

# The Life and Letters of William Sharp and “Fiona Macleod”

Volume 3: 1900-1905



WILLIAM F. HALLORAN

THE LIFE AND LETTERS OF  
WILLIAM SHARP AND  
“FIONA MACLEOD”  
VOL. III



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VOLUME III: 1900–1905

*William F. Halloran*

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*To the memory of  
Noel and Rosemarie Sharp  
and  
Esther Mona Harvey*



# Acknowledgements

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William Sharp's wife and first cousin, Elizabeth Amelia Sharp, became his literary executor when he died in 1905. Upon her death in 1932, the executorship passed to her brother, Robert Farquharson Sharp. When he passed away in 1945, that role fell to his son, Noel Farquharson Sharp, who, like his father, was a keeper of printed books in the British Museum. When he died in 1978, the executorship fell to his wife, Rosemarie Sharp, who lived until 2011 when it passed to her son, Robin Sharp.

I am heavily indebted to Noel and Rosemarie Sharp for their assistance and friendship. They granted me permission to publish William Sharp's writings and shared their memories of his relatives and friends. I am especially grateful to Noel Sharp for introducing me in 1963 to Edith Wingate Rinder's daughter, Esther Mona Harvey, a remarkably talented woman whose friendship lasted until her death in 1993. Her recollections of her mother, who played a crucial role in the lives of William and Elizabeth Sharp, were invaluable.

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The Appendix lists the institutions that have made copies of their Sharp/Macleod letters available and granted permission to transcribe, edit, and include them in this volume. It also lists the letters held by

each institution. Without these libraries, their benefactors, and their competent staffs, a project of this sort — which has stretched over half a century — would have been impossible.

Finally, this project would not have come to fruition had it not been for Warwick Gould, Emeritus Professor and Founding Director of the Institute for English Studies at the University of London. It was he who supported the first iteration of the Sharp letters as a website supported by the Institute, and it was he who suggested Open Book Publishers as a possible location for an expanded edition of *The Life and Letters of William Sharp and Fiona Macleod*. His support and friendship have been a beacon of light.

This is the third and final volume of *The Life and Letters of William Sharp and Fiona Macleod*. The first volume presents Sharp's life from 1855, the year of his birth, through 1894; the second from 1895 through 1899; and the third from 1900 through 1905, the year of his death.

# Introduction<sup>1</sup>

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William Sharp was born in Paisley, near Glasgow, in 1855. His father, a successful merchant, moved his family to Glasgow in 1867; his mother, Katherine Brooks, was the daughter of the Swedish Vice Consul in Glasgow. A talented, adventurous boy who read voraciously, he spent summers with his family in the Inner Hebrides where he developed a strong attachment to the land and the people. In the summer of 1863, his paternal aunt brought her children from London to vacation with their cousins. Months short of his eighth birthday, Sharp formed a bond with one of those cousins, Elizabeth Sharp, a bright girl who shared many of his enthusiasms. Their meeting led eventually to their engagement (in 1875) and their marriage (in 1884).

After finishing school at the Glasgow Academy in 1871, Sharp studied literature for two years at Glasgow University, an experience that fed his desire to become a writer. Following his father's sudden death in August 1876, he fell ill and sailed to Australia to recover his health and look for suitable work. Finding none, he enjoyed a warm and adventurous summer and returned in June 1877 to London where he spent several weeks with Elizabeth and her friends. A year later he settled in London and began to establish himself as a poet, journalist, and editor. Through Elizabeth's contacts and those he made among writers, including Dante Gabriel Rossetti, he became by the end of the 1880s a well-established figure in the literary and intellectual life of the city. During this decade he published biographical studies of Rossetti, Percy Bysshe Shelley, and Robert Browning; three books of poetry; two novels; many articles and reviews; and several editions of other writers. None of those publications brought the recognition he sought. By 1890 he had accumulated enough money to reduce his editing and reviewing and devote more time to poetry and prose.

That autumn he and Elizabeth went to Heidelberg for several weeks and then to Italy for the winter. In January, Edith Wingate Rinder, a beautiful young woman and the wife of Frank Rinder, accompanied her cousin by marriage, Mona Caird, a close girlhood friend of Elizabeth, on a three-week visit to Rome. There Edith spent many hours exploring the city and surrounding area with Sharp, who fell deeply in love with her. Inspired by the joy he felt in her presence and the warmth and beauty of the country, Sharp wrote and printed privately in Italy a slim book of poems, *Sospiri di Roma*, that exceeded in quality those he had written previously.

After returning to England in the spring of 1891 and under the influence of his continuing relationship with Edith, Sharp began writing a prose romance set in western Scotland. When he found a publisher (Frank Murray in Derby) for *Pharais, A Romance of the Isles*, he decided to issue it pseudonymously as the work of Fiona Macleod. In choosing a female pseudonym, Sharp signaled his belief that romance flowed from the repressed feminine side of his nature. The pseudonym also reflected the importance of Edith in the novel's composition and substance. Their relationship is mirrored in the work's depiction of a love affair doomed to failure. Finally, it disguised his authorship from London critics who, he feared, would not treat it seriously if it appeared as the work of the prosaic William Sharp.

*Pharais* changed the course of Sharp's life. Along with *The Mountain Lovers*, another west of Scotland romance that followed in 1895, it attracted enthusiastic readers and favorable notices. When it became apparent that his fictional author had struck a sympathetic chord with the reading public and the books were bringing in money, Sharp proceeded to invent a life for Fiona Macleod and project her personality through her publications and letters. In letters signed William Sharp, he began promoting the writings of Fiona and adding touches to her character. He sometimes functioned as her agent. To some, he asserted she was his cousin, and he implied to a few intimate friends they were lovers. In molding the persona of Fiona Macleod and sustaining it for a decade, Sharp drew upon the three women he knew best: Elizabeth, his wife and first cousin; Edith Rinder, with whom he had developed a deep bond; and Elizabeth's friend and Edith's cousin, Mona Caird, a powerful and independent woman married to a wealthy Scottish

Laird. He enlisted his sister Mary Sharp, who lived with their mother in Edinburgh, to provide the Fiona handwriting. His drafts of Fiona Macleod letters went to her for copying and mailing from Edinburgh.

For a decade before his death in 1905, he conducted through his publications and correspondence a double literary life. As Fiona, he produced poems and stories which, in their romantic content, settings, characters, and mystical aura, reflected the spirit of the time, attracted a wide readership, and became the principal literary achievement of the Scottish Celtic Renaissance. As Sharp, he continued reviewing and editing and tried his hand at several novels. As Fiona's chief advocate and protector, he deflected requests for interviews by insisting on her desire for privacy. If it became known that he was Fiona, critics would dismiss the writings as deceptive and inauthentic. Destroying the fiction of her being a real woman, moreover, would block his creativity and deprive him of needed income. So he persisted and maintained the double life until he died. He refused to disclose his authorship even to the Prime Minister of England in order to obtain a much-needed Civil List pension. The popular writings of Fiona Macleod may have obtained Parliament's approval, but not those of the journeyman William Sharp.

Sharp's rugged good looks and exuberant manner obscured the fact that he had been ill since childhood. Scarlet fever in his youth and rheumatic fever as a young man damaged his heart. In his forties, diabetes set in, and attacks increased in frequency and seriousness. Given his declining health after the turn of the century, though interrupted by occasional bursts of exuberant creativity, his death in December 1905 was not a surprise to his family and close friends. It occurred while he and Elizabeth were staying with Alexander Nelson Hood, the Duke of Bronte, at his Castello Maniace on the slopes of Mount Etna in Sicily. Sharp is buried there in the estate's Protestant Cemetery, where a large Celtic cross marks his grave.

## Structure of the Volume

### LIFE

The introductions to each chapter constitute a chronological biography that draws upon the letters and places them in context. The focus is on Sharp's life; his writings are discussed only as they shed light on his daily comings and goings, his beliefs, his values, and his physical and mental condition. The letters reveal more than has previously been known about William Sharp, and he emerges from them as a unique individual who was talented, ambitious, determined to succeed as a writer, and aware of his shortcomings. He was immersed in the cross-currents of ideas and in the artistic and social movements of the last two decades of the nineteenth century in Great Britain and continental Europe. He participated in spiritualist efforts to affirm the existence of some form of life after death, and he embraced new ideas about the place of women in society, the constraints of marriage, the fluidity of gender identity, and the complexity of the human psyche. Those issues and many others are addressed in his letters and, often indirectly, in his writings. The Life sections of *Life and Letters* are not a comprehensive biography, but they are intended to provide, with the letters, the basis for more comprehensive studies of his life and work. They may also be of interest to scholars studying other individuals of the period and the issues in which they were involved.

## LETTERS

Most of the letters transcribed, dated, and annotated were made available to the editor by libraries and private collectors throughout the world. They are of interest for what they reveal about Sharp, his correspondents, and the topics he addressed. He knew and corresponded with many influential writers, among them Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Walter Pater, George Meredith, Thomas Hardy, and William Butler Yeats. He wrote extensively as William Sharp and as Fiona Macleod to the firms that published his books and to the editors of magazines, journals, and newspapers for which he wrote essays and reviews. Individuals interested in literary and publishing activities in Great Britain and the United States in the 1880s and 1890s may find the letters useful.

The Fiona Macleod letters contributed significantly to Sharp's ability to maintain the fiction of her independent identity. When claims that he was the author emerged in print, he countered by pointing to the different handwriting. He also used the letters to move Fiona from place to place to avoid meetings with avid readers and skeptical journalists. Given her constant travels, it was convenient for her letters to be sent from and received at the address of a good friend she often visited in Edinburgh. It was the address of Sharp's mother and his sister Mary, who supplied the handwriting for Fiona and who was always on guard against visitors seeking her.

Sharp also used the letters to create and mold the person or, more accurately, the persona of Fiona Macleod. Exercising his imagination and literary skills, he entered the consciousness of an imaginary woman and projected her convincingly to her correspondents. She was well-educated and steeped in Celtic lore. She was well-traveled and well-fixed. She had the good fortune to be sometimes the daughter and other times the wife — there were inconsistencies — of a wealthy Scotsman who owned a yacht that could whisk her away on a moment's notice to the western isles, Iceland, or Scandinavia. She was shy and reclusive, but also firm in her decisions, formal in her manner, and resolved not to let herself be taken advantage of by publishers or diverted from her writing by newspaper reporters or suitors. She also had a sharp tongue which she exercised in correspondence when her privacy or integrity was in danger. She was particularly harsh in chastising those brash enough to suggest she was William Sharp.

The poems and stories Sharp published as Fiona Macleod exceed in quality and popularity those he wrote as William Sharp, but Fiona Macleod herself was his most impressive achievement. Her personality emerges in many stories that describe the people she met and the places she visited, and in dedications and prefatory notes in her books, but it is in the letters that Sharp brought her fully into being. Speaking directly as Fiona, he crafted her distinct personality. Initially a lark, she became a financial necessity. Enjoying the deception, he soon became entranced by the woman he was creating. He continued to embellish his creation to the point he could claim and sometimes believe she was a separate person inhabiting his body. His fictional creation became the perfect means for expressing a strand of his being that had its origin in his childhood summers in Scotland's Inner Hebrides. Cast in this light, the character who emerges in the Fiona letters and other writings is one of the most compelling and provocative literary creations of the 1890s.

## FORMAT

The letters are divided chronologically into Chapters, and each Chapter begins with a biographical introduction. The letters have a uniform format:

Line one contains the name of the recipient and the date of composition. For undated letters, a date derived from a postmark, internal evidence, or context provided by other letters is placed in brackets. A question mark precedes questionable dates as [January ?12, 1892].

Line two states the place where the letter was written or from which it was mailed. Vertical marks denote line divisions in the original.

Line three contains the salutation if one exists.

Lines four and following contain the body of the letter with Sharp's paragraphing preserved where it can be determined.

Following the body, a single line contains the complimentary close and signature separated by a vertical mark if the close and signature are separate lines in the original.

If the original contains postscripts, they follow the signature.

The form of the original manuscript and its location follow each letter in a separate line at lower left. When a letter has been transcribed from a printed source, that source is indicated. Most letters have been transcribed from the manuscripts or photocopies of the manuscripts provided by institutions and individuals. Their locations are identified, but any previous printings, with a few exceptions, are not identified.

Obvious errors of spelling are silently corrected. Errors of punctuation and grammar are corrected only when necessary to attain clarity of the author's presumed intention. Notes on margins marked as inserts are placed within the body of the text at the point of intended insertion. Postscripts on margins follow the main body and signature. Every effort has been made to attain a balance between authenticity and readability. Sharp and his sister Mary sometimes omitted the comma after the

salutation, and that inconsistency has been preserved in transcribing the letters.

The notes explain or clarify references. Given the multitude of people, places, literary and artistic works, and events mentioned in the letters, the process of annotation required editorial judgment about what is too much and what is not enough.

## ABBREVIATIONS

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<i>Letters to Yeats</i>	<i>Letters to W. B. Yeats</i> , Vols. I and II, ed. Richard Finnernan, George Mills Harper, and William M. Murphy (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977)
E. A. S.	Elizabeth A. Sharp
E. C. S.	Edmund Clarence Stedman
E. W. R.	Edith Wingate Rinder
F. M.	Fiona Macleod
W. S.	William Sharp
<i>Memoir</i>	<i>William Sharp (Fiona Macleod): A Memoir</i> , compiled by his wife, Elizabeth A. Sharp (New York: Duffield & Co., 1910)
<i>Middle Years</i>	Katherine Tynan Hinkson, <i>The Middle Years</i> (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1917)
<i>Romantic '90s</i>	Richard Le Gallienne, <i>The Romantic '90s</i> (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1926)

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These abbreviations describe the form of the original letter:

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AD	autograph draft
ALS	autograph signed letter
ACS	autograph lettercard signed
APS	autograph postcard signed
TL	typed letter
TLS	typed letter signed

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# Chapter Twenty

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## Life: 1900

On 3 January 1900, Sharp wrote a letter to Nellie Allen from Chorleywood and enclosed a copy of the poem he had written and delivered at the December meeting of the Omar Khayyam Club. In the poem he alluded to her husband, and in his preliminary remarks he called Grant Allen “a fine writer and true-hearted man” whose death was a loss to his many friends and to the club. Both Sharps looked forward to seeing Nellie again as soon as she vacated The Croft in Hindhead and settled in London. On January 8, he wrote a long letter to Edith Lyttelton who had come under the spell of the Fiona writings. It demonstrates his use of Fiona to foster a friendship with a member of the aristocracy, herself an aspiring writer. He was sorry to hear she had been ill through much of the fall. He had also been ill, he confided, and was determined not “to spend another midwinter in this damp & sunless climate.” He asked if she had written anything lately and declared that Fiona, having sampled her earlier work, felt assured she “could, and probably some day soon would, write a notable book.” Fiona’s new book, *The Divine Adventure*, would be published in March by Chapman & Hall. The book’s title was also the title of its long titular essay which had appeared in the recent November and December issues of Chapman & Hall’s *Fortnightly Review*. The book, he wrote, will be “personal” and “autobiographical,” unlike anything Fiona has produced. As for William Sharp, he was “at work every available hour on a commissioned ‘History of the Fine Arts in the Nineteenth Century’ — a kind of synthesis, or coup d’oeil perhaps, of the dominating features and interrelated developments of modern art.” He concluded by asking Mrs. Lyttelton to join him the following

Monday for tea and a chat at his club, the Grosvenor Club, or if she preferred, he could come to her.

In these letters of early January Sharp seemed quite happy, but his cheerfulness soon turned to gloom. During the warm and sunny fall he enjoyed life in Chorleywood, but as winter set in he began to tire of country life and rue the travel in and out of London in foul weather. In early February, he had to tell Theodore Watts-Dunton he could not repay the loan of £25 he had received in November. His letter of February 9 casts a revealing light on both the state of his health and the medical issues people faced in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries:

I know you will be sorry to hear that since Christmas I have had a bad time of it. First, I got influenza again, with pneumonic complication — then an inflammatory condition of the veins was set up — & thro' that & an accident on the railway I started a bad varicose vein, badly strained, & constantly threatening a clot (phlebitis) — laming me as though I had the gout! — & keeping me to the house for weeks. Then a very painful & prostrating meningeal neuralgia set in — partly from overstrain of work & financial straits etc. Still, all might have gone well, had not I gone one day (under great stress of agony) to a dentist to be sure there was nothing the matter with my teeth. He was a faddist, & incompetent — & having found all absolutely sound said he wd. take out 5 sound teeth then & there (& without gas!) as that would cure me! I was weak enough to be persuaded of urgency — but after the second sound tooth had been literally torn out (for my teeth are very sound & strong) I fainted & he could do no more. It now turns out he was wholly wrong as to this — & I have lost two sound molars & have my neuralgia still, only worse! The nervous shock proved so bad for me that my wife, & the doctor, became seriously perturbed. The upshot was that a few days ago I was ordered away for a month to recruit by the sea — & would have gone 2 days ago but for a sudden painful attack of lumbago.

One can only wonder how people endured such a litany of pain.

Watts-Dunton had asked Sharp to make some revisions to the sonnets he contributed to *The Sonnets of the Nineteenth Century* which Sharp edited for the Walter Scott publishing company in 1886. He began this letter by assuring Watts-Dunton he would ask someone at the firm to make the “rectifications” in the volume’s next edition. Worried as he was about money, he went on to say the book had been through several editions, sold nearly 100,000 copies, and was about to undergo another edition. Yet he had received only £10 for editing it and benefited not at

all from the substantial royalties. He planned to go into London the next day and try to raise enough money to take Elizabeth, who was “down with bronchitis,” to “recruit by the sea.” His bank or other friends came through, and they managed to escape for a month to Broadstairs on the southern coast.

Shortly after returning to Chorleywood in early March, Sharp went to Edinburgh to visit his mother and sister for two days on “family business.” On March 15, he wrote to William Blackwood proposing an article for *Blackwood's Magazine* on “Recent French Art” — he planned to visit Paris for the Salon which would open on April 2 — or an article on Breton poets since he planned to go on to Brittany from Paris. He had called at Blackwood's Edinburgh office, but he was not there, and he would not have the pleasure of meeting him since he planned to return to London the next morning.

As it turned out, Sharp fell ill and instead of returning as planned on March 16, he stayed until Monday the 26<sup>th</sup> when, back in Chorleywood, he wrote a note to his friend Stanley Little: “Just returned — but E. still very seedy and at her mother's. I go there now but shall be back tomorrow and hope to write then or Wedny.” Two days later, he wrote again and began by saying he was months behind with urgent work due to illnesses, his and Elizabeth's. After recounting the progress of their maladies, he turned to the work he had managed to do. Between January 1 and 21, he wrote 50,000 words for what would become *The Progress of Art in the Nineteenth Century*. Then he came down with the flu and was unable to continue. He still had 70,000 words to write, but he could not get to it until mid-April. Elizabeth agreed to write an additional 15,000 words about music, and they hoped to have it all done before the end of May. It was commissioned by The Linscott Publishing Company in Toronto and Philadelphia and became Volume Twenty-Two in their gigantic Nineteenth Century Series. It was also published separately in 1902 by W. and R. Chamber, Ltd., in London and Edinburgh.

Little asked Sharp about this work because he had agreed to write another volume for the Linscott series and wondered how much Sharp was being paid. Sharp said he “had special terms, without which it wd. have been wholly impossible to take up the book: and not only special terms, but special conditions of payment.” Unfortunately, he could not share those terms with Little because he was under a pledge of honor,

a given promise, not to do so. He also asked Little not to mention his name or what he had told him when dealing with the Linscott firm. Unless specified in a contract, Little was unlikely to get an advance from Linscott so he should just send in his manuscript and hope for royalties. He told Little he was leaving in a few days to review the Salon in Paris and then to spend some time in Brittany. When he returned, he hoped he and Elizabeth could get together with Little and his wife. Meanwhile, "Iona," the "highly autobiographical" Fiona Macleod essay Sharp wrote in the fall of 1899, appeared in the March and April issues of *The Fortnightly Review*.

When he returned from France in mid-April, Sharp began to make arrangements for a performance of a Fiona Macleod play, the only such performance during his lifetime. While visiting Grant Allen in 1897, he met Frederick Whelen, one of Allen's nephews, who wanted to find a vehicle for producing contemporary art plays. Sharp expressed interest since he was writing a highly symbolic Fiona Macleod play destined, he thought, for the Celtic Theater W. B. Yeats was planning in Dublin. In July 1899, Whelen, encouraged by Sharp and several prominent actors and businessmen, invited several hundred people to attend an organizing meeting for what became the Stage Society. Seventy-five invitees showed up at his house in London's Red Lion Square. Despite the crowd, Whelen managed to form a seven-member Managing Committee that included Sharp. It was agreed the Society would sponsor several performances of new plays every year. They would take place on Sunday evenings when theaters would otherwise be dark because of the prohibition of public performances on the Sabbath. To circumvent the law and avoid prosecution, the performances would be called meetings of the Society and only members of the society and invited guests would be able to attend.

The performances began in the fall of 1899, and Whelen, with Sharp's encouragement, scheduled a production of Fiona Macleod's "The House of Usna" for the fifth meeting of the Society in the Globe Theatre on April 29 1900. Sharp sent a Fiona letter to Whelen dated April 16 in which she gave her permission for the performance and delegated all final revisions and performance details to her "friend and relative Mr. William Sharp." Her only request had to do with "reserved accommodations." She asked for two contiguous boxes, one for her

friends the Sharps and herself if she was able to "come from Scotland for the occasion." She wanted to offer the second to George Meredith in case he was able to attend or, if not, to other friends. She requested eight reserved stall seats which she designated for W. L. Courtney, Editor of *The Fortnightly*; James Knowles Esq., Editor of *The Nineteenth Century*; W. B. Yeats. Esq.; Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Rhys; The Hon. Alfred & Mrs. A. Lyttelton; and Mr. Percy Bunting, Editor of *The Contemporary Review*. The tickets were to be given directly to Sharp who would either send them to Fiona or forward them as she directed. The absence of Edith and Frank Rinder from the list of people for whom tickets were to be reserved is curious. I expect it was due to the possibility that Meredith might attend. We recall Sharp had introduced Edith as Fiona Macleod to Meredith who described her as one of the most beautiful women he ever met. It would be more than embarrassing if he saw Edith at the performance and identified her as Fiona, the author of the play. Since Meredith, in the end, was unable to attend, the Rinders may have been among the friends who occupied the second reserved box.

"The House of Usna" was one of three Fiona plays Sharp had been writing with Yeats' encouragement. On April 29, it shared the bill with two Maeterlinck plays: "The Interior" and "The Death of Tintagiles." Y. M. Capel composed music for the Sharp play, and it was directed by Granville Barker. According to Elizabeth, one critic said the play had beauty and atmosphere, "two very rare things on the stage, but I did not feel that it quite made a drama, or convince, as a drama should, by the continuous action of inner or outer forces. It was, rather, passion turning upon itself, and with no language but a cry." Other reviews were more positive. Elizabeth said Sharp "took the greatest interest in the rehearsals, and in the performance. He thoroughly enjoyed the double play as he chatted about Fiona during the intervals unconcerned about the risks of their detecting the real authorship." The play was printed in *The National Review* in July 1900 and then in book form by Thomas Mosher in Maine in 1903 (*Memoir*, pp. 317–18).

By July 1900, the Stage Society was floundering for lack of resources. Sharp and Whelen developed a plan to rescue it which Sharp described in a letter to the actor/manager Frederick Charles Charrington, a fellow member of the Managing Committee. The plan prevailed, Sharp became the Society's Chairman, and Whelen its Secretarial Manager. The Society

went on for forty years and produced more than two hundred plays that would not have succeeded at first in the West End.

For some time, Sharp had used the London address of Lillian Rea rather than that of his sister in Edinburgh as the return address for the Fiona letters. Receiving the letters in London, where he spent most of his time while in Britain, enabled him to draft answers more quickly and send them to Edinburgh for Mary to copy and mail. In a June 1 letter to Grant Richards, Fiona identified Miss Rea as her late agent and typist and said she was away recovering from illness. Fiona was having all her correspondence “sent through a literary friend, whose address heads this letter.” This address (11 Woronsow Road, London) was the home of Edith Rinder who was often conflated in Sharp’s mind with Fiona and who began to provide secretarial assistance for Sharp.

