

SECTION XVI

LIFE: 1897

Sharp spent New Year's Day at St. Maxime, visited the Janviers in St. Remy for a few days, and went to Paris on January 5. He had intended to spend the entire month in the South, but his health had improved, finances were a continuing problem, and, most important, W. B. Yeats, who was scheduled to return to London in mid-January, asked Sharp to meet him in Paris. In late December, Yeats had written a lengthy letter to Fiona Macleod from Paris in which he suggested she write a short play in the Celtic vein for performances sponsored by one of the various Irish literary and political organizations he was promoting. He described his interest in the occult and his intent to incorporate occult materials in his writings, and he hinted at plans to establish a Celtic Mystical Order. He also expressed his hope that William Sharp "will come to Paris on his way back to England" for "I have much to talk over with him." Sharp probably received this letter at St. Remy, forwarded from the Fiona Macleod return address in Edinburgh.

Although Yeats and Sharp had moved in the same London literary circles since the late 1880s and may have experimented together in drug-induced (hashish and mescal) spiritualist experiments, they were not close friends. Yeats had begun to attract a great deal of critical notice for his poetry, and Sharp wanted to get to know him better. Having invented Fiona Macleod and positioned himself through his supposed friendship with her at the center of a Scottish version of the Irish Literary Revival, Sharp hoped to be drawn more closely into Yeats' circle. The warm January letter to Fiona inviting her to write plays embodying Celtic myths and expressing his hope that Sharp would visit him in Paris was precisely the entree Sharp was seeking. Sharp, in turn, had become Yeats' entrée to the mysterious Highland lady whose

writings had captured his attention and admiration. He wanted Sharp to encourage Fiona to write plays embodying Celtic myths and thus to join the broader Celtic Revival. It is no wonder Sharp shifted his plans and went to Paris.

Far more significantly, given later developments, Yeats wanted to put Sharp's powers of clairvoyance to test. As the result of the ruse Sharp had perpetrated the previous August involving the Archer vision, Yeats was sure of Fiona's visionary powers. He wanted to know if Sharp also had the power to communicate with the spiritual world. When Sharp passed the tests Yeats devised in Paris, the matter was settled. Yeats invited him, and through him Fiona Macleod, to join Maud Gonne and a few other confidants in an effort to obtain through visions the talismans and rituals of the Celtic Mystical Order he hoped to locate in an abandoned castle in the West of Ireland. During the ten days Sharp spent in Paris with Yeats and his friends – besides Maud Gonne, there were only Moina and Macgregor Mathers who were busy establishing a Paris branch of the Golden Dawn -- he was in a heightened, perhaps manic, state of mind. Yeats described Sharp's visit with him in Paris in both the first draft and the final versions of his *Autobiographies*. Further details emerge in his letters to Sharp and Sharp's replies over the next few years. I have described in some detail the astonishing events that occurred in Paris in "W. B. Yeats, William Sharp, and Fiona Macleod: A Celtic Drama, 1897" (the section called "A Plunge in the Seine") in *Yeats Annual, No. 14* (Palgrave, 2001).

Sharp left Paris on or about January 15 and, stopping only briefly in London, went straight to Edinburgh and crossed the Forth to stay at the remote Pettycur Inn. He had arranged for Edith Rinder to join him there so he could share with her his news from Paris and convince her to play the role of Fiona Macleod in the spiritualist work that lay ahead. In a January 25 letter to E. C. Stedman, Sharp implied that a special friend was with him during the two weeks he spent at the Pettycur Inn. He had lead Stedman to believe he was having an affair with Fiona Macleod. Surely that friend was Edith Rinder who functioned as his confidant and companion. It was she Sharp was encouraging to play Maud Gonne to his W.B. Yeats and join him in the

evocation of spirits and psychic experiments that soon followed. The parallel between Sharp's relationship with Fiona/Edith and Yeats' relationship with Maud Gonne were evident to both men. They were deeply in love with a woman who was unattainable. Yeats believed, and caused Sharp to believe, that efforts to contact the spirits had a greater chance of success when undertaken jointly by a man and woman who had a deep emotional attachment.

Back in London in February, Sharp continued to correspond with Stedman about the money due him from E. R. Lamson for *Wives in Exile*. That novel was copyrighted by Stone and Kimball in June 1896 and included on that firm's list of new books in November 1896. Kimball retained the copyright and the printed sheets when his partnership with Stone was dissolved, and Lamson acquired both the sheets and the rights when Kimball's firm failed. The sheets were finally bound, covered, and published by Lamson, Wolffe & Co. in the spring of 1897. Sharp had not received all the money due him from Lamson, and he was so short of funds that he applied as Fiona Macleod to the Geddes firm for an advance against the royalties of the three volume edition of her short stories that would appear in inexpensive soft covers in March. The money Stedman was squeezing out of Lamson and trying to recover from Melville Stone for the broken commitment his son Herbert Stone had made to Sharp for *Wives in Exile* was badly needed and greatly appreciated. Sharp made several proposals to publishers during the month for works by himself and by Fiona; and his problems were compounded by a fire in his study – no doubt caused by a stray cigarette – and the illness of Elizabeth.

Financial problems continued to plague Sharp through the Spring, aggravating his physical and mental illnesses. His letters to Stedman continued to chronicle occasional escapes to the seashore with Fiona Macleod (Edith Rinder) that restored his vitality. His letters to Caroline Janvier in mid-March, from which EAS excerpted in the *Memoir* (283-4), reveal his manic state of mind. He was clearly disturbed, and Mrs. Sharp recalled her concern: "During the most active years of the Fiona Macleod writings, the author was usually in a highly wrought condition of mental and emotional tension, which produced great restlessness, so that he could

not long remain contentedly anywhere” (*Memoir*, 266). And later, “The prolonged strain of the heavy dual work added to by eager experimentation with certain psychic phenomena with which he had long been familiar but wished further to investigate, efforts in which at times he and Mr. W. B. Yeats collaborated – began to tell heavily on him and to produce very disquieting symptoms of nervous collapse” (*Memoir*, 282). The periodic escapes with Edith Rinder provided opportunities to engage in psychic experiments. While they seem to have provided passing relief from his depressions, the spiritualist activities also evoked the manic states that soon collapsed into deeper depressions.

The three-volume reissue of the Fiona Macleod tales by Patrick Geddes and Colleagues appeared in March, and Sharp spent a good deal of time sending copies to friends with notes from Fiona Macleod designed to produce favorable reviews and increase their sales. In late March, he told his friends Stanley Little and Louise Chandler Moulton that he planned to be abroad – in Europe – for two or three weeks in April. There is no evidence that he left England, but in late April he wrote from St. Margaret’s Bay – near Dover – to Elizabeth who was in Paris reviewing the Salons. In early May, he was back in London, and Elizabeth, whose health was not good, went south from Paris to stay in St. Remy where their friends the Janviers lived in the winter months.

Sharp went north the first weekend of May to visit Murray Gilchrist in Derbyshire, and the next weekend he made an improbable flying visit to St. Remy to surprise his wife on her birthday: “On the early morning of the 17th of May the waiter brought me my coffee and my letters to my room as usual, and told me gravely that a large packet had arrived for me, during the night, with orders that it should not be delivered to me till the morning. Should it be brought upstairs? The next moment the door was pushed open and in came the radiant smiling unexpected apparition of my Poet!” (*Memoir*, 286). Sharp arrived back in London on the evening of May 19 and wrote to his friend Stanley Little that he could not see him because he was planning to go away again in a few days for a week: “I’m as nearly bankrupt as I’ve ever

been in my life — but I've lived up to the hilt, and it's Spring, and Summer's still to come, and heads or tails it's still good to be alive, and may the Dispenser of Laughter & Tears smile benignly on both of us, cher ami!" In the midst of all this frantic activity, Sharp was trying to sustain his writing and maintain some income. Among other pieces, he finished an essay on Maurice Maeterlinck that was published in 1898 as volume sixteen of Charles W. Warner's *Library of Best Literature: Ancient and Modern*. His constant movement during these months, reflecting as it does his manic state, causes one to wonder how he was able to accomplish any writing.

Sharp spent most of June working and socializing in London. On the 10th he took a woman, almost certainly Edith Rinder, to visit George Meredith at Box Hill and introduced her as Fiona Macleod. In a letter to Alice Meynell dated June 13, 1897, Meredith described her as "a handsome woman, who would not give me her eyes for awhile." In a letter to Maud Gonnet dated January 14, 1907, Yeats recalled Meredith saying "she was the most beautiful woman he ever saw." To my knowledge, this is the only occasion on which Sharp was able to convince Edith to meet one of his friends playing the role of Fiona Macleod. (See *Yeats Annual, No. 14*, p. 182 and note, and *Gonnet-Yeats Letters*, p. 234). Elizabeth returned home from France on June 14. As the summer progressed he worked on several Fiona tales which would appear in 1899 in *The Dominion of Dreams* and the retelling of Celtic stories for children, *The Laughter of Peterkin*, which would be published in October by Archibald, Constable. In mid-August, the Sharps went to Southwold in Sussex with the Janviers, their friends from New York and Provence. After spending two days in London at the end of the month, they left again to spend two weeks with other friends (unnamed) on the Dorset coast. They returned to London on September 14.

In his letter to Meredith of that date, Sharp said he would be leaving London the next day. If that expectation materialized, his destination is unknown, but he was in London when he wrote to Edward Martyn on September 22. Yeats had encouraged Martyn, a well-off

member of the Irish landed gentry and an aspiring playwright, to invite Sharp and others to his home, Tillyra Castle, in County Galway to discuss the kind of plays Yeats wanted for his projected Irish Theater. With the dates for the theater session now settled, Sharp told Martyn he was leaving for Dublin the next day (Thursday, the 23rd) where he would see George Russell (AE) on Friday and, on Saturday morning, go on the Royal Hotel in Greenore, a port village on the East coast north of Dublin, where he could be contacted on Sunday and Monday mornings, the 26th and 27th. His plans after that, he told Martyn, would be “guided by weather and other circumstances,” but he implied he would be travelling in Ireland until Saturday October 2 when he would take the train Martyn had suggested west to Ardrahan in Galway. Letters that follow, however, indicate he made his way on Monday, September 27, back across the Irish Channel to the Isle of Arran off the west coast of Scotland where he stayed four nights, before returning to Ireland and taking the train west to visit Martyn on Saturday, October 2.

Sharp’s annual birthday letter to E. C. Stedman, dated September 28 from The Corrie, Isle of Arran, began: “I send you a line from this beautiful island (more beautiful than ever to me because of a beautiful friend and comrade who is here too).” He went on to identify that comrade as F. M. The brief Arran interlude seems to have been preplanned secretly to enable him to be alone for a few days with Edith Rinder who would have been spending the month of September, as usual, on the mainland near Tarbert just north of Arran. After leaving Arran, he told Stedman, he would be going “to the West of Ireland (Connemara) to stay at an old castle with a strange and delightful host – with a fellow guest, my friend W. B. Yeats.” In a September 29 letter from Arran he asked John Macleay to see that the *Highland News* “for this and the next two weeks” be sent to him at Tillyra Castle. On Monday October 4 Sharp wrote a long and substantive letter to his wife from Tillyra in which he described his hazardous arrival two days earlier and Martyn’s plans to take him to see the Cliffs of Moher and other West Country sights before Yeats arrived on Thursday. Sharp was in a manic state, delighted to have made it at last into the heart of the Irish contingent of the Celtic literary revival, a distinguished group that included, besides Martyn and Yeats, Lady Gregory, whose deceased husband had

been Viceroy of India and whose Coole Park was nearby, Douglas Hyde, Martin Morris, another neighbor who would become in 1901 Baron Morris of Killanin, and Dr. Moritz Bonn, a German academic. But Sharp was less than well received by the group. Lady Gregory memorably described him (*Diaries*, 153-4) as “an absurd object, in velvet coat, curled hair, wonderful ties – a good natured creature – a sort of professional patron of poets – but making himself ridiculous by stories to the men of his love affairs & entanglements, & seeing visions (instigated by Yeats) – one apparition clasped him to an elm tree from which he had to be released.” I have described Sharp’s strange and amusing visit to Tillyra for what Lady Gregory called a “Celtic party” at some length in a section called “The Soul of the Tree and the Hermaphrodite” in *Yeats Annual*, No. 14. Lady Gregory said later that during this visit she suspected Sharp was Fiona Macleod. That may have been only hindsight, but why else would Yeats have insisted on Sharp being there as a potential contributor to his plans for the theater. Though bound to secrecy, Yeats knew Sharp was somehow, perhaps with the collaboration of a woman he was calling Fiona Macleod, producing the F. M. writings. Throughout the visit Sharp, in his manic state, was playing a double role, and a portrait taken in a Dublin studio on his way back to London confirms Lady Gregory’s description. He had two enormous blond curls descending down his forehead. He seems to have decided – for a brief period at this time – to allow his feminine other self to be partially reflected in his appearance.

In a November 5th letter to the Grant Allens from London, Sharp said he had returned a few days earlier from the west of Ireland where he had a delightful time. He left Tillyra in mid-October and spent some time in Dublin and, perhaps, in the Highlands. But he was not long in London. “Owing to the excitable condition of his brain,” according to Elizabeth (*Memoir*, 290), “London proved impossible, and “he took rooms in Hastings.” The fragment of a letter he wrote to Elizabeth from Hastings, which she included in the *Memoir*, shows he had descended again into depression following his manic experience in Ireland: “There are some who live without the pulse of youth in the mind: on the day, in the hour, I no longer feel that quick pulse, I will go out like a blown flame. To be young; to keep young: that is the story and despair of

life.” On December 4 Sharp was back in London, at least briefly, to attend a meeting of The Irish Literary Society where Yeats read an important lecture on “The Celtic Movement.” Without Yeats approval, the Society officials had asked Sharp to chair that meeting. Probably as a consequence of Sharp’s behavior at Tillyra Castle, but also because it was an Irish society, Yeats had asked Sharp to withdraw. He refused whereupon Lady Gregory intervened and charmed Sharp into acceding to Yeats’ request. Lady Gregory had what she called “a little festa” following the lecture at the Metropole for a group that included the Sharps, Yeats, Yeats’ father and sisters, and Arthur Symons. She said: “It went off very pleasantly.” The remainder of December seems to have passed uneventfully though at the end Elizabeth, who Lady Gregory came to like very much, contracted the flu, where upon her husband took her to his flat in Hastings to recuperate. 1897 was a very full year for the Sharps with many highs and too many lows.

LETTERS: 1897

To Patrick Geddes and Colleagues, [early January, 1897]

Hotel St Romain | 5 Rue St Roch | 5 Rue St Roch | Paris

I have tonight telegraphed to you to send me | *The Sin Eater* | *The Washer of the Ford (2)* | *Hills of Dream* | *Lyra Celtica* | and Papers of the Franco-Scottish Socy. Put all down to Firm, as they are for an important writer here who has promised to do best for us.

W. S.

Have also interviewed Flory the bookseller who is much interested.

