizabeth A. Sharp, October 1, 1889

New York | 1:10:89.

Can only send you a brief line by this mail. I enjoyed my visit to Mr. Alden at Metuchen in New Jersey very much. Among the new friends I care for most are a married couple called Janvier.⁶⁶ They are true Bohemians and most delightful. He is a writer and she an artist . . . and

Abraham Lincoln: A Horatian Ode (1865), *The Book of the East* (1867), and *The Lion’s Cub* (1890).

⁶⁶ Thomas Allibone Janvier (1849-1913) spent 1871 to 1880 in Philadelphia as a journalist with the *Times*, the *Evening Bulletin*, and the *Press*. There he met and married in 1879 Catharine Ann Drinker (1841-1922), a member of a distinguished Philadelphia family. (She was an aunt and the namesake of the novelist Catherine Drinker Bowen.) For three years starting in 1880, the Janviers traveled in Colorado, New Mexico, and Mexico. In 1883, they settled in New York’s Greenwich Village, where they lived for a decade. In 1893, they moved first to southern France (where they became honorary members of the *Félibrige*) and later to England. They returned to America in 1900. After this first meeting in 1889, the Janviers became close friends of both William and Elizabeth Sharp. “Mrs. Janvier was the first person on either side of the Atlantic to penetrate Sharp’s disguise as Fiona Macleod, and she received a letter (Jan. 5, 1895) admitting the identity” (*Dictionary of American Biography*, vol. V., pp. 613-614). Thomas Janvier’s publications include *Color Studies* (1885), sketches of life in Mexico; *The Mexican Guide* (1886); *The Aztec Treasure House* (1890); *Stories of Old New Spain* (1891); *Embassy to Provence* (1893); *In Old New York* (1894); *In Great Waters* (1901); *Henry Hudson* (1909); and *From the South of France* (1912)

both have traveled much in Mexico. We dined together at a Cuban Cafe last night. He gave me his vol. of stories called “Colour Studies” and she a little sketch of a Mexican haunted house — both addressed to “William Sharp. Recuerdo di Amistad y carimo.”

Memoir 154

To Richard Watson Gilder, [early October, 1889]

Dear Mr. Gilder

If you have not already posted Mr. DeKay 's⁶⁷ books to me will you kindly do so to me at my London address.

In haste, | Sincerely yours, | William Sharp

Address: Wescam, Goldhurst Terrace, So. Hampstead, London, NW
ACS Huntington

*To E. C. Stedman, October 6, 1889*⁶⁸

My dear Stedman

This, along with some flowers, will reach you on the morning of your birthday, while I am far out on the Atlantic. May the flowers carry to your poet-soul a breath of that happy life which seems to inspire them — and may your coming years be full of the beauty and fragrance of which they are the familiar and exquisite symbols. You have won my love as well as my deep regard and admiration — and so I leave you to understand how earnestly and truly I wish you all good.

Once more let me tell you how deeply grateful I am to you and Mrs. Stedman for all your generous kindness to me. We have all, somewhere, sometime, our gardens, where — as Hafiz says — the roses have a subtler fragrance, and the nightingales also a rarer melody; and my memory of my last “fortunate Eden” will remain with me always.

But I shall not be content till I hear (not by letter but by PostCard) that you have had your long delayed holiday, and have gained new vigour. Do be careful of yourself: You, who have done so much, have yet so much to say and to do — so, at least listen to that plea.

I shall always think of you, and Mrs. Stedman, and Arthur,⁶⁹ as of near and dear relatives. Yes, we are of one family.

Farewell, meanwhile, | Ever your affectionate | William Sharp

ALS University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and Memoir, 154-5.

To Mrs. Edmund Clarence Stedman, October 12, [1889]

⁶⁷ Charles DeKay (1848-1935), an essayist and poet, was an editorial writer for the New York Times. His works include *The Bohemian: A Tragedy of Modern Life* (1878), *Hesperus, and Other Poems* (1880), *The Vision of Nimrod* (1881), *The Vision of Esther* (1882), and *Bird Gods* (1898).