In June 1899, Grant Richards, at Sharp’s suggestion, asked Fiona to assemble and edit a poetry anthology which would be called “The Hour of Beauty.” A year later, a Fiona letter informed Richards she could not promise to have the book done before the New Year. She had been “much of an invalid” since the previous November and unable to do much work. On 20 October 1900, Fiona wrote again to Richards, with the Lillian Rea return address restored, to say she was resting in London for two days before leaving England for Tangiers. She had been seriously ill, and “a southern air” and “absolute rest are imperatively prescribed.” She had to “relinquish[...] all hopes” of finishing *The Hour of Beauty* before or by Christmas. She wanted to give Richards the option of withdrawing from their agreement or letting it stand indefinitely until her health recovered so she could “take up properly that which can be done only absolutely *con amore*, and with scrupulous judgment and care.” She wondered, instead, if Richards would like to publish a little volume of her poetry in the spring:

It would be called either *For a Little Clan* or else *The Immortal Hour* — the latter being the title of the greater part of the little book, a poetic old world drama, perhaps to be defined as “a symbolist drama” (though I dislike such designations) which is to appear in *The Fortnightly Review* either in November or December (or in both). The remainder of the book would consist of the few selected poems (all I care to preserve) from a volume of verse published some four or five years ago, *From the Hills of Dream*, with some new and uncollected poems.

A Fiona letter to Richards dated October 31 indicates he decided to defer the anthology until she was able to finish it. He liked her suggestion of a small book of poems which would include "The Immortal Hour." In her response, Fiona expressed her hope that she would be able to select the poems and send copy for the book "from Marseille or Malta or Algiers (I do not know where yet) by the end of November." In order to avoid Richards asking to meet Fiona, her October 20 letter informed him she would be in London only two days on her way South. Her October 31 letter is postmarked from Paris on November 13 which means Sharp held it for three weeks to avoid a London postmark and mailed it from Paris on his way south.

In the summer and fall of 1899, Sharp implied to several friends he was experiencing a blurring or a reintegration of the two aspects of his personality and suggested his future writings would reflect a merger of the Fiona voice and the William Sharp voice with the former more prominent in his fiction and poetry and the latter more prominent in his nonfiction. In his 8 January 1900 letter to Edith Lyttelton, Sharp said Fiona Macleod's *The Divine Adventure* would be "unlike anything she has done; it would be personal and autobiographical, especially in the essay called 'Iona'", parts of which would appear in February and March in *The Fortnightly*. The periodical's publisher, Chapman & Hall, would also publish the book containing "Iona" and other essays. When it appeared in May 1900, it carried a longer title derived from its content, *The Divine Adventure: Iona: By Sundown Shores: Studies in Spiritual History*, and it went through several editions during the year. In a Fiona letter to John Macleay in early October 1899 (Volume 2), Sharp wrote:

There is a sudden departure from fiction ancient or modern in something of mine that is coming out in the November and December issues of "The Fortnightly Review." [Volume 72, pp. 879–895 and 1058–1076] I hope you will read "The Divine Adventure," as it is called — though this spiritual essay is more "remote" i.e. unconventional, and in a sense more "mystical," than anything I have done. But it is out of my inward life. It is an essential part of a forthcoming book of spiritual and critical essays or studies in the spiritual history of the Gael, to be called "The Reddening of the West."

The essay improbably personifies the Body, the Will and the Soul and sets them on a journey, "each independently, as three good friends," to

discover the meaning of life: "We had never been at one, though we had shared the same home, and had enjoyed so much in common; but to each, at the same time, had come the great desire of truth, than which there is none greater save that of beauty." Confusion sets in from the start as the narrator of the journey sees his Body, his Soul, and his Will independently travelling through a Scottish landscape each talking with people they meet along the way. Just who, we wonder, is the observer-narrator? What part is left after the departure of Body, Soul and Will? Perhaps the intellect, but that piece of the puzzle seems to merge with the Will or the Mind as the journey proceeds. It is a decided relief at the end to find the narrator having learned:

there is no absolute Truth, no absolute Beauty, even for the Soul. It may be that in the Divine Forges we shall be so moulded as to have perfect vision. Meanwhile only that Truth is deepest, that beauty highest which is seen, not by the Soul only, or by the Mind, or by the Body, but all three as one. Let each be perfect in kind and perfect in unity. This is the signal meaning of the mystery.

If that is the conclusion, was the thirty-four-page journey worth the author's effort and the reader's patience? It must have been, since the book went through several editions. Its success shines a bright light on the efforts of many in 1900 to come to terms with the previous century's scientific discoveries. With its masculine narrator and the masculine nature of his dissected parts, the essay comes out of the "inward life" of William Sharp, and Fiona Macleod, the nominal author, is nowhere to be heard.

The longest essay in the volume is "Iona" in which the narrative voice of Fiona alternates with that of Sharp in chronicling stories and legends associated with the island (pp. 91–252). In a letter to Frank Rinder the previous December (Chapter 19, Volume 2), Sharp said he would like him to read

the opening pages of "Iona," for they contain a very deep and potent spiritual faith and hope, that has been with me ever since, as there told, as child of seven, old Seumas Macleod (who taught me so much — was indeed the *father* of Fiona) took me on his knees one sundown on the island of Eigg, and made me pray to "Her." I have never written anything so spiritually autobiographical. Strange as it may seem it is almost all literal reproduction of actuality with only some dates and names altered.

In the opening pages of "Iona", Sharp as Fiona said she will speak "as befalls her pen" of the multiple meanings of Iona, and she will recount legends and remembrances of her own and others. She will describe "hidden meanings and beauty and strangeness surviving in dreams and imaginations, rather than facts and figures that others could adduce more deftly and with more will." After a hundred and sixty-one Iona pages in the first edition of *The Divine Adventure*, Sharp/Fiona summarized the history of the island:

To this small, black-brown tarn, pilgrims of every generation, for hundreds of years, have come. Solitary, these; not only because the pilgrim to the Fount of Eternal Youth must fare hither alone, and at dawn, so as to touch the healing water the moment the first sunray quickens it — but solitary, also, because those who go in quest of this Fountain of Youth are the dreamers and the Children of Dreams, and those are not many, and few come now to this lonely place. Yet, an Isle of Dreams Iona is, indeed. Here the last sun-worshippers bowed before the Rising of God; here Columba and his hymning priests labored and brooded; and here Oran or his kin dreamed beneath the monkish cowl that pagan dream of his. Here, too, the eyes of Fionn and Oisín, and of many another of the heroic men and women of the Fianna, may have lingered; here the Pict and the Celt bowed beneath the yoke of the Norse pirate, who, too, left his dreams, or rather his strangely beautiful soul-rainbows, as a heritage to the stricken; here for century after century, the Gael has lived, suffered, joyed, dreamed his impossible, beautiful dream; as here now, he still lives, still suffers patiently, still dreams, and through all and over all broods upon the incalculable mysteries.

The quotation illustrates the power of the essay which is the most lasting and influential piece of Sharp's writings. Few may have come to Iona when it first appeared, but many, motivated by this essay, began to visit the island. Nowadays, hundreds visit this special place during the summer months, and many purchase booklets containing this essay in the island's shops.

The section of *The Divine Adventure* called "By Sundown Shores" (pp. 255–308) contains five short essays and a longer piece entitled "Celtic" which also appeared in the May issue of *The Contemporary Review*. "Celtic" exemplifies what Sharp referred to as the merger of his masculine and feminine voices better than many of the volume's essays. One hears in it the voice of Fiona Macleod, but that of the practical literary and cultural critic William Sharp predominates. It is as though



Fig. 1. Benedictine Abbey on Iona, Inner Hebrides, constructed in 1203 AD on the site of the Celtic Church which St. Columba built after he settled on Iona in 563 AD and began to establish Christianity in Scotland. Photograph by PauliT (Gunther Tschuch) (2019), Wikimedia, CC BY-SA 4.0, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Iona\\_07.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Iona_07.jpg)

two separate persons were speaking, both under the control of a single consciousness. Early on we hear Fiona saying the Celtic Movement was not “as so often confusedly stated an arbitrary effort to reconstruct the past,” but an “effort to discover the past.” As “one imputed to this movement,” she sought “in nature and in life, and in the swimming thought of timeless imagination, for the kind of beauty that the old Celtic poets discovered and uttered.” Those poets had no monopoly on artistic beauty. No beauty of art excels “that bequeathed to us by Greece,” but artists must seek and express their ideals through their own tradition. Fiona placed herself firmly in the Celtic camp, the camp of her heritage: “There is one beauty that has to me the light of home upon it; there is one beauty from which, above all others now, I hope for a new revelation; there is a love, there is a passion, there is a romance, which to me calls more suddenly and searchingly than any other ancient love or ancient passion or ancient romance.”

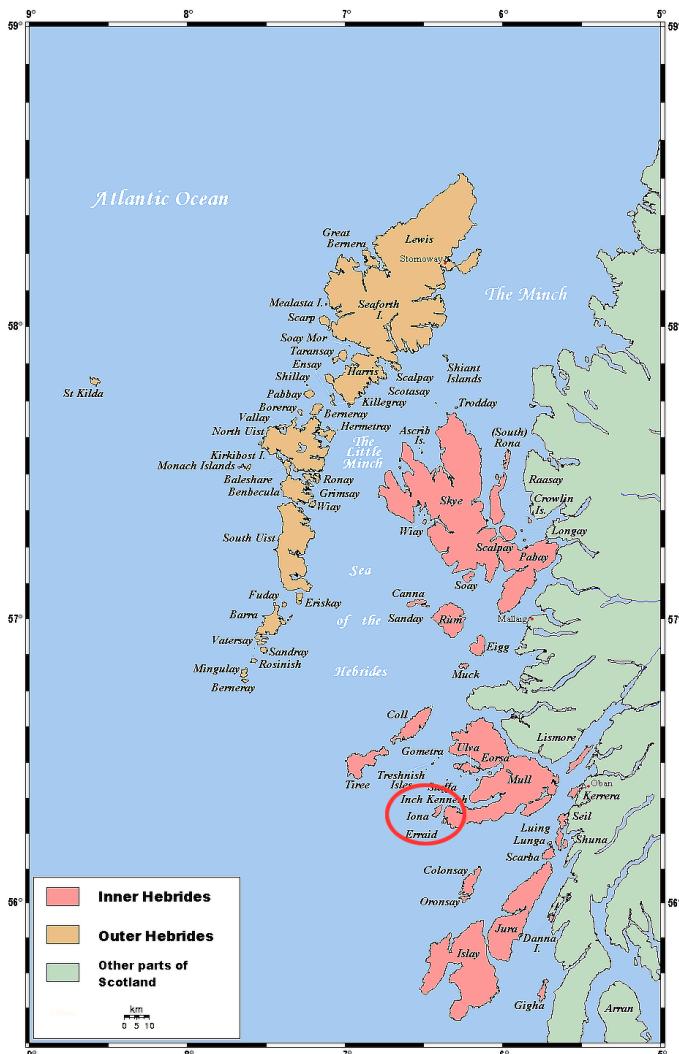


Fig. 2. Map of the Inner and Outer Hebrides in Scotland. Iona is located in the Inner Hebrides, just off the Isle of Mull. Map by Kelisi (2007), Wikimedia, CC BY-SA 3.0, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hebridesmap.png](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hebridesmap.png#/media/File:Hebridesmap.png)

After placing Fiona with her heightened rhetoric firmly among the Celts, Sharp reverted to the plainer language of the literary critic. Still writing as Fiona, he began to sound like the critic William Sharp. Although not a great believer in “movements” or “renascences,” he understood the

"Celtic Movement" as "the natural outcome, the natural expression of a freshly inspired spiritual and artistic energy." Its source was "a mythology and a literature, and a vast and wonderful legendary folklore [...] in great part hidden behind veils of an all but forgotten tongue and of a system of life and customs, ideals and thought that no longer obtains." Then, veering toward dangerous territory, he said he was unable to see the Celtic movement as having "sustenance in elements of revolt." If a movement is to have any force, "it will not destroy itself in forlorn hopes, but will fall into line, and so achieve where alone the desired success can be achieved." He took his examples from the realm of art, but "revolt" and "falling into line" opened the door to politics.

Having placed Fiona, and by extension himself, in the "Celtic Movement," he then placed both figures squarely in the tradition of English literature. The term Celtic writer "must denote an Irish or Scottish Gael, a Cymric or Breton Celt, who writes in the language of his race." Those who write in English, however, are English writers "who in person happen to be an Irish Gael, or Highland, or Welsh." He was willing to be designated

Celtic only if the word signifies an English writer who by birth, inheritance, and temperament has an outlook not distinctively English, with some memories and traditions and ideals not shared in by one's countrymen of the South, with a racial instinct that informs what one writes, and, for the rest, a common heritage.

The paragraph that stands out among the others in the essay turns overtly from literature to the issue of national identity:

Above all else it is time that a prevalent pseudo-nationalism should be dissuaded. I am proud to be a Highlander, but I would not side with those who would "set the heather on fire." If I were Irish, I would be proud, but I would not lower my pride by marrying it to a ceaseless ill-will, an irreconcilable hate, for there can be a nobler pride in unvanquished acquiescence than in revolt. I would be proud if I were Welsh, but I would not refuse to learn English, or to mix with English as equals. And proud as I might be to be Highland or Scottish or Irish or Welsh or English, I would be more proud to be British — for, there at last, we have a bond to unite us all, and to give us space for every ideal, whether communal or individual, whether national or spiritual.

Those carefully chosen words placed all Celtic people in the British Isles, including Ireland, under the British umbrella.

Sharp knew that AE (George William Russell) and Yeats were intent on establishing Ireland as an independent country free of the English yoke. His argument for unity was, therefore, a direct attempt to discourage them from advocating separation from the British Empire to which he remained loyal throughout his life. Though he knew his views would not sit well with them or with other Irish writers advocating independence, Sharp hoped to soften their attitudes, to dissuade them from overt revolutionary activities, and above all to maintain his own position in a Celtic Literary Movement that transcended nationalisms. He underestimated the depth of AE's feelings, the fire underlying his rhetoric, and the strength of the Irish independence movement.

Such is the background of a June 15 Fiona Macleod letter to George Russell. He had written to put her on notice that he intended to write a review of *The Divine Adventure* that took issue with her "Celtic" essay. In response, Fiona expressed her regret that AE rejected her effort to "save our Gaelic remnant from extinction." She hoped he would give up "the transitory while inevitable logic of human sorrow and revolt" and adopt "the immortal and inevitable logic of the Spirit." That hope failed to dissuade AE.

His review appeared in the July 21 issue of Standish O'Grady's *All Ireland Review* (volume 1, number 29). He began by saying there were many things in the book everyone could enjoy. In the title essay, "The Divine Adventure," and in "Iona" there was "a graver and more restrained use of that rhetorical eloquence which Miss Macleod perhaps finds it too easy to employ." If at times there was "only vagueness where a mystic meaning was intended," there was also "genuine imagination and frequent beauty of thought and style." That said, he turned to "Celtic" and its "anti-nationalistic" stance. Casting aside reasoned argument, he accused Fiona of "arrogance and shallowness of judgment" and remarked disparagingly, "it is perhaps like a woman to advise a cheap peace between race and race." She was unable, he said, to distinguish "English emotion from Celtic emotion, or from Hindu emotion." She was "devoid of the faculty of analysis or the power of seeing distinctions, not even subtle distinctions, but glaring ones." He imagined a good Briton reading this essay and feeling quite satisfied that "there were to be no more wild Irish; that he was not to be troubled further with revolt or plain speaking; the truth would be modified to suit his capacity for receiving it." He would beam in satisfaction as the

Celtic “crown of strange jewels” is placed on his brow. AE concluded with some high-handed advice that drew a clear and foreboding line between the Irish and Scottish revivalists: “It is to be hoped in the future if Miss Macleod wishes to write semi-political essays she will speak only for the Scottish Celt. We are a strange people over here and we dislike being preached to by foreigners.” When we read this review with the knowledge that Sharp had told AE that he was Fiona Macleod, pledging him thus to secrecy, we recognize, as did Sharp, that “perhaps like a woman” was a double-barreled shot.

Standish O’Grady attempted to ameliorate the venom of AE’s review by following it in the same issue of the *All Ireland Review* with a different assessment of *The Divine Adventure* by someone who signed the review only J. S. (2-3): “From the beginning of her remarkable career till now Miss Fiona Macleod has done nothing so beautiful and lofty as this wonderful book.” The praise became increasingly elaborate. “Iona,” J. S. wrote, was “so full of spiritual light, not raying out aimlessly into the void but clothing reality and life with beauty, that it is no exaggeration to describe them [the rays] as adding a new sacredness to the Mecca [Iona] of the Gael.” Turning to “Celtic,” the reviewer met AE headlong:

Miss Macleod showed “that her keen insight does not fail her in a region of thought far removed from that into which she has hitherto taken her readers. A Celt of the Celt, and possessed as no other writer of our time is possessed with a sense of the faculty and mission of the Celt, she shows here not only deep intuition but the power [quoting Mathew Arnold] “to see life steadily and see it whole,” of which the Celt, in this country at least, must acquire some greater measure before his flame can burn with any but a destructive power.

The real argument, he concluded, was not between the Scots and the Irish, but among the Irish themselves.

In the next issue of the *All Ireland Review* (July 28) O’Grady printed in the letters section the following sentence: “We overhold an interesting communication from the celebrated Fiona Macleod in reference to strictures recently made in A. I. R. on her latest book ‘The Divine Adventure.’” In that communication — dated July 22 and printed in the next edition of the weekly (August 4) — Fiona thanked the unidentified J. S. for his praise and responded to AE’s charges. She denied her

inability to see distinctions, stated she was not anti-nationalistic, and reaffirmed her belief that “Genius does not lie with any one race.” Rather it is “a calling of the Spirit to one soul here, another there; neither tribe nor clan has the divine mystery as its own.” Allowing that some of her fellow Gaels may be “in some things [...] astray”, she insisted that “others, and the English in particular, are not invariably and inevitably in the wrong, and stupid and malevolent.” Justice and love, not hatred and resentment, must accompany nationalism. Taking up AE’s gender challenge, Fiona asserted that even a woman knows “there is a peace which is death.” She did not advocate “a cheap peace between race and race,” but an ideal for “our broken and scattered race that may not only uplift and ennoble but may bring about a great and wonderful regeneration.” Here Sharp referred obliquely to the regenerative goals of Yeats’ Celtic Mystical Order which he and AE shared. Fiona’s attempt to clarify her position only caused AE to harden his. In a letter O’Grady published which constituted the entire front page of the August 18 *All Ireland Review*, he accused Fiona of labeling nationalism as “race hatred,” reassured his adherence to Irish nationalism, and confessed he had no love for England. Cuttingly, he called Fiona a Briton and an English writer who, unlike some other Scottish Celts, lacked the aspiration to nationality common among Irish Gaels.

The public exchange of correspondence concluded with a letter from T. W. Rolleston on the front page of the August 25 *All Ireland Review*. After noting that AE’s letters contained “so much that is good and true,” Rolleston addressed what he considered the major errors of his ideas about nationalism. Taking issue with AE’s emphasis on British oppression, he suggested the Irish had not been so much oppressed as indifferent to the claims of their heritage and that any changes in attitude must be enforced by the Irish people themselves. He also criticized AE for confusing the Celtic spiritual movement with the Irish political movement, adding that “Ireland might have her local legislature and yet be thoroughly denationalized and vulgarized or that she might attain nationalism in social life, literature, and art and yet ‘be content with her present voice in the Imperial Parliament.’” After criticizing the bitterness and hatred underlying much of the political movement, he said AE and Fiona Macleod were pressing each other to extreme views; their positions were complementary, not contradictory.

Finally, he commended Fiona's Celticism, insisted she was a "helper not a hinderer," and condemned AE's bias against her as a Scottish Celt. Despite the efforts of O'Grady, J.S., and Rolleston to keep Fiona on board and maintain a unified movement, AE's attack, fueled by the growing spirit of Irish nationalism, caused a rift between the Irish and the Scots that became increasingly difficult to bridge.

In late August Sharp wrote a letter to Yeats in which he expressed his feelings about AE's attack: "As for AE, I think I had better not say what I think: but of one thing I am very sorry, his inevitable loss of prestige among those of his own circle who like myself have thought so highly of him and his work. None can now accept him as a thinker, or as a fair and loyal opponent, however else one may regard him." The letter re-enforced what Sharp had told Yeats about Fiona — that she was an independent individual with a will of her own, mysteriously speaking through him, and that there was a flesh and blood woman whom Sharp loved and on whom he depended to evoke this persona. He wished Fiona would not take notice of critics. He wished he had seen her letter to the *All Ireland Review* before she sent it. And he wished AE would be "content to be the poet and seer, and not turn aside to these unworthinesses."

Perhaps motivated by encouragement from Yeats and by Rolleston's suggestion that they were pushing each other to extremes, Sharp drafted a Fiona letter to AE in mid-September saying she wanted to go with him on the "quest," not apart from him. This letter evoked a conciliatory response from Russell in which he said he had no personal feelings against her: "You are to me so far only a beautiful myth." He never fights, he said, "except when I feel the spiritual life of Ireland is threatened and when I fight why of course I do it with all the energy I can put into it." He often fights with his friends, he said, and remains good friends with his opponents. He hoped to remain friends with Fiona because she belonged to "the clan," the group of Irish or Scottish people "who's ideal is mainly a spiritual one." The clan included O'Grady, Yeats, Hyde, Lady Gregory, and others whom Fiona/Sharp did not know. Finally, he enclosed a spray of heather as a peace offering. The letter is written with the full awareness that its recipient would not be "a beautiful myth," but William Sharp. Indeed, AE had written to Yeats on July 13, a week before his first review appeared in print, that he was "a little sorry" he

had been “so savage,” but he hoped it would “do Fiona/Sharp some good.” We can only wonder if his review would have been so savage had he thought Fiona a real woman.

Sharp responded as Fiona on October 20. Briefly in London on her way to southern France, she accepted AE’s offer of continuing friendship: “Your spray from the sacred hill brought me not only a message from your inward self, but more than you could know perhaps. Some fallen link has been caught up through it — and, too, a truer understanding has come to me in one or two points where we have been at issue.” She hoped AE would read and like “The Immortal Hour” in a forthcoming *Fortnightly Review* and a forthcoming essay in *The Nineteenth Century* on “The Gael and his Heritage” which dealt with “the treasure-trove of the spiritual hymns and ancient lore in the Hebrides.” The breach with AE was thus papered over, but there followed a decided cooling of enthusiasm for the writings of Fiona Macleod among the independence-minded Irish.

In addition to managing this public controversy, Sharp continued his association with the evolving Stage Society during the summer and fall. Except for two brief trips to Scotland in late summer, he stayed in Chorleywood and London. He continued to work on the long William Sharp essay that was published in 1902 as *Progress of Art in the XIX Century*. An article titled “Some Dramas of Gabrielle d’Annunzio,” appeared in the September *Fortnightly Review*, and the October issue of the *Art Journal* carried his article about the work of Monro S. Orr, a well-known contemporary Scottish painter, etcher and illustrator. In November, Fiona Macleod’s “The Immortal Hour” appeared in *The Fortnightly Review* and her “The Gael and His Heritage” in *The Nineteenth Century*. The latter was a lengthy and adulatory tribute to Alexander Carmichael’s recently published *Carmina Gadelica*.

In early November, Sharp began a letter at his club (the Grosvenor) to Murray Gilchrist with the incident that occasioned the letter:

A little ago, on sitting down in my club to answer some urgent notes (and whence I now write) my heart leapt with pleasure, and an undeserving stranger received Part I of a beaming welcome — for the waiter announced that “Mr. Gilchrist would like to see you, Sir.” Alas, it was no dear Peaklander, but only a confounded interviewer about the Stage Society!