ACS NLS, Geddes Collection

To Robert Murray Gilchrist, [?January 15, 1897]²

The most hurried line, dear friend, to say that I am leaving London in an hour – My address for the rest of this month (at any rate) is Pettycur House | Kinghorn | (Fife)

Your friend | William Sharp

ALS, Sheffield City Archives

¹ Although undated, this card was written when Sharp stopped in Paris on his way to England from the South of France in early January, 1897. The last Fiona Macleod book mentioned, *From the Hills of Dream*, was published by Geddes in November, 1896. This card pinpoints where Sharp was staying when he stopped in Paris to see Yeats who is the “important writer” for whom the books are being ordered. Yeats owned copies of all four books, but they were in London. The additional copies were probably intended for Macgregor Mathers, his wife Moina Mathers, or Maud Gonne, friends Yeats was interacting with closely during his time in Paris. Yeats described his activities in Paris, including his remarkable interactions with William Sharp, in his *Autobiographies* (London: Macmillan, 1955, pp. 329-40, etc.). I have recounted it in a section called “A Plunge in the Seine” of an article entitled “W. B. Yeats, William Sharp, and Fiona Macleod: A Celtic Drama, 1897” which appeared in *Yeats Annual No. 14* (London: Palgrave, 2001).

² Although undated, this brief letter was written when Sharp passed through London briefly on his way from Paris to the Pettycur Inn in Fife where he stayed for the rest of the month of January.

To Edmund Clarence Stedman, January 25, 1897

Rutland House, Greencroft Gardens | South Hampstead, London | 25. January, 1897.

Excuse a type-written letter (done, to save time and for my eyes which have neuralgia today, at my sister's in Edinburgh — where I have come in for an hour from the remote place among the hills where I am staying with a friend, FM.³

My dear Stedman,

Let me at once hasten to thank you for the generous and loyal way in which you have taken my interests under your care. Not only am I grateful to you for all your many kindnesses, and for the unselfish trouble and responsibility you have taken on my behalf, but also I realize how much more efficaciously you have carried through all this business with Lamson than I could possibly have done, partly from being at such a distance, and largely, I admit, from business incapacity, or rather lack of experience and knowledge of how such financial negotiations are best conducted. Everything that you have done in this matter seems to me wise and discreet. I have received the draft for £ 64.5.6 (that is, the \$319.00 less the small item due Miss McKinney), and duly passed it into my bank, to my own and my wife's great relief, seeing that our worldly fortunes had sunk to about £3, and also, no doubt, to the re-establishment of my waning financial repute with my much tried bank Manager. In the circumstances, I think you were certainly wise, as well as alert in getting hold of those \$319.00, though from all you say, and the collateral security of Merriam & Cop's notes, I have no doubt the whole matter will be settled satisfactorily. I have also by this post written to Mr. Lamson. In that letter I have, of course, dissipated any possible misunderstandings about the English rights of Wives in Exile

³ This section is written in Sharp's hand at the top left of the typed first page of the signed letter. Four words following the last word — friend — are lined out illegibly and above them are the initials "FM." From Paris, Sharp stopped briefly in London, went straight on to Edinburgh, and crossed the Forth to stay at the Pettycur Inn. He arranged for Edith Rinder to meet him there so they could discuss Yeats' request that Sharp and Fiona Macleod assist him in his psychic search for the rituals of his Celtic Mystical Order. Sharp would depend on Edith Rinder to function as his female partner, thus standing in for Fiona Macleod, in this endeavor which would go on for several years.

having surreptitiously been disposed of. Lamson ought to have known that any such action on my part was impossible for me, but over and above any sense of honour and squareness on my part, he should also have remembered that in our signed contract he is absolutely protected on this point. Of course, nothing of the kind has happened, or anything that could possibly give colour to such an idea: as a matter of fact, not even a single word has been said about the book in question to anybody, for the good reason that I have all along been awaiting Lamson's own action in England as agreed upon between us. However, I fancy that possibly he merely mentioned to you some statement made by Kimball, Kimball speaking or writing inadvisedly or misapprehendingly.

I have already written to you about the Stone arbitration matter, and explained that so far as I am aware, nothing whatever was kept back from you. There was no gain to me either from Kimball or from Lamson in the fact of the sheets being got from Kimball. I insisted upon this seeing that Kimball could not pay up anything at all, and as I had lost heavily through the year's loss of this book through non-publication and it was simply in order to strengthen my hands by coming to an immediate arrangement with some other publisher that I got Kimball to yield this point in lieu of what he felt I might otherwise claim as damages. And, as a matter of fact, as I think I told you, Lamson would not have taken the book, even at the half of the original sum (that is £150. instead of £300.), if it had not been for this that he got the printed sheets thrown in. He, therefore, was the gainer by my insistence on this point with Kimball, but it put nothing in my pocket — so that the upshot was my having £150 on a bill of exchange instead of £300, the loss of a year's usufruct of the book in Great Britain and America, and other incidental losses — to say nothing of my voluntary but still necessitated action in coming out to America — all brought about through Herbert Stone's shiftiness in fulfilling his obligations firstly to me, and secondly to Mr. Kimball in connection with me.

I do hope your own affairs will already have taken, or will promptly take, a convincing upward turn and that in means and in health you will soon have that leisure which you so much need for the beautiful work all of us who know you are looking for you still to do, and add to that so fine achievement in prose and verse which is already associated with your name. We

talked often of you and your work and common friends — and by “we” I mean the Janviers and myself — when I was with them recently in Provence. My stay on the Riviera did me good, and after I left the Janviers, I went to Paris for a week or so, and thence abruptly came to Scotland, for a special reason — where after a week or two I am now on the point of returning to London to settle down and be the good boy you have so often foolishly exhorted me to be — foolishly, because a preacher should always be able to exhort out of example as well as from precept!⁴

Finally, do not forget my glad willingness at all times to do anything I can for you over here. And, by the way, let me take this opportunity to tell you about a friend of mine, about whom in any case I will write you later, who is starting literary and agency work in London, chiefly of the Literary Agency nature. This is Miss Lilian Rea (who for some time hence can best be addressed through me) an American girl who after much residence abroad and fairly wide experience came to London first to assist me secretarially, and afterwards succeeded to a responsible position in the firm of Patrick Geddes & Colleagues. She is now settled in London, and going to do all kinds of miscellaneous literary work at first and second hand: typing, copying, researching at the British Museum, translating, obtaining books, in fact everything that comes under the heading of Literary Bureau and Agency. As she is just about to take a new office and rooms, there is no use in giving present address, so if you or any of your friends want to employ her on any matter, from procuring English books up to researching or any literary undertaking, she can be addressed, meanwhile, through me. Later you will have a circular prospectus from herself, but it will be a month or so yet before she is definitely settled in her new quarters and with her new partner. I may add, of course (otherwise I would not venture to recommend her), that she is absolutely trustworthy, thoroughly business like, and will be found

⁴ Sharp had led Stedman to believe that he was having an extramarital affair with Fiona Macleod. Here he implies that he has been surreptitiously with Fiona and that Stedman had or was having similar rendezvous. This theme recurs in Sharp’s letters to Stedman. Sharp, of course, was having an extramarital affair with Edith Rinder. Whether or not there was a base of reality on Stedman’s part, I have no knowledge.

to fulfill every kind of transaction on the most moderate scale practicable. I cannot but think that you and others might find her services of great use even in the minor matter of the swift and economical procuring of English books old and new and second hand. She is also, I understand, prepared to act as literary agent for any American authors -- that is, as to the piloting of their MSS., or arranging for the English issue of their books with English publishers — and once more, to do what is really necessary for the successful appearance of the works of any American author here, to go through typewritten or printed copies of books and see that all American spellings are made conformable with English usage.⁵

Ever affectionately, | William Sharp

I expect to be in London this day week. The time on the Riviera did me a lot of good and still more this unexpected and wild flight straight from France to the Scottish hills. And now I am going back to settle down to hard work till the end of July — and at the same time manage to give both my wife and myself a good time — and be a good boy — and always endorse my cheques — and love you and Mrs. Stedman and Miss McKinney — and “Generally” be your loving and grateful W.S.

Miss M. greatly pleased by your message, and encouraged too. (The tales of *The Sineater* and *The Washer of the Ford*, rearranged and sectioned, and with a few others added, are about to be reissued in three vols. in a cheaper but artistic paper-cover edn. I. Spiritual Tales; II. Barbaric Tales; III. Tragic Romances.)⁶

TLS Columbia

To P. G. Geddes and Colleagues, January 28, 1897

28:1:97.

Dear Sirs

⁵ The remainder of the letter is hand-written.

⁶ This reissue of the Fiona Macleod stories in three soft-covered and relatively inexpensive volumes was published by Patrick Geddes and Colleagues in March, 1897.

Will it be practicable for you to let me have at once — in whole or in part — the £25 agreed upon as an advance against royalties on the new cheap 3. vol edition of my *Sin-Eater* and *Washer of the Ford* (augmented).

I believe the stipulated date was the day of publication, and so I ask for this favour only as one of convenience. If it is not convenient for you to pay me that sum at present, could you let me have £10 to account.

Apologizing for troubling you with my personal needs in this way —

Believe me, | Yours sincerely, | Fiona Macleod

P.S. I send you this through my cousin, Miss Mary Sharp, 9. Upper Coltbridge Terrace, etc. to which please post your reply.

ALS NLS, Geddes Collection

To Hannibal Ingalls Kimball, January 28, 1897

9. Upper Coltbridge Terrace | Murrayfield, Midlothian | 28:1:97.

Dear Mr. Kimball

Do you care to come to any arrangement with me as to an American reissue of my shorter tales, such as indicated in the enclosed prospectus.

Or would you care for a new short volume, to consist of the new tales only -- Morag of the Glen | The Melancholy of Ulad | Ahez the Pale | The Hills of Ruel | The Archer | The Awakening of Angus Ogue -- to be called either (after much the longest and most dramatic) Morag of the Glen | And other Tragic Romances | or simply Tragic Romances⁷

As, apart from Messrs. Harpers who published "Green Fire" (after I had duly submitted the offer to you first), there are one or two other firms in the U.S.A. who want my work, may I ask you for a reply at your very earliest convenience.

(Of course, in referring to other firms, it is only in the instance of this new vol. of the new matter.)

⁷Neither of these proposed American editions materialized.

To you, my terms would be £25 paid to me on receipt of copy, and 15% royalty thereafter

In haste | Sincerely Yours, | Fiona Macleod

P.S. If you care to present me with a copy of my “Stone & Kimball” *Pharais, Sin-Eater* and *Washer of the Ford*, I should be very grateful. I have none left, for these American editions were much admired, and I was weak against the solicitations of friends. I wrote on this matter to Mr. Sharp when he was in New York but my letter failed to reach him in time before he left.

ALS Huntington

To Edmund Clarence Stedman, January 30, 1897

York (en route, returning | to London, staying | with Geo. Cotterell⁸) | *Saty*, 30th

My dear Stedman

I wrote you the other day a long letter of grateful thanks about all your care for my interests in re. Lamson etc.

And now I have just recd. your arbitration-letter. I thought I had made all clear: But in any case my preceding letter should do so.

The mail goes out in less than an hour, and as there is no other till Wedny., I must be very brief.

The primary claim is that admitted by Mr. Stone (Senior) — the document signed by H. S. Stone. But that, I fancy, is no longer worth anything legally. But in any case — as I thought I had explained — I wish to put forward no claim legally. Mr. Stone Senior frankly admitted the moral responsibility of his son — he having persuaded me to give him the book, & given his personal pledges that all wd. be fulfilled — & that it is thro’ these broken pledges, & particularly when he transferred (without explanation) to Kimball. It is to this shiftiness that I

⁸ George Cotterell (?1865-1939) was a poet, critic, and good friend of Sharp’s. His works include *The Banquet: A Political Satire in Verse* (1885) and *Poems: Old and New* (1894). Stedman included two of his poems in his exhaustive *Victorian Anthology, 1837-1895* (Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1895).

owe so much loss of time, health, & money. Cotterell (who sends you greeting) says I haven't another moment — I must regretfully close.

My love to you, dear friend & Poet — Your bad (trying to be good) | Will

ALS Columbia

To Robert Murray Gilchrist, [mid-February, 1897]

My dear friend

If you can put the spur to the Inventive Steed which you ride so well, when opportunity permits, do you think that you can do so now?

Mr. Frank Rinder will write to you on the part of *The Social World* to ask you if you will write a serial romance for them at once. The advantages are your preservation of copyright, freedom to arrange for book publication immediately on cessation of serial publication and a certain sum down: small, perhaps, but sure.

Mr. Rinder (who is my intimate friend) will write more fully with this.

In haste | Ever Yours Affectly | William Sharp

ALS Sheffield City Archives

To Robert Murray Gilchrist, [mid-February, 1897]

Century Club | New York⁹

My dear Robert

Thanks for your note. I think that either I or Mr. Rinder must have inadvertently misled you – for there was no intention on his part to ask for you to undertake anything to do with politics – only an ordinary “fantastic thriller.”

However, he has doubtless understood, and written to you himself. It is just possible I may be seeing him tonight.

⁹ Century Club | New York is crossed through. Evidence for dating this and the previous letter to Gilchrist is the likelihood that Sharp was using stationery he had brought home from New York in November 1896 when he stayed at that club. The mention in this letter of the possibility of Gilchrist coming to London in March suggests the February date for both letters.

So glad to hear you are to be in London soon. Do please let me know well in advance before you come: partly because many engagements are made long in advance, & partly because I might be away from town just when you come. Is it likely to be early in March?¹⁰ (I shall be away the middle of April.)

Alas, my dear boy, I can tell you neither that I am well nor happy. I am content, at present, to tell you that I am not actively unhappy, and that I am, I hope, slowly gaining ground physically. I have not done a stroke of original work for weeks past but am eagerly hoping to be able to begin again soon.

My love to you and cordial remembrances to your mother & sister.

Yours affectionately | Will

Please send me a line by return to say if your coming is not immediate – i.e. if you will not be leaving home for a week or two. I have a special reason for asking.

ALS Sheffield City Archives

To [Richard Le Gallienne?], February 19, 1897

19:2:97

Cher Confrere

If you are disengaged, and otherwise able to come, will you be my guest at the Omar Khayyam Banquet to be held on March 25th. I do not think you are a member: if you are, forgive my not knowing it. I am a recent member of the 49 myself, for last year or rather the Autumn of '95, when the last vacancies occurred, the council elected Andrew Lang, George Gissing, and myself. This year Austin Dobson and someone else have been elected — so they will be there and have to speak: also the guest of the evening, Lord Wolseley.¹¹

¹⁰ Sharp's mid-March letter to Coulson Kernahan indicates Gilchrist was in London about that time.

¹¹ Born and educated in Scotland, Andrew Lang (1844-1912) took a first in classics at Balliol College, Oxford, held a fellowship there, and went on to become a popular poet, journalist, critic and collector of folk and fairy tales. George Gissing (1857-1903) was a British novelist

The ‘banquet’ is at 7: at Frascati’s — morning dress. Each guest must ‘sport’ a white rose, as each member a red one — and all must drink of “the red, red wine.”

Let me know if you can come — as I must notify.

Looking forward to Saty. of next week.

Ever Yours, | William Sharp

ALS Pierpont Morgan

To Hannibal Ingalls Kimball, February 20, 1897

9. Upper Coltbridge Terrace | Murrayfield, Midlothian | 20:2:97.

My dear Sir

Thanks for your letter. But please send me a specific answer to my proposal, so that I may arrange accordingly: the more so as it will, unfortunately, be impractical for me to see you when you are in Great Britain, as you suggest — for I am going to Italy immediately, and when I return in the late Spring or early Summer it will be direct to Glasgow or rather Greenock, to sail thence to my relatives in the Hebrides.

I am hardly ever in London, and indeed rarely even in Edinburgh, though it has been convenient for me to have my letters addressed there.

