

SECTION XVIII

LIFE: JANUARY – JUNE 1899

Sharp celebrated the New Year at the Pettycur Inn in Kilcreggan across the Forth from Edinburgh. His Fiona Macleod article in the January issue of the *Fortnightly Review*, “A Group of Celtic Writers,” was favorably received, especially in Ireland. It precipitated a lengthy article entitled “Who is Fiona Macleod: A Study in Two Styles” in the January 28 *London Daily Chronicle*. Unsigned, it identified Sharp as the author of the Fiona writings and challenged him to deny it. Sharp ignored the challenge at the time, but wrote a disclaimer under Fiona’s name several months later in the *Literary World*. The record of Sharp’s activities between January and the end of March is sparse, but we know he suffered various maladies during the winter months while preparing two books for the publishers. Macleod’s *The Dominion of Dreams* was published by Archibald, Constable on May 27, 1899, and Sharp’s novel *Silence Farm* was published by Grant Richards on June 13, 1899. The former was a collection of stories and ruminations Sharp considered the deepest and most significant of the Fiona writings to date, and the latter was a realistic novel in the vein of Thomas Hardy. After talking Richards into publishing the novel, he promoted it among his friends and fellow writers in the hope of favorable reviews that would boost its sales. Unfortunately, it disappeared quickly into the silence of its title and remains unreadable. Sharp was a skillful and energetic editor and critic, but successful adult fiction eluded him when writing as William Sharp. The fiction he published under the feminine pseudonym is uneven and far from faultless. Adopting the persona of an elusive lady who roamed the highlands and western isles of Scotland, however, released his creative impulses. He was then able to tell stories from start to finish, many based in ancient Gaelic lore and all rooted in the lives of simple rural people, that enabled readers to suspend their disbelief and identify with the characters. Sharp thought his ability to adopt the Fiona Macleod persona and tell her stories depended on maintaining the fiction of her existence as a real person. That being so, it is not surprising he went to such extremes to preserve that fiction.

In late January Sharp was advising Grant Richards about his upcoming delayed honeymoon on the French Riviera which occurred in February. Richards had married a beautiful young Italian woman whose first name was Elisina the previous May. A January 18 letter to Richards indicates Sharp had enlisted Thomas Janvier, who had a house in Southern France, but was then living in Swiss Cottage, not far from the Sharps in Hampstead, to provide information about the Riviera. There is no record of Sharp's activities in February, but early in March he strengthened – through a Fiona Macleod letter – his potential friendship with the curious physician and spiritualist Dr. John Goodchild. The Sharps spent a long Easter weekend in late March with the Grant Allens at their home near Haslemere in Surrey. A well-known and highly-regarded writer, most famous for his feminist novel *The Woman Who Did*, Grant Allen was Grant Richards' uncle and mentor. In accepting the invitation, Sharp said his insomnia required a separate bed; he would stay at a nearby inn if a room containing two beds was not available at the Allen's. Informing the Allens that Elizabeth was about to return from a month-long absence in Scotland, he said, perhaps to mitigate the request for separate beds: "How fortunate that I am an austere Anchorite — eh?" In a follow-up letter to Nellie Allen, who must have assured him of the desired sleeping arrangement, Sharp said he hoped "in your fine air to get a surcease from too much nervous headache and from indifferent sleep."

On March 25, Sharp wrote as Fiona to thank Frederick Ernest Green (1867-1922), a prolific writer on agricultural policy, for his letter praising Fiona's *Washer of the Ford*. This letter was reproduced by Green in his "Book of the Week" column in the January 21, 1909 issue of *The New Age*. The book that occasioned Green's column was Fiona Macleod's *Songs and Poems, Old and New* published posthumously in 1909 by Eliot Stock. Green recalled sitting next to Richard Whiteing at a dinner following the publication of *No.5 St. John Street* in 1899, a very popular novel that went through sixteen editions, made Whiteing famous, and became Grant Richards' first commercial success. Green asked Whiteing if he knew William Sharp for it had been rumored that Sharp "was either Fiona Macleod or else a near relation to that personality." Whiteing replied, "Yes, I do. Now, he is my ideal of a Man — magnificent physically as well as intellectually." Green commented, "How I should have liked to see these two Titans among men

of letters standing together or walking arm-in-arm down Fleet Street when Mr. Whiteing used to write leaders for the ‘Daily News!’”

Green then recalled having talked with W. B. Yeats, the honored guest and speaker at another dinner which took place on March 1, 1899:

From telling me how he could cast a spell upon an Irish peasant and make him see a ghost, we got on to talk of crystal-gazing and from thence to Fiona Macleod, whose writings were to me the most beautiful efflorescence of the Celtic Renaissance. I remember asking him point-blank if he knew who Fiona Macleod was. He answered in the affirmative. He spoke about a pilgrimage, too, that she had made to George Meredith, and how in her was wedded beauty and intellect. This inspired me to speak of my wife, who had died a few years anterior to this, and I promised to send him a little book of her poems.

This is the strange reply I received from Mr. Yeats: “My dear Mr. Green, —I thank you very much for your wife’s little book. What a beautiful face she must have had. Her photograph is a little like Miss Fiona Macleod’s, curiously enough. I have been so busy about “The Irish Literary Theatre” that [I] have put off writing to you from day to day. Again thanking you, I remain, yours sincerely, W. B. Yeats.”

After receiving that letter from Yeats, Green decided to write a letter to Fiona Macleod which produced her reply of March 25. Yeats' letter to Green is of interest for its direct evidence that Sharp showed Yeats a picture of Edith Rinder, as he showed it to Rhys, Le Gallienne, and others, identifying its subject as Fiona Macleod. Green commented: “Whether or not Mr. Yeats ever knew the truth, and felt obliged to sustain the fiction invented by the author himself I cannot say.” Yeats did know a version of the truth. He knew Sharp was the author of the Fiona stories and poems; he had seen a picture of the woman who inspired them, the woman Sharp identified as Fiona Macleod; he was intrigued by the dual personality aspect of the case; and he maintained his pledge of secrecy.

In a letter to Yeats thanking him for a copy of his long-awaited volume of new poems, *The Wind Among the Reeds*, Sharp wrote, “It is beautifully got up — and you know what intimate appeal and constant charm its contents have for me. Some of your loveliest work is here. And the notes (which I must read again and again) have, in their kind, a like charm.” He ended the letter, “Either I or Miss M. — or both, separately — will review your beautiful book in

one or two places. Miss M. has written to the Express.” Fiona’s review appeared in the *Dublin Daily Express* on April 22, 1899:

It is not often, I imagine, that titles are as apt as that which Mr. Yeats has chosen for this little book. These fewer than two-score poems, most of them within the boundary of a page, are small and slight as reeds; and the wind which moves them, which whispers or sings from them a delicate music, is as invisible, as mysterious, as elemental as that “strong creature, without flesh, without bone, that neither sees nor is seen,” of which long ago Taliesin sang.

Having thus caught the spirit of the book, Sharp as Fiona proceeded to praise the lyrics and the poet: “Mr. Yeats is assuredly of that small band of poets and dreamers who write from no other impulse than because they see and dream in a reality so vivid that it is called imagination. With him the imagination is in truth the second-sight of the inward life. Thus it is that he lives with symbols, as an unimaginative nature might live with barren facts.” Then a caution creeps in: “When the reader, unfamiliar with the signature of symbol, shall read these and kindred lines, will he not feel that this young priest of the Sun should translate to a more human key his too transcendental vision?” That question leads to a discussion of the notes which comprise half of the book. They are full of learning and “have something of the charm of the poems to which they stand interpreter,” but “one cannot ignore the incongruity which lies in the wedded union of brief lyrical poems with many explicatory pages. It is not their presence, then, that one objects to, but their need.” From that reservation, Fiona retreated to high praise: “what a lovely gift of music and spiritual intensity and beauty Mr. Yeats delivers in this book” and “no lovelier, more convincingly poetic verse has been given to us of late than these light, yet strenuous, airs of a wind that is forever mysterious, though we hold it more familiar when it blows across the mind of some poet such as Mr. Yeats, whom we know, and to whom we look.”

This review marks another step in the coolness between Yeats and Sharp, indeed the differences between the Irish and Scottish contingents of the Celtic Revival, that began to surface during Sharp’s visit to the West of Ireland in the fall of 1897. Fiona was not alone among reviewers in expressing reservations about the arcane symbolism and lengthy notes of *The Winds Among the Reeds*. Yeats anticipated the criticism when he described the volume to Henry Davray the previous November (*CLWBY*, II, 306): the notes, he said, had given him “a good deal

of trouble & will probably make most of the critics spend half of every review complaining that I have written very long notes about very short poems” (Foster, *W. B. Yeats, A Life*, I, 214). When it appeared in the July 1899 *Mercure de France* (267-8), Davray’s review addressed both Yeats’ book and, interestingly, Fiona Macleod’s *Dominion of Dreams* as the work of the two major exemplars of the Celtic movement in Britain. Though Yeats knew his symbols and notes would invite criticism and though he eliminated the notes in later printings of the poems, he did not expect reservations from Sharp/Macleod, one of his secret confederates in the Celtic Mystical Order and a major force in the Celtic Revival. They, of all people, should have appreciated the symbols, some derived from the Order, as well as the attempt to enlighten the world about Celtic myth and lore. It was not long until Yeats’ reciprocated with a different and more telling reservation about Fiona’s *Dominion of Dreams*.

In mid-April, having finished *Silence Farm* and with Fiona’s *Dominion of Dreams* in galleys, Sharp was set to go to Paris to review the Salons and then on to the country for a period of rest and relaxation with Edith Rinder. Difficult negotiations with Grant Richards, who had published the British edition of Sharp’s *Wives in Exile* in 1898, about terms for *Silence Farm* delayed Sharp’s departure. On the 16th he told Richards he was leaving for Paris the following week “for a week or two.” On the 21st, he would leave if possible on the 26th. On the 26th he would leave on the 28th for “Paris and elsewhere in France for two or three weeks.” On the 27th, he wanted to leave on the 28th and would be in France until at least May 15. On the 28th, he could not leave until the 30th or May 1st. He gave Richards his Paris address, which would be good until May 15, so he could send proofs. These main cause of these delays was Sharp’s need for an advance from Richards in order to go to France. On the 25th he told Richards he was willing to accept £50 instead of his initial request for £100 upon delivery of the manuscript. Two days later he agreed to accept an advance of £25, returned the manuscript to Richards (who had shipped it back to him), and said he wanted the money now “owing to an unforeseen emergency.” Richards had the upper hand since the sale of Sharp’s previous novel, *Wives in Exile*, had been disappointing, but it is sad to see Sharp, who wanted so much to be in his own right a successful writer of fiction, groveling to the young publisher for money.

Once in France, Sharp spent about two weeks reviewing the salons in Paris. While there he met Moina and Macgregor Mathers, Yeats' friends from the Order of the Golden Dawn who were providing some psychic assistance in Yeats' effort to construct rites for his Celtic Order. Sharp read to them several stories from his proof copy of Fiona's *Dominion of Dreams* and told Yeats "they were deeply impressed." In a letter to Yeats dated May 29, after Sharp had returned to London, Moina Mathers wrote: "We have been much delighted to meet William Sharp, who was over here. It is impossible to say how much we liked him – We felt greatly in sympathy – He is a very remarkable being I think – in every respect, & so strangely psychic." After signing the letter "Yours fraternally ever | Vestigia," her name in the Golden Dawn, she added a footnote: "Have just received 'The Dominion of Dreams' -- & am much looking forward to it" (*Letters to W. B. Yeats*, 51). Moina was an enthusiastic reader of the Fiona Macleod writings, and this meeting turned her into an enthusiastic admirer of their author.

On May 14, Sharp left Paris to spend a week in the countryside with Edith Rinder. During that week, we learn from later letters, he became ill enough to need two physicians, but he was able to return to London on May 22 where he found an author's copy of *Silence Farm*. The next day he told Grant Richards he was very pleased by the appearance of the book: "the binding, the print, the paper, are just what I would choose." He said he was sorry Richards had postponed publication until June 13 and gave him a list of people who should, along with the weeklies and monthlies, receive complimentary copies so they could write reviews or otherwise spread word about the book.

The year's work began to bear fruit when Fiona's *Dominion of Dreams* was officially published on May 27. On the 29th Sharp sent one of his author's copies to Frank Rinder. He wanted him to have one of the first because the book "is at once the deepest and most intimate that F. M. has written." When this letter is read with the knowledge that the intense love affair between Sharp and Rinder's wife formed the basis for many of the book's stories, one can only wonder about the relationship between the Sharps and the Rinders. Much of the book, Sharp told Rinder, was "born out of the incurable heartache, 'the nostalgia for impossible things.'" He hoped "the issues of life have been woven to beauty, for its own sake, and in divers ways to

reach and help or enrich other lives.” That, he said, is “a clue to the whole book . . . at once my solace, my hope, and my ideal.” In future writings of Fiona, he hoped to achieve “a deeper and richer and truer note of inward joy and spiritual hope.” He concluded by saying a sentence from one of the book’s stories, “A Distant Country,” would be inscribed on his tombstone: “Love is more great than we conceive and Death is the keeper of unknown redemptions.” That story is more precise than others in the book in recording the progress of his love affair with Edith Rinder. It ends with the suggestion that the fire feeding the affair may have burned itself out. Perhaps that is why Sharp sent the book to Frank Rinder and highlighted that story. The sentence he quotes from the story, moreover, is almost a plea for forgiveness. Deep love is beyond our capacity to understand and control. If it causes pain to others redemption can come only after death. Perhaps that is also why Elizabeth Sharp decided to include portions of this letter in the *Memoir*. If the operation of love is a mystery beyond human comprehension, so it seems is the truth about the relationship between the Sharps and the Rinders,

On May 29 Sharp also wrote letters about *The Dominion of Dreams* to AE (George Russell) and Coulson Kernahan and drafted Fiona letters to Benjamin Burgess Moore in the United States and to Edith Lyttelton in London. The latter presents a telling instance of Sharp’s efforts to ingratiate himself with the London establishment. Edith Sophy Balfour Lyttelton, later Dame Edith Lyttelton, was a writer and an enthusiastic reader of Fiona Macleod. She was also a prominent hostess and the wife of Alfred Lyttelton (1857-1913), a Member of Parliament and, for a time, Secretary of State. In responding as Fiona in early May to a fan letter from Mrs. Lyttelton, Sharp said

I would like to know a little more of you, though more than likely we may never meet. Will you tell me? (Are you Miss or Mrs?) But just as you like, of course. I ask, partly because of yourself as revealed in your letter: partly because of a keen personal association unwittingly awakened. But it does not matter. I am content that you are a friend, that you bear a name dear to me, and that you have been generous enough to write whole heartedly to a stranger.