He went on to say he and Elizabeth planned to leave England on November 12 and go first to Provence, near Marseilles and then, after Christmas, go on to Italy, "perhaps first to Shelley's Spezzia or to Pegli of the Orange Groves near Genoa: and there we await you, or at furthest a little later, say in Florence. We shall be away till the end of March." He had just returned from Dorset where he saw Thomas Hardy who was well and at work, "the two happiest boons of fortune for all our kinship." He wished Gilchrist would come to London for the Stage Society production that weekend, Sunday November 11, of a play by Hardy, another by Robert Lewis Stevenson, and William Ernest Henley's "Macaire." Sharp said he had resigned as Chairman of the Stage Society but was re-elected, so he is extra busy before leaving for France. As usual in his letters to Gilchrist, Sharp told him how he was feeling; "all unpleasantness and incertitude: much to do and little pleasure in the doing: a restlessness too great to be salved short of departure, and the longed for mental and nervous rest far away."

Ill-health continued to plague both Sharps in the late summer and early fall. Mrs. Sharp described their condition movingly:

Partly owing to the insistence of circumstance, partly from choice, we began that autumn a series of wanderings that brought us back to London and to Scotland for a few weeks only each summer. The climate of England proved too severe. ... Despite his appearance of great vitality, his extraordinary power of recuperation after every illness — which in measure was due to his buoyant nature, to his deliberate turning of his mind away from suffering or from failure and "looking sunwise," to his endeavor to get the best out of whatever conditions he had to meet — we realized that a home in England was no longer a possibility, that it would be wise to make various experiments abroad rather than attempt to settle anywhere permanently. Indeed, we were both glad to have no plans, but to wander again how and where inclination and possibilities dictated (*Memoir*, pp. 323–24).

The Sharps left London on November 12, passed through Paris, and went on to stay near the Janviers in Saint Remy De Provence where they socialized with local writers and artists. Sharp finished an essay on "The Impressionists" which appeared under his name in the April 1901 *New Library Review*. He also began an essay on famous Provençal poets called "Modern Troubadours" which appeared in the *Quarterly Review* of October 1901. Stage Society business followed him. On November 19,

he hand-printed a letter to the Editor of *The Topical Times* stating his absolute opposition to the official censorship of plays.

On November 30, he wrote a long letter to John Macleay, of *The Highland News*, in which he expressed his regret that he was unable to visit Andrew Carmichael and his family during his brief visit to Scotland in the fall. He praised Carmichael's *Carmina Gadelica* which, he affirmed, "ought to become as precious to the Scottish Gael as the Greek Anthology to all who love the Hellenic ideal, but with a more poignant, a more personal appeal." After eagerly perusing it from "cover to cover" he had given his early copy to Miss Macleod who praised it highly in "The Gael and His Heritage," an article published in that month's issue of *The Nineteenth Century* (48, pp. 825–41). Fiona had become dissatisfied with the historical novel she was writing, and ill health, "involving much absolute rest, and latterly change of climate," had interfered with her writing. She wanted to go to Italy, but her doctors recommended Egypt or Algeria, as "drier & sunnier, & to vary this frequently with the sea she loves so well & which suits her splendidly." Sharp saw her a week or two ago in Marseilles on her way south, He does not know where to address her now. She may be in Mustapha, near Algiers. He hopes she will be able to pay a flying visit to Sicily in February, where the Sharps hope to go, as she will then be yachting in the Mediterranean with friends. Although he does not know her current address, Sharp said he would be writing to her in a few days and would forward Macleay's note. It was an elaborate effort to impress upon Macleay, who had his suspicions, the separate identity of Fiona Macleod. On Christmas Day, the Sharps left Provence for Palermo in Sicily where they spent New Year's Day. A week later, they crossed the island to the east coast and the beautiful hillside town of Taormina where events affecting the remainder of Sharp's life would unfold.

Letters: 1900

***To Mrs. Grant Allen, January 3, 1900***

Wharncliffe | Chorleywood, Herts | 3/1/1900

Dear Nellie,

The one intended for you must have miscarried. I now send you my own (E. has another, so that is all right) and regret you did not have it sooner. There is only an allusion to the great loss of us all in dear Grant, but it is from the heart.<sup>1</sup> (The footnote about William Simpson<sup>2</sup> was put in at the last moment by special request. I did not know him.) As I said in my few preliminary words, “all admired and many here loved the fine writer and true-hearted man lost to us individually and to the Omar Club.” Excuse more just now, dear Nellie. As soon as you are settled in town Lill and I eagerly hope to see you again.

Your friend always, | Will

*ALS Pierpont Morgan Library*

***To Edith Lyttelton, January 8, 1900***

Wharncliffe | Chorleywood | Herts | 8/1/1900

My dear Mrs. Lyttelton<sup>3</sup>

I was very sorry indeed to hear that you have been so prostratingly “down” through the autumn, and trust that you are indeed much better and when you return to London will find yourself in “good form”. I fear, from your silence at the time and in your letter, that you never received “Sospiri di Roma” & “Madge of the Pool.” The former was a loan: the latter an offering for your acceptance: but both now are perhaps occupying an exile’s place on some unknown & puzzled recipient’s shelf. Later the rare “Sospiri” may again be lent, for a friend

has a duplicate copy: but, if you care to have it, "Madge" can certainly be had.

Illness gives one a shake, however strong one's vitality: and I think we'll do our best not to spend another midwinter in this damp & sunless climate. However, January will pass: & February has always lovely pioneer days: & then Spring & Summer lie ahead.

Yes, I read the "Little Novels" with keen pleasure. Maurice Hewlett told me the other night that he is dramatising one of them ("Ippolita" I think).<sup>4</sup> And "Paolo & Francesca" — have you read that? and what do you think of it?<sup>5</sup>

But nothing I have read for long has so deeply held me as Stevenson's letters.<sup>6</sup>

I am anxious to hear from you if you have done anything more with your pen of late. In a letter I had some time ago from Miss Macleod she spoke of having heard of, and read, your first publication:<sup>7</sup> and how from it, but most of all from your letters, and by instinct, she felt assured that you could, and probably some day soon would, write a notable book.

Miss Macleod's new book, unlike anything she has done, and personal (and in "Iona" & elsewhere autobiographical) to a greater extent than ever she has done before, ought to be out in March. It is to be called *The Divine Adventure*,<sup>8</sup> from the long titular "spiritual essay" which has attracted (on the part of the few who care) so much attention in the *Fortnightly* in November & December. (I understand that selected sections from her long "Iona" are to appear in the Feby & Mch issues of the *Fortnightly* — at least so I understand has been arranged, as the *Fortnightly* publishers (Chapman & Hall) are also to publish the book.) She speaks of my revising the proofs with her "in two or three weeks hence."

For myself, apart from much else on hand, but perforce left alone at present, I am hard at work every available hour on a commissioned "History of the Fine Arts in the Nineteenth Century" — a kind of synthesis, or coup d'oeil perhaps, of the dominating features and interrelated developments of modern art.<sup>9</sup> Well, this is a long letter.

And now about our meeting. Could you, in the first instance, come to the Grosvenor Club on Monday next about 4 o'clock, & have tea & a chat with me (if you prefer it, I could come to you). Please let me know if this will suit.

Meanwhile, believe me, Dear Mrs. Lyttelton,

Sincerely Yours, | William Sharp

*ALS Churchill Archive Center, Churchill College, Cambridge*

**To John Stuart Verschoyle,<sup>10</sup> January 11, 1900**

c/o Mrs. Rinder. | 11. Woronzow Road. | London. | N.W.

My dear Sir,

A hurried line. I am glad you care to print the lines I sent to you. Yes, you may quote the words you indicate: I feel them to stand for the basic truth, and so perhaps they may reach some to whom no other appeal might go home.

Mrs. Rinder will attend to any proof that comes, as she has the copy of the lines which I sent to her to this end, to save time forwarding to Edinburgh.

Will you kindly send me two copies when published.

Yours Sincerely, | Fiona Macleod

*ALS UCLA, Clark Library*

**To Theodore Watts-Dunton, February 9, 1900<sup>11</sup>**

Wharncliffe | Chorleywood | Herts

My dear Aylwin,

Your note & book reached me today. Yes, the Sonnet vol. still sells by the thousand. I believe the (I've quite forgotten *what* edition! — but bringing up to about 100,000) — will be out in the Spring — & your rectifications shall be made. I'll be writing to Scotts in a day or so.

PRIVATE: It's a little hard that for this book I got £10 — & that all I ever had from it since was £5 for preparing a special reprint!! It has gone into innumerable editions — & in all forms has sold to an unprecedented extent for a book of the kind, here & in America etc. At even a royalty of 1d a copy I'd have had over £400 — so imagine what Scott's profit must be!

You don't say how you are or what you are doing — but I hope you are well, & that you are busy with what is after your heart.

I know you will be sorry to hear that since Christmas I have had a bad time of it. First, I got influenza again, with pneumonic complication — then an inflammatory condition of the veins was set up — & thro' that & an accident on the railway I started a bad varicose vein, badly strained, & constantly threatening a clot (phlebitis) — laming me as though I had the gout! — & keeping me to the house for weeks. Then a very painful & prostrating meningital neuralgia set in — partly from over strain of work & financial straits etc. Still, all might have gone well, had not I went one day (under great stress of agony) to a dentist to be sure there was nothing the matter with my teeth. He was a faddist, & incompetent — & having found all absolutely sound said he wd. take out 5 sound teeth then & there (& without gas!) as that would cure me! I was weak enough to be persuaded of urgency — but after the second sound tooth had been literally torn out (for my teeth are very sound & strong) I fainted & he could do no more. It now turns out he was wholly wrong as to this — & I have lost two sound molars & have my neuralgia still, only worse! The nervous shock proved so bad for me that my wife, & the doctor, became seriously perturbed. The upshot was that a few days ago I was ordered away for a month to recruit by the sea — & would have gone 2 days ago but for a sudden painful attack of lumbago. So, considering I am not fallen into depression or loss of "heart," I must be quite a Mark Tapley.<sup>12</sup> I hope now to get away on Sunday, as my lumbago is better.

All this is partly a preamble to explain why I have been unable to repay the loan of £25, which I hoped to do in February. Alas, all this trouble has brought me on my beam-ends, and tomorrow (if able) I am going into London to see if thro' my Bank, or otherwise, I can raise some money to get away with for a month. Elizabeth has been down with bronchitis, & tho' still in bed is better — & will join me on Tuesday — as

she too needs recuperation. What with illness, & these wearing financial straits things are not at their brightest — still I hope all will go well this year. Whenever I can get the money together I'll repay your kind loan — but I have first to earn the wherewithal to satiate the proverbial wolf!

Well, that is a long tirade — all about troubles. When I come back I hope to come & see you. Destroy so tiresome a note, & think of me as recuperative & buoyant as of yore. (It has sadly thrown me back in urgent work — that, perhaps, is worst) Send me a line to say you understand.

Ever, dear Aylwin, | Affectionately yours | W. S.

*ALS University of Leeds, Brotherton Library*

***To Hannibal Ingalls Kimball, [?February, 1900]***

Wharncliffe | Chorleywood | Herts | Thursday

My dear Mr. Kimball

I was very sorry (I shd say "we" were very sorry) not to see you. I would have liked very much to have a chat with you. But this must be a postponed pleasure. We had arranged a special little dinner (hoping to have William Watson, Maurice Hewlett, Richard Whiteing, & one or two others) at the Sesame Club, for Mrs. Kimball & yourself, for next week — but your news about your immediate departure intervenes. Well, we shall have it in May or June — So remember you are engaged!

It was a pleasure to Mrs. Sharp to meet — & for me to see again — your wife, looking if you will allow me to say so more lovely & charming even than when I had the pleasure of seeing her in New York.

Were it at all possible I could call tonight or tomorrow — but I have to hurry away this evening & can't be at home again till Saty.

So meanwhile "bon voyage"

Cordially yours | William Sharp

*ALS University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee Library*

**To William Blackwood, March 15, [1900]**

Wharncliffe | Chorleywood | Hertz | Thursday 15th March

My dear Sir,

I was in Edinburgh for two days on family affairs and took the opportunity to call upon you — but was unfortunate in finding that you were absent.

I wished, for one thing, to ask you if you would care (for the magazine) for an article on "Recent French Art" — either as an outcome of a long History of the Fine Arts in the last half century — or, if preferred, more apropos of the art of the year, as I have already seen it, as I shall see it shortly when I go over to Paris for the Salon which opens about April 2nd this year, a month earlier — at the "New Men" at a Private Gallery — the new Gustave Moreau national bequest, & perhaps at the Exposition.

Perhaps you will kindly let me hear from you about this at your early convenience.

I am also going on to Brittany to visit Breton friends. I am anxious to put together (from a long gathering of material) a study of the contemporary poets & romancists [sic] of Brittany or else an indirect study of them through representative work of their finest representative, A. LeBraz. Would you care for this?

With many regrets at not having had the pleasure of meeting you (and unfortunately I return to London this morning)

Believe me | Yours very truly | William Sharp  
William Blackwood Esq.

*ALS National Library of Scotland*

**To J. Stanley Little, March 26, 1900<sup>13</sup>**

Wharncliffe | Chorleywood | Herts

Just returned — but E. still very seedy and at her mother's. I go there now, but shall be back tomorrow and hope to write then or Wedny.

W. S.

*ACS Princeton University***To J. Stanley Little, March 28, 1900**

Wharncliffe | Chorleywood | Herts | 28.11.1900

My dear Stanley

Often I (I shd. say *we*) have wished to go to Balham to see you both — often I have wished to write — but — well you know our common difficulties, the incessant pressure of life and circumstance, and, over and above all, the painful fact that I am one of the worst correspondents in the world. For one thing I honestly never have time. I am at this moment *months* behind with urgent work — weeks and months also behind with correspondence. We came out here thinking things would be easier: on the whole they are worse in that very respect! Of course, latterly, there has been the additional strain of illness — first of myself, then of Elizabeth, who is still unable to be here, and may not be for 10 days or a fortnight yet (tho' latterly only — a large "only" — with sciatica). We have been little here, since we left our flat and stored our furniture. And shortly after Xmas (i.e. about near end of Jany) I got influenza, then serious pneumonic and other complications, and was more or less ill, and away, till March. Then E. had bronchitis etc. etc. — and at Broadstairs<sup>14</sup> (where we went) had rheumatism — and when I was in Scotland (again ill) she got sciatica, and is still at her mother's (72 Inverness Terrace W). I am "nominally" back here (nominally, for I am here so little, having all E's

work to do as well as my own, and God knows what all, good and bad, especially bad, besides.)

Yes, ultimately, on special *sine-quā-non* terms, I agreed to do the "Fine Arts" for the Toronto series. But I could not touch it or even think of it till after-Xmas. On the last 3 days of the year I planned it all out, and began to write on the 1st day of Jany. I wrote, had typed, and revised over 50,000 words by about Jany 21st — and had that sent off, and it is now I believe being "set up". Unfortunately, I have not been able to do much else to it, owing to illness — nor can I touch it now till after Easter. I hope, however, to do the remaining 70,000 words (about 3,000 or 5,000 done perhaps) of which E. is doing abt 15,000 (the music), well within the six weeks before end of May — though I have 2 books and articles etc. etc. on hand at same time that I must somehow or another manage to work at concurrently.

Yes — I had special terms, without which it wd. have been wholly impossible for me to take up the book: and not only special terms, but special conditions of payment. On the other hand, I much regret, old fellow, I can't tell you anything more explicitly. I am under a pledge of honour, a given promise, not to do so: nor can I consent to your mentioning my name as having told you even what I have done. I must trust you in this.

Surely you are wrong about no royalty payment being due till late in 1901? It is to be hoped that all the books will be out by this autumn. You shd send in your MS. as soon as you can. I'm afraid if you haven't made definite signed terms you won't get anything in advance out of Linscott.

I hope life goes well — I am sure it goes happily — with you & Maud and your little Lois. Soon after I come back from Paris (i.e. about Easter or soon after) — where I go in a few days to the Salon, wh. opens 3 weeks earlier than usual — we must meet. Perhaps you and M. wd. come here for a day: or I (or we, if E. able — doubtful) to you.

Ever cordially and affectly — if distractedly! — Yours, |  
with love to all, | Will

**To John Stuart Verschoyle, April 8, 1900<sup>15</sup>**

Grand Hotel | Paris

My dear Verschoyle

I shall be in England shortly & hope to do as you ask.

Yes, Miss Macleod told me she had written for you, & indeed sent me a copy. She feels profoundly about this matter, as I do — but gets to the root of it better than I fear I can.

Sincerely yours | William Sharp

I hope to be back this week.

ACS UCLA, Clark Library

**To [Frederick Whelen?], April 16, 1900**Edinburgh | 16<sup>th</sup> April 1900

Dear Sir

I was very pleased to hear through my friend and relative Mr. William Sharp that the Stage Society is to produce "The House of Usna" at its next performance.<sup>16</sup> As I at once telegraphed and then wrote to Mr. Sharp, I leave every arrangement to him and full discretion as to any minor alterations which may be thought advisable, mainly in compression. I have also already sent him, a few days ago, a fresh very brief opening scene for "The House of Usna," which indeed already belonged to it, but which I had taken out for the necessarily briefer magazine-use of the play. This short new scene involves no fresh character, though in it the blind harper Coel now takes an active as well as later, a passive part: and it not only gives a dramatic movement, which "Usna" lacks for stage-representation, but also explains what no doubt to an English audience would otherwise be difficult to follow. At Mr. Sharp's request I have also agreed to a more thorough Anglicization and simplification of ancient names and allusions. The play has been accepted for appearance

in a magazine, and also, with two others, for book-publication, but Mr. Sharp has seen to this for me, and there will be no copyright difficulties in the matter.

For myself I gladly agree to its free production by you, feeling myself to be the more indebted. But I presume I may count upon your courtesy in the matter of reserved accommodation. May I ask to have two contiguous boxes reserved.

One of these would be for my friends Mr. and Mrs. William Sharp, whom I should join if I find myself able to come from Scotland for the occasion: the other I would like to be able to offer to Mr. George Meredith (if he can come) or other friends. I should like also to know that you will send *reserved* stall tickets to one or two persons by whose courtesy I am able in one instance to substitute another play, and in another instance to give you "The House of Usna" — and to a few others concerned, say eight reserved Stall-seats — namely to

W. L. Courtney, Esq / Editor *The Fortnightly*

James Knowles, Esq / Editor *The Nineteenth Century*

W. B. Yeats, Esq

Mr. And Mrs. Ernest Rhys

The Hon. Alfred & Mrs. A. Lyttelton

and (probably)

Mr. Percy Bunting / Editor of the *Contemporary*.

If in the event of the great honour of Mr. George Meredith's coming he wished to be alone (for he is not strong, and rarely goes out), or with his son or daughter only, I suppose you could arrange that a further box could be allowed to him. Also I forgot to say that as soon as the tickets are ready I would be glad if you will hand them to Mr. Sharp, who will either send them to me or forward them as I direct

Believe me | Yours very truly | Fiona Macleod

P.S. Could Mr. George Alexander<sup>17</sup> be invited by the Society? I would be glad if so.

ALS Theatre Museum, London

**To Ernest Rhys, May 4, 1900<sup>18</sup>**

Loch-Fyne-Side

They are books at which I look sometimes with dread, for through all their outward change of time and place they are often so intimately personal. Can you understand that when "Pharais" was published I would have given anything to recall it, partly because of the too much suffering there expressed, but mainly because of that "Cry of Women," which nevertheless has brought so many strange and sorrowful letters, and made many unexpected friends. A still more intimate element animates "The Mountain Lovers," a book which will always for me have an unchanged air. We are fortunate if we have one book, one poem even, which, having lived there, never forgets the "Enchanted Valley."

Fiona Macleod

*Fragment of ALS (see note to this letter)*

**To Grant Richards, June 1, 1900**

c/o Mrs. Rinder | 11 Woronzow Road |  
London<sup>19</sup> | 1st June 1900

My dear Sir,

You would have heard from me long before this but for the fact that since November last I have been much of an invalid, and been forbidden to work, and that since the beginning of the year I have done very little, and that only casually.

I have thus made slow progress with "The Hour of Beauty,"<sup>20</sup> despite a great amount of collected matter. Nor can I promise to let you have it soon. If I can let you have it in the autumn I will: but all I can venture to promise is to let you have it by the end of the year. For my own sake as well as for yours I regret the delay: and for my own sake as well as yours

I will now do my best to get on with it. The revision of my latest book, *The Divine Adventure* (recently published by Messrs. Chapman and Hall), stands for almost all I have been able to do, except other arduous revision of unpublished matter.

I see that your letter (which has reached me in Argyll) is addressed to an old address. Miss Rea, my late agent and typist, is still away recovering from illness, and so now and until further notice I am having all my correspondence sent through a literary friend, whose address heads this letter.

By the same post I have received a copy of the June *Fortnightly* which contains a generous and sympathetic study of my writings,<sup>21</sup> which I would like you to glance at.

Believe me, dear sir, | Yours very truly, | Fiona Macleod

*ALS Stanford University*

**To Edith Lyttelton, June 4, 1900**

4th June 1900

My dear Mrs. Lyttelton

I am most glad to hear from you again: and I am glad that you like my new book.<sup>22</sup>

It is a step on the road I travel, and towards the high road I hope to reach.

It is very doubtful if I can (or will!) go South after all: if I do it will not be for more than a day or two, between the 9th and 15th. But though I cannot see you I can send you my profound sympathy and eager hopes that all will go well with you. From now I will again and again send out my thought to you, wishing, to you, a safe recovery to new life; to the little child, a beautiful soul and a fair body and a happy nature.

Your letter had reached me in Western Argyll, though today I have to leave for a few days in Edinburgh, so I write and will post this on board the steamer.

Again, I wish you well, and send you all that I have to send, in some surety that it will reach and help you.

Your friend | Fiona Macleod

*ALS Churchill Archive Center, Churchill College, Cambridge*

**To Edith Lyttelton, [mid-June, 1900]**

Wharncliffe | Chorleywood

Excuse a penciled line in the train

Dear Mrs. Lyttelton

In the hurry of an abrupt despatch I may have accidentally sent the MS of your novel<sup>23</sup> to your London address — tho' I *think* not. Could you, however, send me a card to say if it has safely reached you.

I have just seen an article that will interest you too very deeply — a long and sympathetically interpretive paper on the writings of Miss Macleod by Ernest Rhys. It is called "The New Mysticism" and is in the new (the June) number of the *Fortnightly Review* — a number well worth getting otherwise for, alone, the long new "spiritual essay" on mystery by Maeterlinck.

Too shaky to write more distinctly!

Ever cordially yours | William Sharp

*ALS Churchill Archive Center, Churchill College, Cambridge*

**To Leo J. Maxse, June 8, 1900**

C/o. Mrs. Rinder | 11 Woronzow Road |  
London N.W. | 8th June 1900

Dear Sir

Mrs. Rinder has forwarded your note, which has followed me from the west, as I have had abruptly to come to Edinburgh.

I am pleased that you are going to use "The House of Usna"<sup>24</sup> and the more so as since its performance at the Globe Theatre there have been many enquiries about it. I presume you will be able to print it shortly. (If in the July issue, as I hope, Mrs. Rinder will see to the proofs for me, as she has my revised typed copy). I thank you for your acceptance and for the offer you make (£1 per printed page), and now write to let you know that I accept and am well content.

Nor, in turn, do I wish to adhere undeviatingly to what Mrs. Rinder (Knowing my general terms — sometimes more, sometimes less) — [sic] wrote to you as to a rate of £2 a page for other matter. It depends, with me, whence the application comes. The other day a "magazine" wrote offering me two guineas a page "for anything I cared to write," but I declined: and the editor wrote again, and said he could pay three guineas, but again I declined, and finally, irrespective of terms.

So, as you courteously say you "should have liked others papers by Miss Macleod but for the prohibitive rate" I beg to assure you that I am willing to accept a lesser rate, say 25s, or if that is beyond what you consider feasible, a guinea — which, I may in fairness add, is the rate paid me by the *Contemporary*, though I am paid double or more elsewhere.

Forgive this dwelling on a distasteful subject — or rather on a distasteful discussion of a subject — important and just of course, in itself, but not the paramount, certainly not the sole consideration. On the other hand, let me add that I am ill-fitted or little inclined to write articles as ordinarily understood. I prefer papers of an imaginative kind, or partly reminiscent and personal such as parts of the "Iona" articles that appeared in the *Fortnightly*<sup>25</sup> and in my recently published book *The Divine Adventure*.