My friend Miss Rea, who attends to my typing and correspondence, is, however, shortly going to London to settle there as a literary agent: and thenceforth all my correspondence will be addressed to her there.

When she has a definite official address (about the beginning of March) she will send it to you. Or if you come sooner, you can learn it from Mr. William Sharp, or if he is out of town, by card to Messrs. Patrick Geddes & Colleagues, Edinburgh.

who wrote, among other works, *New Grub Street* (1891); *The Whirlpool* (1897); and *The Town Traveler* (1901). Austin Dobson, a well known poet, critic, and biographer, was employed as a civil servant at the Board of Trade from 1856 until 1901. Garnet Joseph Wolseley (1833-1913) was an Irish soldier and historian who wrote *Narrative of the War in China* (1862); *Life of Marlborough* (1894); *The Decline and Fall of Napoleon* (1895); and *The Story of a Soldier's Life* (1903).

If necessary, you can talk over any literary matters with Miss Rea, who will have all my instructions. But please write at once in reply to my letter.

Personally, I think the best plan would be for you to issue a small volume containing the new tales: viz “Morag of the Glen” (10,000 to 12,000 words), “The Melancholy of Ulad”, “The Hills of Ruel”, “Ahez the Pale”, (8000) and “The Archer” (to be renamed) — in all, about 25,000 words — the whole to be called “Morag of the Glen”.

In haste, | Yours very truly, | Fiona Macleod

P. S. Very many thanks for the books, which will doubtless come by next post.

ALS Huntington

To Bliss Carman, February 24, 1897

15 Greencroft Gardens | South Hampstead | London N.W. | 24/Feb/97

Dear Bliss

Will you please propose to Copeland & Day, from me, the following — An anthology of the rarest and finest poems & lyrics by modern French poets, chosen solely by personal taste — just the few lovely things by a score or so of poets, known and little known — The small vol. to be called, say, “*Le Petit Parnasse Contemporaine*” or, if preferred, “*A Little Treasury of Contemporary French Poetry*” with an introductory note on the Symbolists and the Evolution of Symbolism. I would do this *con amore* (have already many lovely little poems previewed to this end — and though I would prefer to dispose of American rights only, so as to issue here myself, would be willing to dispose of both British & American selling rights if Copeland & Day prefer, & wd. issue in both countries. My terms are £50 on receipt, as an advance against a royalty of 15% — if for both rights: & half, if for the American book only: & six free copies. A small anthology of the *fine-fleur* of Celtic poetry to be called “*The Golden Treasury of Celtic Poetry*” or “*A Little Treasury of Celtic Poetry*” — It would be in two parts: ancient and modern. Or if preferred, wholly ancient. It would be about the usual “Golden Treasury” vols size. Here would be nothing but what is absolutely & authentically Celtic — & would, as I say, consist of the very *fine-fleur* of the Celtic genius.

Here again, same terms as above, & same conditions: though I would not agree to give up English issue, so that the book would have to be issued in both countries.

Let me know from them, please, at their very earliest convenience, as I wish to arrange abt both, but particularly the Celtic vol., immediately.

In both instances, as I say, I am willing to arrange outright if Messrs. C. & D. prefer, but only on an undertaking that the book be published simultaneously in this country. Or, only for American issue.

Meanwhile, I shall make no arrangements but expect early reply.

Yours Ever | William Sharp

P.S. I am still awaiting to hear from you, for Miss Macleod, about her “Hills of Dream,” left with you in Oct-Nov.

ALS NYU, Fales Library

To Edmund Clarence Stedman, March 3, 1897

London | 3 March

Just returned from a short visit to a friend, and find I have barely time to catch today’s mail — so must send only a hurried P/C. I’ll write by next mail, when also I’ll send the letter to be read at the Stoddard dinner,¹² of which event I am very glad to hear. Meanwhile, my grateful thanks

¹²E. C. Stedman described the Stoddard dinner in two letters to Sharp, portions of which Mrs. Sharp included in the *Memoir* (272-3). The first of these is dated February 17: “The most important social matter here this winter relating to our Guild will be a large important dinner to be given on March 25th by the Author’s Club and his other friends, to Richard Henry Stoddard. We are going to try to make an exception to the rule that New York is not good to her own, and to render a tribute somewhat commensurate with Stoddard’s lifelong services, and his quality as poet and man. . . . Of course I do not expect that you will come over here, and I am quite sure you will write a letter which can be read at the dinner, for I have in mind your personal friendship with Stoddard and affectionate comprehension of his genius and career.” The second, dated April 13, describes the occasion: “Your letter to the Stoddard Banquet was by far the best and most inclusive of the various ones received, and it was read out to the 150 diners and met with high favour. . . . It proved to be the most notable literary occasion yet known in this city — was brilliant, magnetic, enthusiastic throughout. I felt a pride in my office as Chairman. The Stoddards were deeply gratified by your letter.”

not only for the Dft for £20 safely to hand (& most welcome) advance from Lamson on a/c but also for all your trouble & forethought.

In extreme haste for the mail, W.S.

ACS Columbia

To Mr. Cuthbertson, March 5, 1897

London | 5th March/97

Dear Mr. Cuthbertson

I do not quite understand why Prof. Geddes writes a joint letter to you and me, particularly as he knows that I have no longer any connection with the firm. At the same time I am very willing to advise on this point.

I think that Tchobanian's book might very well be published by P.G. & Co., since in the first place Prof. Geddes is himself so anxious for it, and, in the next, it is to be brought out in a cheap form.¹³

If it were to be brought out like the "Celtic Library" that would mean a direct appeal to the literary world — or rather to a small section of it: and the result would be unsatisfactory to say the least of it, as the book would then *primarily* be judged on its artistic merits. As a cheap edition, however, and above all with a preliminary note on the lines indicated in Prof. G's letter, I think there would certainly be a large sale for the book — particularly if a shilling volume.

Were I advising another firm I should say "yes, certainly" (in the circumstances) — and my only hesitation is on the question of distribution. Advt. is of little use in a book of this kind, and P.G. & Co's means of distribution (except thro' Simpkin Marshall) are neither extensive nor effective. I think some such title as "Armenian Sorrow" would be better for a book of this kind than Lyra etc.

¹³ This letter from Patrick Geddes jointly to William Cuthbertson and William Sharp makes the points Sharp takes up in this letter. It does not appear that P. G. Geddes & Colleagues published a book by Arshag Tchobanian.

Yours sincerely | William Sharp

ALS NLS, Geddes Collection

To Edmund Clarence Stedman, March 5, 1897

London | 5th March/97

The P.S. in private (Destroy)

My dear Stedman,

As my card will have informed you, I received your last letter all right — also its enclosed dft for £20, (which came as a most welcome lift at an awkward juncture) — Lamson's advance against his Bill for \$250.

I am indeed most indebted to you for all the trouble you have taken and are taking on my behalf. "A friend in need is a friend indeed," as I have found again and again with you.

I entirely approve of all you have done. As for Lamson, I think he ought not to have assured me so emphatically that all was well with the Lamsonian state of Denmark, when he knew its present instability. However, I daresay he will loyally fulfil his engagements: & certainly I hope so — for what with ill health etc. this year has been a disastrous one for me financially. I begin to see daylight all the same.

Among the good news I am waiting for is that of your own well-being in fortune and personal estate. I do hope your worries will disappear, and that all will go well with you in every possible way.

Pour moi, my brief spell of reform (three weeks and three days) convinced me that¹⁴ systematic reform would never suit me in mind or body. I have very happily relapsed into my

¹⁴ The specificity and exuberance of this paragraph suggests Sharp had enjoyed a few days with Edith Rinder after not having been with her for three weeks and three days. It also implies their relationship was, among other things, sexual, and that implication is supported by the postscript which asks Stedman to destroy the letter. Since he had been with Fiona/Edith just three days ago "by the sea," they may have been together, as on other occasions, in the hotel in St. Margaret's Bay, near Dover. He had developed the habit of confiding in Stedman about his relationship with Edith while suppressing her identity by calling her Fiona Macleod. At this time, Sharp was frequently conflating Fiona and Edith in his dealings with Yeats and others and

Pagan ship, and the Sunbeam flies again at the Peak. My mate in this delectable craft smiled at my attempt, and now laughs joyously that I am myself once again.

I am gratified at the invitation to the Stoddard dinner, but find it impossible to be present. I have sent a letter to the Committee (c/o R. Hitchcock) — but in case of miscarriage send a duplicate to you. If there is anything in it you judge ill-timed or inapposite I leave you a free hand.

Sorry you have lost Miss McKinney, but trust her successor consoles you for that bright and cheery presence.

With grateful affection, dear Poet, and my affectionate greetings to Mrs. Stedman,

Ever Yours, | William Sharp

Cotterell much gratified with your cordial message.

(P.S.) Two days ago I was by the sea, with F.M. In mind and body I am ten years younger, with that joy and delight.

ALS Columbia

To Edmund Clarence Stedman, March 9, 1897

London | 9th March/97

My dear Stedman

I have got back from a flying visit to a relative in Tunbridge Wells just in time to write to you by this mail.

First, let me thank you again for all your kindness in this troublesome Lamson matter — and also with thanks acknowledge the safe receipt of the £10 dft. which you sent to me. I note also that you have given Lamson the extension he wants for his own small note for \$150, nominally due March 1st, to May 8th — and also his intention, if practicable, to advance upon

probably in his own mind. He was claiming he needed to be with Edith in order to be inspired to write as Fiona Macleod. In June of this year, three months hence, he took Edith to meet George Meredith and introduced her as Fiona Macleod.

or pay off these notes by installments. Since you are satisfied with the genuineness of E.R., I am.¹⁵

I understand also that the case as you put it, now stands thus: \$250 still due: — against which you hold L.W. & Co's new note for \$101.37 payable April 11 and note for \$150 payable May 8th. I have by today's mail sent to Lamson the proofs of a serial romance (of the Garibaldian campaign) the copyright of which has just lapsed to me.¹⁶ It was a "pot boiler," but I think good at that, and was serially a marked success — so that now in book form it may well serve Lamson's purposes better than a more ambitious literary work. I find myself, both as to health and means, wholly unable to devote myself to the book ("Sister Eunice"¹⁷) he wants — apart from the extreme uncertainty of getting the £100 advance promised by him.

But now to leave business, and say how profoundly vexed I am to hear of your having had a bout of rheumatic fever. If superb vitality can carry any man through, I [know] you are 'through' — but all the same I am anxious. How I wish you were free from all business worries (this sounds ironical from me who cause you so much 'botheration' just now) and able to devote yourself wholly to the pen. That would indeed be good news.

Hoping soon to hear you are feeling better

¹⁵ E. R. Lamson. This letter to Stedman and that of 5 March indicate that the Lamson, Wolffe firm, which began in 1895, was in financial difficulty. The following item in *The Publisher's Weekly* of 4 March 1899 (No. 1414, p. 391) sheds light on the matter: "Lamson, Wolffe & Co., Publishers, have failed. Liabilities are reported to be \$73,105.90 and assets, \$26,748.72. The firm was organized by E. R. Lamson and Mr. Wolffe, then a student in Harvard. The latter was obliged to withdraw, owing to a college rule which prohibits students from engaging in business. Besides the office here, the firm also had an office in New York." It is interesting to note that Stone and Kimball were undergraduates at Harvard when they planned their publishing firm. Sharp had the bad luck of associating himself sequentially with two firms started by Harvard students that failed after a few unprofitable years.

¹⁶ "The Red Rider: A Romance of the Garibaldian Campaign in the Two Sicilies" was issued serially in the *Weekly Budget* (London: James Henderson and Sons, Ltd., 1892).

¹⁷ Sharp did not proceed with this work.

Gratefully and affectionately yours | William Sharp

By last mail I posted the Stoddard letter.

ALS Columbia

To Catherine Ann Janvier, March 10, 1897

Grosvenor Club, | March 10, 1897.

. . . Although I have had an unpleasant mental and physical set-back the last three days,¹⁸ I am steadily (at least I hope so) gaining ground — but I have never yet regained the health or spirits I was in at St. Remy, tho' even there far more worn in mind and body than even you guessed. But with the spring I shall get well.

I am heart and soul with Greece in this war of race and freedom¹⁹ — and consider the so-called “Concert”²⁰ a mockery and a sham. It is a huge Capitalist and Reactionary Bogus Company. Fortunately the tide of indignation is daily rising here — and even the Conservative papers are at one with the Liberal on the central points. Were I a younger man — or rather were I free — I would now be in Greece or on my way to join the Hellenes. As you will see by the

¹⁸On March 5, Sharp told Stedman he had been with Fiona Macleod (Edith Rinder) at the shore “two days ago.” “In mind and body,” he said, “I am ten years younger, with that joy and delight.” Here on March 10, he tells Catherine Janvier, he had a “mental and physical set-back the last three days.” Apparently, his sound physical and mental health lasted only a few days – from the 3rd to the 7th. In order to be well in mind and body -- at least in the winter – Sharp needed to be away from London and in the company of Edith Rinder. When they were alone together, they were surely, at Sharp’s instigation, experimenting with various means of establishing communication with the realm of spirits in the continuing efforts to flesh out Yeats’ Celtic Mystical Order. That effort provided an additional incentive for them to be alone together. Correspondence in May, 1898 casts some light on their contributions to the enterprise.

¹⁹The Greco-Turkish War of 1897 was the result of Greece’s attempted annexation of Crete. Greece lost the war.

²⁰Four members of the European Concert — Great Britain, France, Italy, and Russia — were instrumental in bringing an end to the Greco-Turkish War.

enclosed, I am one of the authors who have sent a special message to the Athenian President of the Chamber. It is a stirring time, and in many ways. . . .

Memoir 283-4

*To Coulson Kernahan*²¹ [mid-March, 1897]

15 Greencroft Gardens | South Hampstead

My dear Kernahan,

As you generously promised to do what you could for the Reissue of Miss Macleod's shorter tales, with others added — and, as I told you, I shall personally be indebted to you for any helpful word you may say, for the reasons I hinted to you — I have asked the publishers to send you today, the day of issue I believe, a set of the 3 vols. complete.

Sorry to hear the other day that Harvey Moore was ill²² — He alluded to your kindness in going over to sit with him. However, I saw him on Saturday at the Royal Academy, and looking all right again — perhaps in part because of a young and pleasing lady companion!

Please thank your wife for her kind letter. I am glad she was pleased to have *Vistas*,²³ and so well liked the added matter. You, I hope, duly received “Flower ’o the Vine.”²⁴

²¹ Born at Ilfracombe, Devonshire, Coulson Kernahan (1858-1943) contributed to many periodicals, wrote humorous verse, and gained wide popularity for his fiction. Among his books are: *A Dead Man's Diary* (1890), *A Book of Strange Sins* (1893), *The Child, the Wise Man, and the Devil* (1896), *Scoundrels and Co.* (1899), *A World without a Child* (1905), *The Dumpling* (1906), and *The Duel* (1906).

²² A. Harvey Moore was a popular British painter of the Victorian period who died in 1905.

²³ Stone and Kimball published an edition of Sharp's *Vistas* in Chicago in 1894 (The Green Tree Library) which contains a Forward and an additional piece entitled “The Whisper.”

²⁴ *Flower o' the Vine: Romantic Ballads and Sospiri di Roma* (New York: Charles L. Webster and Company, 1892). This volume contained all the poems in *Romantic Ballads and Poems of Phantasy*, and “The Last Voyage of Keir the Monk. It also contained all of the poems in the 1891 edition of Sharp's *Sospiri di Roma* and a new “Epilogue.”