The reason Edith Lyttelton’s name is dear to Sharp/Macleod, of course, is because she shared her given name with Edith Rinder. Fiona continued, “You live in London, and know Mr. Yeats. Do you know his, and my friend and kinsman, Mr. William Sharp? As doubtless you have seen in

the papers — for the controversy about myself seems as recurrent as the sea-serpent — he is often supposed to be me, or I to be him, or both of us to be each other, with many other speculative variations! I would like you to meet.”

Sharp did meet Edith Lyttleton at a social gathering shortly after he returned from France. In what must have been a brief conversation she said she had been ill. Sharp invented his passing this news to Fiona as an excuse for her to tell Edith how sorry she was to hear of her illness. She added: “You will, of course, know at once how I have heard of your illness.” She continued, “After your second letter I wanted you to meet Mr. William Sharp, and he would have called a month or more ago but that he had to go to France. I am glad you have met: for as I think I told you, he is my most intimate friend, as well as my kinsman. If you like him, you would like me: if you do not like him, you would not like me. There! It is a woman’s argument — but perhaps none the less convincing.” Silly as those sentences sound, Sharp was not simply having fun with Mrs. Lyttleton. He was angling for another meeting with her, this time alone. “So you live in an old house in Westminster and have ‘a swift and individual mind’, and are ‘keenly sensitive to impressions,’ and ‘seem tuned to that finer inward suffering which goes with every nature open to mystery and to beauty.’” That is what had told her. “Well, I knew that,” she continued, “and more I have mentally reproached my friend for not being more explicit — though he says frankly ‘It is not only that I have no time, but that I am unable to say more. If ever I meet her alone, I will see and know what, in a first visit, in the circumstances and with others present, was of necessity fugitive or uncertain.’” As the letter proceeds, discussing *The Dominion of Dreams*, Sharp works hard to establish a strong bond of friendship between Fiona and Edith: “We can never meet, but we can always be friends.” He was using the Fiona ruse to prepare the way for calling on Edith in hopes of finding her alone and prepared for an in depth discussion of their dreams and desires. It seems that Sharp was especially attracted to women named Edith, this one with the additional advantage of being highly placed in society.

It didn’t take Sharp long to call on Mrs. Lyttleton. In Fiona’s next letter to her on June 18, she said

I am very very glad that you can feel to me as to a friend. I hope you will write when so ever you will. I shall always be glad to hear from you. Indeed, I feel that we *are* friends. There are things — but above all there is *something* — in your letter which comes home to me intimately.

As some slight sign of this I sent you the “Kingdom of Silence,” and also asked Mr. Sharp to send you from me (I thought he had an extra copy of mine, but he hadn’t!) a copy of my most personal or intimate book, “From the Hills of Dream”.

Do you not “write” yourself? Your letters (with their eager note, and distinctive touch) make me think you do. If so, I wish you would let me see something.

I am glad you have seen my friend again. I think you and he will become friends. It is my hope. He says you are “the Hon. Mrs. Lyttelton”, and wife of one of whose family I know something.

And I am sure I would like you now as much as he does.

Sharp’s effort to initiate through Fiona a friendship with a woman of importance succeeded, just as it had, through Yeats, with Lady Gregory.

In late May, probably the 29th again, Sharp assured Yeats he had read a draft of a Celtic Mystical Order Rite he received from Yeats for review and comment. It needed “spiritual recasting,” Sharp said, “something more of visionary insight and significance.” He was waiting for inspiration, a “resurrection” or “rebirth” that would enable him to recast the Rite. He promised to let Yeats know when the epiphany occurred if it was of “any worth.” The stream of his “inward thought” was moving that way,” but he had been very ill; his doctor had ordered “hill and sea air” native to him. So he and Elizabeth would go to Ireland at the end of July, probably to the East coast as it would be too expensive to go to the West. After expressing his hope that Yeats will like *The Dominion of Dreams*, he mentioned that the Fiona Macleod play he was writing would no longer be called “The Tarist,” but “The King of Ireland’s Son.” He ends with a vague hint that he would like to be invited, presumably by Lady Gregory, to spend some time in the West of Ireland in August,.

Through most of June Sharp remained in London, trying to promote sales of his two books through friends and reviewers. On or about the fifth, he wrote again to Yeats. He was still too weak to undertake the psychic effort to comment in detail on the draft copy of the Rite. It

needed more work, and he would get to it as soon as he could muster the energy. Again, he asked Yeats what he thought of *The Dominion of Dreams* and wondered if he would be reviewing it. He remained curious on this point through June, and, having heard nothing in response, he was surprised when Yeats' review appeared in the July *Bookman*. That review and its aftermath will be discussed in the introduction to the next section of letters. After asking Yeats to do something for *Silence Farm* if he could, he said he and Elizabeth would be leaving their South Hampstead flat (30 Greencroft Gardens) for good about July 20. If Yeats would be in town before then, he hoped to see him. Again he told Yeats he and Elizabeth would spend some time on the east coast of Ireland north of Dublin. Then he stated directly his hope that Edward Martyn or Lady Gregory would invite them to the West. The lines containing that hope are crossed through with a single wavy line. He must have wanted Yeats to think he had thought better about conveying his hope for an invitation while leaving the hint highly visible. Uncharacteristically, Sharp ended by telling Yeats he was suffering one of his periodic bouts of depression: "I doubt if I'll ever live in London again. It is not likely. I do not know that I am overwhelmingly anxious to live anywhere. I think you know enough of me to know how profoundly I feel the strain of life — the strain of double life. Still, there is much to be done yet. But for that. . . ." The mention of his double life reminds us again that Sharp had told Yeats, probably in June 1897, he was responsible for the Fiona Macleod writings, but experienced that woman as an alternative personality triggered and inspired by a real woman with whom he enjoyed an intimate relationship.

Yeats had also sent a draft copy of his rite to Fiona Macleod asking her to comment. Strange as that sounds, he probably thought he was writing to the woman who inspired Sharp to write as Fiona Macleod, the woman who was assisting Sharp with the Celtic Rite, Edith Rinder whom he knew only as Fiona Macleod. On June 14 Sharp wrote to Yeats as Fiona asking him to be patient about the Rite for a bit longer. Sharp, she said, would be coming to see her in Scotland at the end of the following week (about June 24), and "it is important he and I should talk over, rather than correspond about this."

In late May Sharp told AE (George Russell) that he would receive a copy of *The Dominion of Dreams* “from Miss Macleod & myself (per the publishers).” While AE knew Sharp was the author of the Fiona writings, he, like Yeats, thought her a separate personality inhabiting Sharp’s body. He knew, therefore, that Sharp was talking about one aspect of his self when he said the book “comes from deeper depths of life, both of suffering & spiritual exaltation, than any other of F. M.’s books.” After reading the book, AE sent Fiona a letter, which has not surfaced, that mixed praise with criticism. Writing as Fiona, Sharp responded on June 17 to AE’s “friendly and sincere letter,” echoing AE’s heightened prose:

I am like one in an apparently clear wood which is yet a mysterious maze out of which I cannot escape, or even reach the frontiers so as to discern where I am and what vistas are beyond me: nay, even the stars themselves become confused often in the darkness of the branches, and the sun’s way seems equally to lead west or east, or north or south, so that I fare often bewildered even at full noon.

Perhaps your letter — perhaps your will and thought — can help me. I hope so. I can say neither ‘yea’ nor ‘nay’ to the central part of your letter. But that spiritually I have been furnishing the palaces of the mind with empty shadows is, I fear, true. Well, I *hope* — and *believe*.

The letter ended with a request for a copy of the review AE was writing for the *Dublin Daily Express*. When AE sent the review to Fiona later in the summer, he excused his delay by saying he had said all he wished to say directly to her in the earlier letter: “The review is sincere if critical. But I can judge by no other than an absolute standard.” He concluded sadly: “if you hope and believe you are on the path: Faith and hope are companions only met on the straight road and having them you have help I could not give you having lost them awhile” (unpublished letter in private hands).

Sharp did go to Edinburgh on or about June 24 and from there on to Glasgow and the west coast. On Tuesday the 27th, he mailed a card from Sterling to Grant Richards while enroute, assuring him he would answer the letter forwarded to him in Edinburgh when he returned there in “about a week.” He had told Yeats he would meet up with Fiona in Edinburgh and go west with her for a brief time. It was his habit to talk about the time he spent with Edith Rinder as time spent with Fiona who, he claimed variously was both his cousin and his beloved. The real-life model for that relationship was his marriage to his first cousin, Elizabeth Sharp.

Sharp was constructing and participating in a drama the multiplying complexities of which only he understood. It is likely that Sharp and Edith were together in the country southwest of Glasgow, in or near the Kyles of Bute, in late June and early July, a respite that may well have lasted longer than a week.

LETTERS: JANUARY – JUNE 1899

To Clement Shorter, January 2, 1899

30 Greencroft Gardens | South Hampstead | 2nd January 1899

Private

My dear Clement Shorter,

You asked me if I had any ‘big’ fiction on hand. I do not think I need speak to you of *Silence Farm*,¹ as it is probably not suited for serial use. It will be about 60,000 words: & I hope to finish it in a month or so: It is a sombre story, told with as much reserve and concentrated power “as I know how”.

But I am anxious to get on at once with (if practicable) a romance of young lives, of their first beginnings, strivings, successes, failures, loves, and vicissitudes, in the world of art and literature.

It is to be called *Bugle Music*, and will be the first of three connected (but independent) romances, each of considerable length: — (alternative title, *The Stars of Fortune*, but I think this wd. be best for the second of the three): — in which I hope to create a living picture of the artistic and literary world in these later Victorian days.²

I began the scheme ten years ago, in Paris, but decided to wait, as I wished to make this trilogy a big work in every sense of the word.

But the time has now come when I wish to take it up in earnest. Though my own experiences of the literary & artistic world go back only to 1880 (all but 20 years, alas!) I knew and know well many, now famous or notable, of an earlier date, who ‘went through the mill’ before & during my time.

¹ *Silence Farm* was published by Grant Richards (London) on June 13.

² Like many of Sharp’s ambitious projects, this one failed to materialize. In a letter to EAS in the fall of 1897, Sharp described a work of epic proportions that would contain and transmit all he had learned about life. At that time, it was to be six books under the general title “The Epic of Youth” (*Memoir*, 289).

Bugle Music begins about 1855 — and among those who come into it are Rossetti, Morris, Burton, Swinburne, & Geo. Meredith., & others of marked personality — more or less importantly or incidentally as the case may be.

In the three books (the third of which will be contemporary in the most immediate sense) I hope to give not only a true and living picture, but to write the romance of contemporary life with the utmost keen and romantic and vivid interest. Romances must be vivid, telling, dramatic, first & foremost.

I prefer the name *Bugle Music* as significant not only of the spirit throughout, but as a good name for the new generation at the century-end & the century-beginning!

Do you think there is any likelihood that you could use *Bugle Music*. I need not say how glad I should be, were it so.

With cordial good will for 1899

Sincerely Yours | William Sharp

P.S. Have you seen the allusion to your wife's fine and distinctive work in Miss Macleod's article in the current *Fortnightly*?³

ALS Brotherton Library, University of Leeds

To John Macleay, [early January, 1899]

30 Greencroft Gardens | South Hampstead | N.W.⁴

My dear Mr. Macleay

Extreme pressure has made it impossible for me to write to you before this, though I was very glad to hear from you again.

³ Clement Shorter (1857–1926) was editor of the *Illustrated London News*. His wife was the Irish poet Dora Sigerson (1866-1918) who, after her marriage in 1895, wrote as Dora Sigerson Shorter. Born in Dublin, she was a major figure of the Irish Literary Revival. Her work was mentioned in Fiona Macleod's "A Group of Celtic Writers" in the January 1899 *Fortnightly* (pp. 34-53). See the Fiona letter to her of late December, 1898.

⁴ Written on Grosvenor Club mourning stationery with that address crossed out and this address written over it.

On the whole, Liverpool seems to suit you. I fancy that after London it is one of the best places to live in, in England -- i.e. for those whom the Gods punish by compelling to dwell within grimy cities.