At the moment I cannot promise — and hardly like to suggest — anything: but, later, I should be very glad to contribute as you kindly suggest. (I have, I may add, at present on hand work for the *Fortnightly*, the *Nineteenth Century*, the *Contemporary*, the *North American Review*, and the *Revue des Deux Mondes*.)

Perhaps the best way would be for you to see a paper called "From a Sea-Garden" in a forthcoming *Contemporary*<sup>26</sup> (alas, unwritten yet, except in notes and journals, and at the moment beyond my approach), and, if you cared for it, for me to send you one or two papers of the kind.

Believe me, dear Sir, | Yours very truly | Fiona Macleod

P.S. Will it be feasible to have "The House of Usna" in July? I hope so.

*ALS West Sussex Record Office*

**To George Russell (AE), June 15, 1900**

15th June 1900

Excuse a dictated typed note, as I have slightly strained my wrist.

Dear Mr. Russell,

I thank you for your long letter, though it is, for me, the saddest letter I have ever received. I seem to hear throughout it the crumbling of my highest ideals and hopes — and above all my passionate hope to save our Gaelic remnant from extinction. To my mind, the "other" way means a sad and inglorious end for the Irish and Scottish Gael. I had hoped, oh I had hoped so much. And with you personally I had never doubted but that the divine law of love would prevail. My feeling now would be one of utter dejection for the dream of splendid resurrection of our race were it not that I still cling passionately to the hope that your extremist attitude, and that of those who think with you, represents the transitory while inevitable logic of human sorrow and revolt rather than the immortal and inevitable logic of the Spirit. I am (though alas only but a little) encouraged in this by the fact that,

since "Celtic"<sup>27</sup> appeared in the *Contemporary* and in my book, I have had many letters from Ireland, eagerly and gratefully thanking me, as neither you (probably) nor I know them, this may mean little. But here are two sentences from the two letters last received from Ireland, one from Mayo, the other from Dublin: "I had lost all hope for my beloved Ireland, and now from my heart I for one thank you for those noble words breathing love and forgiveness to our ancient enemy — so far the more acceptable to us as coming from one whose own passionate eagerness to interpret the Gael and save him and his from the fate he has so ill deserved, but yet so largely brought upon himself, is beyond doubt." The other runs: "It's a good and true word you say, and said at the right time. God speed you. I feel there's more real hope now than for long I've dared to think." As I say, neither you nor I know anything of these Irish writers — perhaps a score in all, including two that were angrily hostile — but at least you know, or know of, *one* Irishman whose noble spiritual nature and proven patriotism cannot be gainsaid, namely Stopford Brooke.

In a letter I had from him a day or two ago, about "The Divine Adventure," he writes: — "and now most earnestly I wish to congratulate you on 'Celtic.' It is the one piece of genuine understanding, the one piece of common sense and of imaginative intelligence which has been written on the 'Celtic movement'."

So, at least, you will see that you are wrong in *one* point, when you say I shall not have a single response.

Ah, dear Mr. Russell, I do not say "Think *my* way, or you shall not be saved": but I *do* say, "Think well, think well, and again and again think well, before you let hate and bitterness and severance be your servants and lords, instead of love and forgiveness and a both-redeeming reconciliation."

If England be indeed as you say, then the more need of our love, our forgiveness, our eager pity: if all be lost, the more need of our aid: ay, if all be ignoble, the more need that we should be noble.

Alas, alas, I fear the baffled bitterness, the unreasoning hate, the ignoble end. But yet, no, I will still hope, still pray, still strive. I am well content to leave it in the hands of the wise gods. But, for ourselves, between you and me let there be understanding and peace and comradely love. "Eadar mise agus tusa am càirdeas gràdhach."<sup>28</sup>

In January of 1899 you wrote me a long letter which ended thus: "I am brought back while writing this letter to some inner life felt keenly long ago and covered ever by passing crowded externalities. It is to again remember someone, or unity, or unquenchable eternal ideal you also know with myself and others taken before this mortal birth — and this you may take as the waving of a hand in remembrance I have not forgotten."

That is how I will think of you always — and however we may differ as to the right road to the one goal we have in view I trust it will also always be the attitude you have, deep down to

Your friend, | Fiona Macleod

*TLS Indiana University, Lilly Library*

**To Frederick Charles Charrington,<sup>29</sup> July 6, 1900**

Wharncliffe | Chorleywood, Herts | 6/July/00

My dear Charrington,

After you left committee-meeting yesterday, we discussed further the difficult secretarial problem. I believe that a solution is to be had thus: — (and failure to find a solution involving the withdrawal of both Whelen and Williams<sup>30</sup> would mean collapse of the Stage Socy) that instead of our paying £150 a year to a capable Secretary, or to 2 clerks or assistants, we should pay £100 to Whelen as Secretarial Manager, with £50 for clerkly help. If we do this, Ernest Williams is willing to remain Hon. Secy. & to give all assistance he conveniently can, for he can place implicit trust in Whelen, & so would not need to give the continuous supervision and daily time & labour he now does. Whelen on his part finds it quite impracticable to keep on as he has been doing — not only because of his marriage & now constantly interrupted home-life, but because of the actual loss involved, & his inability to add to his means. He is, however, willing to take over all the heavy administrative work, if we appoint *him* instead of an outsider.

So strongly do I feel that we cannot afford to lose Whelen (and with him, Williams) that, in the event of their withdrawal from the administration of the Stage Society, I would resign also, as I do not think the Society is strongly enough established yet to avoid collapse otherwise.

I hope, therefore, that you may see your way at our next all-important meeting (on Tuesday next) to support this (as I believe) auspicious compromise.

Cordially Yours, | William Sharp

*ALS Yale University*

***To Standish O'Grady, July 22, 1900***

Dear Mr. O'Grady,<sup>31</sup>

Yesterday the steamer-post brought to the remote place whence I write to you the copy of the "All Ireland Review" with the two papers on "The Divine Adventure."

Let me first say with what pleasure each week I read your paper, and how much I sympathise with you in your endeavour, and am glad of an obviously growing appreciation throughout Ireland and, indeed, elsewhere. There is more true poetry in the several verses in this week's issue than in any of the current great "weeklies" or "monthlies" I have ever seen. Having said this, let me thank "J. S." for his generous words about myself and what I have written, and you for your editorial courtesy and fairness in permitting opposing views to stand together.

Naturally, I read Mr. Russell's with deep regret, for personal as well as other reasons. It would be undignified and futile to quarrel or to recriminate. I must leave the issues to others; above all, to that Spirit which is now breathing in so many hearts, in so many places. I, as well as Mr. Russell, may feel assured that what is ill and worthless in anything I have written will soon be ineffective and forgotten.

So, when I write now, it is not to respond in anger or chagrin to one whose writings I so greatly admire and love. I am sorry that Mr. Russell finds me arrogant and shallow, and devoid of the faculty of judgment.

I do not find him shallow, even in this judgment of his, for I think he has written out of no ill-will to me personally, and even with no active contempt for my deficiencies, but out of a deep, not a shallow, love for Ireland and our common Gaelic ideals. And what of arrogance on his part there is comes, I hope, not from a surety that he must be right and I wrong, because he is a man and I he says deprecatingly, am a woman, because he is Irish and I am a Scot; but because he is so impassioned with the dream that inspires all of us of the Gaelic peoples that the vision of the heart and the vision of the mind are both, temporarily, a little blinded or perverted. Fortunately the point at issue does not lie either with Mr. Russell or myself, as might seem were he and I merely to dispute the other's assertions. In the generous and welcome second article in the same number of the "A. I. R." a quotation of the very sentences which have offended "A. E." is given. If some of your readers, after perusal of these quoted sentences, concur with "A. E." as to their intention and actual import, I can but express my sorrow, and feel sure that the fault must, in a measure, lie with myself in some unwilling perversion of words. I am convinced, however, that most of your readers will not take Mr. Russell's view either as to my intent or as to the actual import of what I have written.

Had this second article not appeared concurrently, I would have had to refute several points in Mr. Russell's. As it is, the quotations do that for me. But I may instance one lapse in fairness. "What are we to think of her when she declares that there is no racial road to beauty, or when she seems unable to distinguish English emotion from Celtic emotion or from Hindu emotion. She seems devoid of the faculty of analysis or the power of seeing distinctions, not even subtle distinctions, but glaring ones." If the reader will turn to the sentence indicated (the third as quoted by "J. S.") he will see, surely, that there is misunderstanding somewhere. Perhaps I have not been explicit enough; but, perhaps, Mr. Russell (I am sure unintentionally) has perverted my meaning. I am not speaking against nationalism; elsewhere in the essay in question I make it clear how essential and treasurable nationalism in literature is; but in the words alluded to I state a universal, not a parochial truth. Again, in a paper I have recently written for an American magazine the following passage occurs: "In the 'Celtic Theatre' many of us have a quick hope. I do not think those who do not intimately know Ireland and Gaelic

Scotland have any adequate idea of how deep is the desire for nationality to expression; how national this expression is rapidly tending to become; and how eagerly those of us who have this development at heart are striving to conserve, to evoke, to sustain in the Gaelic-natured and Gaelic-minded people of our mixed race those elements of national life in whose conversation, evocation, and sustenance lies the one possible road for that troubled spirit, *Anima Celtica*."

There, also, I speak at some length the truth, and I hope show, that because a certain language is the inevitable vehicle of thought and dreams, these dreams and that thought need not be the dreams and thought of the language-makers, but of the people, the separate nation, which uses that language anew and as its own.

Genius does not lie with any one race; there is no racial road to beauty; it is the same proposition differently stated, though perhaps I should have prefaced the word "exclusively" to racial. Surely Mr. Russell would not aver that genius is the inheritance of Ireland only? One may think the Greek genius supreme, another the Italian, another the Hebraic, another the English, another the German; but none says that one must be of the Gaelic peoples, or of the Greek people, or the Italian people, or the Hebraic or English or German people, in order to speak with the divine accent of genius. Genius is a calling of the Spirit to one soul here, another there; neither tribe nor clan has the divine mystery as its own. That is all I say. I do not think that, in what I wrote, there is anything to justify the assertion that I am unable to distinguish English emotion from Celtic emotion or Hindu emotion. Of my own all-dominating feeling — my passionate predilection rather — for Celtic literature as distinct from any other literature, I have written (as I thought, convincingly) in this very essay.

Am I the less a patriot, the less a Gael, with all the passion of sorrow and longing of the true Gael whether he speaks English and lives in Dublin, or speaks Erse only and lives in Connemara, or Gaelic only and lives in the remote Hebrides, if I avow my belief that in some things we are astray, that others, and the English in particular, are not invariably and inevitably in the wrong, and stupid and malevolent in that wrong? Again, am I "only a woman," and so, naturally, the advocate of a cheap peace between race and race, because I say that love is better than hatred, because I have an ideal for our broken and scattered race that may not

only uplift and ennable but may bring about a great and wonderful regeneration? There is a peace which is death. Even a "woman" may know that. Perhaps in all history, certainly in our Gaelic history, it is not women who can be reproached with lack of heroism. An ancestral relative of my own, at the time of the last rising in the Highlands, had five sons. When the two elder were slain she sent the third "out," though she was told that peace could be had. "It is not a just peace," she said. The young man was hanged. She told her two remaining boys to take to the heather. "There's peace now," they told her. "It is not a just peace," she said. One of the boys was shot, the other escaped. Years later he came back, with a "pardon." She tore it up and threw it on the fire. "It is not a just peace," she said. There are women like that in Scotland and in Ireland still, as time will show, if the occasion demand. But if there is a peace that is death, there is also a hate that is death. If one sows that evil unjustly, the innocent must reap a bitter harvest and find it in the dust and ashes. It behooves us all that we do not cherish hatred and call it patriotism, that we do not nourish hatred and call it nationalism, that we do not inculcate hatred and call it wisdom. The gods work through our ignoble hates as well as through our lofty ideals and broken and contrite hearts; but now, as of old, and ever, they say woe unto those who, knowing evil, choose evil; who, knowing the darkness of the dark way, lead to that darkness and that starless road.

But I am writing you an essay rather than a letter, and straying, too, from my first purpose in writing. I may say truly that I would not write at all if it were of purely personal concern. But I have had many letters from Ireland and Irish men and women since the publication of "Celtic" in the "Contemporary Review," and in my book the "Divine Adventure." One or two of these have been hostile, but the others, and there are many, from all sources, have been animated by welcome words of sympathy and gladness. Among them are letters from several prominent Irish writers whose ardent patriotism none could possibly gainsay. And it is for this reason that I do not think that I should keep silent, as my wont is. Even a point so insignificant as that wherein "A. E." alludes to the chorus of approval of the British Press for what I wrote in "Celtic" should be refuted I realize. He may have sources of information that I lack, but I know of nothing to justify the phrase. A few papers have said moderately and modestly what they (or the individual writers) think.

One or two have expressed a genuine gladness at what holds out hope of at least spiritual understanding. In the main, even this essay shallow and arrogant and superficial as it is, has met with anything but a chorus of approval in the British Press. That anything of mine would meet with this would be a new experience for me. One important Scottish paper dismissed it as the vapourings of an irreconcilable Gael!

After all, it comes to this: as an individual, I must hold myself aloof; as in any sense "a representative voice" I have only this to say, at once, humbly and proudly, the old honour-cry, "God be with the right." I have little fear that spiritual influences, infinitely deeper and stronger than those which move any one individual, are moulding and achieving. And some day Mr. Russell and I will not be aloof the one from the other; he will not, knowing the truth, contemptuously call me a "foreigner;" and I, too, will have no shadow of resentment, have indeed none now personally, but only because that willing or unwillingly I stand for other Gaels as truly patriotic, eager, and passionately national as Mr. Russell himself.

Believe me, most cordially yours, | Fiona Macleod

*All Ireland Review and TLS, New York Public Library, Berg Collection*

**To William Archer, [August] 22 [1900]<sup>32</sup>**

Wharncliffe | Chorleywood | Wedny 22

Dear Archer,

You will already have received the book (which I sent on to you yesterday).

The mischance is obviously due to some stupidity at Grant Richards office. At any rate the book had his label on the cover.

I expect we are each in continual receipt of gifts of this kind — & take either receipt or miscarriage alike philosophically.

Yours sincerely | William Sharp

*ALS State University of New York at Buffalo*

**To William Butler Yeats, [late August, 1900]**

Wharncliffe | Chorleywood | Herts

My dear Yeats

Is there any chance of your being in Belfast or Dublin way about the end of September? I may be in Co. Down for a few days about that time. I would much like to see you if possible. You will, I have no doubt, [have] seen the A. E. & F. M. correspondence in O'Grady's paper.<sup>33</sup> Personally, I regret it. I would much rather Miss M. had not written — for although I am in the main at one with her I do not think any good end is served by this fatal appearance of disunion.<sup>34</sup> As for AE, I think I had better not say what I think: but of one thing I am very sorry, his inevitable loss of prestige among those of his own circle who like myself have thought so highly of him and his work. None can now accept him as a thinker, or as a fair and loyal opponent, however else one may regard him.

His last letter seemed to me deplorable in many ways.<sup>35</sup> I don't think Miss M. would have answered it, impulsive as she is: but, just on the chance, I broke a rule with her and telegraphed to her begging that she would not write again, and to my relief had a reply "anything else now would be impossible of course." Personally I wish Miss Macleod would never take any notice of anyone or anything. For several reasons I wish I had seen that long letter of hers first. And A.E., too, how I wish he would be content to be the poet and seer, and not turn aside to these unworthinesses.

What are you doing yourself? I hope you have had a fruitful time in Ireland in every way.

I (my wife and I) go to Buxton, for her sciatica next Monday for 3 weeks: & then to Scotland (only to Galloway tho') for a week or so.

I shan't now see Miss Macleod again till her return from Iceland, where she is about to sail, with her mind filled with saga-music. I don't suppose she'll be back till October, as she is to return by Norway: but she will be in or near London for a short time then, I hope: & I am eagerly hoping will come abroad for 3 mos. next winter where I am going. But all this of course is between ourselves.

If you are at Lady Gregory's please give her (& E. Martyn) my cordial remembrances.

Ever yours | William Sharp

*ALS Yale University*

***To George Russell (AE), [mid-September, 1900]<sup>36</sup>***

Dear Mr. Russell,

You will have read the letter I have written to Mr. Rolleston.<sup>37</sup> I have only this to add (forgive a penciled line, as I am not well) — will you not help me to bury any resentment or misunderstanding for the sake of what we both have so passionately at heart.

We have both no other end or aim than the quest, and so far as in us lies the furtherance, of spiritual beauty: to be revealers and interpreters. I want to go with you, not apart from you. Will you not believe then, and let us each do truly in his or her own way accordingly to his or her inward star.<sup>38</sup>

F. M.

*ALS National Library of Scotland*

***John Stuart Verschoyle, [fall, 1900?]^{39}***

My dear Verschoyle

By a telegram received from Miss Macleod, she suggests that I shd. introduce you to Mrs. Mona Caird (who also wants to meet you) as she is head of so important a section in the Crusade of Mercy<sup>40</sup> in which you are so interested. I have just seen Mrs. Caird (as I can't come in again just now) — so will you send her a line to say if you will go to her either at lunch or afternoon tea on Friday, either at Dysart Hotel (21 Henrietta Pl, Cavendish Square) or at the Sesame Club, (29 Dover Street) yourself naming the hour & place.

In Haste | Yrs Ever | William Sharp

*ALS UCLA, Clark Library*

***To Edmund Clarence Stedman, September 28, 1900***

Wharncliffe | Chorleywood | Herts | 28th Sept 1900 | for Oct 8th

My dear Stedman, Friend, & Poet

For so many years now I have always written to you for your birthday, and always on the 8th itself had a little celebration (sometimes *à deux*, or occasionally *à quatre, cinq, ou sept*) just because you are so fine a poet, so fine a writer, & so fine a man, that I am not going to lapse now even though I understand you are still too far below par to care about added correspondence. But then, you see, this is not a case of correspondence — for it is only a loving greeting from me to you, old friend — & calls for no acknowledgment of any kind: so don't give the matter another thought. I have never misunderstood your silence for a single moment: do indeed entirely understand & sympathize.

I pray that you'll have a happy, prosperous, pleasant, work-filled, & health-uplifted year (& many of the like to follow). I won't bother you about your or my literary doings — but only say that thro' causes of health I must winter-and-spring abroad this year. For the rest, all well.

Is your dear wife well? I hope so: & my affectionate remembrances. And your good friend & secretary, is she married yet?

Ever, dear Stedman, your loyal affectionate friend

William Sharp

*ALS State University of New York at Buffalo*

***To E. C. Stedman, October 18, 1900***

18<sup>th</sup> Oct/00

A loving word of thanks, dear Poet and friend, for your long & so welcome letter. By a happy chance it reached me on the morning of the 8th — so the day was doubly a festival. I was alone, in a remote place, and with the friend to whom you allude — but that evening we were back in London and with three other friends drank life & health & well-being &

fame to Edmund Clarence Stedman, our poet-friend oversea. I hope my own letter to you reached you on your birthday morning, as I tried to make sure by postal enquiries.

This is not a letter in response to yours, dear Stedman: I shall write later. It [this letter] is merely to acknowledge what I would at once have acknowledged but for a rapid journey (& complications) I had to make about the 10<sup>th</sup>. I reached London two days ago. (By the way, that old mother-in-law address, 72 Inverness Terrace, London, W., will always find me as quickly & safely as any other.) I shall, however, be in my "diggings" here (we have till last month nominally been residing at Chorleywood, beyond Harrow, not 25 miles out) till about 10<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> November.

Everything is stored & all "literary-post" connections relinquished — and again I am "Gypsy Bill" as my friends call me. I shall work hard when I am away — but in my own way. My wife and I go first to a little gay French town in the south of Provence, towards the Esterel-Aise, the old Troubadour capital — till the year-end, & after that God knows where or for how long, but for 3 or 4 months any way, & sun-ward, & with few cares & open hearts.

As you know, I love you & always shall. Good-bye for just now. I'll write before long.

Ever loving and your friend | William Sharp

P.S. I have this moment heard that the anthology has just arrived. My many grateful thanks. I'll write again before long, within a week I hope.

*ALS Princeton University*

***To T. W. Rolleston, October 19, [1900]<sup>41</sup>***

19th October

Dear Mr. Rolleston

Many thanks for sending me your interesting notice of *Carmina Gadelica*. It will, I am sure, please Mr. Carmichael.

My own long article ("The Gael and his Heritage") will appear in *The Nineteenth Century*, but (tho' I have just had proofs) not likely, I understand, till January or February.<sup>42</sup>

I have not been well (as you know) and am on my way to a milder or rather less damp air than Scotland can provide at the wane of the year. I write this from London, where I arrived yesterday, and whence I go (to what destination is not yet fixt — I will let you know) probably on either Sunday or Monday morning.

In great haste, | Most Sincerely yours, | Fiona Macleod

P. S. I see your anthology is announced. I wish it a true success every way.

*ALS National Library of Scotland*

**To George Russell (AE), October 20, 1900<sup>43</sup>**

20th October 1900

My dear Mr. Russell

I have been too unwell since I received your welcome note to attempt any correspondence, and now where of all places do you think I write to you — who dread and dislike it so — where but London! I am, however, only a bird of passage here. I arrived two days ago, have been resting, and leave England tomorrow. The sea and the sun are to heal me, so I am told. I think I hope so [sic]; though I seek a healing deeper than the one and beyond the other.

But I did not wish to leave without sending you this little word of thanks and of greeting before I left. Your spray from the sacred hill brought me not only a message from your inward self, but more than you could know perhaps. Some fallen link has been caught up through it — and, too, a truer understanding has come to me in one or two points where we have been at issue.

When in due course they appear (you know how uncertain as to date magazine-contributions are, even when proofs have been "passed") I

would like you to see my poetic play *The Immortal Hour* in a forthcoming "Fortnightly Review": and a forthcoming (December or January perhaps) article in "The Nineteenth Century" on "The Gael and his Heritage" dealing with the treasure-trove of the spiritual hymns and ancient lore in the Hebrides.<sup>44</sup>

Before I left the isles I gathered a spray of fragrant lonroid (you call it bog-myrtle I think, or perhaps gale), of all wild growing things to me the nearest and dearest, and send it to you.<sup>45</sup>

Your friend, | Fiona Macleod

P.S. I forgot to say that my letter-address till next Spring or Summer is that of my typist and agent; c/o Miss Lilian Rea, 2 Carlyle Square, Chelsea, London

*ALS National Library of Scotland*

**To Grant Richards, October 20, 1900**

c/o Miss Lilian Rea | 2 Carlyle Square | Chelsea | October 20, 1900

Dear Sir,

I write to you from London, and had it been practicable would have liked to explain orally what I must now communicate by pen. I am here only passing by, having arrived two days ago, rested, and am to leave England tomorrow for the fall of the year — probably for Tangier in the first instance.

Alas, I have had to relinquish much, and must meanwhile forego all my literary undertakings save what is all but done or awaits overworking or revision only. I have been seriously run down in health — and not only a southern air but as nearly as practicable absolute rest are imperatively prescribed for me. I have no option but to acquiesce. This, however, involves the relinquishment of all hopes to finish the anthology, *The Hour of Beauty*, by or before Christmas. Nor can I now attempt to work at it for several months to come: not till summer at earliest. It is only fair, therefore, first to let you know how matters stand; and, next, to give

you the option of now withdrawing from our agreement: (of course I reserve — as my own property — the title): or of letting the matter stand over indefinitely, till recovered health enables me to take up properly that which can be done only absolutely *con amore*, and with scrupulous judgment and care.<sup>46</sup>

Having reluctantly written thus, may I now ask you if meanwhile, you would care to publish early next Spring a little volume of poetry? It would be called either *For a Little Clan* or else *The Immortal Hour* — the latter being the title of the greater part of the little book, a poetic old world drama, perhaps to be defined as "a symbolist drama" (though I dislike such designations) which is to appear in *The Fortnightly Review* either in November or December (or in both). The remainder of the book would consist of the few selected poems (all I care to preserve) from a volume of verse published some four or five years ago, *From the Hills of Dream*, with some new and uncollected poems.