I hope all goes well with you and your projects.

Elizabeth, alas, is hors-de-combat: for she has been some days in bed, and will likely be a day or two there still, with an attack of rheumatism. Then, the other night, just after Murray Gilchrist left me, my study caught fire — and it was with difficulty that the conflagration was extinguished. Fortunately no harm was done to books or pictures, and the insurance covers the rest.

Have just seen one or two new American reviews of your last book. There as here “The Child etc.”²⁵ seems to be a great and deserved success —

Ever, my dear fellow, | Affectionately Yours, | William Sharp

ALS Princeton

*To Hamilton W. Mabie [mid-March, 1897]*²⁶

15 Greencroft Gardens | South Hampstead | London

My dear Friend,

I have been in France again or would have answered your letter before this — a letter I was very glad to receive. I have been reading certain chapters from your two last books²⁷ to my wife, who has had a bout of rheumatism which has kept her in bed for a week: and she appreciates as deeply as I do their beauty of thought, sentiment, and structure. Your work has

²⁵Kernahan’s *The Child, the Wise Man, and the Devil* (London: J. Bowden and Co.), 1896.

²⁶Hamilton Wright Mabie (1845-1916), an American Journalist and critic, was Associate Editor of *The Outlook* from 1884 until his death. There is no evidence to support Sharp’s claim to have been in France, but the references to Fiona’s *Shorter Tales* and Elizabeth’s being in bed with rheumatism seem to date the letter mid-March, about the same time as the letter to Kernahan. France may have been invented to explain Sharp’s delay in acknowledging Mabie’s books, the praise for which from Fiona is intended to cause Mabie to print a favorable review of her reissued *Shorter Tales* in *The Outlook*.

²⁷Probably Mabie’s *Books and Culture* (New York: Dodd and Meade), 1896, and *Essays on Nature and Culture* (New York: Dodd and Meade), 1896.

great winsomeness as well as distinction. As Miss Macleod (who has read them) says: “Mr. Mabie appeals to me all the more in that he is so fine an idealist, and yet does not disdain the actualities. He has tempered himself to fine thought and fine speech. That he has distinction is good: that he frequents the attitudes of thought and art is perhaps better still: and that his quest and his work are together the expression of himself, is best of all. Or you can reverse these if you like, — for extremes meet: and his formative impulse and his ultimate distinction are really one and the same.”

I have the more pleasure in quoting this, as it is about Miss Macleod’s Reissued Tales I am writing, for I have no time at the moment to write to you a proper letter.

I have asked the publishers to send you by this mail a set of the 3 vols. of the Reissued Shorter Tales, with others added, in the hope that you may be able to help her & them in America. If you can do so, I am sure you will. I am glad to hear that my Comedy in romance, “Wives in Exile” recently pub.d in U.S.A. by Lamson Wolffe & Co. has had so favorable a reception. It is not out here yet.

I had to be photographed recently for some public reason & when I get copies I’ll send one to you as a remembrancer of

Your friend | William Sharp

ALS Library of Congress

*To J. Stanley Little, [March 15?, 1897]*²⁸

Monday Night

My dear Stanley

²⁸ *Madge o’ the Pool: The Gypsy Christ and Other Tales*, mentioned herein, was issued by Archibald, Constable and Co. late in 1896 or January 1897. It was first published in Chicago by Stone and Kimball in 1895 under the title *The Gypsy Christ and Other Tales*. Since some found that title offensive, the British publisher decided to use another story, “Madge o’ the Pool,” as the primary title. The book was reviewed, among other places, in the *Academy* of March 6 (280).

I have time only for a brief note in reply to your letter — but hope to see you some day soon.

Elizabeth and I learned with genuine regret that Maud is not “up to the mark” at present, & we both hope she is by this time quite right or well on the mend: also that your Abigail no longer puts her trust in the Lord, but is up & about again, spotless (in appearance at least) as Abigails should be.

I am distressed at your S/A Rev. & other embarrassments, and hope you will soon be able to note the inflow of a new & more prosperous tide. I would try short fiction if I were you (i.e. stories not exceeding 50,000 words) also short tales for magazines. Is not the Drama as remote & indifferent a Deity as the aforesaid Lord? However, there is no reason why you should not sacrifice at both altars. (I have “The Doctor” in safe keeping: when you want it, say so.)

I am glad you like “Madge o’ the Pool” & thank you for reviewing it. I am, I may add, agreeably surprised at the way it has been reviewed as yet. Some papers are generously eulogistic, & even my usually hostile critics give genuine if qualified praise.

In haste

Ever affectionately yours, dear Stanley | William Sharp

Love from us both to you and Maud.

ALS University of British Columbia

To John Macleay, March 16, 1997

London

Dear Mr. Macleay

I have to thank you for your most appreciative & kind notice of “Madge of the Pool.” It is pleasant to me to know that you like it so well.

The book had had quite a remarkable success, I am glad to say: the reviews having been practically unanimous in their cordial recognition.

And so – to other matters!

If Miss Macleod has not done so herself, Messrs. P/ G. & Co. will send you a set of the Reissue in 3 vols of her Shorter Tales, (from her two P. G. books) with others added. There are some satisfactory corrections in the reprinted matter I am glad to know -- and what I consider a wise note prefatory to the actual basis of "The Sin-Eater" story -- and to "The Anointed Man" (or if not that, then one of the kindred stories) apropos of the use of the name "Gloom."

Personally, I think that two of the new tales -- the long "Morag of the Glen" and the short Highland fisherman story "The Archer" (both in *Tragic Romances*) are among Miss M's best work. She concurs as to the "Archer," I fancy, though not emphatic about "Morag" -- possibly, as I urge, because it is so 'near' her, so to say.

Hoping you are well & at work

Sincerely Yours | William Sharp

ALS NLS

To Richard LeGallienne, March 16, 1897

C/o. Miss Rea | The Outlook Tower | Castlehill | Edinburgh | 16:3:97

Dear Mr. LeGallienne,

Herewith goes (or should go) to you the reissue of my shorter stories -- with others added -- rearranged into their proper interrelation. I heard a few days ago (on one of those rare occasions when I was south for a flying visit) of your marriage, and I beg that you and your wife will accept this 'set' from me with my cordial good wishes, both for Mr. and Mrs. LeGallienne and for the author of "The Quest of the Golden Girl", with which I have been greatly charmed.

Believe me, | Sincerely yours, | Fiona Macleod

ALS Stanford University

To _____, March 20, 1897

Miss Rea | The Outlook Tower | Castlehill | Edinburgh

My dear Sir

I have received so much keen pleasure from your writings -- at once so human and so artistically wrought -- that I would like you to have some little of mine as my 'note of recognition.'

Herewith, therefore, I send you a copy of "Spiritual Tales," the first of a 3. Vol. Reissue by Messrs Patrick Geddes & Co. of my shorter tales. With the exception of "The Melancholy of Ulad" and two other pieces, all these "Spiritual Tales" are reprints from *The Washer of the Ford* or *The Sin-Eater*. Again thanking you for all the pleasure I have had from your work

Believe me | Yours very truly | Fiona Macleod

ALS Unknown (Dealer Catalogue)

Catherine Ann Janvier, March 22, 1897

March 22nd

. . . What a whirl of excitement life is, just now. I am all on fire — about the iniquities of this Turkish-Finance triumph²⁹ over honour, chivalry, and the old-time sense that the world can be well lost. There are many other matters, too, for deep excitement — international, national, literary, artistic, personal. It is the season of sap, of the young life, of green fire. Heart-pulses are throbbing to the full: brains are effervescing under the strong ferment of the wine of life: the spiral flames of the spirit and the red flower of the flash are fanned and consumed and re-created and fanned anew every hour of every day. . . .

This is going to be a strange year in many ways: a year of spiritual flames moving to and fro, of wild vicissitudes for many souls and for the forces that move through the minds of men. The West will redden in a new light — the 'west' of the forlorn peoples who congregate among our isles in Ireland — 'the West' of the dispeopled mind.

²⁹The defeat of Greece in the Greco-Turkish War.

The common Soul is open — one can see certain shadows and lights as though in a mirror.³⁰

Memoir 284

*To Katherine Tynan Hinkson, March 24, 1897*³¹

C/o Miss Rea | The Outlook Tower | Castlehill | Edinburgh | 24:3:97.

Dear Mrs. Hinkson,

The Re-issue of my shorter tales has brought me so many letters: then my present visit to Edinburgh is a brief one: and, once more, very uncertain health has been like a foe knocking at my gates: for all which triple reasons I beg you to forgive me for not having sooner acknowledged your kind little note.

Yes, I *did* see, and much appreciate the *Speaker* notice³² of “From the Hills of Dream” — tho’ I did not have the added pleasure of knowing it was by yourself. I thank you for it, and all the generous interest you have shown in my work.

I did not wish to trouble you with all the 3. vols of the Reissue set — and moreover wished to make it clear that I was sending you one of a set to mark it as a personal offering to a writer whose work has always singular charm for me, and whose generous recognition of my own work has been one of my abiding pleasures. But as you say you intend a little article about

³⁰Mrs. Sharp noted here: “The letter ends abruptly.” Although she does not elaborate, the hyperbolic assertions about the “spiral flames of the spirit” and the West reddening in a new light for the forlorn people of Ireland reflects the language he was hearing from Yeats and AE as they planned the revolutionary Celtic Mystical Order. The passage takes on new meaning when we realize the manic state of mind it reveals was enhanced by the psychic experiments Sharp was conducting to discover rituals and talismans for that Order.

³¹ Mrs. Hinkson reprinted this letter in its entirety with only minor changes in *The Middle Years* (130-33).

³² *The Speaker: a Review of Politics, Letters, Science and the Arts* (1890-1907) was a weekly paper which published articles on politics, science and the arts, as well as verse, foreign correspondence, letters to the editor and reviews of books. Its title became *The Speaker, The Liberal Review* in October 1899.

me and my work, in the *English Illustrated Magazine*,³³ I have directed the publishers to send to you the two companion vols.

The third, “Tragic Romances”, contains my strongest contemporary short story, by common consent (viz., “Morag of the Glen”) — and what I myself think to be my best, the shorter story called “The Archer”.

Oh yes, dear Mrs. Hinkson, I am now well aware of much of the mystery that has grown up about my unfortunate self. I have even heard that Fleet Street journalist rumour to which you allude — with the addition that the said unhappy scribe was bald and old and addicted to drink.

Heaven knows who and what I am according to some wiseacres! A recent cutting said I was Irish, a Mr. Chas. O’Conor,³⁴ whom I know not.

A friend of a friend told that friend that I was Miss Nora Hopper and Mr. Yeats in union — at which I felt flattered but amused. For some time, a year or so ago, there was a rumour that “Fiona Macleod” was my good friend and relative, William Sharp. Then, when this was disproved, I was said to be Mrs. Sharp. Latterly I became the daughter of the late Dr. Norman Macleod.³⁵ The latest is that I am Miss Maud Gonne³⁶ — which the paragraphist “knows as a

³³ This article did not appear.

³⁴ Charles O’Conor (1838-1906) was a Roman Catholic politician. As a liberal for Roscommon County from 1860-1880, he frequently spoke on Irish education and land tenure. He held an honorary LL. D. from the Royal University of Ireland and was mainly responsible for the Irish Sunday Closing Act of 1879. He was President of the Royal Irish Academy and the Irish Language society.

³⁵ Norman MacLeod (1812 – 1872) was a distinguished minister of the Scottish Church. He studied at Glasgow and Edinburgh and was ordained in 1838. He was made one of the Royal Chaplains in Scotland in 1857, and became a trusted friend of Queen Victoria. He was the first editor of *Good Words*, to which he contributed many articles and stories.

fact”. Do you know her? She is Irish, and lives in Paris, and is, I hear, very beautiful — so I prefer to be Miss Gonne rather than the Fleet Street journalist!

Seriously I am often annoyed by these rumours. But what can I do? There are private reasons, as well as my own particular wishes, why I must preserve my privacy.

I do most urgently wish not to have my privacy made public, partly because I am so ‘built’ and partly for other reasons: but I would not perhaps let this stand in the way of the urgent wishes of friends, were it not that there are other reasons also. But this much I will confide to you, and gladly: I am *not* an unmarried girl, as commonly supposed, but am married.

The name I write under is my maiden name. Perhaps I have suffered, as well as known much joy, in my brief mature life: but what then — all women whose heart is in their brain must inevitably suffer. And so, you will, I know, at once excuse me and forgive my inability to give you any material particulars. This past week I have had no fewer than four editorial applications for my photograph for reproduction — but now, as ever, I have had to decline. Two friends in London have my photograph, and perhaps you may see it someday: but now I do not even let friends have a photograph, since one allowed someone to take a sketch of it for an American paper. I can’t well explain why I am so exigent. I must leave you to divine from what I have told you.

I have looked among my newspaper excerpts for some cuttings of a personal kind, and particularly for a longish account in “The Highland News” — but they are mislaid. I can find only two, which appeared about the time of the publication of “The Mountain Lovers” a couple

³⁶Maud Gonne (1866-1953) was the daughter of Colonel Gonne who had been on the staff of the Irish command. She was an ardent Irish Nationalist and a close friend of W. B. Yeats. His devotion to her and their association in the cause of Irish independence and in the Irish Theatre Movement during the nineties and the early years of the twentieth century inspired some of his finest lyric poems. In 1903, she married John MacBride, who had recruited and led the Irish Brigade in the Boer War and who was executed following the Easter insurrection in Dublin in 1916. Their son, Sean MacBride, would become Irish Minister for External Affairs (1948-51).

of years ago. Perhaps you will kindly let me have them again. There was also a (slightly) personal article on me as a “new writer” in *The Bookman*³⁷ for some autumn month in 1895.

But, of course, if wished, I could give you any information about my books, my work, and “what I feel about things in general”, as one (would-be) American interviewer puts it: (of course I don’t object to its being known that I come of an old Catholic family, that I am a Macleod, that I was born in the Southern Hebrides, and that my heart still lies where the cradle rocked.)

If, perchance, I should be in London this autumn or early winter — on my way to the Riviera (for I am not strong) — I hope to be able to make your acquaintance in person. I have heard of you from several friends, and particularly from Mr. William Sharp, who is a great admirer of your writings, both in prose and verse.

But now I have taken up too much of your time.

Believe me, dear Mrs. Hinkson, | Cordially yours, | Fiona Macleod³⁸

ALS University of Toronto Library

To J. Stanley Little, [March 24?, 1897]

Wedny

My dear Stanley

³⁷Annie MacDonald's article “Fiona Macleod” appeared in *The Bookman*, 2 (October, 1895), 135-6.

³⁸After reproducing this letter in *The Middle Years* (132), Mrs. Hinkson stated: “With regard to this last letter Mrs. Sharp writes that ‘the autobiographical details given in it are fictitious details, which were used in order to prevent the assumption by the recipient of the letter that the writer was William Sharp: that it was his imperative desire from the outset of that phase of his work that the secret of the authorship should be preserved till his death; that through the loyalty of the few friends who knew that he and he alone was Fiona Macleod, and by means of efforts of his own, the wish was fulfilled.’”

Ever so many thanks, my dear fellow, for your most generously worded review of ‘Madge’³⁹. I wish the book really deserved half you say of it — which is a genuine and not an ‘epidermic’ wish! It has had quite a remarkable reception all round. But apart from any public criticism, I am gratified it appeals so much to so good a judge as yourself.