⁶⁸ This letter was written before Sharp sailed on the Sierra from New York to Liverpool, post-dated, and given to a florist to deliver with flowers to Stedman on October 8th, Stedman 's birthday (see next letter).

⁶⁹ Arthur Stedman, Edmund Clarence Stedman's son.

S.S. "Sierra" | Saturday 12th Oct

My dear Mrs. Stedman

It is too rough for me to attempt to write with pen and ink — so I am sending you a brief pencilled note. Sometime in the middle of the night, or early in the morning, we expect to reach Queenstown to disembark a few passengers and land the mails. On the whole, we have had a pleasant passage, though with some heavy rolling and a good share of rain and fog. Now that we are nearing the British coast we are coming into true October weather, — blue skies, with fresh keen air. I have made some pleasant acquaintanceships on board — and, curiously enough, with an artist and his mother and sister who live quite close to me in London. There is no one of artistic or literary note on board, except Alfred East,⁷⁰ the well-known landscape-painter, who is returning from a painting-expedition to Japan.

I need hardly to say that often and often I think of you and yours, and remember with ever fresh pleasure the visit which your kindness did so much to make delightful. Believe me, I shall never forget, nor cease to have a "warm corner in my heart" for you, and your husband, and son. I do trust that Mr. Stedman is feeling better, and that by the time this reaches you, you will both be in the country, and enjoying a thorough rest. I am sure you both need it. Arthur, I know, was only going away for a few days, but into these I hope he has crammed a month of health.

I'm afraid I must come to an abrupt conclusion — but the rolling of the vessel is so great that I can hardly keep my seat. I shall be thankful to see Queenstown, and still more to reach Liverpool, some fifteen or eighteen hours later. I expect that two or three letters will arrive for me in New York from my wife — but Arthur kindly promised to send any letters on at once, though I wish to relieve him of that trouble by instructions to the General or District Post Office.

I must stop, or I'll be rolled overboard — and then there will be an end of me as well as of my letter. With affectionate regards to you and yours,

Believe me, dear Mrs. Stedman, | Ever sincerely yours, | William Sharp

P.S. I hope the florist (at the corner of Broadway and Madison Sq.) did not forget to deliver my letter to E.C.S. and the flowers so as to arrive as a birthday greeting on the morning of the 8th. I made him promise to send them round before 10 o'clock. May he and you live to see many happy, ever happier, returns of the 8th!

ALS Columbia

To Thomas Robert Macquoid, [mid-October, 1889]⁷¹

⁷⁰Sir Alfred East (1849-1913) was named to the Royal Academy in 1899. His paintings were widely displayed in Europe and the United States. He also wrote *The Art of Landscape Painting in Oil Color* (1906).

⁷¹ Thomas Robert Macquoid (1820-1912) was a well-known and prolific watercolorist and illustrator for the *Graphic and Illustrated London News*, among other publications. His wife Katherine Sarah Macquoid (1824-1917) was and equally well-known travel writer and novelist. "1889" is written in pencil on the letter. Mid-October 1889 is a reasonable date since Sharp had just returned from his trip to Canada — where he met Roberts — and the United States.

17a Goldhurst Terrace | So. Hampstead. N.W.

Cher Confrere,

Herewith I send you, for consideration for E. & W., a very fine sonnet by Prof. Chas. Roberts, the foremost of the younger poets in Canada. He is well-known here, as well as in Canada and the States. His third vol, which will be out in 1890 (autumn), is full of remarkable studies in poetic realism.

Have you had time to consider the suggestion or two I made to you?

In haste & with best wishes for the success of your Xmas No.

Yours sincerely | William Sharp

I sincerely trust Mrs. Macquoid is feeling better.