I had half promised any such book elsewhere, but circumstances alter cases, and having meanwhile to disappoint you (and myself) about the anthology, I would be glad if you care for this other and feasible suggestion.

With you or any publisher I have one stipulation to make about it — namely its *format*. I want it to be a little book, and as nearly as practicable like one of the limp-leather or limp-cloth little volumes published by Mr. Dent, say his edition of Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound*. If you agree, you would, I presume not object to advance me a small sum on the publication, say ten guineas — as in varying degree according to circumstances I always make an equivalent stipulation.

My address as above (that of my London typist and agent) will always speedily reach me.

Believe me, dear sir | Yours very truly, | Fiona Macleod

*ALS Brown University Library*

***To Grant Richards, October 31, 1900<sup>47</sup>***

My dear Sir,

I am in receipt of your courteous letter. So be it: later I shall take up "The Hour of Beauty" to, I hope, our common advantage. I cannot *at present* send any "copy" for the volume of verse proposed: but may be able to do so from Marseille or Malta or Algiers (I do not know where yet) by the end of November. Meanwhile you can see the titular piece in *The Fortnightly* for November where it is *presumably* given complete, though possibly not.<sup>48</sup>

Yours very truly | Fiona Macleod

*ACS Private*

***To R. Murray Gilchrist, [early November, 1900]<sup>49</sup>***

My Dear Robert,

A little ago, on sitting down in my club to answer some urgent notes (and whence I now write) my heart leapt with pleasure, and an undeserving stranger received Part I of a beaming welcome — for the waiter announced that "Mr. Gilchrist would like to see you, Sir." Alas, it was no dear Peaklander, but only a confounded interviewer about the Stage Society! ...

Elizabeth and I leave England on the morning of the 12th — and go first to the South of Provence, near Marseilles: after Yule-tide we'll go on to Italy, perhaps first to Shelley's Spezzia or to Pegli of the Orange Groves near Genoa: and there we await you, or at furthest a little later, say in Florence. We shall be away till the end of March.

Meanwhile 'tis all unpleasantness and incertitude: much to do and little pleasure in the doing: a restlessness too great to be salved short of departure, and the longed for mental and nervous rest far away.

I have just returned from a flying visit to Dorset, and saw Thomas Hardy. He is well, and at work: the two happiest boons of fortune for all our kinship — and therein I hope you are at one with him. I wish you could run up and see our first Stage Society production this

weekend (Sunday) when we bring out a short play by Hardy<sup>50</sup> and R. L. Stevenson and Henley's "Macaire".<sup>51</sup> (I resigned my Chairmanship but was re-elected: and so am extra busy before I go.)

Your loving friend, | Will

P.S. Miss Macleod's drama "The Immortal Hour" is in the November *Fortnightly*, also her article "The Gael and His Heritage" in the November *Nineteenth Century*.

And in addition to these a study on the Dramas of Gabriele d'Annunzio appeared in *The Fortnightly*, in September, signed "W. S."

*Memoir*, pp. 324–25

**To Theodore Watts-Dunton, [November 12, 1900]**

Poste Restante | Aix-en-Provence | France

My dear Watts-Dunton

Just a hurried line as about to leave. I return (with sincere thanks to you) Mr. Prothero's<sup>52</sup> letter. I have heard from him too — a cordial letter, commissioning the Provencal article, & suggesting the possibility of the American one later.

I owe this to you, dear "Aylwin," & I am grateful.

By the time you get this, we shall be on our way to Provence.

Ever affectly yours | William Sharp

*ALS University of Leeds, Brotherton Library*

**To Dr. John Goodchild, November 15, 1900<sup>53</sup>**

Nov. 15, 1900

Dear Dr. Goodchild,

I am glad that you have found pleasure in *The Immortal Hour*. I wonder if you interpret the myth of Midir and Etain quite differently, or if you, too, find in Midir the symbol of the voice of the other world; and what you think of Dalua, the Fool, here and elsewhere. Your earnest letter, written in spiritual comradeship, has been read by me again and again. I do not say that the warning in it is not justified, still less that it is not called for: but, on the other hand, I do not think I follow you aright. Is it something in *The Immortal Hour* (or in *The Divine Adventure* or more likely *The Dominion of Dreams*) that impelled you to write as you did: or something seemingly implied, or inferred by you? ...

We seldom know how or where we really stand, or the mien and aspect we unwittingly bear to the grave eyes of the gods. Is it the lust of knowledge, of Hidden Things, of the Delight of the World, of the magic of Mother-Earth, of the Flesh — to one or all — that you allude. The matter touches me intimately.

You have (I had almost said mysteriously, but why so, for it would be more mysterious if there were no secret help in spiritual comradeship) helped me at more than one juncture in my life...

Most sincerely, | Fiona Macleod

*Memoir*, pp. 318–19

**To the Editor of *The Topical Times*, November 19, [1900]**

Hotel Sextius | Aix-en-Provence | 19th November

Re: Censorship of Plays<sup>54</sup>

Dear Sir,

Your communication has reached me in the South of France, hence my apparent delay in response. I cannot at present go into my reasons in detail, but I may say at once that I am absolutely opposed to an official censorship of plays. It seems to me the Civil Law can do, or be framed anew to do, all that is needful: namely, to interdict the further performance of any play which by its subject and treatment constitutes (1) *Lèse-Divinité* or (2) *Lèse-Décence*. If to this end, and in order to be effective and free from fussy abuse, the Law needs a censor to decide when it should be invoked, then let us have an official Censor but with functions limited solely to those (1) of an Arbiter in Appeal and (2) of a Public Prosecutor. Against any other Censor I am absolutely opposed, believing as I do that a Censor over dramatic composition is as incongruous as would be a Censor of Poetry, a Censor of Painting, a Censor of Sculpture, a Censor of Music, a Censor of Architecture. There exists already a well-understood collective Censorship — in England we name it often “Good Form” — which is, and I believe would continue to be, more effective than the Censorship of any one individual, however well-equipped with literary tastes, histrionic sympathies, cosmopolitan culture, and the obvious and necessary advantages of social position, he might be.

I speak of course for myself only, and not for my colleagues of the Stage Society, whose collective opinion, however, might be obtained at a later date.

I am, Sir, Yours faithfully | William Sharp |  
Chairman of The Stage Society

*ALS Theatre Museum, London*

*To John Macleay, November 30, 1900<sup>55</sup>*

Hotel Sextius | Aix-en-Provence | France |  
Friday Evening | 30<sup>th</sup> November | 1900

Dear Mr. Macleay,

Your friendly note has reached me here, where I have been some time, this being my best centre in Provence at this season for my special studies in Provençal literature & history. My wife and I expect to remain here till about Christmas-time, & then to go on to Italy.

Pressure of urgent work — chiefly a lengthy volume of about 130,000 words on the evolution of the Fine Arts in the Nineteenth Century,<sup>56</sup> primarily for transatlantic publication — prevented my being much in Scotland this autumn. I was a brief while in Galloway visiting friends, & for a week or so at Portpatrick, and a few days in Edinburgh — c'est tout.

At one time there was a chance that I might be near Taynuilt, and I looked forward greatly to see Mr. Carmichael again. He is a splendid type of the true Highlander, and of a nature incomparably sweet and refined — & I have the greatest admiration of him in all ways. Mrs. Carmichael is a woman of fine character, too, and their daughter Ella has charm as well as character & intellect. A remarkable family, and I would to Heaven there were more such families in the Highlands now.

Yes, what a book *Carmina Gadelica* is!<sup>57</sup> It ought to become as precious to the Scottish Gael as the Greek Anthology to all who love the Hellenic ideal, but with a more poignant, a more personal appeal. I did the best I could to help it by presenting my early copy (subscribed for two or three years back) to Miss Macleod, after I had eagerly perused it from cover to cover, and persuading her to write publicly on it. I am glad you liked her article in the "Nineteenth Century," which seems to have attracted much attention.<sup>58</sup> Did you see the poetic drama, "The Immortal Hour," in the November "Fortnightly?" I am glad you are writing on "Carmina G." in the "Bookman" & "Good Words."

I can't tell you about Miss Macleod's historical romance for the good reason that I don't know anything about its present prospects myself. Personally I regret the long postponement, as I think (judging from what I have seen) that it would be a success as a romance of history.

Miss Macleod, however, became dissatisfied with what she had done, or its atmosphere, or both, and (I believe) has not touched it again for some months past — though the last time she spoke of the subject she said she hoped it would be ready by midsummer. I shall believe in its completion when I see it out!!

Ill-health, involving much absolute rest, and latterly change of climate, has prevented her doing all she had projected, but she has been & is writing, though leisurely and with great deliberation. In all probability she will spend the winter and early spring along the Mediterranean coasts. She wants much to go to Italy, but the doctors advised Egypt or Algeria, as drier & sunnier, & to vary this frequently with the sea she loves so well & which suits her splendidly. I saw her in Marseilles a week or two ago on her way south, and hope that, later, she may be able to pay at least a flying visit to Sicily (where later we hope to go) in February, as she will then be with yachting friends. It will depend on health and much else. I don't know where to address her at the moment (possibly now in Mustapha, near Algiers) — but in a few days shall be writing, & shall forward your note. She will be very glad, I know, to hear about the *Highland News* (as I am) as well as about Mr. Carmichael's book. I do hope the H. N. may come under your control. It might be made the foremost literary and national representative of the North. If so, it w<sup>d</sup>. be of signal importance to get some of A. C.'s<sup>59</sup> unpublished material.

You do not tell me of your literary work as distinct from your breadwinning work. I hope you will make time to fulfill the notable promise & accomplishment in what I have seen. What of your novel?

I am myself heavily engaged in work, including many commissions. I've finished an essay on "Impressionism" ("The Impressionist" I call it) for the forthcoming new monthly, "The New Liberal Review," & am now in the throes of a long "Quarterly" article.<sup>60</sup> Then I have a Provencal book on hand, and (interlusive) a Provencal romance.

You will, of course, keep all I have said of myself & doings, & still more importantly of Miss Macleod, to yourself. I don't think she wants anyone save friends & acquaintances to know that she is abroad, & for her health. And above all needing rest as she is, she dreads the slightest addition to a correspondence already beyond her capacities.

Before I left London I read with deep interest the opening installments of Neil Munro's new book *Doom Castle*.<sup>61</sup> It promises, I think, to be his *chef-d'oeuvre*.

Write to me again soon, with news of your doings & prospects. My kind regards to your wife, though she does not know me — & my felicitations to you both on the safe advent of a young Highlander.

Yours sincerely, | William Sharp

*ALS National Library of Scotland*

***To Mr. and Mrs. Coulson Kernahan, [December, 1900]***

To Mr. and Mrs. Kernahan

With all good wishes and Xmas greetings to you both from Elizabeth and William Sharp, who leave Provence for Palermo on Xmas day.

*ACS Princeton University*



# Chapter Twenty-One

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## Life: 1901

When they reached Taormina, the Sharps checked into the Hotel Naumachia which offered spectacular views of the bay of Naxos and Mt Etna. In a January 25 letter to Catherine Janvier, Sharp described the joy he felt in the warmth and beauty of Taormina:

Today it was too warm to work contentedly indoors even upon our little terrace with its superb views over Etna and the Ionian Sea — so at 9 a.m. Elizabeth and I, with a young painter-friend, came up here to a divine spot on the slopes of the steep and grand-shouldered Hill of Venus, bringing with us our writing and sketching materials and also fruit and wine and light luncheon. It is now about 3 p.m. and we have lain here for hours in the glorious warmth and cloudless sun glow — undisturbed by any sounds save the soft sighing of the sea far below, the fluting of a young goatherd with his black flock on a steep across a near ravine, and the occasional passing of a muleteer or of a mountaineer with his wine-panier'd donkeys. A vast sweep of sea is before us and beneath. To the left, under the almond boughs, are the broad straits which divide Sicily from Calabria — in front, the limitless reach of the Greek sea — to the right, below, the craggy heights and Monte Acropolis of Taormina — and, beyond, the vast slope of snow-clad Etna.

In addition to the warm weather and beauty of Taormina, Sharp took special pleasure in the area's association with Greek literature, especially the pastoral poet Theocritus who was born in Sicily around 300 B. C.

I have just been reading (for the hundredth time) in Theocritus. How doubly lovely he is, read on the spot. That young shepherd fluting away to his goats at this moment might be Daphnis himself. Three books are never far from here: Theocritus, the Greek Anthology, and the Homeric Hymns. I loved them before: now they are in my blood.

While picnicking on Monte Venere above Taormina, Sharp continued his letter to Mrs. Janvier:

Legend has it that near this very spot Pythagoras used to come and dream. How strange to think that one can thus come in touch with two of the greatest men of antiquity [...] Perhaps it was here that Pythagoras learned the secret of that music (for here both the sea-wind and the hill-wind can be heard in magic meeting) by which one day — as told in Iamblicus — he cured a young man of Taormina (Tauromenion) who had become mad as a wild beast, with love. Pythagoras, it is said, played an antique air upon his flute, and the madness went from the youth.

In the Sicilian sun, the illness and depression that beset both Sharps in the rain and cold of London disappeared as if by magic.



Fig. 3. Taormina on the east Coast of Sicily with Mt. Etna in the distance.  
Photograph by Miguelfortores (2011), Wikimedia, CC BY-SA 3.0,  
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=17133090#/media/File:Taormina\\_and\\_Mt\\_Etna.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=17133090#/media/File:Taormina_and_Mt_Etna.jpg)

When word of Queen Victoria's death on January 22 reached Taormina, Albert Henry Stopford (1860–1939), a British antiques and art dealer with connections to the royal family, arranged a memorial service in the English Chapel of Saint Caterina. After the service the Sharps met Alexander Nelson Hood who accompanied his father — the Viscount

Bridport in England and the Duke of Bronte in Italy — to the service from his estate near the town of Bronte on the western slope of Mt. Etna. In 1799, King Ferdinand IV of Southern Italy and Sicily gave the estate to Lord Nelson in appreciation for the latter's interception of the French fleet and saving his kingdom from Napoleon. Along with the estate, Ferdinand made Nelson the Duke of Bronte, the name of the area's largest town. Nelson was proud of the title — Bronte in English is "thunder" — which symbolized his victory in Italy, but he did not survive to visit his Duchy. It passed, along with the title, through the marriage of his niece to the Hood family which was headed by a succession of Baron Bridports and, as of 1874, the Viscount Bridport who attended the memorial service in Taormina. The service had a special meaning for Bridport as he had served for forty years as the personal Lord in Waiting to the Queen.

His son, the Honorable Alexander Nelson Hood, was attached to the household of the Duchess of York who later became Queen Mary, but he lived at least six months each year on the Bronte estate where he renovated the residence and introduced farming methods that improved the condition of the people who depended on the estate for their livelihood. Since he had given the Duchy new life and restored it to profitability, Hood, who was the fourth son of the Viscount Bridport, inherited both the estate and the Italian title when his father died in 1904. Over the years, he entertained many British artists and aristocrats at his Castello Maniace. He also constructed a large villa in Taormina where he spent part of the time mingling with artists and enjoying the social life of the English community. Since he never married and had no direct heirs, his title and the estate reverted to the British Bridports following his death in 1937.

Hood took an immediate liking to the Sharps and invited them to visit his Castello Maniace. Several days later they left Taormina for their first trip "to that strange beautiful Duchy on Etna, that was to mean so much to us" (*Memoir*, p. 331). This was the first of five winters in which the Sharps spent some time with Hood at Maniace. Sharp died and was buried there in December 1905. His grave in the estate's English cemetery was marked with an imposing Celtic cross, carved from Etna's lava and commissioned by Hood, which still towers over its lesser neighbors. Having sold most of the estate's land to local farmers, the



Fig. 4a and 4b. Bust and portrait of Alexander Nelson Hood, on display in the Castello Nelson (formally the Castello Maniace). Photographs by Warwick Gould (2014), reproduced with permission.

Hood family in 1981 sold the Castle and 15 hectares of surrounding land to the regional government which presented it to the nearby town of Bronte. The town, in turn, opened the house as a museum in 1982 and renamed it the Castello Nelson. Over the last forty years, the estate's buildings and grounds have been gradually repaired and improved, and the main house, now open to the public, displays a wealth of Nelson memorabilia and fine furniture donated by the Hood family. Although Lord Nelson died at Trafalgar before he could visit his Dukedom, many of his possessions have found a permanent home at the museum which has become one of the main tourist attractions of the Provence of Catania in eastern Sicily.

After returning to Taormina for a few days, the Sharps went south to Syracuse where, on February 7, Sharp wrote again to Catharine Janvier who shared his interest in ancient Greek history and literature. It was the

Syracuse of Theocritus you love so well — the Syracuse where Pindar heard some of his noblest odes sung, where Plato discoursed with his disciples of New Hellas, where (long before) the Argonauts had passed after hearing the Sirens singing by this fatal shore, and near where Ulysses derided Polyphemus — and where Aeschylus lived so long and died.

They were fortunate to be there for a “special choral performance” in “the beautiful hillside Greek Theatre in honour of the visit of Prince Tommaso, the Duke of Genoa, the late King’s brother, and Admiral of the Fleet.”

Imagine our delight! And what a day it has been—the ancient Aeschylean theater crammed once more on all tiers with thousands of Syracusans so that not a spare seat was left—while three hundred young voices sang a version of one of the choral sections of “The Suppliants” of Aeschylus—with it il Principe on a scarlet dais where once the tyrant Dionysius sat! Over head the deep blue sky, and beyond, the deep blue Ionian Sea. It was all too wonderful.



Fig. 5. Greek Theater in Syracuse, Sicily. Built about 470 B. C., it is the largest surviving theater of the ancient world. Photograph by Michele Ponzi (2006), Wikimedia, CC BY-SA 2.0, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Teatro\\_greco\\_di\\_Siracusa\\_-\\_aerea.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Teatro_greco_di_Siracusa_-_aerea.jpg)

Sicily restored the Sharps’ physical and mental health, and they were pleased to be accepted among the elite who wintered in Taormina. With some misgivings, they left the island on the first of March to spend a month in Florence where they rented rooms and were introduced to the

English community by Elizabeth's aunt who lived there. They also spent some time at the Villa Il Palmerino in the hills below Fiesole, as guests of Sharp's friend Eugene Lee Hamilton, his new American wife, and his half-sister Violet Paget, the well-known English feminist who published under the pseudonym, Vernon Lee.



Fig. 6. A recent photograph of the beautifully restored Villa Il Palmerino in Settignano, north-east of Florence, where Eugene Lee Hamilton and Vernon Lee lived for many years. Photograph by Sailko (2016), Wikimedia, CC BY 3.0, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Il\\_palmerino,\\_esterno\\_04.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Il_palmerino,_esterno_04.jpg)

Coincidentally, on the day the Sharps left Sicily, March 1, Sharp's sister, Mary Beatrice Sharp who lived in Edinburgh with her mother and provided the Fiona Macleod hand writing, gave birth to a baby boy in London. Mary's oldest sister, Agnes, was with her in a nursing home in Hammersmith, when she gave birth. Mary named her baby Douglas and gave him up for adoption. He was raised by a family in the midlands, and it was only when he decided as a young man to immigrate to Canada and needed his birth certificate that he learned the identity of his birth mother whereupon he changed his surname to Sharpe, adding

a final “e” that may have come from a mistake on the certificate. In 2004, Douglas Sharpe’s son, Derek Michael Sharpe, shared with me this information and his supporting documents. He was living in Canada and anxious to learn more about his grandmother and the Sharp family. Mary Sharp played a critical role in the production of the Fiona Macleod correspondence which was essential for maintaining the fiction of her separate identity. William and Elizabeth were of course concerned about the progress of Mary’s pregnancy and relieved when they learned she delivered a healthy baby and survived the birth in good health. Sharp’s early poem, “Motherhood”, was only the first of many Sharp and Fiona writings about the agonies and dangers of childbirth. Sharp’s advanced feminism and focus on the travails of womanhood had its origins in the eight children (six girls and two boys) born to his mother in the twelve years following his birth in 1855. Mary’s pregnancy and the birth of her baby were reminders of the complications awaiting the Sharps at home. A photograph of Mary Sharp is reproduced on page 527 of Volume Two.

An October 20, 1900 letter to Grant Richards may have been the last Fiona letter Mary copied before she gave birth on March first. The next surviving Fiona letter in Mary’s script — to David Munro, the Assistant Editor of *The North American Review* — is dated March 15, 1901, two weeks after her baby was born. It was mailed from London, and Fiona explained she had been delayed there by her health on her way to Scotland from Italy. The next Fiona letter — to Mrs. Gertrude Page — is only a draft by Sharp for Mary to copy. The date March 16 is crossed out and “18<sup>th</sup> Mar” in the Fiona hand is substituted on Sharp’s draft. Since Fiona claims in the letter to be writing from Florence, Sharp must have sent the draft to London for Mary to copy and return to him in Florence where he mailed it. The letters to Munro and Page placed Fiona simultaneously in London and Florence, but Munro in New York and Mrs. Page in Bedfordshire would not be comparing notes on her location. The effort of explaining this sequence of locations and dates pales in comparison to the complexities of managing it, but Sharp seems to have enjoyed the game.

These two letters indicate that Mary was sufficiently recovered in mid-March to copy letters into the Fiona handwriting. Meantime, Sharp was making plans to conduct the Fiona correspondence from London after Mary returned to Edinburgh. In the March 16 |18 letter



CARLTON ST.  
Glasgow

Davis.

CARLTON ST.  
Glasgow

AM 16177

Yours Sincerely  
Mary B. Sharp.

"Fiona Macleod's sister, who did all the writing she. of the Fiona Macleod work and carried on the correspondence connected with it."

To the Rev. R. Wilkins Rees.

1906

Fig. 7a and 7b. Recto and verso of photograph of Mary B. Sharp (1902), sister of William Sharp. Her handwriting became that of Fiona Macleod. Photograph held by Princeton Firestone Library. Photographs of recto and verso by William F. Halloran (2020).

to Mrs. Page, Fiona said her “most convenient letter address” was “c/o Mrs. Rinder | 11 Woronzow Road | St. John’s Wood N.W.” That is also the return address of Fiona’s March 15 letter to David Munro. Sometime between October and March, Lillian Rea left the country, and Edith Rinder stepped in as the London transfer agent for the Fiona correspondence. Dated June 1, the subsequent Fiona letter is entirely typed, and the font differs from those Mary occasionally typed in Edinburgh; even its signature is typed. Edith Rinder, whose return address it contains, must have typed it from Sharp’s draft. Meanwhile, Mary transcribed in the Fiona script a card to the American publisher Thomas Mosher dated June 10 and mailed it from Edinburgh. In a lengthy typed letter to Mosher dated July 8 (which included a note and signature in the Fiona script and carried Edith’s return address), Fiona referred to Mrs. Rinder as her “friend and literary-correspondence agent.” It is somehow fitting that Edith Rinder, who was so intimately involved in Sharp’s production of the Fiona writings, became the London manager of Fiona’s correspondence.

On February 1, while visiting Alexander Hood, Sharp wrote to ask Theodore Watts-Dunton to persuade his housemate, Algernon Swinburne, to consent to Sharp editing a selection of his poems for publication by Baron Tauchnitz, whose firm in Leipzig was publishing inexpensive paperback editions of English authors. Sharp received Swinburne’s permission, conveyed through Watts-Dunton, after returning to London in April. In a March 19 letter to Watts-Dunton, Sharp said Baron Tauchnitz had accepted his terms for the Swinburne volume (30 pounds), but he was still worried about gaining Swinburne’s consent. He had asked Sharp: “Do you think you could in any case prevail upon Mr. Swinburne to write the briefest line — or to sign one written to you, saying simply “I consent to the preparation of a Tauchnitz vol. of selections from my poetical writings.” Whether or not Swinburne complied with that request, Tauchnitz published *Selections of Poems by A. C. Swinburne*, selected and arranged and with an introduction by William Sharp, in October 1901. Sharp was under the impression that Swinburne had given him complete freedom to select and arrange his poems, but when the volumes appeared he received a letter from Swinburne (*Memoir*, pp. 336–37) which contained several complaints about both selection and arrangement.