I am bound to say that a perusal of "John Splendid," a month or so ago, greatly enhanced my opinion of (as well as my pleasure in) that book. At the same time I found, & still find, the style hangs too continuously to one insistent note. But, at its best, it is most truly delightful, stimulating, and winsome. I hope & believe the new story will be a success: I like the opening apparently better than you do. But, like you, I look to the ensuing book for his masterpiece. When I was in Edinburgh recently I met Neil Munro, and a day or two later we spent an afternoon together. I took a very definite liking to him: he seems to me in every way "a good fellow."⁵

As to your enquiries about Miss Macleod I can say that she is slowly but surely getting along with her historical romance -- having canceled all she had written & started afresh. I have, however, seen only the opening chapters. She is so much preoccupied with other work -- most of it, I fancy, more akin to her own taste, but some of it, critical & other, in a sense 'put upon' her by editors -- that her big romance emulates the snail. However, when done, I fancy every one will be surprised by this book.

N. B. don't pass on [?] anything given by Miss M! She seems to change her titles & contents without remorse. A few weeks ago a friend in U.S.A. begged me for some particulars about her next book -- which, authorized, I gave. I now hear that the book is to have a different (certainly a much finer) name, with contents which involve a markedly different character for the book regarded as a whole. It is confusing, but at least the changes seem to make for strength & variety.

I suppose you have seen Miss M's article in the current *Fortnightly*⁶ -- Today I recd., presumably at her request, tho' it was not in her writing, a copy of the "Dublin Express" of

⁵ Neil Munro (1863–1930) was an influential Scottish journalist and novelist. After serialization in *Blackwood's Magazine*, *John Splendid*, his first novel, was published in 1898. It deals with the sack of Inverary by Montrose and his subsequent victory at the battle of Inverlochy in 1645.

⁶ "A Group of Celtic Writers" (January, 1898, 34-53).

Monday, with her letter. She certainly turns the tables on the ‘Express’ reviewer who had rashly echoed the parrot-cry about her ‘Gaelic.’

For myself, I am very busy, & in more ways than I have time to tell or egotism to inflict. Apart from books on hand, & needful ephemeral pen-work in periodicals, I have a good many articles & short stories commissioned.

If he puts it in, there may be something about the less important things (for I have forbidden allusion pro. tem. to the more ambitious) I have on hand in this week’s *Ill. London News* (where I have also a short art-paper): at any rate, Clement Shorter wrote me the other day & asked if I had any objection to his “literary lettering” what he had remembered me saying in conversation.

I forgot to say that I strongly agree with you in your opinion about Miss Macleod’s Scandinavian & Viking stories. Personally, I consider them her best achievement, or with only casual exception.

With all good will for 1899, & hoping it may bring you luck in all way --

Cordially Yours | William Sharp

ALS NLS

To Grant Richards, January 18, 1899

30 Greencroft Gardens | South Hampstead | 18/1/99

My dear Richards,

I haven’t yet seen Clement Shorter’s notice to which you allude — though as he was specially asking me about my work recently I know of course to what he must be alluding.

I have had a letter from two other publishers.

Frankly, I can say nothing definite at the moment. It must be *largely* a matter of £. S. D.⁷ with me.

I think “*Silence Farm*” will be considered the strongest and best piece of work I have done in fiction.⁸ It is a sombre story — which, therefore, some will like & possibly more won’t.

⁷ Pounds, shillings, pence.

Sister Eunice (or some other title) will either be a shortlist book of 3 or 4 stories of an oriental kind — or be a longer book comprising all the best short fiction I have done or am still engaged on.⁹

Of the two critical volumes — only one will be ready this Spring — namely, that on literary subjects. It will be *the* book of W.S. the critic!

I forwarded your letter to Janvier — a near neighbor (14 Winchester Road, Swiss Cottage, N.W.)

If perchance you don't hear from him, I can give you a good deal of information about Provence — which I know well. I also know Mistral, Felix Gras, etc. (One of the things I am now engaged on is a critical study of modern Provençal literature. It will, I *hope*, be in the book I speak of.)

Hope you & your wife are well.¹⁰

Cordially Yours | William Sharp

P.S. I suppose you got my note about a review-copy of *Wives in Exile* to Mr. J. Strang?

ALS Stanford University

To Grant Richards, [late January, 1899]

30 Greencroft Gardens | South Hampstead | NW

My dear Richards,

⁸ This is the first of several letters Sharp addressed to Richards about the realistic novel he was writing. After much back and forth about royalties and other business matters, Richards accepted the book and published it on June 13, 1899.

⁹ This book never materialized.

¹⁰ In his memoir *Author Hunting* (1934), Grant Richards wrote “Sometime in the early spring of 1898, I became engaged to a young Italian lady; in May of the same year we were married. I shall have, I think, no need to mention that marriage again, so I will confine myself to saying that my wife bore me children [three boys and a girl] and that the union was dissolved” (116). The first wife, Elisina Richards, was also the first editor of *Englishwoman* which the Richards firm published from 1909–1921. They were divorced in 1914, and in 1915 Richards married a young Hungarian widow named Maria Magdalena de Csanady.

I sent the “Provence Maritime”¹¹ to your Chelsea address, & have just heard that *Fumeurs d’Opium* was duly sent on to you this morning at Henrietta St., at my request, from my friend Mrs. Wingate Rinder, to whom I had lent it. I gave it to her some time ago with the strong recommendation to translate it (you know her admirable translative work, I expect) — and she has begun to do so. It will, I believe, make a very striking book in English. The tales are powerful. If it strikes you as desirable, I hope you may see your way to commissioning Mrs. Rinder to translate it for you.¹² (Her recent “The Dark Way of Love”, a translation of C. Le Goffic’s “Le Crucifié de Kéralies”, was a success in both senses).

When you have done with the book will you please let me have it again. Mrs. Rinder is anxious to get on with the translation.

The other book will do when you return. I hope you & your wife (what a charming as well as a pretty woman, you unduly lucky devil!) will have a memorably happy & fortunate time. My cordial greetings to you both. Bon voyage!

William Sharp

ALS State University of New York at Buffalo

To Doctor John Goodchild, March 4, 1899

(Edinburgh) | 4th March 1899

My dear Sir

¹¹ Grant Richards first visited the French Riviera in February 1899: “William Sharp and Thomas A. Janvier collaborated in drawing up my itinerary” (*Author Hunting*, 124). It was a delayed honeymoon trip with Elisina whom he married in May, 1898. Some years later Richards wrote *The Coast of Pleasure: An Unconventional Guide to the French Riviera*.

¹² Jules Bossière (1863-97), poet, traveler, Chinese scholar, and opium addict, was a disciple of Mallarmé and the Symbolists. He wrote seven books in his short life, the two on opium usage his finest. *Fumeurs d’Opium*, a collection of stories, was first published in 1896 and went through four editions. The autobiographical *Propos d’un Intoxiqué* first appeared in 1911. He was one of the first French writers to study the action of opium on the intelligence and sensibilities (Liedekerke, *La Belle Epoque de l’Opium*, p.197). The suggestion that Edith Rinder translate *Fumeurs d’Opium* for publication by Grant Richards did not materialize. Edith Rinder’s translation of *Le Crucifié de Keralies* by Charles Henri Le Goffic was published in 1898 under the title, *The Dark Way of Love*.

Your letter reached me yesterday from the address of my London agent where for private reasons all my correspondence goes.

Let me say at once that your surmise is wrong: far from not interesting me your second kind letter interested me profoundly, and not only intellectually but because of spiritual coincidence.

I was, however, unable to answer it on account of a feverish chill which ended in Influenza, now fortunately overcome, though it has weakened me somewhat and has also thrown all my correspondence and work into arrears.

I have considered as well as read your letter, and more and more I am impressed by the strangeness of the fundamentally identical spiritual ideas which come to many minds. Race, temperament, and perhaps conditions modify or affect these ideas, but below the accident lies the same spiritual reality. I have long believed in the arising of the Woman Redeemer: and that she will be born in the west, perhaps in Ireland, perhaps in Iona of the Prophecy. The place matters little. Even in my writings you could find traces of this — notably in the last section of *Green Fire* ('The Beauty of the World') — [a book which as a book I care little for and think immature and in almost every way unsatisfactory] —

There is a strange and obscure prophecy in the Hebrides upon which I had meant to write a long study, but this for several reasons I had to relinquish. I have in my mind, however, all but finally thought out (my way of work) a spiritual study called "The Second Coming of St. Bride" which will give utterance to this faith in a new redeeming spiritual force, — a women who will express the old Celtic Bride or Brigit (goddess of fire, song, music), the first modern Saintliness of woman (Bride-nan-Brat etc., St. Brigit of the Mantle; Muime-Chriosda, Christ's Foster-Mother; Mary's Sister etc.): the Virgin Mother of Catholicism: Mary of Motherhood: Mary, the Goddess of the Human Soul: Mary, Destiny, the Star-Kindler, for Destiny is but the name of the starry light hidden in each human soul: Consolatrix: Genetrix: the immortal Sister of Orchil, the Earth Goddess, at once Hêra, Pan, and Demogorgon: the Daughter of God: the Star of Dreams: the Soul of Beauty: the Shepherd of Immortality.¹³

¹³ The concept of a female redeemer, especially the St. Bride story, appears frequently in the Fiona writings.

In the short story called “The Washer of the Ford” (in the volume so called, and in *Spiritual Tales*) there is a hint of this in another way — that of the conflict between the Pagan and early Christian ideals of the mysterious Woman, whether a Celtic Fate or a Mary Bride of God: as again, in another way, in a story called “The Woman with the Net” in the pagan section of my forthcoming book, “The Dominion of Dreams.”¹⁴

It may well be that through what you have written to me, or along the indicated lines, I may reach some more direct and more vital view of a great spiritual problem than I have done. I am but a dreamer of dreams.

Let me thank you again for your long and interesting letters and diagrams. I must try and go to Glastonbury. If you feel inclined to write further on this strange problem I hope you will do so.

Believe me, | Sincerely yours, | Fiona Macleod

NLS

To Mr. and Mrs. Grant Allen, [March 25, 1899]

Rutland House, | Greencroft Gardens, | So. Hampstead | Saty

My dear Grant and Nellie Elizabeth has been delayed in Edinburgh but returns tomorrow. Meanwhile I have telegraphed to her — and now I have just sent you a wire to say with what pleasure we accept your kind invitation to come to you on Thursday next. And, considering what kind of day E. Monday is in town we shall very thankfully stay with you over the Monday as you most kindly suggest.¹⁵

I shall have to work in the mornings (for I am trying to finish a new book, a romance called *Silence Farm*,¹⁶ besides having many proofs, and other writing, etc., etc., etc. to attend to — but I shall be in no one’s way, for if fine I can work in the Garden — or in ‘any corner anywhere.’

But one thing I will ask, if I may: for my insomnia is still troublesome, and by the doctor’s orders I must sleep alone. So if you have not a room with two beds in it, or cannot (as may well be) let us have a room each, I will ask you to allow me to take for myself a bedroom at the (?) or

¹⁴ Archibald, Constable, and Company (May 27, 1899).

¹⁵ Easter Monday, April 3.

¹⁶ *Silence Farm* was published on June 13, 1899 by Grant Richards (London).

somewhere near, if that be feasible. Sorry to be such a confounded bother (pray say it, but out of your affectionate good hearts, smilingly overlook!).

So you have Dick and Julie Le Gallienne now as near neighbours?

I shall be glad to see my truant Spouse again — she has been away a month.

How fortunate that I am an austere Anchorite — eh?

Ever yours | Will

ALS Pierpont Morgan

To Mrs. Grant Allen, [March 28, 1899]

Tuesday

My dear Nellie

Just a hurried line to say that E. has just returned, and that she is as glad as I am (tho' fortunately without the same need) of so happy a chance and holiday. Very sorry to hear Grant is seedy — but feel sure you are too good a friend to hesitate in asking us if our coming were to burden him or you just now. We shall hope to find him his cheery self again — & you as blithe as usual.

I doubted if I could get away till the late afternoon — but as the Eastertide crowd will be very unpleasant anytime after 2 o'clock on Thursday, we have decided to leave Waterloo by the 1:50 train, due at Haslemere at 3:25 — so I suppose we'll be with you somewhere about 4 or so.¹⁷ For myself I can assure I look forward in every way to this visit — & apart from your and Grant's affectionate comradeship I hope in your fine air to get a surcease from too much nervous headache and from indifferent sleep. Well, till Thursday, Aufwiedersehn,

Will

ALS Pierpont Morgan

¹⁷ Elizabeth Sharp recalled visiting Mr. & Mrs. Grant Allen in Surrey “at their charming house, The Croft, built among the heather and the pines on the hill-top just by the edge of the chasm called ‘The Devil’s Punch Bowl’” (*Memoir*, 317).

*To F. E. Green, March 25, 1899*¹⁸

c/o Miss Rea | The Columbia Literary Agency, |
9. Mill Street, Conduit Street, | London | March 25, 1899

My Dear Sir,

I must ask you to excuse my delay in response, though the fault is not wholly mine, for the address to which you wrote is an old one, and the letter had to be forwarded to my London agent, and thence to me.

I am grateful for your letter. It has been the happiest thing connected with my work that I have been able to appeal strongly to certain natures, particularly to those who have loved deeply and deeply suffered. You say you have read "The Washer of the Ford," and you may have noted that the story called "Muime Chríod" is inscribed to "a beautiful memory".

The Mrs. Alden was a stranger, an American, of singular beauty of character and life (wife of the editor of "Harper's Magazine"), but she was of those who feel as you are generous enough to tell me you feel; and when she was dying she put away all else from here, and asked her husband to read certain things of mine, and died with the MS. of "Muime Chríod" in one hand and some white flowers in the other. These are to me the unforgettable things, and your letter is of them, and I thank you.

I wish I had known your wife. In her strong and fine face, to me beautiful, I see, as well as in her verses and heart-inspired prose, that she was a poet, in life, in thought, in spirit.