Sorry I can’t give you exact particulars about the Salons — as I don’t know them myself. I understand, however, that the dates are as follows: (you know that both Salons are opening a fortnight earlier than usual?)

The ‘New Salon’ (Champ de Mars) is said to open on Apr. 14th — and the Champs-Élysées or Old Salon on the 20th.

Probably these dates mean the “Tour du Vermissage” — our ‘Private-View’. If so, it will mean that the N.S. press day is the 12th or 13th — and that of the O.S. the 19th or even the 17th.

There is no way to get tickets save by application to the Directeur, & *on the part of the paper* (not the critic himself). *Personal* application *might* do as an emergency, but cannot be trusted. After talking fluently & arguing in rapid French for an hour, one might succeed — but probably not.

Separate tickets are needed for the Tour du Vermissage. Tickets *only* for the O.S. — for the new, there is public admission also, price 10 fcs. I fancy the New keeps to a uniform 1 fc rate for other days: the O. S. has a 5 franc day, & a 2 fc. day. On Sundays, 1 fc till 12, & free after. When I know anything more definite I’ll let you hear.

³⁹ See note to Sharp’s March 15 letter to Little. This review probably appeared in the Surrey newspaper that employed Little as an editor and reviewer. Little was planning to go to Paris to view and review the annual Salons, perhaps for his newspaper. Either William or Elizabeth Sharp, or both, attended the Salons each year and reviewed them for the *Glasgow Herald*, *The Art Review*, and other periodicals. It appears that Sharp was planning to go not to the Paris Salons, but elsewhere in Europe for two or three weeks at the beginning of April, but there is no evidence that those plans materialized. EAS did attend the Salons in mid- to late-April before going South to spend time with the Janviers in St. Remy.

Frantically busy just now & in deep arrears — the more so as from the 4th I expect to be away (abroad) for 3 or 4 weeks. Hope Maud is all right now. E. has been very seedy, but is better.

Ever affectly Yours, | Will

Are you ever Bond St. way in the afternoon? Someday I wish we could meet at the Grosvenor Club & have a chat over a cup of coffee.

ALS University of British Columbia

To George Meredith, March 26, 1897

c/o Miss Lilian Rea / The Outlook Tower / Castlehill / Edinburgh | 26:3:97

Dear Mr. Meredith

Herewith I send to you, begging you to give me the pleasure of its acceptance by you, a copy of one of the three vols. of the just published Reissue of my shorter tales. These have been rearranged, and organically grouped, and (with others added) have just appeared as a new and cheaper edition in three volumes. I was tempted to burden you also with “Spiritual Tales” and “Barbaric Tales” -- but have refrained. I wonder if you will be cynical, and say “Ah, why has she not been equally reticent with “Tragic Romances”! But I hope not: for it is a pleasure to me to bring any small flower o’ the mind to you, if you will accept both the homage of the gift and the shy pleasure with which it is given.

I chose “Tragic Romances” because it contains my longest modern short story, “Morag of the Glen,” and the story which I myself think the nearest to what I want to do in this particular *genre* – “The Archer.”

The other stories are from either *The Sin Eater* or *The Washer of the Ford*. I saw a paragraph in “The Highland News” that you had been ill, but are now quite well again. I hope the latter is true.

There is a chance I may be south this Spring or early Summer. If so, I look with keen pleasure to the often anticipated visit to you.⁴⁰

I am deep in a big historical romance: and having sloughed the immature manner of “Pharais” and “Green Fire,” I may not displease those who are kind enough to hope good things of me.

Ever Sincerely yours / Fiona Macleod

ALS Mark Samuels Lasner

To Louise Chandler Moulton, March 31, 1897

15 Greencroft Gardens | South Hampstead | London | 31/Mch/97

Dear Louise,

The mail day finds me so close run for time that I can do no more than send you my affectionate greetings for your birthday -- & therewith my latest “phiz.”⁴¹ I leave England next week for 3 weeks or so — & perhaps when I return it may be to find you here. I hope so.

Ever dear friend, | affectionately yours, | Will

Did you receive the copy of “Wives in Exile” I asked to be sent to you?

ACS Princeton

To W. E. Henley, April 1, 1897⁴²

⁴⁰ Sharp took a woman pretending to be Fiona Macleod, almost certainly Edith Rinder, to meet Meredith at Box Hill on June 10, 1897. In a letter to Alice Meynell dated June 13, 1897, Meredith described her as “a handsome woman, who would not give me her eyes for awhile.” In a letter to Maud Gonne dated January 14, 1907, Yeats recalled Meredith saying “she was the most beautiful woman he ever saw.” To my knowledge, this is the only occasion on which Sharp was able to convince Edith -- pretending to be Fiona -- to meet one of his friends (See *Yeats Annual, No. 14*, 182 and note, and *Gonne-Yeats Letters*, 234).

⁴¹ Photographic portrait

⁴² This letter is transcribed from a draft in Sharp’s handwriting with W. E. Henley’s full name and address in the upper left corner. The draft was for Mary Sharp to copy in the Fiona

To W. E. Henley Esq. | Stanley Lodge | Muswell Hill | London, N. | 1:4:97

Dear Mr. Henley

I thank you for your kind letter. Any word of recognition from you means much to me. Your advice is wise and sane, I am sure — and you may be certain that I shall bear it in mind. It will be difficult to follow — for absolute simplicity is the most difficult of all styles, being, as it must be, the expression of a mind at once so imaginative in itself, so lucid in its outlook, and so controlled in its expression, that only a very few rarely gifted individuals can hope to achieve the isolating ideal you indicate.

I sent you only the second volume of the Reissue of my shorter tales — but I would now like you to see what I have written last (with no implied compulsion on you to express your opinion, however!).

The three latest things I have written are the long short-story “Morag of the Glen”, “The Melancholy of Ulad”, and “The Archer”. The second appears in the first volume, “Spiritual Tales” — but the two others in the third, “Tragic Romances”: so I will direct the publishers to send you a copy. I would (if you do write — but, let me repeat, I do not ask or in a sense expect this, knowing how preoccupied you must ever be) particularly like to know what you think of the style & method of “The Archer” (I mean, apart from the arbitrary fantasy of the short supplementary part — which affords the clue to the title) — as there I have written, or tried to write, with the accent of that life as I know it.

Macleod hand. W. E. Henley (1849-1903) was a well known poet, editor, arbiter of taste, and man of letters. He 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 retitled the *National Observer*. He resigned his editorship in 1894. Among his publications are *Book of Verse* (1880), *Views and Reviews* (1890), *Poems* (1901), and *In Hospital* (1901).

I was visiting friends in an old house among the Pentlands when your kind letter was posted, and by mischance I did not receive it till last night. I expect to be in (or near) Edinburgh for a week yet, when I return to Assynt⁴³ for a season.

Do not for a moment think that I take your “imposing yourself editorially” upon me as “an offense” — or anything but a welcome and honourable tribute of interest.

Believe me, | Sincerely yours, | F.M.

ALS NLS

To Katherine Tynan Hinkson, April 3, 1897

C/o Miss Rea, | The Outlook Tower, | Castlehill, | Edinburgh | 3.4.97.

Dear Mrs. Hinkson,

I have asked my friend Miss Rea, who has now gone to London (and will still, as before, look after my correspondence), to send you some notes ‘she took of me’ for an American article she has been commissioned to write.⁴⁴ These, if I remember aright, will give you the main drift of my possible publicities. For the rest, let me answer briefly that my first encouragers were (first and foremost) Mr. George Meredith — then Mr. Grant Allen, Mr. Traill, and very soon Mr. Yeats and fellow-Celtic writers, including Katharine Tynan Hinkson.

In great haste,

Most cordially yours, | Fiona Macleod

The Middle Years 130

To Benjamin Burgess Moore,⁴⁵ April 9, 1897

⁴³ An area in the far northwest of Scotland.

⁴⁴ This article did not appear. “Fiona Macleod,” an article which appeared in *The Critic*, 48 (May 1906), 460-3, is the only piece by Miss Rea that has been located.

⁴⁵ Benjamin Burgess Moore was an undergraduate at Yale University who wrote an article about the Fiona Macleod writings that appeared in the *Yale Literary Magazine*.

Dear Mr. Moore,

— For ‘Sir’ and ‘Madam’ seem incongruous with the expression of a friendly sympathy such as yours and of a gratified acceptance such as mine.

I write at the earliest date practicable since I heard from you, to thank you most cordially for your friendly letter, and for the accompanying copy of the Yale Literary Magazine, with its profoundly sympathetic and therefore to me most welcome ‘appreciation’ of my work. It is a keen pleasure to me that I have won many friends in the United States — as I discover, apart from my publishers, from reviews and from unknown correspondents. And now I have to add a new friend to my unknown friends oversea — and believe me it is a true encouragement as well as a pleasure to win the deep and keen sympathy of one like yourself. As to the article itself, I have seen nothing in any American paper or magazine which can be compared with it — either in knowledge of the writings, sympathetic understanding, and general insight — and this, I may add, not merely because you honour me with such cordial praise.

There are some writers who dwell apart, in every sense of the word: and I am one of these. My wishes and my tastes, as well as certain exigencies in my private circumstances, incline me towards a greater privacy or isolation than suits that ethic of publicity which prevails and is to me so undignified and even distressing: and hence have arisen many strange rumours about me and as to “who I am” etc. And in like manner, even those who know me say that I am a survival from a remote past, and not a proper modern at all. This is not quite true, for I believe in one intensity of emotion above all others, namely the intensity of this brief flame of life in the heart and the brain, an intensity no one can have who does not account the hours of every day as the vanishing pawns in that tragic game of chess for ever being played between Time and Eternity. All the same, I have ever mentally been impassioned for the past and so it is that I find myself, both in the inner and outer life, much aloof from my fellows. I find in the close and intimate communion with nature, which is so much more possible away from towns — and I live truly only when I am in the remote Isles or among the mountains of Argyll — a solace and inspiration which come to me much attenuated through the human medium. Perhaps

this is because, though young in years, I have a capacity for sorrow and regret which has come to me through my Celtic ancestry out of a remote lost world: because, indeed, I have myself walked the blind way between Joy and Sorrow and been led now by the one now by the other. But do not think I am a melancholy person. I am not, in the ordinary sense. I am young, and life has given me some of her rarest gifts, and I am grateful: and, when my hour comes, shall be ready, having lived. Not even in my vision of life am I melancholy. All the same, I am, as you discern, saturated with the gloom and strangeness of life from one vital point of view: and am ever aware of the menace of the perpetual fugitive shadow of Destiny. It is summed up in a dream I had once, lying among the grassy dunes in Iona: a dream wherein I heard a voice saying in gaelic that the three Dominions or Powers were “The Living God, the Dying World, and the mysterious Race of Man”, and that behind each gleamed the shadowy eyes of Destiny. I write to you thus, and of course in all privacy, because you will understand, and care that I should do so. I am glad my books appeal to you so. As you do not seem to know my most mature and most characteristic book, “The Washer of the Ford”, I send you a copy. If I am mistaken, and you already have one, this or the other can be given to some friend who will care to hear what a far away and rather weary dreamer of a beautiful if perhaps vain Dream has to say out of her vision of life temporal and spiritual. As, also, I gather from a phrase in your article that you have not seen my most intimate book of all, the poems collectively entitled “From the Hills of Dream”; I send you also a copy of that book. It is almost certain I shall never publish another volume of poems. It is giving up too much of oneself, exposing to curious or indifferent eyes the emotions which, as Plato says, colour that strange flame, the soul.

Please let know if you received this too-long note and the accompanying books — and believe me

Most Sincerely Yours | Fiona Macleod

P. S. I enclose a review of “From the Hills of Dream” by an unknown but as sympathetic a critic as yourself.

ALS Huntington

*To Elizabeth Sharp [late April, 1897]*⁴⁶

St. Margaret's Bay

Sunday (on the shore by the sea, and in the sunshine). I wonder what you are doing today? I feel very near you in spirit as I always do when I have been reading, hearing, or seeing any beautiful thing — and this forenoon I have done all three, for I am looking upon the beauty of sunlit windswept sea, all pale green and white, and upon the deep blue sky above the white cliffs, upon the Jackdaws and gulls dense black or snowy against the azure, upon the green life along and up the cliff-face, upon the yellow-green cystus bushes below -- and am listening to the sough of the wind, soft and balmy, and the rush and break of the sunlit waves among the pebbly reaches just beyond me — and have been reading Maeterlinck's two essays, "The Deeper Life" and "The Inner Beauty."⁴⁷

I am longing to be regularly at work again — and now feel as if at last I can do so. . . .

More and more absolutely, in one sense, are W.S. and F.M. becoming two persons — often married in mind and one nature, but often absolutely distinct. I am filled with a passion of dream and work. . . .

Friendship, deepening into serene and beautiful flame, is one of the most ennobling and lovely influences the world has. . . .

Wilfion⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Introducing this fragment, EAS said, "Towards the end of April I went to Paris to write upon the two 'Salons,' and my husband, still very unwell, went to St. Margaret's Bay."

⁴⁷ These essays appeared in Maeterlinck's *The Treasure of the Humble*, tr. by Alfred Surto (London: Grant Allen) 1897.

⁴⁸ The final sentence ending in an ellipsis (either reflecting the original or cut off by EAS) refers to his relationship with EWR who was probably with him in St. Margaret's Bay. The marriage metaphor to define the relationship between the two sides of his nature takes on a deeper significance when we know he was, at this time, frequently conflating Edith Rinder with Fiona Macleod, the female "second self" he claimed to have within. His assertion that he needed to be with Edith in order to think and write as Fiona was true – at least part of the time – for identifying with her, adopting her perspective, facilitated his ability to write as a woman. That

P.S. Again some more good tidings. Constables have accepted my giving up *The Lily Leven* indefinitely — and instead have agreed to my proposal to write a child’s book (dealing with the Celtic Wonderworld) to be called *The Laughter of Peterkin*⁴⁹.

Memoir 285

To Robert Murray Gilchrist, [May 3, 1897]

Hotel Teston | St. Rémy de Provence | Bouches du Rhone | Monday

Dear Mr. Gilchrist

Do not, please, measure my pleasure at receiving your photograph by my apparent forgetfulness in writing more fully than the post card permitted me to thank you for your kind remembrance of my wishes. I am very glad to have your photograph, and I am daily becoming better acquainted by means of it with Will’s firm friend.

I hope you will find some opportunities of seeing you. A chat of half an hour is too little in which to become really friends, and that is what I wish.

Will was very disappointed at the failure of the Ronen plan, and I hope he will carry out his present idea of going to see you within the next few days.

claim also provided a convenient excuse for them to be alone together. EAS (*Memoir*, 423) said of Sharp’s use of the name “Wilfion”:

In surveying the dual life as a whole I have seen how, from the early partially realised twin-ship, “W.S.” was the first to go adventuring and find himself, while his twin, “F.M.,” remained passive, or a separate self. When “she” awoke to active consciousness “she” became the deeper, the more impelling, the more essential factor. By reason of this severance, and of the acute conflict that at times resulted therefrom, the flaming of the dual life became so fierce that “Wilfion” — as I named the inner and third Self that lay behind that dual expression — realised the imperativeness of gaining control over his two separated selves and of bringing them into some kind of conscious harmony.

⁴⁹ *The Laughter of Peterkin: A Retelling of Old Tales of the Celtic Wonderland* (London: Archibald, Constable & Co.), 1897.