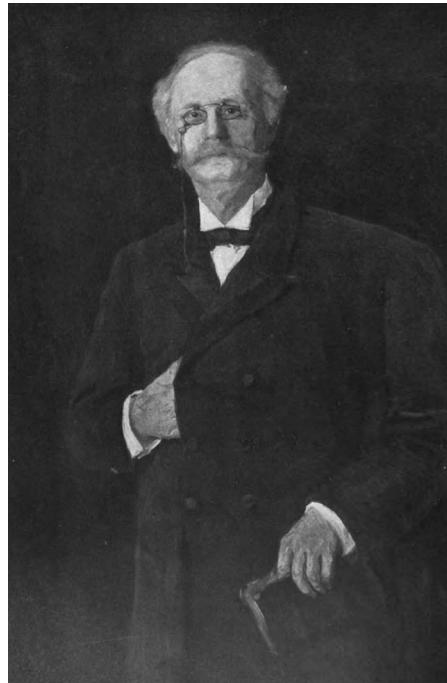


Fig. 8. Baron Christian Karl Bernard Tauchnitz (1841–1921). Portrait by Vilma Lwoff-Parlaghy (1901). Wikimedia, Public Domain, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Tauchnitz\\_Christian\\_Karl\\_001.jpg#/media/File:Tauchnitz\\_Christian\\_Karl\\_001.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Tauchnitz_Christian_Karl_001.jpg#/media/File:Tauchnitz_Christian_Karl_001.jpg)

The Sharps left London on or around July 9 and settled for a month at the Spa House in Cowley within walking distance of R. Murray Gilchrist at Cartledge Hall near the village of Holmesfield. While they were in rural Derbyshire, Edith Rinder gave birth on July 26 to Esther Mona Rinder. The child's middle name recognized the crucial role Mona Caird played in the lives of her parents. As Frank Rinder's cousin and soon to be Esther's godmother, Mona continued to provide material and emotional support for Edith and Frank long after she facilitated their move to London in the late 1880s and their marriage in 1890. Often in his decade-long relationship with Edith Rinder, Sharp lamented, in private notes and in the Fiona Macleod stories, their inability to have a child. Occasionally, he cast Fiona, the product of their collaboration, as their child. Given the interdependence of the relationship between the Sharps and the Rinders and the fact that neither marriage had produced a child,

it is not surprising that the Rinder's baby girl meant a great deal to both couples.

Since Sharp often referred to Edith as Fiona's very close friend, it was not surprising that Fiona's retelling of the story of *Deirdrê and the Sons of Usna*, published by Mosher in 1903, was dedicated "To Esther Mona." Writing as Fiona, Sharp left a beautiful, loving message for the child which reads in part

I shall have bent above the fading warmth, and have risen at last, cold, and gone away, when that little wandering heart of yours shall have become a woman's heart; and so I do not know whether, if I were to look in it, I should see beyond the shaken reeds of the mind the depth-held star of the old passion of beauty, the old longing, the old enchantment. But I hope so. Are you not the child of her, that friend to whom I inscribed my first book; of whom, in its prefatory words, I wrote "we have loved the same things and in the same way [...] take, then, out of my heart, this book of vision and dream." [...] So, little one, come in time to love these things of beauty. Lay your child's heart, that is made of morning joy and evening longing, to that Mother-heart; and when you gather years, as now you gather the little white clan of the grass, it shall be well with you. And you, too, when your time is come, and you in turn pass on the mystery of life to another who will look up from your breast with eyes of still wonder and slowly shaping thought, forget not to tell that other to lay its child's heart of morning joy and evening longing against a more ancient and dream-filled heart than that of any woman, that mother-heart of which I speak to you, the Heart of Beauty (pp. x-xii).

It is one woman speaking to another, but more profoundly it is a man who loved the child's mother expressing his hope the child will come to love the same things they loved, including the Gaelic myth of the beautiful Deirdrê he recounted for the child in "this book of dream and vision." Had Sharp lived longer, he would have been quietly satisfied as the hope expressed in Fiona's dedication was realized. Esther Mona (Rinder) Harvey was a woman of many accomplishments as a linguist, artist, wife, and mother. He would have been equally satisfied with the accomplishments of the family she left behind when she died in 1993 at the age of ninety-one.

During his visit to New York in the fall of 1896, Sharp spent a few days with Henry Mills Alden, the Editor of *Harper's Magazine*, in his home across the Hudson in Metuchen, New Jersey. One night after dinner he told Alden, who was twenty years his senior and had recently lost his

wife, about Edith Rinder, the love of his life. In his letter to Alden of October 22, 1901, Sharp expressed his hope that “all goes well with you in your new life” — Alden had recently remarried — and continued: “I wish too I could tell you of a strange, of a fantastically strange, and to me deeply moving development of that old romance of boyhood which I confided to you one evening before the fire at Metuchen.” At a time when the relationship between Sharp and Edith had begun to cool — as he explained directly to Yeats and indirectly in the Fiona writings — Edith gave birth to a daughter. That must have been the “deeply moving development” he wished he could describe to Alden. The Fiona dedication to Esther Mona and Sharp’s guarded statement in this letter appear to be his only surviving references to Esther; and her only remembrance of William Sharp was the oranges he sent to the Rinder family from Sicily when she was a child of three and four.

After spending most of July and early August in Derbyshire, the Sharps went to Kilcreggan in Argyll and remained there until mid-October. During the summer, Sharp as Fiona corresponded frequently with the publisher Thomas Mosher in Portland, Maine. Over the course of a lengthy career, Mosher oversaw the design and publication of hundreds of books, mostly reprints of works by British authors. Sharp’s enthusiastic praise of Mosher’s books in many Fiona letters was genuine and well-deserved. Unsurprisingly, there was also a financial motive. Since the demise of Stone and Kimball five years earlier, Sharp had no outlet for the Fiona books in the United States. Sensing that Mosher’s publishing firm might fill that void, he moved full steam ahead.

The December 1900 issue of Mosher’s little-magazine anthology, *The Bibelot, A Reprint of Poetry and Prose for Book Lovers*, featured “Lyrics From the Hills of Dream,” a selection from the book of Fiona poems published in Edinburgh in 1896 by Patrick Geddes and Colleagues. The response to Fiona’s poems in *The Bibelot* suggested she might be a reliable source of income for Mosher. When he visited Edinburgh in the spring of 1901, he sought and received permission from Geddes to publish more of the poems. In May 1901 he wrote directly to Fiona proposing an American edition whereupon Sharp accepted the proposal and began to remove some of the poems in the Geddes edition of 1896 and add new ones. *From the Hills of Dream: Threnodies, Songs, and Other Poems* was published in September 1901, in Mosher’s *Old World Series*,

and the edition differed substantially from the Geddes first edition. Mosher published nine more Fiona Macleod books during the four remaining years of Sharp's life — a total of ten — and six more after he died. It was principally through the Mosher publications that Fiona Macleod gained a modest but devoted American readership in the early twentieth century.

A source of concern for Sharp during the summer and fall of 1901 was his involvement with W. B. Yeats in planning the Celtic Mystical Order. In 1897, Yeats became convinced Sharp and the woman he called Fiona Macleod were accomplished visionaries, and he invited them to join him and a few close friends (Maud Gonne, George Russell (AE), the Macgregor Mathers, and his uncle George Pollexfen) in an effort to produce the Order's rituals. Yeats borrowed his model for the rituals for the new Celtic Order from those of the Order of the Golden Dawn of which both he and Sharp were members. Sharp had begun to experiment with spiritualism as early as 1892. After joining forces with Yeats in 1897, his efforts to contact spirits, sometimes aided by drugs, became more frequent and intense.

In late May 1901 from his London address, Yeats sent Sharp a draft, which he had "done in a very perfunctory way", of the first Rite, the initiation ritual, for his Celtic Order (*Collected Letters IV*, pp. 967–68). He asked Sharp "to try to get a vision of the coming of the seven races," the races which invaded Ireland in ancient times, and to send the rite back with notes "as soon as possible." He also asked Sharp to "try to get Miss Macleod to try her hand at any point that may seem weak." His goal was to "start" the Order with this first Rite when he returned to London from Ireland in the fall, "and then go on Rite by Rite till the whole fabric is finished." A few days later, having received no word from Sharp, Yeats wrote directly to Fiona from Rosses Point near Sligo where he was staying with George Pollexfen. The first Rite draft Sharp supposedly sent her concerned the Celtic mysteries and needed to be "better written," but he thought its structure was right. Perhaps she could help with the writing. He went on to describe what he thought the material to be mastered should be in the remaining six Rite. He had worked out the symbolism, the proposed content, and the purpose of all seven Rites, but "the great problem is structure, just as the great

problem in a play is structure." Since Fiona's clairvoyant powers were greater than his own, he hoped she would comment on his draft.

Sharp constructed a brief Fiona reply to Yeats which is now lost, but the substantive reply is in a Fiona letter dated July 26, coincidentally the very day of Esther Mona Rinder's birth. Fiona wondered if Yeats would object to a complete reconstruction of the Rite since it seemed to present "insuperable difficulty." "In other words," she continued, "has your Rite finality to you?" She then warned Yeats to be very careful in November: "It is always a month of suffering and mischance for some of us and especially about the 21<sup>st</sup> (the seven days before or after)." Her friend — Sharp — was feeling especially vulnerable. He had recently had "five very singular visions, each unsought and abrupt." They were followed by a sixth which, she thought, was a warning from the realm of spirits: "Put the four cups of light about you in the seven and seven dark days of the month of the curlew (... i.e. November)." If there was any truth in her words, Sharp's feelings of vulnerability would be entirely understandable. He had other matters on his mind and was trying, I believe, to cover his inattention to Yeats' Celtic project with language borrowed from the Golden Dawn. Yeats, on the other hand, was deadly serious. He responded in a brief note to Sharp on August 4 (*Collected Letters*, IV, p. 980). He could not delay much longer the implementation of the first Rite. Once it is finalized and accepted, Sharp will find he is "much less attacked." The ceremonies will be his

protection — that is indeed part of their purpose. A Rite woven into other Rites is a ceaseless invocation of strong protectors. Make a circle of light about the room before you begin & if you think well — this I got once studying Maud Gonne — set the 4 hosts of the Feann to guard the cardinal points.

For the time being Sharp should simply do whatever he could about the Rite and protect himself from evil forces.

In a much longer letter of August 4 to Fiona Macleod, Yeats dismissed her proposal to recast the first Rite and suggested she start working on the second Rite, which would be "The Mystery of the Cauldron" (*Collected Letters*, IV, pp. 974–78). He had been "instructed to work on the six initiations in order," but a plan for the second Rite, the "initiates of the cauldron," had floated before him. The officers, or those conducting the initiation, would speak "as the prow, stern, rudder

etc. of a symbolic ship, which is taking the candidate on his way." The initiation would then change to "a purifying ceremony (the candidate standing symbolically in the stone vessel one sees in New Grange). I got the ship from a ship in 'The Book of the Dead' & from a certain Irish peasant ceremony, said to have been obscene by the priests who put it down." Since Fiona, according to Yeats, was "beyond comparison a greater clairvoyant," he would gladly have her complete reworking of the first Rite, "The Mystery of the Obligation," but that would take time. He wanted to move quickly in order, "to initiate certain people who I have in my mind into the Mystery of the Obligation this autumn."

Given the time constraint, it would be better for Fiona and Sharp to focus on getting the details and the language for the second Rite, "The Mystery of the Cauldron." Yeats concluded this letter to Fiona by stating his goal in creating the Celtic Mystical Order and the need for fast action: "I believe that there is a great contest going to come on here in a few years between the Church and the mystics. There have been some premonitory mutterings already. It is absolutely necessary to begin our organization at once." He was creating a spiritualist movement that would rival and eventually replace Christianity, including the Catholic Church, which exercised great power over the minds and bodies of the Irish. Though Sharp was certainly interested in contacting the spirit world that surrounded him, replacement of the Christian religion, be it Roman, Irish, or British, was not his objective.

In the face of Yeats' sense of urgency, Sharp continued to procrastinate. In fact, he was losing interest in Yeats' Celtic Mystical Order and shifting his spiritualist interests toward those of his new friend Doctor John Goodchild whose geographical locus for spiritualist renewal was not in the West of Ireland, but in the West of England — specifically in the area of Glastonbury. On October 31, Sharp, as Fiona, told Yeats she wished she could write on magical matters, but regretted it was not possible yet. "I have never known such continuity of hostile will, of which I am persuaded: and though, owing to the visionary power of our common friend [Sharp], much has been seen and overcome, and much seen and avoided, there is still something to avoid, something to overcome, and something to see. Soon, "possibly in this very month of November where the dark powers prevail (and if so, a double victory indeed!) that which has been impossible may become possible." All she could do now

was send Yeats a copy of the new edition of her poetry published by Thomas Mosher in Maine. She described in some detail how this edition differed from that published by the Geddes firm in 1896. In addition to the new array of poems, one section of the volume entitled "Foam of the Past" contained a lengthy dedication to Yeats. That dedication will appear, she told him, at the very front of a projected new English edition of her poems, a project that failed to see the light of day until 1907, after Sharp's death in 1905. She wanted Yeats' advice among three titles she was considering for that English edition. Having brushed quickly past the Celtic order, Sharp wanted Yeats' approval of the new poems in the new edition. It must have been clear to Yeats that Sharp's interest in his Order had waned.

On November 23, Sharp sent Yeats a Fiona note accompanying the November issue of Thomas Mosher's *Bibelot* which featured a reprint of her "Celtic" essay, the essay AE had attacked in his review of *The Divine Adventure* in the July 21, 1900 issue of the *All Ireland Review*. She had expanded its title to "Celtic: A Study in Spiritual History" and written a prologue intended to address some of AE's concerns which she would like Yeats to read. She hoped he had found "something to care for" in Mosher's *From the Hills of Dream*, and in its dedication to him.

The reminder caused Yeats to respond quickly with apologies for having waited so long to thank her for the book (*Collected Letters IV*, pp. 982–84). He took time to writing frankly and perceptively. He liked her prose better than her poetry, but "here and always you are a wonderful maker of myths. They seem your natural mode of expression. They are to you what mere words are to others." He encouraged her to strive for simplicity of language so "the myths stand out clearly, as something objective, as something well born & independent." When she used elaborate words, she invented "with less conviction, with less precision, with less delicacy." He continued:

I have an advantage over you in having a very fierce nation to write for. I have to make everything very hard & clear, as it were. ... You have in the proper sense far more imagination than I have & that makes your work correspondingly more difficult. It is fairly easy for me who do so much of my work by the critical, rather than the imaginative faculty to be precise & simple, but it is hard for you in whose mind images form themselves without ceasing & are gone as quickly perhaps.

When Fiona spoke in an obviously personal voice, Yeats wrote, she was "not that Fiona who has invented a new thing, a new literary method. You are that Fiona when the great myths speak through you." Yeats made no mention of the volume's dedicatory note to him or to the new prologue to the controversial "Celtic" essay. Rather, he concluded by returning to his principal interest. He asked Fiona to send him any notes she had on the Celtic Rite because "there are places where I need the qualities of a different mind from mine."

This carefully crafted letter blends perceptive criticism with generous praise. Yeats shared AE's displeasure with the heightened rhetoric and imprecision of some of the writings of Fiona Macleod. Yet he believed many of Fiona's works were valuable, indeed that Sharp as Fiona had "invented a new thing, a new literary method." In some of her prose, "myth" was her "language" and the myths spoke directly through her. Although AE had warned Yeats directly and then through Lady Gregory in August 1900 that Sharp/Fiona should not be trusted with the secrets of the Celtic Mystical Order (*Collected Letters II*, p. 552 and *Collected Letters IV*, p. 978), Yeats ignored the warning. Despite the fact that Sharp was using some of the symbols and constructs of the incipient Order in Fiona's poems and plays, Yeats continued to seek his assistance because he believed Fiona, or Sharp as Fiona, had clairvoyant powers more insightful than his own.

In early 1901, Sharp's proposal for an article on the poetry and prose of Theodore Watt-Dunton was accepted by the weekly magazine *Literature* whose editor wanted "an account and sympathetic appreciation." Sharp submitted the article in June and wrote to Watts-Dunton in early July: "I hope that what I have written will be just such a pronouncement as you would like. Fortunately, *Literature* now carries great weight with its large circulation." In fact, *Literature* was in dire straits, having descended into confusion in February 1900 following the unexpected death of its powerful editor, Henry Duff Traill. It soon combined with the *Academy* and survived for a time as the *Academy and Literature*. Sharp's article never appeared, and Sharp had to tell Watts-Dunton on February 10, 1902 (Chapter 22, Volume 3) that he had heard nothing from the journal: "neither returned MS [manuscript], nor payment, nor even acknowledgment of my letter." During the summer, Sharp's friend George L. Halkett, Editor of the *Pall Mall Magazine*, accepted his

proposal for an article on Watts-Dunton and his housemate at the Pines, Algernon Swinburne. He finished this article in Derbyshire, sent it to Watts-Dunton for review, and put it in final form for Halkett. Entitled "A Literary friendship: Mr. Swinburne and Mr. Watts-Dunton at the Pines," it appeared in the December number of the *Pall Mall*.

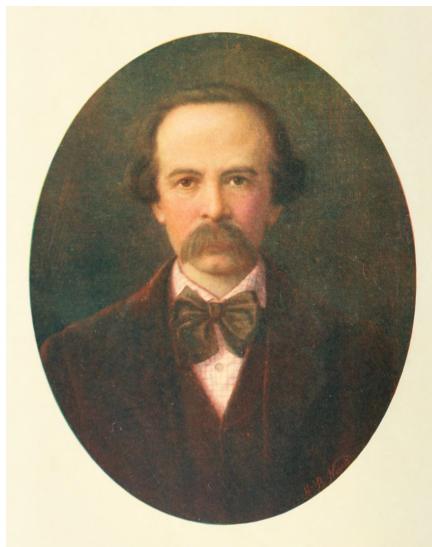


Fig. 9. Theodore Watts-Dunton (1832–1914). Portrait by H. B. Norris (1902),  
Wikimedia, Public Domain, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theodore\\_Watts-Dunton#/media/File:Theodore.watts-dunton.jpeg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theodore_Watts-Dunton#/media/File:Theodore.watts-dunton.jpeg)

After returning to London in mid-October, the Sharps made plans to spend December in Florence and then go south for another extended stay in Sicily. From January to mid-February they would be in Taormina followed by a fortnight or so with Alexander Nelson Hood at his Castle Maniace. Through Hood, Sharp had met the popular American novelist Marion Crawford who lived with his wife near Sorrento in Italy. Sharp wrote to say they would be happy to visit the Crawford's in Sorrento on their way to Sicily. Subsequently, the Sharps' December plans were canceled due to illness, their own and, more seriously, that of Elizabeth's mother who required Elizabeth's presence at her bedside at 72 Inverness Terrace.

While still in London in mid-December, Sharp drafted a letter for Mary to copy and send to Thomas Mosher. In response to his request

for a photograph of Fiona, Sharp had sent him a picture of Edith Rinder. Mosher asked her to allow him to publish it for Fiona's fans in America. Like others who had seen the picture, he was struck by the woman's beauty. The Fiona letter to Mosher of December 15 is an artful response to a reasonable request from someone whose favor she wanted to maintain. Asking him not to think her ungracious, she continued, "I am sure you know me well enough to be sure that neither a foolish 'fad,' nor still less any ungraciousness towards a request so natural and from one whose friendship I value, is responsible for my asking you not to press the point of my photograph." Were she to accept his request, she would be under "continual subsequent nervous apprehension, in itself very bad for work and well-being." In fact, her recent illness was due to the "serious nervous drain" that affected her after she sent the picture to Mosher on loan. She hated to refuse him just as she had hated to refuse a similar request from George Meredith. She promised Mosher he would surely have a photo when she died, or even earlier were she to decide later that the distance between Scotland and Portland was far enough to avoid "peril." Sharp did not tell Mosher the nature of the feared peril, that the woman in the photograph might be recognized as Edith Rinder. Sharp's greatest invention remained to the end of his life a source of endless fabrication and occasional anxiety.

While Elizabeth was confined to London with her mother, Sharp went to Hastings in mid-December to "convalesce." On the 19<sup>th</sup>, he spent a day with Henry James in Rye and described the visit in a letter to Mrs. Philpot:

I had a most delightful day at Rye with Henry James who now lives there for many months in the year. I went over early, lunched, and then we went all over that wonderfully picturesque old Cinque Port. A lovely walk in a frost-bound still country, and then back by the sombre old Land Gate, over the misty marshes down below, and the flame red Cypress Tower against a plum coloured sunset, to Henry James' quaint and picturesque old house to tea. It was in every way a memorable and delightful day, and not least the great pleasure of intercourse with that vivid brilliant and alive mind.

On December 26, he told Louise Chandler Moulton he would leave for Sicily in a week, going first to Bordighera, where his friend Doctor John Goodchild wintered, and then to Genoa where he hoped to meet

Elizabeth, and then on to Sicily for January and February. Despite the illnesses and the financial problems, 1901 was redeemed by days like those with Henry James and by the discovery of Thomas Mosher in Maine and Alexander Nelson Hood in Sicily.

## Letters: 1901

### *To Catherine Ann Janvier, January 25, 1901*

Monte Venere, Taormina, | 25th Jan., 1901

Today it was too warm to work contentedly indoors even upon our little terrace with its superb views over Etna and the Ionian Sea — so at 9 a.m. Elizabeth and I, with a young painter-friend, came up here to a divine spot on the slopes of the steep and grand-shouldered Hill of Venus, bringing with us our writing and sketching materials and also fruit and wine and light luncheon. It is now about 3 p.m. and we have lain here for hours in the glorious warmth and cloudless sun glow — undisturbed by any sounds save the soft sighing of the sea far below, the fluting of a young goatherd with his black flock on a steep across a near ravine, and the occasional passing of a muleteer or of a mountaineer with his wine-panier'd donkeys. A vast sweep of sea is before us and beneath. To the left, under the almond boughs, are the broad straits which divide Sicily from Calabria — in front, the limitless reach of the Greek sea — to the right, below, the craggy heights and Monte Acropolis of Taormina — and, beyond, the vast slope of snow-clad Etna.... .

I have just been reading (for the hundredth time) in Theocritus. How doubly lovely he is, read on the spot. That young shepherd fluting away to his goats at this moment might be Daphnis himself. Three books are never far from here: Theocritus, the Greek Anthology, and the Homeric Hymns. I loved them before: now they are in my blood.

Legend has it that near this very spot Pythagoras used to come and dream. How strange to think that one can thus come in touch with two of the greatest men of antiquity — for within reach from here (a pilgrimage to be made from Syracuse) is the grave of Aeschylus. Perhaps it was here that Pythagoras learned the secret of that music (for here both the sea-wind and the hill-wind can be heard in magic meeting)

by which one day — as told in Iamblicus — he cured a young man of Taormina (Tauromenion) who had become mad as a wild beast, with love. Pythagoras, it is said, played an antique air upon his flute, and the madness went from the youth, . . .

I shall never forget the journey across Sicily. I forget if I told you in my letter that it had been one of my dreams since youth to read the Homeric Hymns and Theocritus in Sicily — and it has been fulfilled; even to the unlikeliest, which was to read the great Hymn to Demeter at Enna itself. And that I did — in that wild and remote mountain-land. Enna is now called Castrogiovanni<sup>1</sup> — but all else is unchanged — though the great temples to Demeter and Persephone are laid low. It was a wonderful mental experience to read that Hymn on the very spot where Demeter went seeking — torch in hand, and wind-blown blue peplos about her — her ravished daughter, the beautiful Pherephata or Persephone. However, I have already told you all about that — and the strange coincidence of the two white doves, (which Elizabeth witnessed at the moment I exclaimed) and about our wonderful sunset-arrival in Greek Tauromenion. . . .