When it is published, probably in later part of April, I would much like you to read certain things in my new book, "The Dominion of Dreams". Especially, perhaps, in tales (or spiritual narratives) such as "In the Silence of the Hills", or "The Wells of Peace", you may find something of inward appeal. It may be so. I would be glad.

¹⁸ This letter appeared in "Book of the Week," a column by F. F. Green, in the January 21, 1909 issue of *The New Age*. The book that occasioned Green's column was an edition of Fiona Macleod's works called *Songs and Poems, Old and New* published posthumously that year by Eliot Stock. The circumstances that led to Fiona's letter to Green, as recalled in Green's column, are described in the introduction to this section of letters.

I seem to read much from your wife's face, from her book, from your letter. Let me quote one sentence from part of "The Dominion of Dreams" (from the end of "The Distant Country"): — "Love is more great than we conceive, and Death is the keeper of unknown redemptions."

Believe me, | Most sincerely yours, | Fiona Macleod

Printed letter, *New Age*, January 21, 1909 (267)

To T Fisher Unwin, [April 10, 1899]¹⁹

Sunday

Dear Mr. Unwin,

Thanks for your note, and kindly sending the advance copy of Dr. Hyde's book which will doubtless come tomorrow. Of course I'll say nothing about it (except possibly a useful paragraph in one or two places) till on or after the day of publication.

In haste | Yrs very truly | W. S.

APS Berg Collection

To T Fisher Unwin, [April 12, 1899]²⁰

Monday Night

Dear Mr. Unwin

Dr. Hyde's book has not come yet — I send this reminder only because in your note of Saty you say "I have today sent you advance copy etc." Perhaps it may come tomorrow — but you will know, of course, if it has been sent.

Yrs very truly | William Sharp

ACS Berg Collection

To William Butler Yeats, (April 16, 1899]

Sunday

¹⁹ This card is postmarked April 10, 1899. Douglas Hyde's *A Literary History* was published by Unwin in late April, 1899. Accompanying this card is a manuscript note which reads: "Hyde's Literary History / Sent to Sharp per Pickford on the 8th. Signed for, / on behalf of Pickford, by A. Smith."

²⁰ Postcard postmarked April 12, 1899.

My dear Yeats,

A hurried line from the country (Pinnar) where I am for this evening — to thank you for your book.²¹ It is beautifully got up — and you know what intimate appeal and constant charm its contents have for me. Some of your loveliest work is here. And the notes (which I must read again and again) have, in their kind, a like charm. In no hypercritical spirit, but a little wonderingly, I wd ask you if you are *sure Sidhe*²² ever means “Wind.” I write away from books of course — but I have never heard of any words for wind except | *Goath* (wind) | *Soilbheas* (blast) | *Anail* (breeze or breath) | One has to be careful in these matters.

Either I or Miss M. — or both, separately — will review your beautiful book in one or two places. Miss M. has written to the Express — “Literature” is already secured.²³

Ever yours, | W. S.

ALS Yale

*To Grant Richards, [April 16, 1899]*²⁴

(In train from Country) | Sunday

My Dear Richards

I hope to send you “Silence Farm” before this week-end — but for your immediate consideration, as agreed, as not only do two other publishers want it, but I wish to arrange at once,

²¹ *The Wind Among the Reeds* (London: Elkin Matthews, 1899) was published on April 15, 1899. Pinar is a village northwest of London in Middlesex.

²² In his note to “The Hosting of the Sidhe,” the first poem in *The Wind Among the Reeds*, Yeats indicated that the gods of ancient Ireland were known among the poor as the Sidhe and stated: “Sidhe is also Gaelic for wind” (p 65).

²³ A review of *The Wind Among the Reeds* signed Fiona Macleod appeared in the *Dublin Daily Express* on April 22, 1899. Sharp wrote about the volume again as Fiona Macleod in “The Later Work of Mr. W. B. Yeats,” which appeared in *The North American Review* (175, 473-485) in October 1902. Sharp thought H. D. Traill’s weekly *Literature* would publish a review under his signature, but I have not found it. Sharp’s opinions of the volume in the context of his ongoing relationship with Yeats are discussed in the Introduction to this section of the letters.

²⁴ Sharp wrote this letter on the train returning to London from Pinner where he had been for the evening.

both because for urgent reasons it shd. come out this season — & because next week I have to go abroad for a week or two.

Mrs. Wingate Rinder is for every reason very disappointed about the miscarriage of “Fumeurs D’Opium”— for personal as well as for other reasons — & she hopes, as I do, & as I know you do, that the missing volume may yet be recovered.

You have not written to her — she told me yesterday.

Hoping you are all right now —

Believe me, my Dear Richards

Most Sincerely Yours | William Sharp

P.S. Glad to have been instrumental in several quarters in helping Whiteing’s book.²⁵

ALS SUNY-Buffalo

To T. Fisher Unwin, [April 18, 1899]²⁶

Thanks — but I now have another photo of Douglas Hyde. (I shall be noticing his book in 3 places.)

When is Yeats’ reissued “Poems” to be out.²⁷ If you send me an advance copy I’ll do what I can for it.

W. S.

ACS Berg Collection

To Grant Richards, April 21, 1899

30 Greencroft Gardens | South Hampstead | Friday night 21: Apl:99

My dear Richards,

²⁵ The reference is to *No. 5 St. John Street* by Richard Whiteing (1840-1928) which Grant Richards had recently published.

²⁶ Date from postmark.

²⁷ Originally published by T. Fisher Unwin in 1895, a revised edition of Yeats’ *Poems* was published by Unwin on May 8, 1899.

Herewith I fulfill my promise, and give you first offer of *Silence Farm*, which I think the strongest and in every way best book I have done. (It is about 58,000 words or so; with the 14 sectional forepages equivalent to over 60,000.)

I have already told you what I would like to get for it as an advance against royalties: and I think urged, but may do so again, the advisability of its being brought out with the utmost expedition now — on account of the recent widespread and continued controversy about Miss Macleod and myself. As Miss Macleod is publishing a new book, “The Dominion of Dreams”, through A. Constable and Co., about the beginning of May, and as that controversy (in some ways deeply regretted both by her and me) is certain to arise again in consequence, and cannot but materially affect the sales of her book, and, if mine is ready, of mine, you will at once see the urgency of bringing out *Silence Farm* with the least possible delay.²⁸ Little proof-revision will be called for — only textual errors: for I have already revised in MS and in typed-copy.

For the same reason of urgency, I will ask you to keep to your promise — to let me hear from you within two days: i.e., I shall look to hear from you by Monday evening, or at latest by Tuesday morning. This is the more imperative for me, as I have, if possible, to go to France on Wednesday or Wedny night. If you do not wish the book, I shall thus have time to arrange with one of the two other publishers who are desirous of it.

I reserve American (U. S. A.) rights, and shall myself arrange for publication there and on Wedny shall post my typed duplicate there. This, however, is not to delay issue here.

Cordially yours | William Sharp

ALS Private

To John Macleay, [April 25, 1899]

Tuesday

My dear Mr. Macleay

It is not often coincidences happen as today -- for your letter (largely about Miss Macleod's new book) -- one from Miss Macleod about the same points -- and W. B. Yeats (to whom you allude) in person, came to me practically simultaneously.

²⁸ The book's official date of publication was May 27, 1899.

I am under great pressure, with my art-work etc., and just before going to Paris and elsewhere in France for two or three weeks – whither I hope to get on Friday. Besides, I have just finished a new book, “*Silence Farm*,” which I think is in every way the best thing I have ever done in fiction. One of the chief ‘readers’ in London has just reported on it in a way that has deeply gratified me – speaking of it as one of the most powerful & moving studies he has ever read.

It will (I hope) be out this summer – if so, probably abt end of May: but I don’t know for certain yet. It *may* have to wait till autumn on account of the American edn.

I’m not sure when Miss Macleod’s “*Dominion of Dreams*” is to be out. I understood the first week in May – but today she writes simply that final revises etc. are now off her hands. When she first set aside her historical romance to give herself up to this book, I thought she made a mistake. But I do not now think so. I see that it was inevitable. She was right in her instinct that she had to go to her own frontiers before she could step into a new realm. Her new book is the logical outcome of the others: the deeper note, the vox humana, of these.²⁹ I think it is more than merely likely that *this* is the last book of its kind. “I have had to live my books – and so must follow an inward Law” – that is truth to art as well as to life I think. There is, however, a miscellaneous volume (of ‘appreciations,’ and mystical studies) -- and then a poetic vol. which I suppose shd be classed with it. I imagine that, thereafter, her development will be on unexpected lines, both in fiction & the drama: judging both from what I know and what I have seen. In every sense I think you are right when you speak of ‘surprise’ as an element in what we may expect from her.

I am glad to hear you are to be married in August. I suppose it would occur to you to try for the new *Morning Herald*?

When I come back – i.e. any time after May 20th or so – I’ll be glad to look at your work as you suggest.

Yes, simplicity – severity even is best – but *not* without flexibility, & that can only be got by a fusion of Saxon, English, Latin-English, & all other English, into the one fine instrument of – English.

²⁹ EAS printed this sentence and the rest of the paragraph (*Memoir*, 307).

I hope that you may be able to do something for Miss M's book in the H/News. I'll send you her address.

Sincerely Yours/William Sharp

P.S. Yeats has left me a copy of the *Dublin Express*, and George Russell has sent me one with his article, so I send you one of them with pleasure, as you say you regret having missed it. I don't want it back of course. Have not yet had time to read, but Yeats very pleased. I see there is a para about Miss M in it.

P.S. I suppose some of that confounded controversy about Miss M. & myself will [begin] again -- this I hope the Chronicle will not have the bad taste to start as it did Etc. ³⁰

ALS NLS

To Grant Richards, [April 25, 1899]

30 Greencroft Gardens | South Hampstead

My dear Richards

I realise there is a good deal of general truth in what you say — as, I am sure, absolute truth from *your* standpoint: and, believe me, I shall very regretfully publish this book elsewhere, if need be. I have important work on hand (& I believe work likely to appeal widely) & would like to keep it in one publisher's hands if possible — and as I know and trust you as a publisher as well as know & like you as a friend. I am reluctant to go elsewhere for a temporary advantage.

If, therefore, I am willing to accept your point of view financially, so far — perhaps you can meet me. *If you can bring it out this season* — & this could surely be managed quite well (& this is, I admit, to me a matter of signal importance), I am willing to accept a less royalty — namely 15% instead of 20% — up to first edn. — and an advance of (instead of £100) £50.

I think you will admit that, as I am obviously waiving immediate advantage to myself — though of course I believe to our mutual benefit later, & in several ways — I am showing both my

³⁰ A journalist and aspiring novelist from Scotland, Macleay began his career as a writer for the *Highland News* in Inverness. Though he continued to write occasional pieces for that paper, he had recently moved to Liverpool to join the staff the *Liverpool Chronicle*. He suspected that Fiona Macleod might be William Sharp and speculated on that point in both papers, usually quoting unnamed sources. Sharp was pulled between the need to keep Macleay at a distance from the truth while also encouraging him to write about Fiona in order to boost sales of her books.

confidence in you & in this book — & my willingness to do as I said when I gave you “Wives in Exile”, that I wd. do my utmost to “keep with you”.

If, as I hope, we can now meet on ground fair to each, please wire to me *as early in the forenoon* as you can.

Believe me | Cordially Yours | William Sharp

Far from objecting, I wd. very much prefer to see it come out at 3/6 instead of 6/-

ALS Stanford

To Grant Richards, April 27, 1899

30 Greencroft Gardens | South Hampstead | 27:April:99

My dear Richards

I have been far too ‘rushed’ with the R. A.³¹ and much other pressing work either to get off to Paris today or to make other arrangements about “Silence Farm”. I have, besides, carefully considered your letter from every point of view, present and prospective, & have come to the conclusion that it’s a square enough arrangement as things are — tho’ I don’t think “Wives in Exile” was a fair test, for several reasons. Again, it seems to me of imperative importance, partly for the reasons already explained, to get the book out this season, and as early as practicable — and I am willing to this end to forfeit the greater immediate advantage elsewhere open to me.

I have, therefore, decided to accept your offer as indicated in your telegram: namely, an advance of £25. I think a fair royalty arrangement would be 15% up to an edition of 1000 — & thereafter, if a successful sale calls for more, at 20%.

So I return the MS. for you to put in hand at once. I hope you will make every effort to have the book struck off as swiftly as practicable: I on my part will pass the proofs at once, & probably with no other corrigenda than printer’s errors: & I hope that it may be publishable by the end of May. A relatively short typed & corrected ‘copy’ such as this should be easily and swiftly printed.

³¹ Sharp was reviewing the annual exhibit at the Royal Academy of Art for either the *Glasgow Herald* or the *Art Review*.

As I have shown my friendly goodwill throughout, I daresay you will be able to oblige me by letting me have the £25 advance on signature of the contract — as that, owing to an unforeseen emergency, would be a very great convenience to me.

As if at all possible I want to get away either tonight or tomorrow morning will you very kindly send me agreement by return.

I shall be in France till the 15th of May at any rate: and shall send you my address or addresses, for proofs.

I was very pleased to hear that you thought so highly of *Silence Farm*. One well-known ‘reader’ who saw it at my house, & begged the loan of it for a night, wrote to me that it was “a very long time indeed since I have read anything so fine, so powerful, so moving. It is the best thing you have done. It will certainly gain wide recognition.”

By the way, please have as simple a cover as practicable. Personally, I like smooth dark-red or brown buckram.

In haste, | Sincerely yours, | William Sharp

P.S. Telegram just come from one of the big London dailies, & I may have to go to Paris early this evening. So please, if you can manage it, send up Contract etc. by P.O. Messenger-Boy, with instructions that he will be paid here.