Here in this lovely, sunny spot I am gathering strength, and resting, and enjoying myself. The charm is as appealing as that of Italy; but it is different — a little more direct — I find. And I am much interested in meeting some of the members of the Felibre: Felix Gras,⁵⁰ and the lovely Queen of the Felibres M^{me} Gasquet.⁵¹ Mistral⁵² I hope to meet next week. It is extremely interesting to be taken into the heart of this wonderful vital literary movement⁵³

[Elizabeth A. Sharp]

Frag. Sheffield City Archives

To Robert Murray Gilchrist, [May 4, 1897]

15 Greencroft Gardens | So. Hampstead | NW

My dear Robert

⁵⁰ Felix Gras (1844-1901) was a poet, novelist, and prominent member of the Félibrige, becoming its president in 1891. His works include *Li Carbounié*; *Tolozà*; *The Reds of the Midi*; and *The White Terror* (1899).

⁵¹ Marie Josephine (Girard) Gasquet (b. 1872) was the author of *Une Fille de Saint François* (1922), *Une Enfance Provençale* (1926-41), *Sainte Jeanne d'Arc* (1929), and *La Fête-Dieu* (1932). EAS is referring to a title Gasquet received at the Floral Games, an event the Félibrige held every seven years. At the Games a poet laureate was crowned, after which he would choose a queen. Gasquet must have been the reigning queen in 1897. (For more on the Félibrige, see note on Frédéric Mistral below.)

⁵² Frédéric Mistral (1830-1914) was a poet who led the nineteenth century revival of the Provençal language and literature. He was co-winner of the Nobel Prize for literature in 1904 for his contributions to literature and philology. In 1854 he and several friends founded the Félibrige which was dedicated to maintaining Provençal culture. His works include *Miréio* (1859), *Lou Pouémo dóu Rose* (1897), and his memoirs, *Moun Espelido* (1906), which was his most popular work.

⁵³ This letter from Elizabeth Sharp is included to demonstrate her intelligence and range of literary and cultural interests. Her entry to that group was provided by Catherine and Thomas Janvier, with whom she was staying. The remainder of the letter is missing.

Will you be at home, & free this week-end?

There is *just a chance* I could come to you on Saty, for a couple of days.

If so, I would come via Chesterfield. Is it an easy drive from there to you?

Affectionate greetings to you & yours. W.S.

Do send me the promised photograph.

ACS Sheffield City Archives

To Robert Murray Gilchrist, [May 6, 1897]⁵⁴

It is possible I may not be able to get away on Saturday till the train which leaves at 3 (due Chesterfield 6.14) — in fact it had better be arranged so: so (if convenient for you) I shall hope to see you at Chesterfield Station at 6.14.

W.

If, on Saty. Morning early, I see that I can get to the train due at C at 3.40, I'll wire.

ACS Sheffield City Archives

To Robert Murray Gilchrist, [May 10, 1897]

Monday Night

My dear Robert

I reached Chesterfield, I reached Stretton, I reached Ashover by bus, and I reached Liedernot. There I learned that Mr. & Mrs. Murray had left home for a fortnight. This was 11.30, & there was no bus till the evg, no train till the afternoon!

So I got a dog-cart, & drove the 3 or 4 miles to Stretton for my bag, & then the 6 or so to Chesterfield, where I had an hour & a half to wait. Well, I console myself by saying that I reached home 2 or 3 hours earlier than I expected to do — so all's well that ends well.

I enjoyed greatly my brief visit to you. It is true I am suffering from the effects of that long detour you involved me in on Sunday, & deeply resent that dream about the pig — but by

⁵⁴The card is postmarked May 7, 1897. Since that was a Friday, it was written on the 6th.

the time I have written to my wife about your unfortunate dropsical mania, & general anaemic decay; & to Mrs. W. R. about your loving intimacy with Death; & to Madame Janvier about your most unwarrantable and lewd dream; & to Grant R. about what you told me about his horrid Complaint; ⁵⁵ by *then*, I shall have no other than happy thoughts of you, you deeply ungrateful & foolish youth.

I think it is not improbable I shall get south, on Friday or Saty: but cannot tell for certain till Friday comes.⁵⁶ So if you write them you had better not say that you know I am to be there, in case I cannot manage it. I am very anxious to do so, however, if I can — though four days incessant travelling (i.e. there & back) & over 1000 miles, is a good deal to do for one day — at most for two: for I wd. need to leave again on the 18th or at latest the 19th.

However, I'll try & let you know in advance. At the present moment my getting away *seems* impossible — and indeed with the best will in the world it may well prove to be so.

Do not forget to put your shorter stories together, and as soon as possible. I do hope you will do this — & also that you will soon work at “The Labyrinthe”.

When you write to Mrs. Wingate Rinder do not forget your photograph. Her address is 11 Woronzow Road | St. John's Wood. If you are getting any more, get an *unmounted one* for her, so that she could put it into “The Stone Dragon”.

How strange life is, indeed. Today we laughed and chatted, and everything was as usual — & yet I received at Cartledge⁵⁷ today a letter of the most vital & far-reaching importance in my life! But so it is, often & oftener with all of us, or many of us.

⁵⁵ Interestingly, these are the three most important women in Sharp's life at this time: EAS, EWR, and Catherine Ann Janvier. Grant R. is Grant Richards, a mutual friend. EAS had received Gilchrist's photograph, as had Sharp presumably. Now he reminds Gilchrist that Edith Rinder wants one – unframed if possible.

⁵⁶ Sharp left London on Friday, May 14 for St. Remy where he surprised Elizabeth on Sunday morning, celebrated her birthday on Monday, and left again for London on the 18th, arriving there on the evening of Wednesday, the 19th.

My loving greeting, Camerado mio | Your friend | Will

I have written to your mother also, so send no messages with this.

ALS Sheffield City Archives

To Edmund Clarence Stedman, May 12, 1897

12/May/97

P.S.⁵⁸ After all, I am just going abroad again on important work — and shall not be back for a week or 10 days, so cannot write at the moment. I wrote by preceding mail to thank you most cordially for your ever watchful and helpful care of my interests. You were, of course, quite right abt. this last postponement, though I do trust L⁵⁹ will pay up Thursday as I urgently need it. Meanwhile my most grateful thanks to you, ever kind friend, W.S.

ACS Columbia

To J. Stanley Little, [May 19, 1897]

Monday

My dear old man,

On returning to London this evening I found your note awaiting me.

Elizabeth is still in the South of France, & will not be back till either the 14th or the 15th of June. Much as I want to see you again, I fear it will be impracticable until E. returns — & then we shall both gladly come — for tho' I am to be here till this week-end I go away again

⁵⁷A small village in Derbyshire not from Sheffield and the Gilchrist homes through which Sharp passed on his way home. It is surprising that he received a letter while passing through that remote place, and the content of the letter remains a mystery.

⁵⁸This post card was intended as a post script to a letter (now missing) Sharp sent to Stedman in the preceding mail.

⁵⁹The publisher Lamson who owed Sharp money which Stedman was trying to collect for him.

then for a week, and meanwhile am engaged every day and night. What with the autumn in Scotland, the early winter in America, Jany in the Riviera, Provence, Scotland, & France three times, I've not been much here since last summer! I'm as nearly bankrupt as I've ever been in my life — but I've lived up to the hilt, and it's Spring, and Summer's still to come, and heads or tails it's still good to be alive, and may the Dispenser of Laughter & Tears smile benignly on both of us, cher ami!

Ever yrs affectly, | Will

If I can't get away this week-end, i.e. if free this Saty or some day next week I'll send you a preliminary wire, and try to get to see you — but it is unlikely.

ALS Princeton

To Elizabeth A. Sharp [May 21, 1897]

London

It seems very strange to be here and at work again — or rather it is the interlude that seems so strange and dreamlike. This time last week it was not quite certain if I could get away, as it depended partly upon finishing the Maeterlinck Essay and partly upon the postponement of due date for the monograph on Orchardson.⁶⁰ Then Richard Whiteing came in. Then at last I said that since fortune wouldn't hurry up it could go to the devil — and I would just go to my dear wife: and so I went. And all is well. Only a week ago today since I left! How dramatic it all is — that hurried journey, the long afternoon and night journey from Paris, the long afternoon and night to Tarascon — the drive at dawn and sunrise through beautiful Provence — the meeting you — the seeing our dear friends there again. And then that restful Sunday, that lovely birthday!

Memoir 286

⁶⁰ Unable to locate this essay on Maeterlinck or the monograph on Orchardson.

To Patrick Geddes, [May 29?, 1897⁶¹]

Monday

My dear Geddes,

Excuse a pencilled line in great haste. I have just returned home, & find many things awaiting immediate attention.

Yes — I had already thought and certainly do think it wd. be a mistake for P.G. & Co. & for you not to take advantage of the Iona pilgrimage-celebrations. Among other things I thought it wd. be a paying thing to ask Miss Muir (if she is still there — or other representative of the small Iona Press — a little, primitive, right, Iona printing company of two or three persons) or some one to sell the paper and indeed other copies of F.M. The best place would be a little stall near the Ferry landingstage — or at the north entrance to the ‘Cathedral’—

Much the most suitable thing of Miss F.M. would be what she suggested last year as a cheap Xmas reprint in pamphlet — or paper-cover booklet form, of “The Three Marvels of Iona.” (As thus reprinted in the Reissue — Vol. I, abt 30 pp in all.) In some respects, “St. Bride of the Isles” (“Muime Chriosd”) is considered her most typical Iona tale — but I imagine that some of the good folk of the Kirks would not like the Bethlehem and Biblical parts. What do you think about this? For that matter, both “St. Bride of the Isles” (which might be rechristened ‘St. Bride of Iona’) and “The Three Marvels of Iona” might each be done in booklet form.

Miss M. says she is quite willing, and indeed glad: but at the same time wishes me to see for her that she obtains her just share in the returns of any such sales: i.e. a direct proportion, to be agreed on, on all copies in this proposed reprint, to be duly accounted for and duly paid in ordinary course. On these conditions, I agree for her.

It is impossible to say right away if she can send a poem. Send me a P/C to say the latest date it wd. need to be recd. — and I’ll let her know.

⁶¹“William Sharp, May. 1897.” has been typed onto the letter just below where Sharp had written “Monday.”

It must be strange for you both to be in Dundee after the East. Well, Life has been kaleidoscopic enough for you of late?

Love to you both —

In haste, | Yrs Ever, | W.S.

ALS NLS, Geddes Collection

To Robert Murray Gilchrist, May 24, [1897]

St. Rémy de Provence | May 24

Dear Mr. Gilchrist,

Your letter on my birthday gave me great pleasure, bringing as it did not only kindly wishes but the pretty message from the wood sorrel.

You knew of the delightful surprise that was in store for me & you will therefore readily believe this birthday of mine is very memorable. The whole establishment was in a ferment; for the landlord & landlady had kept the secret since the previous day. They decked our dinner table with masses of lovely roses of all sizes and colors: a central pyramid & star-like rays to the edge of the table — very lovely.

Will is back again in London, & his coming now seems like a beautiful dream. He told me how much he enjoyed his visit to Cartledge Hall.

Someday I hope to avail myself of Mrs. Gilchrist's kind proposal that I should accompany him when he goes to see you. He has spoken so much to me of your mother that I am doubly wishful to have the privilege of meeting her.

I have your message to Mr. Janvier who is greatly gratified thereby.

I am charmed with the sound of the Provençal language. It is so much more sonorous and liquid than the concise clear cut French. It is eminently suited to the lips of poets. Hearing it, and seeing the beauty and richness of this southern land, one understands why this was & still is the land of Troubadours, Sunshine, and sweet sounds — the heart must needs sing it seems to me.

I hope you are writing. I like your work — and look forward expectantly to what you will give us to read & ponder over.

Sincerely yours | Elizabeth A. Sharp

Hotel Teston

ALS Sheffield City Archives

To Elizabeth A. Sharp, [late May, 1897]

Herewith my typed copy of your Wilfion's last writing. Called 'The Wayfarer'⁶² though possibly, afterwards, 'Where God is, there is light,' it is one of the three Spiritual Moralities of which you know two already, 'The Fisher of Man' and 'The Last Supper.'⁶³ In another way, the same profound truth is emphasised as in the other two — that Love is the basic law of spiritual life. 'The Redeemer liveth' in these three: Compassion, Beauty, Love — the three chords on which these three harmonies of Fiona's inner life have been born. . . .

Memoir 286-7

To Robert Murray Gilchrist, June 14, 1897

14th June/97

My dear Robert,

I must tell you at once that I am delighted more than I can say with your new book. Frankly, I had not expected this. I knew I should be interested: I knew there would be good & fine work: but I had imagined the contents to be, however good, still of the pot-boiler nature. Instead, I find them the best you have done as yet. I mean what I say when I add that I can compare them only with Guy de Maupassant, different as they are in atmosphere. You have

⁶² Fiona Macleod's "The Wayfarer," was published in *Cosmopolis* (June, 1898, pp. 613-26). A revised version was included in Fiona Macleod's *The Winged Destiny* (Chapman and Hall, 1904). In 1906 it was published by Thomas Mosher as a separate volume, prefaced by a sonnet "In Memoriam" by Alfred Noyes.

⁶³These two stories were in *The Washer of the Ford and other Legendary Moralities* (Edinburgh: P. G. Geddes and Colleagues, 1896).

observed so truly, depicted so masterly, and with so true a sense of proportion, and with, too, so much of poignant if always controlled pathos, and humour of a rare kind, that I almost dare to hope “A Peakland Faggot” will go straight to the mark. I do not think the title will take the public, & it is a bad time for books just now — yet surely such altogether exceptional work must find a public.⁶⁴

The first six tales seem to me absolutely perfect in their kind. (The first I remembered in a moment, and found it as impressive & reaching as ever). The seventh I did not find convincing. It put me too in mind of a tale of Hardy’s — I don’t mean in facts, but in atmosphere & treatment. It is followed by five charming studies. “The End of the World” is the best thing of its kind I have read for very long. The dialogue throughout is admirable, colloquially consistent, & convincing.

Altogether I do most heartily congratulate you on such notably fine work. Work now on a bigger scale, on a broader canvas, with a still freer touch, and you will be in the front rank of our creative writers.

My love to you & yours, & all cordial greetings. I am just off to meet my wife, who arrives tonight. If I cannot do anything at first hand I’ll do what I can at second hand to help the book.

Ever affectionately | Your gratified friend | Will

ALS Sheffield City Archives

To Mrs. Coulson Kernahan [August 4, 1897]

⁶⁴ Gilchrist’s *A Peakland Faggot: Tales told of Milton Folk* was published in 1897 by Grant Richards, London. It is a collection of stories set in his native Peak district near Sheffield in Darbyshire. The village called Milton was based on the village of Eyam and many of the stories contain characters based on people who lived in and near Eyam. Long after Gilchrist died in 1917, a selection of his stories with a memoir by his friend Eden Phillpotts (1862-1960) was published under the title *A Peakland Faggot* (Faber & Gwyer: London, 1926).

I — we — had meant to write before this — but as Mrs. Malaprop says “suckingstantial suckcumstances have been agin us”, up till tonight.

But I’ll write soon, tomorrow I hope, with the cook etc. Love to you both —

W.S.

ACS Princeton

To Robert Murray Gilchrist, [mid-August, 1897]

18 Park Lane | *Southwold* / Suffolk

My dear Robert

I was glad to see your fist⁶⁵ again — though sorry to learn that your old enemy neuralgia (or is it cancer-cum-dropsy, as you vowed of old) has been visiting you.