William Sharp

*Memoir*, pp. 328–29

**To Theodore Watts-Dunton, [early] February, 1901**

Hotel Naumachia | Taormina | Sicily | Feb/01<sup>2</sup>

My dear Aylwin

On the head of a letter from Baron Tauchnitz I am writing to you today from here, just before my return to Taormina, to ask you (if you are willing) to add any needed persuasion to my letter by same post to Mr. Swinburne with reference to the proposal to include in the Tauchnitz Series a “Swinburne” vol. akin to Hueffer’s “Morris” and the two Rossetti vols. I hope very much Mr. Swinburne will consent — for I know that apart from a large number of English-speaking people living abroad who would like to have a companion vol. to the much

appreciated "Morris" & "Rossetti" vols, there are many French, Russian, Scandinavian, German and other students of our literature for whom a Tauchnitz volume is practically the sole opportunity.<sup>3</sup>

I hope you are well & hard at work — above all in that work in which your self most reflects itself. What a dreary winter it has been in England, apart from the great sorrow of the Queen's death.<sup>4</sup>

We had a delightful late autumn in Provence, & there & since I worked at & finished my long article on Modern Provençal literature, for the "Quarterly." It has now been typed, but not yet revised & dispatched. (By the way, did you get our little Christmas greeting?)

We have had a wonderful time in Sicily since Christmas — at Palermo, Syracuse, and Taormina. Prof. Butcher<sup>5</sup> is the nearest Literary neighbor we have here — but we have many other friends, including our present host Lord Bridport (here the Duke of Bronte).<sup>6</sup>

We remain here (Taormina) till the end of February, & on 1st March leave for Florence, arriving there about the 5th or 6th, probably to take rooms there for about six weeks.

With all affectionate remembrances (in which my wife asks to join)

Ever Sincerely Yours | William Sharp

*ALS British Library*

***To Catherine Ann Janvier, February 7, 1901<sup>7</sup>***

Casa Politi, | Strada Dionysio, | 7th Feb, 01

I must send you at least a brief line from Syracuse — that marvelous "Glory of Hellas" where ancient Athens fell in ruin, alas, when Nicias lost here the whole army and navy and Demosthenes surrendered by the banks of the Anapus — the Syracuse of Theocritus you love so well — the Syracuse where Pindar heard some of his noblest odes sung, where Plato discoursed with his disciples of New Hellas, where (long before) the Argonauts had passed after hearing the Sirens singing by this fatal shore, and near where Ulysses derided Polyphemus — and where Aeschylus lived so long and died.

It seems almost incredible when one is in the beautiful little Greek Theatre up on the rising ground behind modern Syracuse to believe that so many of the greatest plays of the greatest Greek tragedians (many unknown to us even by name) were given here under the directions of Aeschylus himself. And now I must tell you of a piece of extraordinary good fortune. Yesterday turned out the superbest of this year — a real late Spring day, with the fields full of purple irises and asphodels and innumerable flowers, and the swallows swooping beneath the multitudes of flowering almonds. We spent an unforgettable day — first going to the Castle of ancient Euryalos — perhaps the most wonderful I have ever known. Then, in the evening, I heard that today a special choral performance was to be given in the beautiful hillside Greek Theatre in honour of the visit of Prince Tommaso (Duke of Genoa, the late King's brother, and Admiral of the Fleet). Imagine our delight! And what a day it has been — the ancient Aeschylean theatre crammed once more on all its tiers with thousands of Syracusans, so that not a spare seat was left — while three hundred young voices sang a version of one of the choral sections of "The Suppliants" of Aeschylus — with the Prince on a scarlet dais where once the tyrant Dionysius sat! Over head the deep blue sky, and beyond, the deep blue Ionian sea. It was all too wonderful.... .

William Sharp

*Memoir*, pp. 329–30

***To David Munro, March 15, 1901<sup>s</sup>***

C/o. Mrs. Rinder | 11 Woronzow Road | St. John's Wood |  
London | 15th March.1901

Dear Mr. Munro.

Ill health has prevented my sending you before this my promised article on "*The Irish Muse*" (à propos of the recent publication of Mr. Stopford Brooke's and Mr. Rolleston's important Irish Anthology) — which I have tried to make at once as significant and widely interesting as I

could.<sup>9</sup> It has caused me much time and thought, and will I hope please you and Mr. Harvey.

If you should find it overlong, even by putting the verse and other quotations in small and close type, you may delete whatever you choose between pp. 26–34 inclusive, or elsewhere if desired. As I am still delayed by my health from returning to Scotland, and so, too, from work — and have given all my energy of late to this article — it will greatly oblige me if you could kindly remit to me for it, after you have read it, at your earliest convenience.

With cordial regards | Believe me, yours very truly | Fiona Macleod  
*ALS New York University, Fales Library*

**To: Gertrude Page, March 18, 1901<sup>10</sup>**

Florence | 18th March, 1901  
Mrs. Gertrude Page | Heatherbank |  
Woburn Sands | Beds R. S. O.

My dear unknown friend

You must forgive a tardy reply to your welcome letter, but I have been ill, and am not yet strong. Your writing to me has made me happy. One gets many letters: some leave one indifferent; some interest; a few are like clear and familiar voices speaking in a new way, or as from an obscure shore. Yours is of the last. I am glad to know that something in what I have written has coloured anew your own thought, or deepened the subtle music that you yourself hear — for no one finds the colour of life and the music of the spirit unless he or she already perceive the one and love the other. Somewhere in one of my books — I think in the latest, "The Divine Adventure," but at the moment cannot remember — I say that I no longer ask of a book, is it clever, or striking, or is it well done, or even is it beautiful, but — out of how deep a life does it come? That is the most searching test. And that is why I am grateful when one like yourself writes to tell me that intimate thought and emotion deeply felt have reached some other and kindred spirit.

Have you read "*The Divine Adventure*" — though by that I mean rather the section in it called "Iona" (or as it appeared serially, in the *Fortnightly*)? If so, you may care to know that all that is "reminiscent" there is truly of myself, & with but slight and nonessential variations in name & locality.

I am writing to you from Florence. You know it, perhaps? The pale green Arno, the cream-white, irregular, green-blinded, time-stained houses opposite, the tall cypresses of the Palatine garden beyond, the dove-grey sky, all seem to breathe one sigh..... *La Pace! L'Oblio!*

But then — life has made those words "Peace," "Forgetfulness," very sweet for me. Perhaps for you this vague breath of another Florence than that which Baedeker describes might have some more joyous interpretation. I hope so. Perhaps you are older, perhaps younger than I — but one may feel old when the world looks on one as young, as, with happy lives, one may feel young when one is old.

If you care to write to me again at any time — & I would like to know that you get this letter, as several letters of mine recently have gone astray, probably because I could not see to them myself — my most convenient letter address is c/o Mrs. Wingate Rinder | 11 Woronzow Road | London N W.

If you *do* write again, tell me if you are married or unmarried, and anything else you care — for I would like to number you among my friends and to put some colour and contour into the likeness of the friendly voice that has generously spoken.

You are right in what you say, about the gulf between kindred natures being less wide than it seems. But do not speak of the spiritual life as "another life": there is no "other" life: what we mean by that is with us now. The great misconception of Death is that it is the only door to another world.

Believe me, | Your friend, | Fiona Macleod

*Draft ALS in National Library of Scotland*

**To Theodore Watts-Dunton, [late April?, 1901]**

Sunday | Wharncliffe | Chorleywood | Herts

I have not heard from you yet (as to Chatto), but suppose it is all right, & that I can now write to Tauchnitz.<sup>11</sup>

Have written to Editor of "Literature" (but I must say that I don't like the style, in any sense, of the "Henley" — besides, as I think, its exaggerated estimate of Henley).<sup>12</sup>

Yours Ever Affectionately | William Sharp

*ALS University of Leeds, Brotherton Library*

**To Theodore Watts-Dunton, May 19, 1901**

Wharncliffe | Chorleywood | (Herts) | Sunday | 19/5/01

My Dear Watts-Dunton,

I have had a satisfactory reply from the Ed. of *Literature*: "I sh<sup>d</sup>. be much obliged if you would, as you suggest, write on Watts-Dunton. What we want may perhaps be described as "an account, & sympathetic appreciation," of an author's literary work. But we are anxious in no case to do more than that, or to sacrifice an attitude of independent criticism."<sup>13</sup>

Can you send me. Or direct me to, any adequate & exact chronological record of your work etc.? Please do, with the loan of anything else that would serve.

I'm unfortunately not very well at present, & under special treatment, or instead of writing would have run out to see you: as it is, the inevitable going into town once or twice in the week is more than enough for me. I have also (this morning) heard from Baron Tauchnitz. I am very glad indeed, every way, to say that he accedes to my suggested terms. (By the way, it was £30 that was finally paid to Mr. Hueffer for each of the vols. he edited — & Baron T. adds "this price has proved to be in accordance with the results of the sale of the said vols. in our edition." However, he

adds, "though it would otherwise be natural to offer the same terms for 'Rossetti' and 'Morris,' I will accept your proposal.")

He concludes: — "As soon as I hear from you that everything is now right, I will send you the usual contract forms" — adding "Pray give my best regards to Mr. Watts-Dunton as well as to Mr. Swinburne, and tell them that I am proud now to be able to put the name of the greatest living English poet on our list of publications." With reference to the "contract forms" alluded to — I presume they will be such as I can sign all right — but if they sh<sup>d</sup>. involve any explicit statement as to Mr. Swinburne's generous consent to this Tauchnitz ed<sup>n.</sup> en ligne with the "Rossetti" & "Morris," what am to do? Do you think you could in any case prevail upon Mr. Swinburne to write the briefest line — or to sign one written to you, saying simply "I consent to the preparation of a Tauchnitz vol. of selections from my poetical writings.""

I hope you can do this.

For the rest, I will in every respect do my utmost to fulfill well both the explicit & implicit trust reposed in me.

In haste, Yours ever, | William Sharp

P.S. I hope you may be able to let me hear from you on both matters at your earliest convenience.

*ALS University of Leeds, Brotherton Library*

***To Thomas Mosher, May 31, 1901***

c/o Mrs. Rinder | 11 Woronzow Road | St. John's Wood N. W. | Friday  
night<sup>14</sup>

Dear Mr. Mosher,

I have only to-night received (on my delayed arrival in Midlothian on a visit) your letter of the 11th, (May, 1901) inst — for which, and its kindly expressions about my work, pray believe you have my thanks. I regret a lost pleasure, in the missing you — but, as a matter of fact, I am only rarely now on the East Coast, and except a periodical visit to friends still more rarely in or near Edinburgh.

I know your always dainty and sometimes beautiful little editions: and it gives me pleasure that you should wish to bring out "From the Hills of Dream,"<sup>15</sup> and the more so as my now many friends in America find it almost impracticable to procure it — (I think all my other books, save the latest, "The Divine Adventure," are in American editions) — and I am often written to enquiringly.

And I am glad, too, that you have not bought the sheets of the Edinburgh edition, but intend to print and produce in your own way — I trust the smallest practicable format, urging from my own preference.

The honorarium I would leave to your own good will and discretion, were it not that both for your sake and my own I would rather incur some editorial labour, not of revision but of omission and addition. There are some poems I do not wish to reprint: and there can be nothing but gain to an American edition in (the) cancelling of what a maturer art would rather ignore. There are some poems I should be willing to add. This would give you a copyright American edition. But as among these are some unpublished poems — and as all I write, slight in output as that "all" is, is well paid (by the way, if any poems of mine appear in Harper's during the next few months, these specially commissioned poems .... a sequence of mine .... must not be included) I think I do not over-estimate my time and other interests — my verse I certainly do not — if I suggest to you a payment of (for the revised, part cancelled and re-arranged and augmented "From the Hills of Dream") Twenty-five Pounds (£25).<sup>16</sup>

I am glad that what has "so deeply impressed" you, as one of my readers to whom I most care to appeal, is what, of my own verse, my own surety confirms.

I shall await hearing from you before I do anything in the matter: but if an agreement be come to there shall be no needless delay in preparation of what would in a sense be a special edition.

You would, of course, courteously send me some copies on publication?

The address at the head of this letter is my best literary-correspondence address, of which please take note.

Believe me, dear Sir | Yours very truly, | Fiona Macleod

P. S. It would please me to have one or two copies of the *Bibelot* reprints of my verse to which you allude, and of which I have heard from correspondents.

*TLS New York Public Library, Berg Collection*

***To North American Review, June 10, 1901***

c/o Mrs. Rinder | 11. Woronzow Road |  
London N. W. | 10th June, 1901

Dear Sir,

A hurried acknowledgment to catch the mail. The dft. for £20 kindly sent in advance by Mr. Munro's direction duly to hand, and receipt herewith.<sup>17</sup>

Yours very truly | Fiona Macleod

*ACS Wellesley College Library*

***To Thomas Mosher, June 19, 1901***

June 19, 1901 | Edinburgh

Dear Mr. Mosher

Many thanks for your letter, which Mrs. Rinder immediately forwarded to me. I shall endeavor to send you complete copy within about a week from now — certainly without a day's unnecessary delay, both for your sake and my own, as I may be moving about in the remoter parts of the Hebrides in the later autumn and would like to receive and "pass" all proofs at as early a date as practicable.

F. M.

*ACS New York Public Library, Berg Collection*

***To Richard Garnett, June 23, 1901***

Wharncliffe | Chorleywood | 23/June/01

My dear Garnett,

My delay in response to the friendly & welcome present of your new book<sup>18</sup> is due first to temporary absence, & then to a gradual because delighted reading of your beautiful verse. Some of the sonnets are of course old friends (their flavour all the finer I find) — and in particular that on "Age" — which ever since I came upon it when compiling my Sonnet Treasury I have always considered the finest poetic utterance on "the common doom" in our language — so far as I know, in any modern language. I think that after "Age" I rank "Brevity," which both Emerson and Meredith might have been proud to write. But between the splendid "Torches of Love & Death" and the delightful "Sonnet Concert" there is enough of enduring charm and art-won thought to make this little book always treasurable. I value it for the giver's sake, and old friendship, and now shall always value it for its own beauty & distinction.

Ever cordially yours | William Sharp

*ALS University of Texas, Austin*

***To Theodore Watts-Dunton, [early July, 1901]***

Wedny Night

Dear Alwyn

The only possible time this week or next is on Friday evening this week. But could you make it early, at 7 at latest, & excuse me if I don't stay late — as I am under pressure this weekend. As a good place to have room to sit quietly *à deux*, & to chat over coffee &c., may I suggest the Café Monico as probably most convenient for you as well as for me.

Please let me have a line, fixing.

Literature said it would do its best, but perforce had to restrict length of article on account of next issue being already mostly in type, & because of U.S.A.

I suppose it was for this reason also that the “leading” was not their largest but second largest. I wrote to complain of this, & Traill I see is back, for I recd. the enclosed.

I hope that what I have written will be just such a pronouncement as you would like. Fortunately, *Literature* now carries great weight with its large circulation.<sup>19</sup>

Ever affectionately yours, William Sharp

*ALS University of Leeds, Brotherton Library*

***To Thomas Mosher, July 5, 1901***

Friday 5th July/01

Dear Mr. Mosher,

I have unavoidably been delayed in the dispatch to you of completed “copy” by this mail as I had hoped — in part because the revision, additions, and re- arrangement etc., have taken me much longer than I anticipated. I hope, however, to dispatch complete “copy” by registered post by next mail, leaving here on Monday, when also I shall write. Meanwhile in haste

F. M.

*ACS New York Public Library, Berg Collection*

***To Thomas Mosher, 8th July, 1901***

c/o Mrs. Rinder | 11 Woronzow Road |  
London N. W. | 8th July, 1901<sup>20</sup>

Dear Mr. Mosher,

By this mail I have sent you from Edinburgh per registered book-post (the post-people tell me it is absolutely as safe, and that there would

be about 10/ difference!) the complete “copy” of the much revised, rearranged, here cancelled and here augmented new edition of *From the Hills of Dream*.<sup>21</sup>

I do not know the limits in length of your “Old World Series,” but presume you knew the length of my book when you asked for it. Although I have cancelled some 19 or 20 poems, and the whole of the end-section “The Silence of Amor,” the book is now rather longer than before: though in every way I hope a much better book. In case, however, you wish to bring it down by say 25 pp. I add overleaf a Note of what could be cancelled, if really necessary.

You need not use the end-pages with quotations from Mr. Yeats and others about the “Hills of Dream” etc unless you wish.

I think you will see that I have very greatly improved the book, having made it more organic, and also brought into more prominence the section that has most deeply impressed so many people. (That is why I added, for your consideration, the end page with Mr. Yeats’ (a known severe and reticent critic) emphatic statement about “The Prayer of Women”).

In a word, “From the Hills of Dream” is now practically a new book, for either American or English purchasers, and of course gives you absolute American copyright.

After much consideration, as I wished to make this edition worthy of the honour you do it and of its beautiful format, I decided to get back from Harper’s the poems of which I spoke to you, with an offer at some later date to substitute something else (and probably, too, more suited for magazine publication). This request was acceded to, though for many months, at least, I must stand a loser in some £40 — and so I am able to add them to this edition, thus giving the book a finality it would not otherwise have had.

I do not of course suggest that this sacrifice of a large payment should be taken into consideration by you with respect to the sum you agreed to pay me, but I think that perhaps you may be willing to meet me thus far, namely by sending to me, over and above the promised author’s copies, say 25 copies of the book on publication. In a sense I have no right to suggest this, as the sacrifice, for this edition’s sake, is my own doing, and you are content without it. So I do not press the point but only lay it before your friendly courtesy. I hope you may accede, as I

cannot afford to buy copies and yet would like to send copies to many distinguished friends, who from Mr. George Meredith to the youngest have been so deeply interested in my work in verse.

You say in your letter of 16th June "I shall see that you get copies of the book as soon as ready (6, or more if you desire them)." Will you let these author's copies stand at 10, then, please: irrespective of the foregoing. (Apart from private copies I find that I owe over 30 "return-courtesies" to nearly all my distinguished contemporaries!) Later I will send you one or two names of influential literary people in New York who will, I know, write specially on the book on its appearance. I do not think I have much more to add to this long letter, save the following points: —

- (1) PROOFS (A) Please send these in duplicate.  
(B) As my friend and literary-correspondence agent etc. Mrs. Rinder will be abroad during August, and as at the end of July and during August I shall be visiting in Derbyshire, will you kindly direct that Proofs (and all other communications) during *August* be addressed thus: Miss Macleod | c/o Robt. Murray Gilchrist Esq. | Cartledge Hall | HOLMESFIELD | by Sheffield | (England)
- (2) You say you will send half the sum agreed upon, (12-10/-0) on receipt of "copy," and the other £12-10-0 on my completion of proof sheet corrections. I am of course quite agreeable to this, but would only point out one advantage in my having the cheque complete on the first occasion, namely that I could safely receive it while in Derbyshire; and that from the last week in August and for the first three weeks of September I expect to be moving about (yachting) in the Hebrides, with too many chances of lost or seriously delayed correspondence. But this is only a consideration to be pointed out: I leave the matter entirely to your discretion.

- (3) As to a Frontispiece-portrait — I must say “no,” both from personal preference and for other reasons — but the less reluctantly as I infer from your kindly-put words that this is a matter you leave wholly to the author to decide. I have personally a very great dislike to publicity ... but apart from this always dislike a frontispiece portrait. The only true portrait is in the spirit which informs the book.

Again thanking you for your courtesy throughout and all your kind expressions,

Believe me, dear Mr. Mosher, | Very truly yours |  
Fiona Macleod

*TLS New York Public Library, Berg Collection*

***To Thomas Mosher, July 9, 1901***

Temporary Address (till mid-August at any rate) | Miss Macleod |  
C/o Robt. Murray Gilchrist | Cartledge Hall |  
Holmesfield | by Sheffield |

9th July, 1901

Dear Mr. Mosher<sup>22</sup>

After perusal of your charming catalogue, it has occurred to me that for one or other of your series you might care to consider one at any rate of the following suggestions.

With two exceptions all my books have been reprinted in the States — probably the early romance Pharaïs (in which The Rune of Women first appeared), The Sin- Eater, and The Washer of the Ford (issued by Stone & Kimball, or Herbert S. Stone & Co.) having gone the best. I know nothing of how The Dominion of Dreams (F. Stokes & Co.) has gone, though here it is in its fourth edition. My most recent

and mature book, "The Divine Adventure: Iona: and Other Studies in Spiritual History" was not, however, separately issued in America: partly because Messrs Chapman & Hall (who brought it out in a format internally and externally designed by myself, that has been much admired) did not wish to delay publication, and partly no doubt because the contents were not "popular fiction." There is nothing of mine that is at once so individual, so autobiographical, and that I would prefer to see in the hands of those who care for my writings, as the long "essay," a small book in itself, called "Iona." To quote the Motto I will use in the next edition or any reprint — from one of my favorite books, *Sesame and Lilies*<sup>23</sup> — "This is the best of me: for the rest I ate and drank, and slept, loved and hated, like another; my life was as the vapour, and is not; but this I saw and knew: this, if anything of mine, is worth your memory."

Of the titular piece, "The Divine Adventure," much was written in the press and literary reviews when it first appeared in the *Fortnightly Review*, and afterwards in book-form. Some of my readers rank it as the best thing I have done: others do not like the realism of the method of this study in the profoundest of all psychological problems: the "general reader," I fancy, either thought the author next thing to Mad, or the "Adventure" unreadable — or both!

I can form absolutely no opinion as to whether "The Divine Adventure" would or would not reach even a limited American public. It was, I remember, declined by the Editor of Harper's with the remark that no magazine in any country would venture to print it — immediately after which it was accepted by the Fortnightly, and there attracted much and certainly not unfavorable comment.

But I do think that "Iona" would go well as a separate publication. A great deal has been written about it here, both during its appearance in two or three sequent issues of the Fortnightly, and in book-form. Apart from all else that I have tried to make it, it is the most autobiographical and reminiscent of my writings.

If I cannot get a copy in Edinburgh today, I will ask Mrs. Rinder to obtain and send you a copy of the book — which in any case I would like you to accept from me. I enclose the only three notices I chance to have by me, found in my own copy: one written by the Editor himself in "The Outlook," the other by Mr. W. L. Courtney in the Telegraph: the third in the influential Spectator. Please do not fail to let me have these back.

I would like also to ask your opinion on another matter. Some time ago some one, in Boston if I remember rightly, wanted me to add a few pieces to the series of prose poems called "The Silence of Amor," in the original From the Hills of Dream (but now cancelled, as out of keeping with a volume of verse): and so enable a small volume, either unillustrated or to be illustrated, to be brought out. I was too unwell at the time to pay heed to the matter, and "for the time being" declined to accede to the suggestion. You have the original edn. of From the Hills of Dream and can judge: do you think it would be well to bring out a "Silence of Amor" (augmented and revised for copyright)? If so would you object to another firm's bringing it out (as part of the original "Hills of Dream")? If perchance you wished to have it yourself I should of course concur: but even if not, I should not like to do anything that might clash with the book of mine you are now bringing out. Or do you think the "Silence of Amor" had best be left in silence?

And now one more suggestion for your consideration — in connection with the only other book of mine that has not been reprinted in America. This book, in any reissue, I should call Old Tales Retold or else Heroic Tales of the Gael. The book was published as a Christmas book under the title "The Laughter of Peterkin" — a hopeless misnomer, and with much superfluous setting. The gist of the book consists of the three favourite Gaelic heroic tales, retold by me: the famous tale of Deirdre and the Sons of Usna (my play of "The House of Usna" was performed in London) — the Tale of the Heroical Quest of the Sons of Turenn — and the Tale of the Swan-Children of Lir: the first and last, in particular, in their Gaelic originals, having been loved by every generation of Irish and Scottish Gaeldom for over a thousand years. I have often wished to see these "Heroic Tales," in my retelling, issued properly, that is by themselves and severed from their superfluous and worse than useless "setting" and misleading and absurd title. If this should make an overlong book for any of your series, would you care for "Deirdrê" alone?

Deirdrê (in Scottish Gaelic Deirthrê, and Darthool) is the "Helen of Troy" of Gaelic Legend: and my retelling — I think the fullest, and most authentic — has been accepted by many good judges as the best. It was certainly a labor of love, and one of my few personal writings which I can reread without dissatisfaction.

I will ask Mrs. Rinder to send you the Deirdrê and “Children of Lir” for you to judge by (“The Sons of Turenn” I am keeping to revise and in part rewrite) — but please let me have these sections again.

Forgive so long a letter — though it was necessary in order to bring together the points in question for your consideration. You will of course not hesitate to say frankly if none of them appeals to you. My primary wish, after your friendly courtesy to me in the matter of The Hills of Dream, is to know your opinion and wishes, before I should consider any other proposal or myself approach any other publisher.