ALS SUNY-Buffalo

To Grant Richards, [April 28, 1899]

30 Greencroft Gardens | South Hampstead

My dear Richards

I think it is better to have the usual contract, & with the same clause in it as in “*Wives in Exile*” contract (which please consult) as to 7 years duration — a condition I invariably adhere to with everything I publish.

I cannot now get away to Paris till Sunday night or Monday morning.³²

³² Sharp finally left for France on Sunday April 30 or Monday May 1.

As I wrote last night, I am obliged to you for your ready courtesy about the cheque: and am sincerely glad that you are to be the publisher of *Silence Farm*: and am also very glad at the expedition you promise.

Unless you hear to the contrary, my address in Paris from Monday evg till the 15th anyway will be

Poste Restante / Bureaux des Posts: Palais du Luxembourg / Rue de Vangirard / Paris
(a district office contiguous to where I shall stay).

I don't know if it will commend itself to you — but I much like the enclosed as a binding.

I am hopeful that unfortunate *Fumeurs d'Opium* may still be traced — the more so as the book is not easy to get now, as it is *épuisé*.³³ Mrs. Wingate Rinder is naturally put out about it, as the translation too is stopped.

Yours Sincerely | William Sharp

ALS SUNY- Buffalo

To Grant Richards, April [29], 1899

My dear Richards

I think I forgot to enclose the sample binding I alluded to last night. I enclose both — the red being that which I prefer.

This, of course, is only suggestion. You know best — & will I am sure bring out the book at once as severely simply & with as much chic as practicable.

Yours in haste | W.S.

ALS Private

To Edith Lyttelton³⁴, [early May, 1899]

C/o. Miss Rea. | The Columbia Literary Agency | 9 Mill Street. Conduit Street. | London. W.

³³ See Sharp's late January letter to Richards.

³⁴ Edith Sophy Balfour Lyttelton (1865-1948), later Dame Edith Lyttelton, was a playwright and author. Her works include *Warp and Woof*; *Peter's Chance*; *The Faculty of Communion*; and *Our Superconscious Minds* (1931). A prominent society hostess, she was the wife and biographer of Alfred Lyttelton (1857-1913), a Member of Parliament and, for a time, Secretary of State.

My dear Miss Lyttelton,

I am sure that you will not have attributed my delay in reply to your letter of the 6th either to indifference or discourtesy. But partly because it was addressed (not through Mr. Yeats surely? unless he was very forgetful) to an old address, involving roundabout reforwarding, and partly because I have just come to Midlothian from the West, I have only today received it.

If you have had a real and deep pleasure from my writings, or from some things I have written, I also have had some of my rarest pleasure from letters such as yours. Yours itself I have read with genuine pleasure. I get a great many letters from England and Ireland, and many from America, but few of them “come home” to me. But every now and again I find myself in close rapport with some unknown friend, whom all at once I seem to know. And now, dear Miss Lyttelton, comes your own generous and to me welcome letter.

I am glad you know and love the Highlands: and I am glad to think that I have helped you to a fuller and deeper understanding. You, I feel, are of the few who discern that I am not the less a realist because I strive to interpret the Gaelic spirit and nature and inmost mind, rather [than] their familiar and often wholly misleading outward expression, or than the outward ordinary life. To every man, his woman of women; to every woman, her man of men; and to every soul its own flight. So, too, should it be with the creative artist. There is one way: his or hers: and he or she should go that way and no other. Thus it is that I pay no heed to those who would have me be other than I am.

I do not suppose that I can ever have a wide audience, and quite frankly I am indifferent. I am content to do what I can, in my own way, and to leave the rest to other discretionary powers and influences. If, soon or late, my work should appeal to the many, so much the more fortunate for me, or, rather, for those influences in life and art by which I take my stand. If not, I know I shall not any the more have missed my goal. Success in literature is measurable by depth, not by extension. It is perhaps because of outer accident as well as my temperament that I think so very little of, care so next to nothing about, what is commonly called success. Yet I would not have you interpret this as arrogance or affectation. Every writer must be sincerely glad to win appreciation, and must regret apparent failure. But I simply *cannot* care much. All my thought and care is in my work: in the life of thought and dream, emotion and passion: in the ceaseless revelation of the human heart, nature, and that little infinite flame in each of us that we call the spiritual life. In the deepest sense

of the words I have *lived* my books. In the truest sense they are profoundly realistic. There is, I need hardly say to *you*, a realism of the imagination, of the spirit, as well as of material vision.

Many, because of the reputation I have fortunate enough to win, such as it is, will read my shortly forthcoming book, "*The Dominion of Dreams*", (which I venture to hope *you* will read, when published 2. or three weeks hence by Archd Constable & Co.): but how few will care much for it, how fewer still will really understand it, or the most intimate part of it.³⁵

Yet, in a sense, if I may say so, it is a profoundly revelative book.³⁶ Well, if it gains wide and sincere appreciation, I shall be glad: if it should practically be ignored I shall be sorry: but, beyond that, I am indifferent. I know what I have tried to do: I know what I have done: I know the end to which I work: I believe in the sowers who will sow and the reapers who will reap, from some seed of the spirit in this book: and knowing this, I have little heed of other considerations. Beauty, in itself, is my dream: and in some expression of it, in the difficult and subtle art of words, I have a passionate absorption.

I would like to know a little more of you, though more than likely we may never meet. Will you tell me? (Are you Miss or Mrs?) But just as you like, of course. I ask, partly because of yourself as revealed in your letter: partly because of a keen personal association unwittingly awakened. But it does not matter. I am content that you are a friend, that you bear a name dear to me, and that you have been generous enough to write whole heartedly to a stranger.

You live in London, and know Mr. Yeats. Do you know his, and my friend and kinsman, Mr. William Sharp? As doubtless you have seen in the papers — for the controversy about myself seems as recurrent as the sea-serpent — he is often supposed to be me, or I to be him, or both of us to be each other, with many other speculative variations! I would like you to meet.

And now I must apologise for so long a letter. I am constantly reproached for being so bad a correspondent, and for brevity and taciturnity when I *do* write — and lo this 'screed' to an

³⁵ *The Dominion of Dreams* was published by Archibald, Constable (Westminster) on May 27, 1899.

³⁶ The remainder of this paragraph was reproduced separately by EAS in the *Memoir* (306-7) where it is introduced by "to another correspondent he wrote" with the implication it was an extract from a William Sharp letter.

unknown friend! But perhaps, dear Miss Lyttelton, you will forgive it, since it is from your *caraid dileas*,

Fiona Macleod

ALS Churchill College, Cambridge

*To William Butler Yeats, [mid- May, 1899]*³⁷

...pieces are less ‘personal.’

I read to the Macgregors, from Miss Macleod’s proofs, “The Woman with the Net,” “Dalua,” “Book of the Opal”. They were deeply impressed they said, and I saw.

I hope very much too that you will be able to write authoritatively about it. We lay more stress on a sympathetic appreciation from you than from any other of course.³⁸

Would not Traill let you write a special article?³⁹

³⁷ What follows are fragments of two or three letters Sharp wrote to Yeats. They were owned by Yeats’ son, Michael B. Yeats, who gave me copies. The paper and script of the fragments are similar, but how they fit together, if they do, is unclear. It is likely all three fragments were written when Sharp was in or near Paris in early May 1899. The fragment placed first here (ending at “special article”) was certainly written while Sharp was in Paris. The introduction to this section of the letters comments on his reading to the Mathers. The next fragment, which begins with “I send you a cutting” and ends with the first “Reddening of the West,” also deals with *The Dominion of Dreams*. In the final fragment, Sharp addresses the plays he will write as Fiona before the end of the summer for Yeats’ theatre in Dublin. It seems also to have been written in France since Sharp wrote two letters to Yeats after he returned to England both of which said he was seriously ill in France. It was surely written before May 29 when he cautioned Yeats against referring to “The Tarist” since he intended to name it “The King of Ireland’s Son.”

³⁸ This is the first of several times Sharp expressed his desire for Yeats’ opinion of *The Dominion of Dreams* and his hope that Yeats would review the book. Without responding to Sharp about the book, Yeats reviewed it in the July 1899 issue of *The Bookman*. He praised the book, but also criticized its wordiness and overblown style. Sharp was greatly distressed at first by the criticism, but came to recognize Yeats’ comments were at least partially justified (*Memoir*, 308).

³⁹ This sentence is written in the left margin of the page. Henry Duff Traill was editor of the weekly *Literature* which was first published in October 1897. The subject of the “cutting” in the next line and the advice it must have contained are unknown

I send you a cutting which has been circulated throughout the literary Press & chief papers. If you remember, let me have it again.

I think this wise: do you not?

(I think some of the best of F.M. will be found in this book. Few can guess how personal much of it is. You almost alone will read “The Distant Country,” for example, with ‘other eyes’.

I think, too, that both in style & thought [& imaginative treatment of imaginative thought]⁴⁰ the other unpublished book, “The Reddening of the West”⁴¹ — which Miss Macleod intends to dedicate to you — & which will likely be publ. . . .⁴²

From every point of view we are very eager about the plays.

Two will be finished before this summerend — and also if possible the most purely dramatic, “The Tarrist”. “Dahut the Red” may only be for book form.

I have been away, as you know, with my friend. It has been an eventful time. Life presses. New and vivid developments await.

Sometime I want you to read something that Miss M. wished kept back from “The Dominion of Dreams.” It is called “The Second Mystery of the Incarnation” — and is in great part an actual record of that mysterious union of which I have spoken to you. It will probably be incorporated in the chief section of “The Reddening of the West”:

(It preceded “The Distant Country”)⁴³

⁴⁰ The words in brackets are inserted above the line.

⁴¹ This book became *The Divine Adventure: Iona: By Sundown Shores* when it was published in early summer 1900 by Chapman and Hall (London). By then, Sharp’s relationship with Yeats had cooled, and the volume was not dedicated to him, but to EALASaidh, which is Elizabeth (or EAS) in Gaelic. In the spring and fall of 1899, he expected to finish and publish the book in November 1899.

⁴² This is the end of two pages that fit together. The next excerpt is from the beginning of two pages written side-by-side on a single sheet. These pages are probably part of the same letter as the two pages above, but that is not certain.

⁴³ This line is written in the left margin.

I am more glad than I⁴⁴

Private

*To Grant Richards, [May 23, 1899]*⁴⁵

Tuesday night

My dear Richards

I am very pleased indeed with the get-up of the book: the binding, the print, the paper, are just what I would choose. It seems to me a very fine 'turn-out' for a 3/6 volume. It is a great pleasure to me the way you turn out most of your books: and I am particularly glad "Silence Farm" is just as I would wish it.

I am sorry about the postponement — the season is already so far advanced. But you know best as to what is advisable — & so of course I have no more to say.

Can you let me have my other author's copies soon — three in particular I want for America: the others I wd. hold over till publishing-date.

You say I am sending advance copies to *Daily Chronicle* and *Literature* — but why advance to these two in particular? In any case, would it not be very risky to send copies so much in advance? Would not others object? I sh^d think it well to send at once to the weeklies (*Literature, Academy, etc., etc., Sketch, etc.*) — but not to the D/C unless also to the other dailies.

To your provincial list add the *Liverpool Courier*, please: also *Nottingham Guardian*. It would also be well to send advance copies to the following (who will all do what they can):

1. Richard *Whiteing* Esq.
2. Chas. G. D. *Roberts*, 8 Templeton Place, Earl's Court (who is to do a special article)
3. John *Macleay* Esq., 194 Grove Street, Liverpool

⁴⁴ The page ends here, and the next page is missing.

⁴⁵ Sharp probably returned from France on Monday May 22 and found waiting him an author's copy of *Silence Farm*. See his April 25 letter to Macleay. Richards had decided to delay official publication until June 13.

4. Coulson Kernahan Esq.
5. Richard *Le Gallienne* Esq., Waggoner's Wells, Haslemere
6. Lionel Johnson Esq., 8 New Square, Lincoln's Inn
7. Ernest Rhys Esq., Hunt Cottage, The Vale, Hampstead N.W.

Let me know if you have sent or will send to these, please. If I remember any others, or hear to that effect, I'll let you know.

In haste, | Cordially yours, | William Sharp

We'll meet at the Omar meeting, I hope.⁴⁶

P.S. I forgot to ask you to be sure to add to your list *The Daily Express, Dublin* and to the other list to add

7. Geo. Russell Esq. 28 Upper Mount Pleasant Avenue, Ranelagh, Dublin
and

8. W. B. Yeats Esq. | c/o Lady Gregory, Coole Park, Gort, Co. Galway, and

9. to Mr. Henry D. Davray⁴⁷, 33 Avenue D'Orleans, Paris, who will write about it in 2 places.

Please let me have list of those you send to.

ALS Pierpont Morgan

To Frank Rinder, [late May, 1899]

My Dear Frank,

Today I got three or four copies of *The Dominion of Dreams*. I wish you to have one, for this book is at once the deepest and most intimate that F. M. has written.

Too much of it is born out of incurable heartache, "the nostalgia for impossible things". . . . My hope is that the issues of life have been woven to beauty, for its own sake, and in divers

⁴⁶ The Omar Khayyam Club was a group of literary men who met periodically for dinners, listened to each other deliver speeches, and inducted new members.