I have had a troubled & wearing time since I saw you — save for a brief happy spell in the early part of July. But, where there is nothing to be said, words are idle.

I have liked being here, where Elizabeth & I came with our friends the Janviers from Provence at the end of July. It is one of the pleasantest English coast places I know. We leave again on Saty the 28th, & return to London for two days, when we go to the Dorset coast till the 12th Sept (my birthday, by the way, so send me a line, mind!) to stay with friends — | Good Rest / *Parkstone* / Dorset | Then I go north (by sea to Ireland, & thence to the Inner Hebrides) for 2 or 3 weeks.

I have heard many (literally) good reports of the “Faggot”, tho’ I fear it has not gone very well, owing to Jubilee etc.⁶⁶

What are you doing now? You are I hope engaging in some big thing?

W.S. is busy with the architectonic & other preliminaries of two books, very different in kind, though both imaginative fiction: and, later, will be busy on a play. F.M. has recently

⁶⁵ A handwritten letter from Gilchrist.

⁶⁶ See note to June 14, 1897 letter to Gilchrist. The Jubilee was a year-long celebration in 1897 of Queen Victoria’s ascension to the throne in 1847.

finished “a retelling of old tales” volume, partly what is called a child’s book⁶⁷ — & is now planning out preliminaries of a long historical romance, & also of a short imaginative dramatic poetic play called “The Hour of Beauty.”

Elizabeth is much better & well & happy, tho’ enviably idle. Mrs. Wingate Rinder is at present in Cornwall — but I shall see her before long.

Of my love take what you will for yourself, & give also to your mother & sisters. In the pipe put no hashish (which I refuse to send to you) but put in it an Imperishable Dream, and smoke it whenever Silence, Solitude, & Reverie concur.⁶⁸

Your friend | Will

ALS Sheffield City Archives

To William Sharp [September 12, 1897]⁶⁹

My dear Will,

I would like to write you a longer note, but I find it impracticable today. However, you know how sincere my good wishes are: and I trust from my heart that you may have a happy and prosperous new year.

⁶⁷ *The Laughter of Peterkin: A Retelling of Old Tales of the Celtic Wonderland* (Archibald, Constable & Co., London) was published in November 1897.

⁶⁸ This sentence is the only surviving reference to the drug he and W. B. Yeats were occasionally using to facilitate the visions they hoped would produce the rites and talismans for Yeats’ projected Celtic Mystical Order. He and Gilchrist must have discussed the drug and its effects.

⁶⁹ This birthday letter from Fiona Macleod to William Sharp is undated, but the date is established by the publication of F.M.’s *The Laughter of Peterkin* in November 1897 and by the date of Sharp’s birthday, September 12. The letter is in Sharp’s hand, not the Fiona Macleod hand provided by Mary Sharp. It must have been written when WS and EAS were staying with friends at Good Rest | Parkstone | Dorset. He reminds himself that he must become more productive in the “new year,” but the letter is also an attempt to reaffirm and strengthen his sense of being two separate people. There is also, of course, a note of whimsy.

Now, dear Billy, forgive me if I say that I am very much disappointed with you this past year. You have not been well, it is true: but you have also been idle to a painful degree, and your lack of method makes me seriously anxious. I will not dwell upon your minor and to me irritating faults: you know well to what I allude, and I think too you are often greedy, for it is not necessary always to have both marmalade and butter at breakfast. That is a small thing but it is significant: I can only hope that you will control your appetites better in 1897-8.

But do for heaven's sake put your shoulder to the wheel, and get soon in good working trim at something worth doing. You ever put pleasure first, and think so much of youth that you don't like billiards merely because the balls are bald. This is sad, Billy.

I shall keep all the rest till we meet. What an uncomfortable half hour you will have!

Still, you're a dear, and I like you with all your faults. Be a good boy and I'll love you.

Your loving twin, | Fiona

I have a lovely present for you. I'll tell it when we meet. I shall also, later, send you "The Laughter of Peterkin."

ALS Private

To William Meredith, September 14, 1897

15 Greencroft Gardens | South Hampstead | 14/Sept/97

Dear Mr. Meredith,

My friend, Mrs. Mona Caird, with whose name you are of course familiar, & some of whose books you may have seen, sent me a short time ago the (typed) MS. of her new novel, "The Pathway of the Gods," with the request that I should advise her where to send the book. (She did not wish it to go to the publishers to whom, at their request, she gave her last book, "The Daughters of Danaus")⁷⁰

⁷⁰*The Daughters of Danaeus* was published by Bliss, Sand (London) in 1894. *The Pathway of the Gods* was published in 1898.

I have read “The Pathway of the Gods” with deep appreciation & sustained interest — and I think your firm may be glad of the opportunity to consider it — so I send it to you herewith.

Whatever your decision it will be simplest if you will communicate with Mrs. Caird directly (I understand that her foremost wish is not so much as to terms as to early publication). Mrs. Mona Caird’s private address is Mrs. Henryson Caird | Cassencary | *Creetown* | N.B.

I hope you are well, & having a pleasant summer. I have just returned from some delightful cycling in Dorset: but have not been able to get to Scotland yet, where however I hope to go for October.

I am here only for today & till tomorrow — so please send me here by return a line of acknowledgment of Mrs. Caird’s book.

I trust you have good news of your father⁷¹ — & that you and yours are well.

Sincerely Yours | William Sharp

ALS University of California at Berkeley

To Edward Martyn, [September 22?, 1897]⁷²

⁷¹ His father was Sharp’s friend, the novelist and poet George Meredith.

⁷² In his letter to Meredith, Sharp said he would be leaving London on September 15 or 16. If that expectation materialized, his destination is unknown. He was back in London when he wrote to Martyn which, from its description of his plans, must have been written on September 22 for he tells Martyn that he will leave for Dublin tomorrow (Thursday, the 23rd), see George Russell there (Friday, the 24th), leave Dublin on Saturday morning, and be at the Royal Hotel in Greenore, a port village on the East coast north of Dublin, on Sunday and Monday mornings, the 26th and 27th. His plans after that, he tells Martyn, are uncertain, but he implies he will be travelling in Ireland until Saturday October 2. The letters that follow indicate that, on the contrary, he made his way on Monday, September 27 to the Isle of Arran off the west coast of Scotland where he stayed four or five nights, before returning to Ireland and taking the train west to Galway on Saturday, October 2. The letter he wrote to E. C. Stedman from Iona says he is staying there with Fiona Macleod. The Arran interlude in his visit to Ireland seems to have been preplanned secretly to enable him to spend time alone with Edith Rinder who would have

My dearest Martyn,⁷³

Many thanks for your letter and the response to my telegram. It would have been a great disappointment if I had been unable (or you) to make this much looked forward to visit a reality. I am anticipating with exceptional pleasure my visit to the west of Ireland, and to long talks with you and Yeats on the Celtic and other subjects so dear to us all.

I go to Dublin tomorrow — till Saty morning (Poste restante G.P.O.) where I shall see George Russell⁷⁴ but have no other address meanwhile, as my movements in north or n. Western Ireland will be guided by weather and other circumstances. I expect to be at the Ry.

been spending the month of September, as usual, in a rented house on the mainland near Tarbert, just north of Arran.

⁷³ Edward Martyn (1859-1923) inherited money, properties, and an impressive establishment (Tillyra Castle) near the town of Gort in the west of Ireland. British by heritage, he considered himself an Irishman. He wrote plays and was an instrumental supporter of the Irish Dramatic Movement in the 1890s. He entertained his guests by playing the harmonium in the great hall of his castle. He founded the Palestrina Choir of Men and Boys in Dublin in 1899 and served as President of Sinn Fein from 1904 to 1908. In 1914 he founded in Dublin the Irish Theatre for the production of native non-peasant plays in the Irish language, and translations of continental master dramas. He was a promoter of the Gaelic league and other educational improvements for Ireland. Among his publications are *Morgante the Lesser* (1890) and *Preface to Robert Elliot's Art and Ireland*. His plays include *The Heather Field*, *Maeve* (1917), and *The Dream Physician*.

⁷⁴ George Russell [AE] (1867-1935) was an Irish writer and painter, a close friend of W. B. Yeats, and, more to the point here, a fellow member of the coterie Yeats had put together to find in the spirit world the elements of his projected Celtic Mystical Order. Russell had praised the writings of Fiona Macleod, and there is reason to believe Sharp, when he met Russell in Dublin, stated or implied strongly that he was producing the writings of Fiona Macleod. This confession seems not have endeared Sharp to Russell who before long began to attack Sharp's ideas, as expressed through the FM writings, about Pan-Celticism. Russell remained fervently Irish and wanted to keep the Celtic Revival largely, if not exclusively, an Irish movement in order that it might further the Irish cause against the British. Among his publications are *Homeward* (1894), *The Earth Breath* (1897), *The Divine Vision* (1904), and *Deirdre* (1907).

Hotel at Greenore on Sunday and Monday morning — and after that at present know nothing more. But when I know an address later — and in any case nearer the time — I shall communicate with you in case for any reason you wish to postpone my visit.

Otherwise with keen pleasure I shall arrive at Ardrahan by the train you mention on Saty the 2nd of October. I hope the poetic drama of the Return of the Gods is finished. I am eager to hear that and other achievements of you and our brilliant comrade.

Sincerely yours, | William Sharp

ALS National Library of Ireland, text from transcript made by Library staff

To William Meredith, September 24, [1897]

Isle of Arran | Friday. 24th Sept. | En passant.

Dear Mr. Meredith

I had not time to do more than send a formal acknowledgment of the cheque for £50 advance against royalties on “Peterkin”⁷⁵ — which at my request you kindly forwarded to me, and for which I now send you and “A. Constable & Co” my cordial thanks.

I do hope the book will be a success, and reward you for all the trouble and outlay, as well as the friendly interest shown by you.

I asked Miss Rea some time ago to request a finished proof-copy for me (not for revision) and, if ready, for proof illustrations with it.

If this gale abates we sail from here tomorrow. For several weeks to come I shall be among the inner and outer Hebrides, and am never happier than when thus addressless. However, as you know, I can always be communicated with through Miss Rea, with whom whenever practicable I keep myself in telegraphic communication.

I hope, soon, to work uninterruptedly on “In the Old Magnific Way”,⁷⁶ and *possibly* finish it by the turn of the year or early in 1898, but I can say nothing definite yet.

⁷⁵ *The Laughter of Peterkin*

I hope soon to see Mr. Sharp who is at present in Ireland, and after seeing him to write to you a suggestion about my first book *Pharais*, which he negotiated for me.

With kind regards | Believe me, | Yours very sincerely, | Fiona Macleod

ALS University of California at Berkeley

To Edmund Clarence Stedman, September 28, [1897]

Temporary | The Corrie | Isle of Arran | Western Isles | 28:Sept

My dear friend, Comrade, and Poet

I send you a line from this beautiful island (more beautiful than ever to me because of a beautiful friend and comrade⁷⁷ who is here too) to wish you all of good luck, of good weal, of good fortune in the deepest sense, that loving friendship can wish for you. And not least do I hope that in this coming year you will find more leisure for your literary work, and for a fuller and richer expression still of your lovely lyric gift. If love, dear Stedman, can bring you your heart's-desire in all things, you shall be well served by "the silent ministers." I am eager to hear where you are, how you are, what you are doing, and how things are going with you. I forget when I last wrote to you — it was from Paris I think, or en route, and just after I had received the final settlement of that Lamson matter. Let me once more thank you lovingly for all the trouble, scrupulous heed, and wise discretion you showed throughout — and once more to tell you how grateful I am. You are of those who are indeed loyal in friendship.

I hope the delightful household at Bronxville flourishes — tho' your good friend (and mine I hope in a less ambitious way) Miss "Mary Stuart"⁷⁸ is gone. When is she to be married?

⁷⁶This may be a preliminary title for Fiona Macleod's *The Dominion of Dreams*, which Archibald, Constable & Co. published in May, 1899.

⁷⁷He tells Stedman F M is with him which means he was with EWR.

⁷⁸Miss Mary Stuart worked in a secretarial capacity for E. C. Stedman.

and your dear wife — she is well I hope? You have been away of course: I wonder where.

And that other friend? Does all go well, there? I have often thought of this.

Tomorrow F.M. and I leave Arran. Then I go to the West of Ireland (Connemara) to stay at an old castle with a strange and delightful host — with a fellow guest, my friend W. B. Yeats. If you have time to send me a line after receipt of this, let it be to c/o Edward Martyn Esq, Tillyra Castle, Ardrahan, Co. Galway, Ireland. About the end of the month I shall be in Ireland again. (F.M. says you are to have from her her new book — but as it will not be out till end November it must be combined birthday and Xmas present — and be from us both!)

Ever, dear friend, Admiringly & Affectionately, | Your Comrade | William Sharp

ALS Huntington

To John Macleay, [September 29, 1897]

Isle of Arran | 29th Sept.

My dear Mr. Macleay,

Pray excuse a pencilled note. I have been yachting with some friends, & have put in at Arran, where I have found a budget of letters. I am now about to go to the West of Ireland, and shall stay at an old castle in Iar-Connacht (the coast-end of County Galway) with, for fellow-guest, W. B. Yeats.

I can give you little information about Miss Macleod's new work that, I fancy, you do not know already. There is this, however: Messrs. Geddes & Co have found that the cheap 3. Vol reissue (in sets & separable) much appreciated -- & there has been a great advance of late in the sales of Miss M's works -- & in America as well as here. Then again: Messrs A. Constable & Co. will issue, a month or so hence (Sooner or later, but that's what I heard from Miss F. M. a day or two ago) a new volume by her, mainly for young readers – tho' not what is called a child's book – called "The Laughter of Peterkin." It consists *mainly* of a retelling of the three beautiful old Irish-Gaelic & Alban-Gaelic tales known as "The Three Sorrows of Story Telling" – i.e. "The Four White Swans" ("The Children of Lir"), "Deirdre and the Sons of Usna," and

“The Fate of the Sons of Tureen.” I have seen these in proof, but not the original preliminary or appendical matter. The book is to be illustrated, but, if I ever heard, I forget by whom.

Finally, as to Miss M., she is devoting her time wholly to her historic romance -- the first draft of a trilogy dealing with “the epic” of the fall of the Stuart dynasty. All that she has already done has been mere scaffolding towards this ambitious structure – and has been destroyed now that the plan is clear: but, I understand, it will be the Spring before she finishes the writing of the initial volume (Each will be a distinct romance, i.e., independent of each other: but, all the same, the trilogy will be a complete sequence.) It has been commissioned to appear serially first -- but I am not at liberty at present to say where or under what title.

As for myself, I am now within 2 or 3 months from the end of a romance I began last Spring, and hope to see it published about the middle of next Spring, I am also at work on a new play (for appearance in America first). For the rest, I am (or should be!) busy with commissioned articles for Harper’s, the Atlantic Monthly, Nineteenth C., & Fortnightly.

I don’t think I have any other news that wd. Interest you – unless it be that Mrs. Wingate Rinder (whose “Shadow of Arvor” you liked so much, & which by the way an eminent French critic has just praised for its high quality as at once faithful to the originals and yet individual in the retelling) is shortly to bring out a little volume through Messrs. Constable, a translation, under the title “The Dark Way of Love,” of the chief work of the Breton romanticist Charles Le Goffie, “Le Crucific de Keralies.”

I hope things are going well with you as to private pen-work. If possible, get out some romance or something of the kind. That, if at all successful, would help you better than anything else. I trust, too, you are in better health.