ALS, private

To Richard Watson Gilder, [late October, 1889]

17a Goldhurst Terrace | So. Hampstead | London N.W.

Dear Mr. Gilder

The books by your brother-in-law, and the present writer, arrived almost simultaneously this evening in London. I had a pleasant passage. Already my most delightful visit to New York seems dreamlike.

Kindest regards to you and other friends with you and to Mrs. Gilder,

Faithfully Yours, | William Sharp

ACS Huntington

To Robert Underwood Johnson⁷², November 6, 1889

6th Nov./89

My dear Mr. Johnson

Just returned from Germany, so excuse this hurried P/C C as I have a great pile of correspondence awaiting me.

Many thanks for Mrs. Dodge's fine sonnets.⁷³ Please do not forget your other promise. Kindest remembrances to yourself and confreres —

Sincerely yours, | William Sharp

ACS Huntington

To Kineton Parkes, [November 6, 1889]⁷⁴

⁷² See note to Sharp letter dated 11 January 1889.

⁷³ Mary Elizabeth Mapes Dodge (1831-1905), an editor and children's writer, published adult fiction in *The Atlantic Monthly*, *Harper's Magazine*, and *The Century*. In 1870 she became an associate editor of *Hearth and Home*, and from 1873 until her death, she edited the juvenile magazine, *St. Nicholas*. Her works include *Hans Brinker: or, The Silver Skates* (1865), *A Few Friends and How They Amused Themselves* (1869), *Rhymes and Jingles* (1874), *Along the Way* (1879, republished in 1904 as *Poems and Verses*), *Donald and Dorothy* (1883), *When Life is Young* (1894), and *The Land of Pluck* (1894).

Wescam | Goldhurst Terrace | So. Hampstead. N.W.

I sent you a line from Germany a few days ago which I fear cannot have reached you. I forgot your address, & simply put after your name. Editor of *Comus*, Birmingham. Perhaps you wd recover the P/C by enquiring at the G.P.O.

In haste | William Sharp

APC private

To James Mavor, December 14, 1889

Handed in at the Swiss Cottage

To Mavor | 93 Hope St. | Glasgow

Can you reserve me two to three pages February number for Elegiac poem in memoriam

Browning⁷⁵

William Sharp

Telegraph, University of Toronto

To Edmund Clarence Stedman, [December 15?, 1889]

London

My dear Friend

I was so sorry – so grieved for you – to hear of the death of your mother. You who have had so much trouble, and borne it all with such heroic heart and brave demeanour, have again been saddened by disaster. I wish I could say or do something to lighten your pain: you know at any rate that you have my loving sympathy. I gave myself the satisfaction of writing a short account of your mother in a paper here, based on that in a paper you sent me.

And so Browning⁷⁶ — beloved and revered friend and great poet — has gone!

⁷⁴ The date stamped on the postcard looks like 8/89, but Sharp was on his way to America on that date. Shortly after returning from the United States in mid- October, he went to Cologne to meet his wife, who had been staying with Mrs. Caird at Veldes in the Carpathian Alps during her husband's absence. The card's probable date is 6 November 1889, the day he also sent a card to Robert Underwood Johnson which he dated and in which he says he just returned from Germany. W. Kinton Parkes (1865-1938), a novelist and critic, edited *Comus* from November 1888 to October 1889. He also edited *The Library Review* in 1893-1894. His works include *Shelley's Faith: Its Development and Relativity* (1888), *The Pre-Raphaelite Movement* (1889), *The Painter Poets*, ed. for the Canterbury Poets Series (1890), *Love a la Mode: A Study in Episodes* (1907), *Potiphar's Wife* (1908), *The Altar of Moloch* (1911), *The Money Hunt: A Comedy of Country Houses* (1914), *Hardware* (1914), and *The Art of Carved Sculpture* (1931).