⁴⁷ Henry D. Davray (b. 1873) wrote and translated for the *Mercure de France*. He was the author of *Chez les Anglais Pendant la Grand Guerre* (1916), *Through French Eyes* (1916), and *Lord Kitchener: His Work and His Prestige* (1917).

ways to reach and help or enrich other lives. . . . “The Wells of Peace” must, I think, appeal to many tired souls, spiritually athirst. That is a clue to the whole book — or all but the more impersonal part of it, such as the four opening stories and “The Herdsman”; this is at once my solace, my hope and my ideal. If ever a book (in the deeper portion of it) came out of the depths of a life it is this: and so, I suppose it shall live — for by a mysterious law, only the work of suffering, or great joy, survives, and that in degree to its intensity. . . .

F. M.’s influence is now steadily deepening and, thank God, along the lines I have hoped and dreamed. . . . In the writings to come I hope a deeper and richer and truer note of inward joy and spiritual hope will be the living influence. In one of the stories in this book, “The Distant Country”, occurs a sentence that is to be inscribed on my gravestone when my time comes.

“Love is more great than we conceive and Death is the keeper of unknown redemptions.”

Lovingly, | Will⁴⁸

Memoir 306

To George Russell (AE), [late May, 1899]

30 Greencroft Gardens | South Hampstead | London

My dear George Russell

Today or tomorrow you shd. receive from Miss Macleod & myself (per the publishers) a copy of “*The Dominion of Dreams.*” I hope you will find some living beauty in it. It comes from deeper depths of life, both of suffering & spiritual exaltation, than any other of F. M.’s books — particularly the second section of *Ulad*.

⁴⁸ Frank Rinder was the husband of Edith Rinder, the woman Sharp loved, and their love is the subject of many stories in the book. In “The Distant Country,” for example, the female narrator describes a love affair that is so intense it threatens to burn itself out. His mention of this story may have been an indirect means of suggesting to Rinder that his affair with Edith was beginning to wane. The sentence Sharp quoted suggests he believed Rinder would concur that intense love between two human beings cannot be denied and whatever redemption might be required for the harm that love causes others comes only after death. This is one of very few letters from Sharp to the Rinders that Elizabeth used partially in the *Memoir*. Since she knew the facts of Sharp’s relationship with Edith would one day emerge, she must have wanted future readers to know that both she and Edith’s husband knew about and tolerated the love affair between their two spouses.

It is sent as a gift of friendship & camaraderie; but at the same time I may frankly say that if you can write anything about it I shall be glad — because it is *you*.

My greetings to you & your wife.

W. S.

If by chance Yeats's copy comes to your care, please post it c/o Lady Gregory

ALS Indiana, Lily Library

To Benjamin Burgess Moore, May 29, 1899

c/o Miss Rea | The Columbia Literary Agency |
9 Mill Street Conduit St. | London E. C. |

Dear Mr. Moore

I know I am in your debt — but you must forgive me.

I have had a good deal of illness, and been abroad, and have been hopelessly preoccupied with work and correspondence since leisure has been approximately mine again. But I bear you ever in friendly remembrance — one of my sincerest friends oversea I know.

Yes — I have been much annoyed at all these personal and often impertinently obtrusive remarks etc about myself. But I think that is all over now — with the result that my privacy will be safeguarded and let useless speculations cease.

Do write to me about my new book, *The Dominion of Dreams*, which I have asked the publishers to send to you. It was published two days ago. It is my deepest, most intimate book.

If, too, you can help it at all, I know you will (though I do not send it for that, but simply as a friend).

Always yours sincerely | Fiona Macleod

29th May 1899

ALS Huntington

To Coulson Kernahan, [May, 29, 1899]

30 Greencroft Gardens | South Hampstead

My dear Kernahan

Miss Macleod asked me for your address, as I had told her you w^d probably be able to say a good word for her new book, “The Dominion of Dreams,” and as in any case she wished you to have it. But I have been in France, and am just back, & my lost letters are coming in upon me many days late!

However I hear that she gave your name to Constables, & that a copy was sent to you. I am sure you will do what you can.

My own new book, *Silence Farm* (a tragic romance), is to be issued by Grant Richards tomorrow fortnight (June 13th).⁴⁹

You, of course, are very busy too — and your dear wife. Our love to you both.

Ever yours, | William Sharp

ALS Princeton

To Edith Lyttelton, May 29, 1899

C/o. Miss Rea | The Columbia Literary Agency |
9 Mill Street. Conduit Street | London | 29:May:99

My dear Mrs. Lyttelton

I am in Edinburgh for a couple of days, mainly in connection with the publication of my new book — but leave again tomorrow for Loch Fyne.

It is not to tell you about myself, however, that I look up this page to write to you. I write to say that I am so sorry to hear you have been seriously unwell, and are not yet strong: and to express a not conventional but genuine hope that you will soon be in full enjoyment of life. Do you know that any time in the Yellow Month (i.e. from the mid-May day called Yellow-May-Day — *Là buidhe Bealltainn* — till *Là Fheill-Eòin*, St. John’s Day) a friend may put ‘green-life’ into the heart of another? Well, I wish ‘green life’ to you — that is, youth, and the living spirit, and inward joy. And so . . . get well! You will, of course, know at once how I have heard of your illness.

⁴⁹ This statement dates the letter as Monday, May 29.

After your second letter I wanted you to meet Mr. William Sharp, and he would have called a month or more ago but that he had to go to France. I am glad you have met: for as I think I told you, he is my most intimate friend, as well as my kinsman. If you like him, you would like me: if you do not like him, you would not like me. There! It is a woman's argument — but perhaps none the less convincing.

So you live in an old house in Westminster and have 'a swift and individual mind', and are "keenly sensitive to impressions," and "seem tuned to that finer inward suffering which goes with every nature open to mystery and to beauty." Well, I knew that, and more I have mentally reproached my friend for not being more explicit — though he says frankly "It is not only that I have no time, but that I am unable to say more. If ever I meet her alone, I will see and know what, in a first visit, in the circumstances and with others present, was of necessity fugitive or uncertain." I was glad to hear that you are going to read "The Dominion of Dreams"— and if you care for the book, or feel deeply anything in it, I hope you will tell me: for sympathy and understanding such as shown in your letters, and others akin to them, mean far more to me than the most laudatory reviews. Not that I anticipate more than a somewhat puzzled reception, even at best, for this book: much of it can of necessity appeal only to the few.

We may never meet, but we can always be friends: and in token of that indefinable but real comradeship that means so much I send for your acceptance one of a little private edition of ten copies, made up of a certain intimate section of "The Dominion of Dreams," but here entitled anew "The Kingdom of Silence." All of us who suffer — whether fully known, or in the shadows of insight, of foreknowledge — know how not only we must live, but must alone find symbolic or disguised expression, in this domain of silence.

But I must be wearying you. Forgive so long a letter, and believe me, your unknown and yet not unknown friend

Fiona Macleod

ALS Churchill College, Cambridge

*To William Butler Yeats, [May 29?, 1899]*⁵⁰

Monday

My dear Yeats

I have read and carefully considered the rite — but I think it calls for something more definite in visionary insight and significance — for spiritual recasting, so to say. And as you well know, all work of this kind — as all imaginative work — is truly alive only when it has died into the mind and been born again. The mystery of dissolution is the common mean of growth. Resurrection is the test of any spiritual idea — as of the spiritual life itself, of art, and of any final expression of the inward life.

I cannot say when this rebirth will be: but when it comes I will write to you, if the result seems to me to be of any worth, any significance: as I hope it will be. The sole stream of inward thought that can help is moving that way.

I have been ill — and seriously — but am now better, though I have to be careful still. All our plans for Scandinavia in the autumn are now over — partly for the now impracticable expense, partly by doctor's order, who says I must have hill & sea air native to me — Scotland or Ireland.

So about the end of July my wife and I intend to go to Ireland. It will probably be to the east coast, Mourne Mountains coast, as we must live cheaply & simply. Will you be eastward at all? Surely Tara-land, Ulidia, must have strong appeal to you?⁵¹ I would be glad go west of

⁵⁰ Yeats had asked Sharp to comment on or add to a draft of a ritual he had constructed for his Celtic Mystical order. A note in *CLWBY* (II, 422) says of this draft: "Probably an early version of 'The Initiation of the Spear,' which he [Yeats] had repeatedly experienced since 17 Dec 1898. By January 1899 WBY had also worked out a structure for the rituals based on cauldron, stone, sword, and spear related to the four seasons ('Visions Notebook')."

⁵¹ The area around Tara in County Meath in the east of Ireland. The ancient kings of Ireland were said to have their seat and hold their assemblies in Tara until 563. Ulidia or Uladlh (Ulla, i.e., Ulster), an original kingdom of ancient Ireland, became the northern province of Ulster composed of nine counties, six of which are now in Northern Ireland.

course, but we cannot afford it, as it would involve going about & living in hotels. We think of Kilkeel or Annalong or Newcastle.⁵²

I hope you like “The Dominion of Dreams.” Miss Macleod has received two or three very strange & moving letters from strangers, as well as others. The book of course can appeal to few, — that is, much of it. But, I hope, it will sink deep.

If you are at any time announcing, or speaking of the play by Miss Macleod for acting next year, do not now speak of it as “The Tarrist”. Either that name will be relinquished, or used later for another play. Of *course if thought advisable* it can be retained — for the acting play — but in its literary & published form it will be called “The King of Ireland’s Son.”⁵³ You will be interested to hear, if Miss Macleod has not already told you, that this play will be finished soon, relatively. I think it will not disappoint you.

Are you to be at Gort (or Tillyra) in August?⁵⁴ I hope you are happily at work. What are you doing? I envy you in the West. My heart is always there. And you are amid green and beautiful things. There is no nostalgia like that of the green way.

Yours | W. S.

⁵² Kilkeel and Newcastle are seaport towns in County Down. Annalong is a fishing village 5 miles north of Kilkeel.

⁵³ Sharp finished and published two plays under the Fiona Macleod pseudonym: “The House of Usna,” *National Review*, 35 (July 1900), pp. 733ff and “The Immortal Hour,” *The Fortnightly Review*, 68 (Nov. 1900), pp. 867-896. “The Tarrist” and “The King of Ireland’s Son” were rejected titles for “The House of Usna.” “The King of Ireland’s Son” was probably rejected because it was the title of a poem by Nora Hopper which was quoted in “Dalvan,” a story in *Ballads in Prose*, 1894 (*Letters to Yeats*, I, p. 54). In a letter dated 16 September 1899 (see below), Sharp told Yeats “The House of Usna” and “The Immortal Hour” were the two finished plays (*Memoir*, p. 310). “The House of Usna” was performed “under the auspices of The Stage Society, of which William Sharp was the first Chairman” at the Fifth Meeting of the Society at the Globe Theatre, April 29, 1900. It was directed by Granville Barker, and Y.M. Capel wrote the music that accompanied it (*Memoir*, 317-8). Two short plays by Maeterlinck were also performed that evening.

⁵⁴ Gort is in County Galway near Coole Park, the residence of Lady Gregory, and not far from Edward Martyn’s Tillyra Castle.

My most cordial remembrances & regards to Lady Gregory. London is prostratingly hot. You are well out of it.

ALS Yale

To John Macleay, May 31, 1899

c/o Miss Lilian Rea | The Columbia Literary Agency |
9 Mill Street. Conduit St. | London

Dear Mr. Macleay

I am indebted to Mr. Sharp for your new address – and I asked Messrs. Constable to send you a copy of my new book. I greatly hope that you, one of my earliest and staunchest friends across the pen will care for “The Dominion of Dreams.” To me it stands for my best work, as it is certainly the deepest and most mature: though I can well understand how its appeal must be limited.

After all, I doubt if I really care for any work save that which tells imaginatively of

[page or pages missing here]

Jacobite romance (which will in movement, and, in a sense, in style, recall the Pagan and Scandinavian tales in “The Washer of the Ford” or “The Sad Queen” in the present volume -- and to my mind my strongest work is here; though not necessarily my deepest or most intimate) - - a book of ‘spiritual studies’ of the Gael, a book after my own heart – and a volume of poems and with them two prose plays. I have also a play of a necessarily rougher mould, for the stage.

If you like “The Dominion of Dreams” I hope you will tell me so.

(Write to me as above: I am at present on Argyll.)

You yourself are busy, of course. I look for your work. I may be wrong, but I *think* Mr. Sharp told me you are about to be married.

If so, my sincere good wishes!

Yours most truly | Fiona Macleod

ALS NLS

To Grant Richards, early June, 1899

My dear Richards

On my return I find that I stupidly omitted two names of reviewing friends who will do their best for “S/F,” namely

(1) J. Stanley Little Esq | 18 Drakefield Road | Balham | SW

(2) Percy White Esq | 22 Holland St. | Kensington W.

I suppose you are now sending out review copies? Please send above with them.

I hope the book will do well. Our friend Janvier writes me that he has rarely been more moved and more profoundly interested by any book -- & says other things which, coming from so exacting a critic, greatly please me.

What a lovely little book you have made of Mr. Lucas’ “The Open Road.”⁵⁵ I will say what I can for it. I am sending a copy to Miss Macleod, who has long meditated a little anthology of lovely and rare things in prose & verse – purely by personal choice of selection – to be called (I believe) “The Hour of beauty.” This lovely little book should be a further spur to her intent.

The few who have seen ‘Silence Farm’ concur with me in liking greatly its get up.

Ever yours | William Sharp

ALS SUNY Buffalo

To Coulson Kernahan, [June 5, 1899]⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Edward Verrall Lucas (1868-1938) was a versatile and popular English writer of nearly 100 books. *The Open Road* went through many editions both in England and in America where it was published by Henry Holt. Born in Kent, educated at a Friends school, he rose without university education to the *Punch* ‘table’ in 1904 and wrote prolifically for the magazine. In 1924 he became chairman of the London publishers Methuen and Company. According to R. G. G. Price’s *A History of Punch*, his polished and gentlemanly essayist’s persona concealed “a cynical clubman ... very bitter about men and politics ... [with] the finest pornographic library in London.”