Perhaps you will kindly see that the H. N. for this & the next two weeks be sent to me at Tillyra Castle/ Ardrahan/Co. Galway/Ireland.

With cordial regards & good wishes | Yours very truly | William Sharp

P.S. I expect to be in Edinburgh from about the 15th to 20th Oct. (Address Murrayfield) Is there any chance of your being South then. If so let us meet.

ALS NLS

*To Elizabeth A. Sharp, [October 4, 1897]*⁷⁹

Tillyra Castle | Galway, Ireland

. . . I find it almost impossible to attempt to tell you the varied and beautiful delights of this lovely place. . . . The country is strange and fascinating — at once so austere, so remote, so unusual, and so characteristic. . . .

Lord Morris,⁸⁰ and Martyn and I go off today “to show me the beauties of the wild coast of Clare”. It is glorious autumnal weather, with unclouded sky, and I am looking forward to the trip immensely. We leave at 11, and drive to Ardrahan, and there get a train southward into County Clare, and at Ennis catch a little loopline to the coast. Then for two hours we drive to the famous Cliffs of Moher, gigantic precipices facing the Atlantic — and then for two hours move round the wild headlands of Blackhead — and so, in the afternoon, to the beautiful Clare ‘spa’ of Lisdoonvarna, where we dine late and sleep. Next day we return by some famous Round Tower of antiquity, whose name I have forgotten. Another day soon we are to go into Galway, and to the Arran Isles.

On Thursday Yeats arrives, also Dr. Douglas Hyde, and possibly Standish O’Grady — and Lady Gregory,⁸¹ one of the moving spirits in this projected new Celtic Drama. She is my

⁷⁹ For a description of the Celtic gathering which Sharp begins to describe in this letter to EAS and in which he played a starring, if discordant, role, see my article, “W. B. Yeats, William Sharp, and Fiona Macleod: A Celtic Drama, 1897.” It appeared in *Yeats Annual No. 14, Yeats and the Nineties*, ed., Warwick Gould (Palgrave, 2001).

⁸⁰ Not *Lord* Morris, but his son Martin Morris (1867-1925), an aspiring writer whose article, “The Philosophy of Poetry,” had just appeared in *The Nineteenth Century* (September, 1897, 504-13). Michael succeeded to the titles, Baron Morris of Killanin, when his father died in 1901.

⁸¹ A member of the English landed gentry in Ireland, Lady Augusta Gregory (1859-1932) was a playwright who played a crucial role in the Irish literary revival of the 1890s and beyond. Best known, perhaps for welcoming W. B. Yeats every summer to stay at Coole Park, her beautiful estate near Gort in Galway, she also became and served for many years as a Director of the Abbey Theatre in Dublin. Among her publications are *Poets and Dreamers* (1903), *Gods and Fighting Men* (1904), and *Our Irish Theatre* (1913). Her plays include “The Image,” (1910),

host's nearest neighbour, and has a lovely place (Coole Park) about five miles southwest from here, near Gort. I drove there, with Sir N.G.⁸² yesterday, in a car, through a strange fascinating austere country.

The people here are distinct from any I have seen — and the women in particular are very striking with their great dark eyes, and lovely complexions and their picturesque 'snoods'.

The accent is not very marked, and the voices are low and pleasant, and the people courteous to a high degree.

In the evening we had music — and so ended delightfully my first delightful day in the west. . .

I forgot to tell you that I arrived late — and of course at Athenry only — some 14 miles from here. I had to wait some time till a car could be got — and what a drive I had! The man said that “Plaze God, he would have me at Tull-lyra before the gintry had given me up entoirely” — and he was as good as his word! The night was dark, and the roads near Athenry awful after the recent gale and rains — and it was no joke to hold on to the car. Whenever we came to a particularly bad bit (and I declared afterwards that he took some of the stone dykes at a leap) he cried — “Now thin yer honour, whin I cry *Whi-roo!* you hould on an' trust to God” — and then came his wild *Whi-roo!* and the horse seemed to spring from the car, and the jarvey and I to be flying alongside, and my rope-bound luggage to be kicking against the stars — and then we came down with a thud, and when I had a grasp of re-found breath I asked if the road was as smooth and easy all the way, whereat my friend laughed genially and said “Be aisy at that now — shure we're coming to the bad bit soon!”

“The Full Moon” (1911), “The Golden Apple” (1916), and *Three Last Plays* (1928). Douglas Hyde and Standish O’Grady were crucial figures in the artistic, intellectual, social, and political movements that led eventually to Irish independence.

⁸² Sir William Nevill Geary (1859-1944), a well known lawyer and diplomat, was a friend and neighbor of Lady Gregory and Edward Martyn.

Not far from here is a fairy-doctor, I am going to see him some day. It is strange that when one day Lady Gregory took one of Russell's mystical drawings (I think of the Mor Reega) and showed it to an old woman, she at once exclaimed that that was the "photograph" of the fairy queen she had often seen, only that the strange girdle of fan-flame was round her waist and not on her head as in the drawing. An old man here also has often met "the secret people," and when asked to describe one strange "fairy lord" he has encountered more than once, it was so like G. R's drawing that that was shown him among several others, and he at once picked it out!

It is a haunted land.

In haste (and hunger), | Wilf.

P.S. I have been thinking much over my long-projected consecutive work (i.e. as W.S.) — in five sequel books — on the drama of life as seen in the evolution of the dreams of youth — begun, indeed, over ten years ago in Paris — but presciently foregone till ten maturing years should pass.

But now the time has come when I may, and should, and indeed, now, *must*, write this Epic of Youth That will be its general collective name — and it will interest you to know the now definitely fixt names of these five (and all very long) books; each to be distinct and complete in itself, yet all sequently connected: and organic and in the true sense dramatic evolution of some seven central types of men and women from youth to maturity and climax, along the high and low, levels.

Name: The Epic of Youth.

I. The Hunters of Wisdom.

II. The Tyranny of Dreams.

III. The Star of Fortune.

IV. The Daughters of Vengeance.

V. The Iron Gates.

This will take five years to do — so it is a big task to set, before the end of 1902! — especially as I have other work to do, and F.M's herself as ambitious. But method, and maturer

power and thought, can accomplish with far less nervous output, what otherwise was impossible, and only at a killing or at least perilous strain.

So wish me well!⁸³

Memoir 287-90

To Mr. and Mrs. Grant Allen, November 5, 1897

15 Greencroft Gardens | South Hampstead | 5th Nov /97

My dear Grant and Nellie,

The appearance of “God” in the hearts of man seems a just cause for congratulation — so I write to wish you (G.A.) heartiest good-fortune with it. I hope your other undertakings, also the plans of both, go well.

We returned a few days ago — or rather Elizabeth did some short time ago, and I dropped casually from an unexpected place I found myself in — the West of Ireland. I had a very delightful time there, as also in the Highlands.

We hope you are to be in town this winter, or a part of it — selfishly that is, for I don’t doubt but that you are infinitely better at Hindhead — or, failing that, abroad.

I saw Dick Le Gallienne last night. He has just published a weak and malappropriately named little booklet⁸⁴ — but, I am glad to say, is at the moment writing the best and in every way finest thing he has yet done. You know, I daresay, that he and Julie have temporarily (amicably, of course), separated, on account of his inability to live at Waggoners Wells, because of his asthma, and also for financial reasons. She is now in Copenhagen, but is to join him

⁸³Mrs. Sharp said of this plan (*Memoir* 290): “But the pressure of health, of the needs of daily livelihood, and of the more dominating ambitions of F.M. prevented the fulfilment of this scheme. Many times he talked of it, drafted out portions of it — but it remained unaccomplished, and all that exists of it is the beginning chapters of the first book written in Paris ten years before, and then called *Caesar of France*.”

⁸⁴ Le Gallienne’s *Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam: A Paraphrase from Several Translations* (London: Grant Richards, 1897).

again at the end of December, and both go then to America for a long time. In every way, Dick is pulling himself together.

To show you that I am more faithful to my promises than either of you are, I enclose my promised photograph. This particular “phiz” was taken a week or two ago in Dublin. (If E. were in, she would doubtless send a new one of herself too: but she isn’t, and won’t be here till Monday. Won’t you fulfil your solemn promises, you unfaithful twain?

Ever Yours, | William Sharp

ALS Pierpont Morgan

To Elizabeth A. Sharp, November 21, 1897

I am so glad to be here,⁸⁵ in this sunlight by the sea. Light and motion — what a joy these are. The eyes become devitalised in the pall of London gloom. . . .

There is a glorious amplitude of light. The mind bathes in these illimitable vistas. Wind and Wave and Sun: how regenerative these elder brothers are.

Solomon says there is no delight like wisdom, and that wisdom is the heritage of age: but there is a divine unwisdom which is the heritage of youth — and I would rather be young for a year than wise for a cycle. There are some who live without the pulse of youth in the mind: on the day, in the hour, I no longer feel that quick pulse, I will go out like a blown flame. To be young; to keep young: that is the story and despair of life. . . .

Memoir 290

To Lady Augusta Gregory, [November 27?, 1997]

Rutland House | Greencroft Gardens | South Hampstead

Dear Lady Gregory,

I have written definitely withdrawing, both to Yeats & the Committee.

⁸⁵ EAS said of this letter: “London proved to be impossible to him owing to the excitable condition of his brain. Therefore he took rooms in Hastings whence he wrote to me.”

Cordially Yours | William Sharp⁸⁶

ALS Berg Collection

To Edmund Clarence Stedman, December 3, 1897

30 Greencroft Gardens | South Hampstead | London NW | 3/Dec/97

My dear Stedman

Let me send you not only my cordial thanks for the welcome copy of your Poems, but also my congratulations on the beauty and variety of the poems themselves.⁸⁷ I have read the book with delighted interest from first to last — & much of it over and over (some of course I knew well — some I had read before in some magazine or other — & some was new to me). What a wonderful fellow you are! Here is a volume coming out late in life (you, you Viking-bard, will be young till your last breath) — and it is enough to set up any new poet with a very high reputation indeed. After fresh joy in old favourites such as the exquisite “Ancassin,” I turned with keen pleasure to the Caribbean section. What glow and colour and life! And what a splendid ballad is the one (new to me) entitled “Captain Francisca.” It is bound to pass into

⁸⁶Sharp is withdrawing, at Lady Gregory’s request, from serving as Chair at a meeting of the Irish Literary Society in London on December 4, where Yeats was scheduled to give a lecture on the Celtic movement. Yeats had written to Sharp on November 20 asking him to withdraw in favor of Edward Martyn, but he refused. A. P. Graves, Secretary of the Society, had asked Sharp to assume the Chair for the occasion without asking Yeats’ approval of his choice. Yeats thought that having Sharp, a Scotsman and with minimal public credentials as a Celtic writer, in the Chair would undermine the seriousness of the meeting and cast a bad light on what Yeats wanted to say to fellow members of the Society. Sharp was offended by Yeats’ request. When Lady Gregory spoke to Sharp, he was resistant. She promptly invited him to dinner, and when he accepted on the condition he could bring his wife she knew her objective had been accomplished. See *Collected Letters of W. B. Yeats* II, 1896-1900, ed. Warwick Gould, John Kelly, and Dierdre Toomey, OUP, 1997, 148; and *Lady Gregory’s Diaries: 1892-1902*, ed. James Pethica, OUP, 1996, 156-7.

⁸⁶ Stedman’s *Poems Now First Collected* (Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1897).

the permanent ballad literature of our language. “Christophe,” too, how noble & stirring it is. I am glad, also, that you ended the volume with the stately & beautiful “Ariel” — with which I am more impressed than ever.

My wife was deeply gratified to receive a copy from you, & is charmed (in the best sense of a much abused word) by it. She — like myself — has been home only a few days — & so cannot write to you by this mail: but will do so two or three days hence she says. I was going to get and send a copy to Miss Macleod — but this morning heard that she had just received one that had been forwarded from Edinburgh, & from you yourself. She says she is writing, but cannot post till she returns to Edinburgh at the week-end, as she is off to a remote Highland spot. She seems deeply touched by your courtesy, & kindness in sending her the book — which, she adds, more Celtico, “I have taken into my heart.”

I will write again later. (Have applied two places to review the book.)

Meanwhile my renewed thanks & loving congratulations.

Love to you & yours, dear Poet and Friend, | William Sharp

P.S. I hope you got my note on your birthday.

ALS Huntington

To John Macleay, [?mid-December, 1897]

30 Greencroft Gardens | South Hampstead

My dear Mr. Macleay,

I have read your book of stories with very great interest. They are full of ‘good stuff’ -- and it is quite clear that you have a real & fine faculty. But having said this much I am puzzled as to how best to advise you. It seems disheartening (after you have already worked at them so much) to say that they lack finality – but so, frankly, it seems to me they do. It is just because they are potentially so good, that I say so: otherwise it would be useless. I have not come to this conclusion through perusal in adverse circumstances or when not of the mood – and have, for greater surety, reread. I think a fine, strong, & interesting book lies here – but it wants re-writing in parts, reshaping in phrase and section every here & there, & throughout, lowering in

key and a definite, a scrupulous almost austere finishing up ‘line by line.’ Frankly, too, there are too many pages which (rightly or wrongly seem to me to) reflect the influence now of Neil Munro, now of Miss Macleod. Both these writers can influence to strength & beauty, but, also, both can influence to self-conscious mannerism of strength & to a mannerism of sentiment that easily outruns itself. I think your work is too good to be other than your own.

Critically, I should advise you to make the book wholly of fiction (tale or episode) -- & to keep out “An Old Capital” etc. for a book to be called, say, “Highland Essays.” If I were asked by a firm as a “reader” I should indicate the inclusion of a long piece of discursive non-narrative prose such as this as out of place & likely to interfere with the particular reception wanted. A volume of stories & imaginative life-renderings called “From the Upper Glens” (an admirable title) should go well.

I think I like best “Neil the Harper,” “Uistean the Seer,” and “John Pane.” But I would make the book as uniform in general sentiments as possible. Personally, I don’t believe in ‘mixtures.’ In any case, before you submit it anywhere (I wd. try *Blackwoods* first) you should revise the typed copy. It is full of mis-typing – & experience teaches me how important it is not to prejudice a publisher or his reader by seeming carelessness or indifference. If your book had come to me as a reader, I shd. have added a rider to the effect that if a contract were made, the author shd. be responsible for extra corrections in proof -- as his “MS” was so careless!! (E.g., just take the first I light on, the first & last pp. of the “Servant Girl” – where “glow the *rich* plain furnishings,” and where a striven heart’ is left for presumably ‘a stricken heart.’

It is only my genuine interest in you & your work that makes me write as I have done – & at a time & on a day when I am overwrought with unavoidable continuous pressure. It would be no true friendly service to have sent you compliments just on what was good, & to have been silent on essential things. You will understand, I am sure. I may well, of course, be wrong in my opinions – but they are at least the sincere expression of what your very promising & interesting work leaves in the mind of

Your friend | William Sharp

To Coulson Kernahan, [December 28, 1897]⁸⁸

3 Pelham Crescent | Hastings

So very sorry that, by doctor's orders, Elizabeth (who has had influenza) is forbidden to go to Scotland — and by the doctor's advice I brought her here today, at a few hour's notice. She will be here for a week or so — and I when I can. But sometime later I hope our Scotland visit may come off.

Cordial and affectionate regards to you both. W.S.

ACS Princeton

⁸⁸ Date from postmark.