⁷⁵ Mavor's response appears at the bottom of the telegram: "Glad to have poem Browning"

⁷⁶ Robert Browning died on 12 December 1889. Shortly after 1 January 1890, Sharp agreed to write a biography of Browning for the Great Writers Series. He also published two poems on Browning. "In Memoriam: Robert Browning," appeared in the January 1890 issue of *Belford's Magazine*, and "On Robert Browning" appeared in the *The Art Review* in June.

But a Xmas-note must not be all sad. We will think of you and yours, and drink your healths in loving remembrance. May the gods give you in 1890 the leisure you require, and may your strenuous high song make itself heard in renewed strength and heart.

Always affectionately yours, | William Sharp

ALS Columbia

*To Richard Watson Gilder, December 18, 1889*⁷⁷

17a Goldhurst Terrace | So. Hampstead | London. | N.W. | 18:12:89 | Dictated

Dear Mr. Gilder

I am engaged upon a series of “Imaginary Journals,” and wonder if you would care to have one for *The Century*.

As the style and scope of the series will of course be various, no one example will quite show you a precedent: still, as an *essai pour servir*, perhaps you may care to glance at the enclosed.

The proofs are duplicated of an “Imaginary Journal” by me which is to appear in the January issue of *The Art Review*. In each of the series, my effort is to reach the real self of the person represented: to show them in quintessential moods. Collectively, they will (in some measure) demonstrate the strange mental and spiritual complexities of the Modern Renaissance, a period which I hold to have begun its efflorescence earlier than is commonly granted, and hold, also, to have undergone suspension, or perhaps a Protean interfusion, till the beginning of this century, when it has been, and still is, culminating.

Two others of the series will in due course appear in *The Art Review*: one in *Backwood's*: and one in *Macmillan's*.

I am slowly (work of this kind is necessarily very gradual and careful) writing the others which will complete my work. Perhaps you would care to have one of these.

(Fragments from)

1. *The Lost Journal of Gaspara Stampa*
“il Saffo de Nostri Tempi,” as she was called. The beautiful Venetian poetess, whose lover, Collalto, was seduced by Diane de Poitiers when he went to the French Court as an ambassador.
2. *D° of Giorgione*
Dealing with his love of colour and music; etc.
3. *D° of Gerard de Nerval*
The French Romanticist poet, whose strange manner of death has never been satisfactorily explained.
4. *D° of Baudelaire*
a purely psychological revelation.

⁷⁷ This letter is interesting because it was dictated to Sharp’s sister Mary and is in her hand. Several years later — when Sharp decided to reinforce the independent identity of Fiona Macleod by having all her letters copied by Mary Sharp and sent by her from Edinburgh where she lived — this handwriting became that of Fiona Macleod. This letter is the only instance discovered so far of Sharp’s using Mary as an amanuensis prior to the advent of letters from Fiona Macleod in 1894.

5. *The Reverie of Bazzi.*
Fragments from The Journal of Bazzi (Sodoma) while painting the St. Benedict Frescoes at the Convent of Monte Oliveto in the wilds of Umbria.
6. *The Passion of Parmigiano*
His “passion,” as it literally was, at the end of his life, was Alchemy. It ruined him, but not until it had first ruined his art.
7. *The Crime of Andrea dal Costagno*
A fragment from the Journal of this murderer painter and successful hypocrite, written not long before his death. (Vide Vasari)
8. *A Dark Day of St. Francis*

If you would care to have any of these you might specify the two you fancy most, and I should send you one of them. But could you print for certain in 1890?⁷⁸
Best wishes for Xmas and the New Year!

Yours sincerely | William Sharp

P.S. I enclose two short poems for yr. consideration.⁷⁹
ALS New York University Fales Library

⁷⁸ Sharp’s hand concludes the letter from this point.

⁷⁹ A poem by Sharp entitled “Remembrance” appeared in the *Century*, which Gilder edited, in December 1891. See note to Sharp’s letter dated 11 January 1889.