⁵⁶ In his Thursday, June 8 letter to Little, Sharp said review copies were going out that week, the week preceding publication on June 13. This letter and the letter to Yeats, which are undated, similar in handwriting and some wording and written on the same stationery, were probably written early in the week of June 5, a Monday. So I have chosen that as the probable date of both letters.

30 Greencroft Gardens | South Hampstead

My dear Kernahan

Today or in a day or so Grant Richards should send you a copy of my new book, "*Silence Farm*" — which I hope you will like, and which I (to say nothing of G. R. and his readers) — think the best thing I have done.

If you can say anything about it anywhere, I sh^d be grateful — but in any case I want so good a friend as yourself to have this book from me.

I am now back from France — where I was very ill (2 doctors etc.) — and though better have to be careful).

I hope you two are both well, and happily at work.

We are soon going to leave our flat, and for good: I doubt if we'll ever live in town again. First we go to Ireland for two months.

Shall you be at the Omar dinner? I hope so.

With affectionate greetings to you both | Cordially yours, | William Sharp

ALS Princeton

To William Butler Yeats, [June 5?, 1899]

30 Greencroft Gardens | South Hampstead | London

My dear Yeats

Serious illness (in France I had to have a doctor) has still left me so down, mentally & bodily, that I find myself unable to do anything just now involving deep concentration & spiritual intensity. Therefore the rite waits. But I feel something moving within me. (I do not think what you sent can stand, i.e. can do more than spiritually indicate a direction. I'll explain later.)

I am very eager to hear what you think of "The Dominion of Dreams." If ever a book was born out of spiritual stress & suffering, out of the *depths*, this book was: as I think Miss Macleod herself has written to you.

Shall you be writing about it anywhere?⁵⁷

It is probable that after “The King of Ireland’s Son,” Miss M’s next play will be a short modern play of a deep & moving human interest, called “Dark Rosaleen” (meaning Ireland mainly).⁵⁸

Today or in a day or so Grant Richards should send you a copy of a new book by myself “Silence Farm”. I think you will find it the best & most satisfying thing that has appeared under my name (G. R. & his reader seem to have a very high opinion, & very high hopes of it, indeed.) If, perchance, you sh^d be able to say anything about it anywhere I should be grateful. But this is just as you can, & feel inclined. In any case I want you to have the book. I would send you an advance copy with my inscription — but I find that the last of the very few I have has my inscription to Lady Gregory — but G. R. will have had my instructions by this. I’m sending Lady Gregory’s to her.

We leave our flat about 20th July. Shall you be in town before then?⁵⁹

⁵⁷ Sharp asked Yeats several times in late May and June what he thought about *The Dominion of Dreams* and wondered if he would review the book. Having heard nothing on the subject from Yeats by the end of June, he was surprised, and more than a little annoyed, when he learned in early July that Yeats’ review had appeared in that month’s *Bookman*. This matter will be described in more detail in the introduction to the next section of letters.

⁵⁸ “The King of Ireland’s Son” became “The House of Usna.” Sharp is telling Yeats indirectly he is capable of writing contemporary “Irish” plays, which might be suitable for an Irish Literary Theater in addition to the Pan-Celtic dramas set in the mythic past. Political considerations had caused Yeats in late 1897 to shift the name of the theater he and others were developing in Dublin from “Celtic” to “Irish.”

⁵⁹ EAS combined this line and the last paragraph of this letter with passages from a letter to Yeats I have dated May 29 into what appears in the *Memoir* to be a single letter. She omitted from both letters references to the possibility that Lady Gregory or Edward Martyn would invite them as guests to the West, references to their financial difficulties, references to the plays Sharp was writing as Fiona for Yeats’ Irish theater, and, most significantly, all references to the Rite for the Celtic Mystical Order

Then we go to Ireland but I don't know where yet, [Possibly Lady Gregory or Martyn may ask us west. Otherwise we'll go straight to the]⁶⁰ probably to the Mourne Mountains coast.⁶¹

I doubt if I'll ever live in London again. It is not likely. I do not know that I am overwhelmingly anxious to live anywhere. I think you know enough of me to know how profoundly I feel the strain of life — the strain of double life.⁶² Still, there is much to be done yet. But for that. . . .

Your friend | William Sharp

ALS Yale, *LWBYI*, 51-2

*To George Russell, [June 5?, 1899]*⁶³

30 Greencroft Gardens | South Hampstead | London | N.W.

My dear Russell

I know you will be glad to hear that Miss Macleod's book has made a far deeper and more moving impression on at least a few than any other of her writings. It is not to be expected that a book such as this — coming deep out of a life — could be of wide or at any rate of

⁶⁰ The bracketed words are crossed through in the MS letter, probably by Sharp since the inserted words "probably to the" appear to be in his hand. Presumably he wanted Yeats to think he had thought better about conveying his hope for an invitation while leaving enough to plant the idea.

⁶¹ The east coast north of Dublin in County Down.

⁶² Sharp had told Yeats, probably in June 1897, that he was responsible for the Fiona Macleod writings and that he experienced her as an alternative personality triggered and inspired by a real woman with whom he enjoyed an intimate relationship. Sharp was suffering one of his periodic bouts of depression.

⁶³ This strange letter to Russell, which assumes a closer relationship between the two men than in fact existed, was written about the same time as the previous letter to Yeats, thus the probable date of June 5. It conveyed the same note of depression and disdain for city life in London that Sharp expressed to Yeats in his May 29 letter and again on June 5. Somewhat plaintively, Sharp asked AE to provide Fiona some "sympathy and comradely help" which she needed to refresh her soul. He must have done so right away since Fiona, in a letter dated June 17, thanked AE for his "friendly and sincere letter."

immediately wide appeal: but it will, I hope, help to mould the minds and spiritual temper of many. Already a response has come, and from strangers as well as those in a sense known. The book seems to have not only moved profoundly, but to have revealed much — and that is perhaps one of the ultimate tests.

But if out of much spiritual suffering and joy, and a too great pressure of sorrow and that “unknown grief,” the nostalgia for impossible things, this book has been woven, it is easily understandable, at least *you* will understand, that a great and ultra-sensitive weariness may follow. Oftenest the soul best finds refreshment by following its own guidance to the secret Fountain of Youth: sometimes it is through the dreams and visions of others: sometimes through the gates of personal joy, or, oftener, of sorrow and anguish: but sometimes only through the sympathy and comradely help of others of close spiritual kindred. I think it is so with Miss Macleod just now — and *you* are of the few to whom she turns. When you have time, I hope you will write to her about “The Dominion of Dreams.” Neither she for herself, nor I for her, would ask this, were there not times when one should not let even just scruples of consideration make one refrain from asking for spiritual help or word of helpful greeting. If some day, when a little of your rare leisure permits, you write to her, do so | c/o Miss Rea | The Columbia Literary Agency | 9 Mill St. | Conduit St | London W. | which is now her sole address for correspondence.

I hope the book I saw announced sometime ago is soon to be out — that of your and Yeats’ reprinted essays. I look for it eagerly. I think our little band is already exercising a deep and far-reaching influence: and that this will steadfastly deepen and widen. I often think of you, & what you are doing — & often keep in touch by a glance into something you have written. Yes: as you wrote once: we go to the same goal, and are never far apart.

My wife and I (I have been seriously unwell, & need rest & sea-air & hill-air of a native kind) give up our flat in London towards the end of July — I mean give it up for good — (& personally I never wish to live in London again, where a terrible devitalisation in all ways forever was) — and to come to Ireland for August & Sepr., probably crossing before the end of

July. We intend going to the east coast (Mourne Mountains), as we must live cheaply as well as simply: probably to Kilkeel, or Annalong, or Newcastle. If so, I hope greatly we may see you & your wife. Perhaps she does not remember me — but I well remember her. I hope you are both very happy in a true comradeship.

The heat here is very great — prostratively — & so more than ever I long for the unimprisoned life. As I wrote to Yeats recently — there is no nostalgia like that of the green way.

Ever your friend | William Sharp

ALS Indiana, Lily Library

To J. Stanley Little, [June 8, 1899]

Thursday

My dear Stanley

I have asked Grant Richards to send you a copy of my new book, *Silence Farm*, which I think the best thing I have done (as others do). Advance copies are to go out this week, and the book nominally to be publ^d? on Tuesday next.

If you can say a good word for it I shall be grateful: but that is as you find convenient. In any case I want you to have the book from me, in old friendship.

I was very ill recently in France (2 doctors etc.) but am now better tho' I have still to be careful.

We leave our flat for good about mid July.

I hope you are both well — and that things prosper.

Ever yours, | Will

ALS Princeton

To John Macleay, June 8, [1899]⁶⁴

⁶⁴In her May 31 letter to Macleay Fiona asked if she was correct in thinking that Macleay was soon to be married. Macleay answered that question affirmatively, and here Fiona sent good wishes for “his wedded life.” That fixes the date as 1899.

c/o Miss Rea | The Columbia Literary Agency | 9 Mill Street | Conduit St. | London

Dear Mr. Macleay

Thanks for your friendly letter. Yes, I *do* wish you could obtain the control of the “Highland News.” Much could be done with that paper.

I daresay there is much truth in what you say – but each of us must seek according to the light that is in us for guidance. Yet on the face of it, there must surely be more likelihood of spiritual beauty where life is attuned to the great natural influences and where simple natures have more depth and scope. There is moral and spiritual beauty in the slums -- but not the same degree, I suppose: at any rate, we have overmuch literature pointing out all this in slum-life and the like -- a little pharasaically it seems to me.

But I don’t “go to the isles” for beauty. The isles – the past -- the pagan wonder and mystery – *come to me!* It is what a writer *receives* that makes him or her. All art is from within. It is from what dies into one, and is reborn.

Each to his kind. My cordial good wishes for your wedded life.

In haste / Sincerely yours / Fiona Macleod

ALS NLS

To William Butler Yeats, June 14, [1899]

c/o Miss Rea. | 2. Carlyle Square | Chelsea. | London. S.W.

14: June.

Dear Mr. Yeats

I have just come to Midlothian again from the Middle Isles. Will you be patient as to the Rite for a brief while longer?⁶⁵ My reason for asking this is that our friend W. S. will be in

⁶⁵ Sharp was stalling, through Fiona, for more time to comment substantively on the Rite as he had in his May 29 and June 5 letters to Yeats. Yeats sent separate copies of the Rite to Fiona and to Sharp for comment. Since he knew Sharp was writing the Fiona Macleod works under the influence of a woman he loved and since that woman was cooperating with Sharp in divining the rites for Yeats’ Celtic Order, the intended recipient of the second copy of the Rite was Edith Rinder. Following Sharp’s lead and because he did not know who she was, Yeats addressed her as Fiona Macleod.

Scotland (to see me) at the end of next week — and that it is important he and I should talk over, rather than correspond about this.⁶⁶

Then, too, I will write on other matters.

I have work, too, on hand about which I should like to write to you. Do you know German? . . . if so, would you care to see, when it appears soon, “a ‘Kritik’ on Fiona Macleod,” dealing largely with the mythopoeic aspects of the work and particularly with what the writer somewhat cumbrously calls in his letter “the newly conceived and newly shaped, howsoever old-world-based idea of the incorporate madness of men, of the madness that is wisdom and of the wisdom that is madness, in your ‘Dalua,’ the most deeply significant mythopoeic creation in our time.”⁶⁷ But if you are pressed about the Rite, I could . . . but no, that would be inadvisable. You will wait, now, I am sure! Lest I forget, let me add that the ‘Touch of the Queen’ is in May. [It is also fatal on St. Bride’s Day i.e. 1st February (am Theill Bhrighde)].

I cannot say at the moment, but I believe the times to beware of in May are the 1st (and its eve), and the three cold days (17th to 19th or 19th to 21st according to some).

In haste | Sincerely yours | Fiona Macleod

ALS Private)

*To George Russell (AE), June 17, 1899*⁶⁸

c/o. Miss Rea | The Columbia Literary Agency | 9. Mill Street. Conduit St. | London

⁶⁶ Fiona was in Midlothian from the “Middle Isles” to explain the Edinburgh postmark. Sharp drafted the letter in London and sent it to his sister in Edinburgh to copy and send. Yeats is to presume that Fiona will remain in Edinburgh for a week and Sharp will join her there on or about June 23. Subsequent letters confirm this supposed meeting and imply they went together back to the “Middle Isles” south and west of Glasgow where they remained until early July. It is likely that he was with Edith Rinder in the West.

⁶⁷ The “Kritik” which was to appear soon and its author are unknown to me. “Dalua” is the first story in the first section of *The Dominion of Dreams*.

⁶⁸ Sharp’s handwritten draft of this letter is in the National Library of Scotland. Mary Sharp’s transcription, used here, is in the Lily Library at Indiana University.

17: June: 99.

My dear "A. E."

I thank you for your friendly and sincere letter. It has given me, will give me, subject for close thought. I am like one in an apparently clear wood which is yet a mysterious maze out of which I cannot escape, or even reach the frontiers so as to discern where I am and what vistas are beyond me: nay, even the stars themselves become confused often in the darkness of the branches, and the sun's way seems equally to lead west or east, or north or south, so that I fare often bewildered even at full noon.

Perhaps your letter — perhaps your will and thought — can help me. I hope so. I can say neither 'yea' nor 'nay' to the central part of your letter. But that spiritually I have been furnishing the palaces of the mind with empty shadows is, I fear, true. Well, I *hope* — and *believe*.

I have no doubt you are right in what you say about "The Book of the Opal." I think you are a little off the trail about "The Yellow Moonrock,"⁶⁹ which is the essential part of a pipe-story called "The Lily Leven,"⁷⁰ before W. B. Yeats' "Hanrahan" was written (or appeared).⁷¹ Yet it *may* be that in its later reshaping it has been influenced as you say. I will be on guard.

Will you send me your Express review?⁷² Please do.

Always your friend and comrade, | Fiona Macleod

ALS Indiana, Lily Library

⁶⁹ "The Book of the Opal" and "The Yellow Moonrock" appeared in *The Dominion of Dreams* (1899). AE's letter to FM about the book contained some advice and some criticism as did his review in the *Dublin Daily Express*.

⁷⁰ Sharp began "The Lily Leven" in 1896 but it was not published. See note to letter dated September 23, 1896.

⁷¹ Yeats's stories about Hanrahan the Red first appeared in *The Secret Rose: A Collection of Stories* (London: Lawrence and Bullen, 1897). They were published later as *The Stories of Hanrahan the Red* (Dundrum: The Dun Emer Press, 1904).

⁷² AE's review of *The Dominion of Dreams* appeared in the *Dublin Daily Express* in June 1899.

To Edith Lyttelton, June 18, 1899

C/o. Miss Rea | The Columbia Literary Agency | 9. Mill Street. Conduit St. | London.

18th June | 99

My dear new friend

In this lovely and continuous sunflood I have been too indolent — save when pricked by some unwelcome necessity — to answer letters. But in your case, it is from no forgetfulness. I have had your letter often by me: have read it thrice at least. I am genuinely glad that you like “the Dominion of Dreams” so well — that something in it has deeply appealed to you. It will interest you to hear that two or three of the important reviews which have appeared and I am agreeably surprised at the sympathetic and generous welcome given to this book — and even the *Athenaeum*,⁷³ usually hostile, gives it this week a most generous criticism (with a foolish objection to certain Gaelic names being anglicised — and I wonder how English readers would like “Sine MacIllcathain” or “Eoghau Mac-an-t’-Saoir” for “Jean Maclean” or “Hugh Macintyre”!)— ah, I’ve lost my breath, so to say! . . . well, I meant to say at once that you would be interested to hear that one you like so well, “In the Shadow of the Hills,” is noted as the best or one of the best. I think the *Athenaeum* says so too — and so does another just to hand, the *Daily Telegraph* (Mr. Courtney), of which I send you a copy as it has come to me in duplicate.

And now enough about my book.

I am very very glad that you can feel to me as to a friend. I hope you will write when so ever you will. I shall always be glad to hear from you. Indeed, I feel that we *are* friends. There are things — but above all there is *something* — in your letter which comes home to me intimately.

⁷³ No. 3738, June 17, 1899: “in some respects the most considerable work yet issued by the writer who has been for several years the protagonist of the Scottish Gael.”

As some slight sign of this I sent you the “Kingdom of Silence,” and also asked Mr. Sharp to send you from me (I thought he had an extra copy of mine, but he hadn’t!) a copy of my most personal or intimate book, “From the Hills of Dream”.

Do you not “write” yourself? Your letters (with their eager note, and distinctive touch) make me think you do. If so, I wish you would let me see something.

I am glad you have seen my friend again. I think you and he will become friends. It is my hope. He says you are “the Hon. Mrs. Lyttelton”, and wife of one of whose family I know something.

And I am sure I would like you now as much as he does.

I do hope you are now quite strong again. If you could hear the last call of the cuckoo in the woods of Claondiri, and see the brown-sailed herring smacks coming up Loch Fyne, as I do, you would be glad to be here for a while and not in London.

I have not been very well, (life ever wears me too much), but the sunflood heals.

I hope all my work hence will have less of sorrow and regret, and more of strength and joy: not because life is so attuned for me, but because of inward growth. But . . . well, one can only hope, and work.

I don’t quite know yet what next of things begun, half-done, projected, to go on with. At the actual moment I am finishing a play for the Irish Literary Theatre⁷⁴ — and have begun a commissioned article for the *Fortnightly* on Contemporary Breton Poetry. But I will tire you.

Write to *me*, please!

Your friend, | Fiona Macleod

ALS Churchill College, Cambridge

*To The Editor of the Athenaeum, [June 18, 1899]*⁷⁵

⁷⁴ Probably *The House of Usna*.

⁷⁵ The letter is transcribed from Sharp’s draft for Mary to copy. It was written in response to the review of *The Dominion of Dreams* in the June 17 *Athenaeum*. I do not know if it was published.

Not wholly as a Personal Matter — and I would be ill to please were I not gratified with the sympathetic and generously worded review of *The Dominion of Dreams* in the current *Athenaeum* — I write to say that it is perhaps a little misleading to indicate as careless Gaelic what is obviously anglicised. Surely no one with even an elementary knowledge of Gaelic could think ‘Sheumais’ the proper spelling of ‘Seumas’ or ‘muirnean’ of ‘mhuirnein’: but is it not wiser when foreign words are introduced (and I think this use should be sparing and only when inevitable or at least advisable for emphasis or subtler effect) that they should be given as nearly as possible as they are pronounced. ‘Seumas’ would certainly be mispronounced by the English reader, but ‘Sheumais’ is sufficiently near: in ‘mhuirnein’ there is not only the puzzling aspirate but the (to most English readers) apparently Teutonic ‘nein’; whereas ‘muirnean’ is unmistakable. It is, I think, out of place to introduce words of an unpronounceable kind: and even personal names must be anglicised (e.g. Domnhuill, Mhic Illeathain, Mac-an-t-davir — Donald, Mclean, Macintyre) or else they will be as obscure and difficult as for example would be my own name if, instead of Fiona Macleod, I signed

Yours truly, | Fionaghal nic Lèoid

ALS NLS

*To T Fisher Unwin, [June 19, 1899]*⁷⁶

Rutland House | Greencroft Gardens | South Hampstead

Dear Mr. Unwin,

Will you kindly oblige me with a P/C as to when Yeats’s ‘Complete Poems’ will be out. I have to write about him before long. You are to issue the book, if I remember rightly. (You publish no other Celtic work, do you, except the Irish Library?)

⁷⁶ Unwin published a revised edition of Yeats’s *Poems* in May, 1899. The postmark on this card is “Ju 19 9_.” The numeral after the second 9 is unclear. 20/6/98 has been written in pencil above the salutation. “Send,” appears in another hand in pencil above the message with a line going to “Complete Poems” in the body of the note. Since Sharp asked Unwin on April 18, 1899 when Yeats’ reissued *Poems* would be out and offered to do what he could for the book, June 19, 1899 is the probable date of the card.

Yrs very truly | William Sharp

ACS NYPL, Berg Collection.

To Grant Richards, June 22, 1899

C/o. Miss Rea. | The Columbia Literary Agency | 9. Mill St. Conduit St. | London

22nd June /99

My dear Sir

Your letter reached me just as I am leaving the west for a short time in Edinburgh.⁷⁷ Yes, it is true I have projected a little anthology which I propose to call “The Hour of Beauty.” The idea is a severely chosen and severely limited selection of short prose and verse pieces which (1) come up to a high and rare standard of beauty and distinction (2) scrupulously to make my own personal delight and conviction the means of choice, thus, too, giving a greater unity and avoiding all conventionality in selection — and (3) that “The Hour of Beauty” should be a truly indicative title. I, too, on the whole prefer that this ‘Hour’ should not be limited to any one period, country, or literature.

No, I have not yet made any arrangement elsewhere, though I had intended it should go either to Messrs. Constable, John Lane, or Macmillans. It would, however, certainly weigh with me greatly if “The Hour of Beauty” were to come out in the same *format* as the beautiful little book you have just published, with its lovely end-papers.⁷⁸ Therefore, I certainly hold myself free to consider any offer you have to make to me. I have, unfortunately, to be biased by other considerations than those of personal preference — but, I admit, ‘The Open Road’ invites me to

⁷⁷ The idea here is that Sharp would join Fiona in Edinburgh on the 23rd or 24th and they would go to the West together. Sharp’s mother’s house in Edinburgh was, before Miss Rea entered the picture, Fiona’s return address since Sharp’s sister Mary who provided the Fiona handwriting lived there with their mother. That was where Sharp stayed when he was in Edinburgh and where Fiona supposedly stayed with her aunt and cousins when she was in Edinburgh. Sharp could place her there only for brief time slots for fear someone would knock on the door looking for her.

⁷⁰ Edward Verrall Lucas, *The Open Road*.

any proposal of yours. I take it, of course, that the possible coincidence of a few pieces (*probably* only a few, but I cannot tell yet) being also in Mr. Lucas' anthology does not matter.

I have thought of a possible periodic division (dawn, noon, dusk, etc.) but doubt if advisable.

The above is my sole letter-address now, so kindly address to me there.

Believe me | Yours very truly | Fiona Macleod

Grant Richards. Esq.

ALS Stanford

To Grant Richards [June 26, 1899]

South Bantaskine | Falkirk

My dear Grant Richards

Your letter has been forwarded to me as I am en route.⁷⁹ When I return to Edinburgh within a week I'll answer it. (Meanwhile let me say that I rec'd Statement of a/c/ & in same slip, without any other note, request for payment, which naturally I took for a request for Balance)

In haste | Yrs very truly | William Sharp

ALS SUNY Buffalo

To Ernest Rhys, June 29, 1899⁸⁰

Thursday Night | 29th June 1899

My dear Mr. Rhys

⁷⁹ This card was written and mailed on June 26 in Falkirk, near Stirling, when Sharp was travelling on the main line from Edinburgh to Glasgow and on to the west. He probably received Richard's letter during his brief stop in Edinburgh.

⁸⁰ This letter is transcribed from the draft in Sharp's hand intended for Mary to copy into the Fiona hand. Sharp found the letter to Fiona from Rhys in Edinburgh when he stopped there on June 24/5. He must have drafted this response in the west and sent it to Mary from there. Letters in the Fiona hand usually carry the date of Sharp's drafts.

Your letter gave me great pleasure in several ways — first, because you are one of those I most want to hear from: next, because you tell me your wife is going to write to me, at which I am glad, for I am deeply interested in her fine work, and in the strong and controlled personality underlying it.⁸¹ A letter from her will be very welcome indeed. I like to think of you two, and the blending of the Cymric and Gaelic flame into one fine Celtic spirit. You may have much to contend with, but you are both such true artists and do such beautiful work, and are together and work together, that I think life must mean gladness for you both. I am sure your wife has both the need and the power to express herself: and I await her new work, as yours, with keen anticipation. It is very good of you to say you will write to me more fully and soon. I look to it; so do not disappoint me. I much wish to hear from you as to certain things in and problems involved in this book, if possible. To my great and genuine surprise, the “Dominion of Dreams” has been so much sought for that it is already in a second edition — though that does not mean very much, perhaps, as the first edition did not exceed 2000 copies, if that [(possibly only 1,000, alas!).]⁸²

Perhaps the many influential reviews have brought this unexpected result about. As I know you are so genuinely interested in what I am doing and trying to do, and as you may be far from all papers, I send you an advt. cutting from last week’s *Spectator* and also one from yesterday’s (no, Wednesday’s) *London Daily Chronicle*. For certain reasons, I had expected either to be ignored or unpleasantly treated in the latter: so am very glad. Will you kindly, however, return both these when you (or your wife) write. What a charming address! I wish I could suddenly look in at Carrig Cennen.

Believe me, dear Mr. and Mrs. Rhys,

Most sincerely yours, | Fiona Macleod

⁸¹ Grace Rhys (*née* Little, 1865 - 1929) was an Irish writer raised in Boyle, County Roscommon. She met her husband at a garden party given by Yeats, and they married in 1891. Her first novel, *Mary Dominic*, was published in 1898. Her other work includes *The Wooing of Sheila* (1901), *The Bride* (1909), and *Five Beads on a String* (1907), a book of essays. She died in Washington, D.C. while accompanying her husband on an American lecture tour.

⁸²The phrase in brackets was crossed out.

*To F. E. Green, [June 30?, 1899]*⁸³

c/o Miss Rea | The Columbia Literary Agency, | 9.Mill Street, Conduit Street | London

Dear Mr. Green,

I thank you for your letter, which has reached me in the Highlands.

I am glad you like “The Dominion of Dreams”. Some of it I knew (from your letter) would appeal to you. It is my hope that a book which has come out of the depths will be an influence to sink deep in other minds and spirits.

No, I am afraid my books are not in any sense popular; but they are reaching further, and sinking deeper, and that contents me. Of necessity, work like the second part of “The Dominion of Dreams” can appeal only to a few — and perhaps only to those whose imaginative insight is clarified by suffering.

The “Epilogue” has reached some, as well as yourself, I am glad.

I hope you will have in every way a pleasant and encouraging time in Wales.

Sincerely yours, | Fiona Macleod

Perhaps something of what you want from me as a writer will be found in the book of miscellaneous prose “The Reddening of the West,” to be published probably in November.

⁸³ F. E. Green included this letter in his column -- “Book of the Week” -- in the January 21, 1909 issue of *The New Age*. He concluded the article: “I may say that I was not actuated by mere literary curiosity in writing to Fiona Macleod; but by a genuine desire to find out more of the philosophy and religion underlying the spiritual romances which emanated from that wonderful pen.” I have dated the letter about June 30 because it places Fiona in the Highlands where Sharp was located in late June and early July. Also in late June, *The Dominion of Dreams* had appeared recently, and Sharp still thought “The Reddening of the West” [*The Divine Adventure*] might be published in November 1899.