Believe me, | Sincerely yours, | Fiona Macleod

*TLS New York Public Library, Berg Collection*

***To Thomas Mosher, July 12, 1901***

July 12, 1901

Please cancel (and destroy) the poem called “Silis” in the Hills of Dream.

F. M.

*ACS New York Public Library, Berg Collection*

***To William Butler Yeats, July 26, 1901***

Loch Fyne | 26 July 1901

Dear Mr. Yeats

In connection with my recent letter

(1) Would you object to a complete reconstruction of the Rite, as for some reason we both still feel either an inveterate hostility or an insuperable difficulty. By a reconstruction I mean a Rite identical in end but wholly distinct in externals. In other words, has your Rite finality to you?

(2) If you know or come across anything about "the Queen's touch" or "the Fool's laughter" in November, please tell me. By the way, be very careful this November. It is always a month of suffering and mischance for some of us and especially about the 21st. (the seven days before or after) — My friend<sup>24</sup> recently has had five very singular visions, each unsought and abrupt. Three of these I have been able to verify, and am deeply impressed. Another I know to be a reflection of circumstances unknown to us yet. The sixth is of a warning nature, at least I take it so, though he is uncertain. "Put the four cups of light about you in the seven and seven dark days of the month of the curlew" (... i.e. November).

The steamer is coming down Loch Fyne, so I must hurriedly close.

Yours Sincerely | Fiona Macleod

Please answer through Mr. S. (who will at once forward to me) and cancel now the Miss Rea address — as she has gone abroad for some months — and also, please tell either Mr. S. or myself when the Irish Theatre performance is to be in Dublin this year.

His address just now — later, in a fortnight or so he will be in Argyll — is

Spa House | Cowley | By Chesterfield.<sup>25</sup>

*ALS Private and Letters to Yeats I, p. 84*

**To Edward Dowden, July 30, 1901**

Springfield | Kilcreggan | Argyll

My dear Prof. Dowden,

Despite the above address I write to you from a Derbyshire Moor-Farm, where we (my wife & I) came from London for a month for rest & better conditions of work — but we are now going north.

Yesterday I came across lines of yours which impressed me as very fine: and I write to you now to ask if you will kindly tell me if these lines, ending

For they had questions far more wise  
Than our accustomed old replies;  
And in their baby eyes I saw  
The deeps of life, and in their breath  
Heard the strong song of Death —

are in any volume of yours, and of so which. Like all your poetry, they ring true, and have the large touch.

I have been abroad a great deal in the last two or three years since I saw you — and am not sure if I have not missed something by you. Last autumn we spent again in Provence (long known & loved — & one literary outcome of which is the long essay on Modern Provencal Literature in the next issue of the *Quarterly Review*) and the winter & spring in Sicily, north, south, & central.<sup>26</sup> Then in the late spring, Florence & Spezia: then London (or rather our rooms at Chorleywood, near London, on the Chiltern spur.) We shall be in Scotland till October —about the middle of which month there is just a chance I may go over to Dublin for a few days. Shall you be at Killiney<sup>27</sup> then? If so, I should much like to see you again.

Believe me | Sincerely your | William Sharp

ALS University of Dublin, Trinity College Library

**To Theodore Watts-Dunton, [August 1, 1901]**

Thursday

Dear Watts-Dunton

I hope you will find yourself able to send off the article today, as I am much pressed by many things to see to & arrangements before we leave for Scotland on Sunday or Monday.<sup>28</sup> I have just time before our one post goes — to say that I fear there will be no possibility of use of any of the new poems, both because of the inevitable strict constrictions of an

article such as this, & Mr. Halkett's explicit directions, & because I fear it would throw the article out of balance, the already quoted matter being the maximum to be used with tact. But I suppose the new book could be alluded to? (It is perhaps to appear in the October number, certainly in the Nov issue at latest).

I should of course welcome any opportunity to write on your new poems elsewhere. Do you think Mr. (?) the Editor of *The Athenaeum* would entrust the book to me?<sup>29</sup>

In haste | Yours ever | William Sharp

*ALS University of Leeds, Brotherton Library*

**To Thomas Mosher, August 5, 1901**

Springhill | Kilcreggan | (Argyll) | Scotland | 5th Aug. 1901

Dear Mr. Mosher

Thanks for your long letter of the 24th July, which has just reached me.<sup>30</sup> At the last moment I was prevented from going to Derbyshire (it is all right, however, about my proofs etc. addressed to me there c/o Mr. Murray Gilchrist of Cartledge Hall.) Till end of August I shall be at the above address (don't omit the "Springhill", as I am only visiting) — but except for a day's possible delay it is all the same whether letters go to me there or to the other address.

Please note from 1st September till middle of October (i.e. for receipt) my best letter-address will be 22 Ormidale Terrace | Murrayfield | Midlothian | Scotland. Thereafter, it will be c/o Mrs. Rinder | 11 Woronzow Road | St. John's Wood | London, as before.<sup>31</sup>

My thanks for your promised prompt dispatch of duplicate proofs. For convenience for me, also, I hope they may arrive complete: in any case there shall be no avoidable delay in return. And many thanks also for your courtesy in kindly sending the draft for £25, at once — the endorsement on which, with this acknowledgement that the said sum is payment in full, will I suppose be sufficient receipt.

Yes, I quite concur with you that it would not do to make this volume over bulky, and in your decision to cancel all the dramatic part. (Will you please return this portion — "Dalua" etc — to me by registered book-post.) Even were I not in agreement with you on this point I should have absolute confidence that you are right. No one can know your publications and not see that apart from the beauty and charm of your reprints in point of format, they bear the impress of your own individual love of and selection of beautiful things — in fact your several series would have been impossible but for central judgment, taste, and knowledge. This enhances my gratification at the generous words you apply to my volume of verse: and I can only hope that you will find sufficient number of people to go at least so far with you as not to let you be a loser by your own predilection.

You say you enclose a list of your announcements for the autumn and with allusion to "From the Hills of Dream" — but there was nothing in your envelope save the letter and the cheque. I should like to see it — and also please do not forget your kind promise about the Bibelots containing some selections from my poetry. I have to thank your friendly courtesy for the beautiful little volume of "The Blessed Damozel," which I accept with pleasure. How you must enjoy your work! Everything from your press has individuality and distinction. With that booklet and the charming Book-Lists there was a leaflet of "Mimes." It struck me a fragrant petal from what should be a beautiful flower. Presumably it is a book of translation? I remember reading a beautiful little volume of "Mimes" by Marcel Schwob.<sup>32</sup> I wonder if it is his work. In any case, please let me have a copy, with account for it and postage. You will have received before this, I hope, the copy of "The Divine Adventure" with my cordial regards.

I quite agree with you about end-advts etc. As to the other matters broached by me and alluded to by you all in good time. Meanwhile I look forward to the appearance of "From the Hills of Dream," and again hope that you may be adequately supported — though alas I fear there are few who care for these or any other dreams in these days of the starless road.

Sincerely yours | Fiona Macleod

**To Thomas Mosher, August 20, 1901**

Ormidale Terrace | Murrayfield | Midlothian  
20<sup>th</sup> Aug<sup>t</sup> 1901

Dear Mr. Mosher

I have today cabled to you as requested, having found no reason to make other than a few minor revisions and typographic corrections: — my telegram being as follows — Mosher | Portland | Maine | Only minor revision

I now at once return proofs so far as received, and shall be as expeditious with following set. Of course I leave the rest in your hands, though I hope each poem will begin on a fresh page and not run on. In present set please draw attention of your printer to the extensions of second line in first verse of the 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> poems. If possible let the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> run on in complete lines. Also please note the important textual change in 4<sup>th</sup> line from bottom of "The Prayer of Women" and elsewhere.

Yes, I am willing that you should reprint the "Celtic" essay in the *Bibelot*,<sup>33</sup> though I should like to add a few words in the text, as a footnote, or prologue, because of a certain misunderstanding of my meaning which arose with some of my Anglo-Gaelic critics especially in Ireland.

In haste for the post | Yours very Sincerely | Fiona Macleod

*ALS New York Public Library, Berg Collection*

**To Thomas Mosher, August 27, 1901**

27th August, 1901 | Kilcreggan: Argyll

Dear Mr. Mosher

Since I cabled and wrote with returned proofs (so far as received) *on the 20<sup>th</sup> inst.* no further proofs or otherwise have reached me, or been received at Mr. Murray Gilchrist's in Derbyshire. I send this in case of any miscarriage — and also to remind you that from now till when later I give you a fixt address my letter-address is (without my forename,

please, simply Miss M.) 22. Ormidale Terrace, | Murrayfield | Midlothian  
| Scotland

F. M.

*ACS New York Public Library, Berg Collection*

***To Thomas Mosher, September 2, 1901***

Address | Miss Macleod | 22. Ormidale Terrace |  
Murrayfield | Midlothian (Scotland)

2<sup>nd</sup> September

My dear Mr. Mosher

First let me attend to the urgent matter of proofs.<sup>34</sup>

You will have received my cable (I presume you wished to know by cable in second instance as well as in the first) and will have understood not to set the remainder of the book in page-forms. The cancelling of the dramatic portion throws the previous arrangement into wrong relief: and indeed in any case too much monotony obtains in the late arrangement of contents.

I have also cancelled one poem altogether (the first of "Lir" on Galley 18) and another (on Galley X1) provisionally, as there explained in connection with an added Gaelic-English short poem. I would also like the book to end with the short MS poem now sent, at end of the galleyes. I think you will at once see the very great improvement in this rearrangement, apart from the subtler improvement in harmony of collocation naturally not so obvious at first. One section of "Hills of Dream" comes first — then (with one or two poems transferred to later section) comes "Foam of the Past" — and finally the section now collectively called "Closing Doors." All necessary instructions are in text or in preliminary attached slip.

What a beautiful book "Empedocles on Etna" is.<sup>35</sup> It is a poem I have always cared greatly for — far beyond Arnold's unemotional and unimaginative "Tristram and Yseult." And now it will be a new pleasure to read it again. My best thanks for your friendly courtesy, as well as for

the very welcome promise of an early copy of Mimes when published in October — which I shall read with exceptional if critical interest, as I believe re-creative translation to be as rare or almost as rare a gift as the original creative faculty itself. I am delighted with the *Bibelot*. What a charming little booklet! As for its preliminary matter, I can only say I am grateful, and glad. I write for a small clan, but words such as these splendidly recompense me.

Will you please (this is a "business request" ... and I have to put it this way to guard against your generous courtesy!) send me, with a/c and postage, when I shall remit,

12 copies of *The Bibelot* for Dec. 1900

One copy of the bound "*Bibelot*" vol. for 1900<sup>36</sup>

Subscription to the *Bibelot* for 1901 and 1902

I have read and reread your letter of the 16th August, and value it. I wonder if in any country there is another publisher who has so much to heart the rarer spirit and the finer things in literature. Apart from any personal consideration, there is matter of exceptional solace for me in what you write as to your wishing from now above all "to produce works of the spirit, of that inner life which is the only life."

It is a very genuine satisfaction to me that you care for "The Divine Adventure" as you do. The reception of the book on the part of a very small public (I think only some 700 copies sold) was deeply gratifying to me — but of course a book such as that could have a very limited appeal — though I thought that after The Dominion of Dreams having gone into a fourth edition, the demand would be somewhat more. I am both sorry and glad ... sorry, because for this book I would have had the largest possible public, because of what I hope and believe lives in the spirit which animates it; and glad because that [sic] so much of myself and of my actual life is in the book (in "Iona" particularly, and the shorter papers) that I sometimes shrink from the fact that in some measure I have opened the windows to even a few hundred readers! In a later letter, I will tell you about what I am now working at in prose and verse (a few of the poems included in this book are to appear in the Fortnightly for October,<sup>37</sup> if possible, an honour in its kind, for it is very seldom either the Fortnightly or the Nineteenth Century print verse). It

is just possible too I may submit a proposal to you later: i.e., if neither the Fortnightly nor Nineteenth etc. will venture to print a “narrative” called “For the Beauty of an Idea” (in a subtler sense, more spiritual than physical, but physical also, the idée-mère is that of Hermaphroditus).<sup>38</sup>

But now I shall miss the mail if I do not close, and as I have to go West again tomorrow morning.

Believe me, dear Mr. Mosher | Very sincerely yours, | Fiona Macleod

*ALS and TLS New York Public Library, Berg Collection*

***To Thomas Mosher, September 3, [1901]***

Tues. 3rd Sept.

Dear Mr. Mosher

In my letter of last night, with returned Revised Proofs, I forgot to say that if (but just if convenient for you) there happen to be two blank-end pages (fore and back) on blank half pages, I should like the following printed in small italics near right-side top margin (1) of a forepage to book and (2) of end page: —

(1) Ged tha thu 'n diugh 'a d'aibheis fhuar,

Bha thu uair 'a d'aros righ —

Though thou art today a cold ruin,

Thou wert once the dwelling of a King.

(2) Gleidh sinn a glinn man diar

'Us a teigh nan diamha dubhra

Keep us from the Glen of Tears

And from the House of Sorrow.

P. S. Please note that in the Gaelic lines “Naoi Miannain” the last word of the 6th line begins with a “u” not an “n” (*uaine* not *Naine*). I add this as

I forget whether these lines were written or typed — and as I find that u and n are so often misprinted.

F. M.

5<sup>th</sup> Sept. 01

*ALS New York Public Library, Berg Collection*

***To Thomas Mosher, September 13, 1901***

Edinburgh | 13th Sept. 1901

Dear Mr. Mosher,

Herewith I send you preliminary matter for the "Celtic" reprint,<sup>39</sup> unless you prefer to issue the essay with a forward of your own, or simply to reprint it without comment.

Thank you for kindly saying that you will remit copies at the earliest practicable date. Please address these "Miss Macleod, 22 Ormidale Terrace, Murrayfield, Midlothian, Scotland," where my friend will attend to them if I am in the Hebrides — where I want to be as late as I can this year, and the more so as I may have to go abroad again this winter for health's sake, against our too gloomy and too trying winter-damp.

Please, however, let me have two copies by book-post (often days in advance of parcels post).

By the way, about the two cablegrams I sent to you, and concerning which you were so good as to say that you would make good the outlay. Please do not remit this small amount (14<sup>s</sup>/- for the two, if I remember rightly, though perhaps the first was only 6/- = 13<sup>s</sup>/ in all, if so) — but let it stand against the Bibelot copies and the Bibelot subscription etc. of which I wrote to you. If there is something over, let me have (if not one of the dearer issues — I have not your list beside me at the moment) a copy of Walter Pater's "Guardian" essays,<sup>40</sup> which I have never read — or else an extra "Hills of Dream": if "the other way round" please do not fail to let me know.

Believe me, dear Mr. Mosher, | Yours very sincerely | Fiona Macleod

In Typed Copy of "Forward" to *Celtic* please note to correct on

- Page 3. line 7, "or" should be "on".  
lines 9–10 should be "run-on"
- Page 5. line 7 "offshoot or tributary" (not "a")
- Page 6. line 2 "distinctively English" not ("distinctive English")
- Page 7. line 7 delete comma after "but"  
insert colon after "ideals" in 17 line
- Page 8. line 5–6, delete "to us" at end of line  
line 6–7, delete "and direct" at end of line  
line 8, delete "a" before ennable
- Page 8. Initial signature

*ALS New York Public Library, Berg Collection*

***To Thomas Mosher, October 1, 1901***

c/o Mrs. Rinder | 11. Woronzow Road | London. N. W. | 1st Oct. 1901

Dear Mr. Mosher

I do not know what you do about review-copies, or presentation-copies to those who would be specially interested and perhaps of service: but if you have not already sent copies of "From the Hills of Dream" to the following I would like very much if you would do so.

- (1) H. M. Alden | Editor of "Harper's Monthly" | Franklin Square | New York City
- (2) Mr. D. Munro | Ass<sup>t</sup>. Editor | "The North American Review" | Franklin Square | New York (3) Mr. Bliss Carman, | whose present address I do not know, but which you probably do. If not, then c/o Editor of "Harpers"
- (4) Mr. Chas. G. D. Roberts | Do. do.

- (5) Mr. Edmund Clarence Stedman | Lawrence Park | Bronxville | New York
- (6) Mrs. Louise Chandler Moulton | Rutland Square | Boston | Mass.
- (7) Mrs. R. W. Gilder | "The Century Magazine" | New York
- (8) Mr. Hamilton W. Mabie | (whose address I do not know, but which you will either know or can easily find)
- (9) Mr. Benj. W. Moore | 303 Welch Hall = New Haven = Connecticut U.S.A.
- (10) Mr. Richard Le Gallienne | (I do not know Mr. La Gallienne's American address — but if you do not know it send | c/o Editor *Harper's*.
- (11) Mr. Burlingame | Editor "Scribner's Mag." | New York City
- (12) The Editor | "The Atlantic Monthly" | Boston | Mass.

By the way, I would of course have remitted for the "Bibelot" vol (a most delightful one in all respects) but for the Contra cablegram items as explained. The best way will be to send me an account for all due over and above the outlay on the two cablegrams — unless you accept the additional "Celtic" essay matter sent by me as payment? If so, this would simplify matters — I trust fairly (but if not convenient from a business standpoint I trust to you not to hesitate to say so) — and also enable me to have the one or two books I want very much the Pater "Guardian Essays," the promised "Mimes" etc. and if possible another copy of "The Bibelot" for 1900.

*ALS New York Public Library, Berg Collection*

***To Algernon Charles Swinburne, [early October], 1901***

Murrayfield | Midlothian

Dear Mr. Swinburne

I have not yet received copies through the customs & Baron Tauchnitz's agent — but a friend in Germany has posted me an early copy, which I

have this morning received, and have the pleasure in at once sending on to you.<sup>41</sup> I have taken the liberty to cut the leaves of the latter part — mainly to see if certain proof corrections had been effected. All seems right, and I hope is so: though in one or two instances "from so-and-so" has accidentally been omitted, as in the lovely song at p. 253, & the not less lovely lines on p. 213.

Altho' I made it my rule to avoid excerpts, I had to break it once or twice, as in that exquisite fragment from "Loctrine" ("What the Birds Sing") on p. 254; and in these lovely lines from "Loch Torridon" on p. 213, already alluded to (and to which I ventured to give present title) — and, again, the unforgettable "Sappho" lines from "Anactoria".

There was a horrifying misprint in proofs — fortunately now corrected. The 3rd line of "The Nympholept" was made to end "through the frondage ... the sunbeam smelt!"

Believe me | Most Sincerely Yours | William Sharp

*ALS British Library*

***To Henry Mills Alden, October 22, 1901***

Wharncliffe | Chorleywood | Herts | 22/Oct/01

My dear Alden,

Herewith I send you my selections etc. from Swinburne, which I told you Baron Tauchnitz had asked me to undertake (of course with Swinburne's consent) only a few copies are allowed to come thro' the English Customs House — but fortunately some copies were sent direct to A.C.S. & so my few got through all right. Out of these I have had pleasure in reserving a copy for you, old friend.

I have not yet got over my disappointment at not getting to New York etc. this autumn: though I quite recognise the imperativeness of the counter-order from my physician. However, perhaps the fates will [be] propitious next year. We shall be in London till early in Dec., and then leave again for Sicily (Taormina).

You ought by this time to have received from our common friend Miss Macleod (per Mr. Mosher of Portland, Maine) a copy of what is

practically a new book, tho' nominally a reprint of "From the Hills of Dream" — for apart from the cancelling of a score [of] poems, & the addition of forty, the whole has been rearranged and many poems have been rewritten. You will notice that the opening 10 are those which Miss Macleod sent to you — but which on your inability to use them she at once sent to the "Fortnightly," where they appear in the Oct. number, — & also arranged for their inclusion in this book. They have already brought her several editorial requests — but these things can't be "turned on."

Altho' sent to you as a private copy, it just occurs to me that possibly you might be able to have a word said of it somewhere. No matter, however, if this is in any way inconvenient or now out of your way.

I am sending a business note to your office. So here let me ask if, as I hope, all goes well with you in your new life. I think often of you. I wish too I could see you to tell you of a strange, of a fantastically strange, and to me deeply moving development of that old romance of boyhood which I confided to you one evening before the fire at Metuchen.<sup>42</sup>

Well, if we are to meet again, we are to meet. And I believe it.

All my well wishes to those near and dear to you — & to you the love of your dear friend

William Sharp

*ALS University of Delaware Library*

***To Thomas Mosher, October 23, 1901***

Address till further notice | Miss Macleod |  
22 Ormidale Terrace | Murrayfield | Midlothian  
23rd.Oct. 1901

My dear Mr. Mosher

I was in the Highlands when your letter reached me, and now have come to Edinburgh for a couple of days. My sincere thanks for the generous supply of books, of the "Hills of Dream," all safely delivered at my private secretary's address at Murrayfield. The book is beautifully printed and

bound, and it is a pleasure to see one's work in so artistic and satisfying a guise. Do not think me carping if I add that, to my mind, the effect of artistic harmony would be very greatly enhanced if the headings of all the poems were uniform in placement throughout. Look, for example, at the gain in typographical beauty, if say at pp. 46–47 or at pp. 6–7, "The Rose of Flame" and "The Undersong", and again "The Valley of Silence" and "Dream Meadows", were, titularly, exactly counterpoised. The right effect can be seen at p. 78–79, with "Nine Desires" and its opposite. I am sure this is worth your considering in the future: and all the more so as your publications are invariably so beautiful in format and witnesses of a very rare and scrupulous taste. There are a few misprints, but only one is annoying, namely on the last page, where nonsense is made of the final line of the Gaelic verse. It should not end Gu hrath ... but gu brath, the difference in Gaelic being very considerable! The other misprints are at p. 125, where the 4th line should begin, not 'schuir' but 's chuir', and where in the 3rd line of the poem itself "of" is printed "af". At page 79, the end of the 6th line is printed "Ahe green Mantles," instead of "the Green Mantles", and in the last line of the Gaelic version opposite, anama is spelt arrama. Elsewhere I noticed one other, in "The Washer of the Ford" (where "whirling hand" is printed for "whirling brand"). Fortunately, as to the Gaelic misprints, only a few persons will notice them — and though over here our Gaelic purists are rampant over any such slips (and more in proportion as their acquaintance with Gaelic is slight and recent!) those likely to be hawk-eyed will be dissuaded by preliminary MS. correction!

I would have preferred if "Fatis accede deisque" had been on a page by itself, both for itself and the simplicity of the upper heading. And now I don't think I have anything more to say after these very slight comments than to express again my pleasure at this beautiful reprint and my appreciation of all your care to conform to certain troublesome requests. I like the title page very much — and think the parchment cover design in every way charming.

Many thanks also for so kindly sending the Pater volume and R. L. S.'s beautiful little essay,<sup>43</sup> which I am delighted to have in this form. I love everything he has written, and the "Letters" most of all. (I wish you would print say 25 or 20 of the most fascinating and interesting of the letters — and the same might be done, by the way, in the instance

of Keats). I confess that Pater's book disappoints me. It is delightful to have it: but we have not here the Walter Pater of the "Leonardo" and "Giorgione" essays, of "Marius" and the "Greek Studies", but simply Mr. Pater "our valued contributor to *The Guardian*".<sup>44</sup> Much of the book is obviously written out of kindness rather than from intellectual predilection or from compelled critical consideration. Still, there are pages where the real Peter stands revealed, passages informed with beauty often, with distinction often. But is he (Saintsbury also) not wrong in speaking of "the other beauty of prose"? I thought Dryden's words were "that other harmony of prose." However, I am probably mistaken. But, after all, there is nothing vital or rememberable in this book, whereas there is not a sentence in the Stevenson essay that is not vital and might well be remembered.

I hope you will not forget your kind promise to send me the "Mimes." I much look forward to that book. The original has all the delicate craft of Pierre Louÿs, with a worthier art. Do you know one of the loveliest recent writings, D'Annunzio's "Sogno d'un Mattino di Primavera"? I have recently been rereading it along with the (MS. and I believe as yet unpublished) translation by my kinsman and intimate friend Mr. William Sharp, whose name you will know (it is his sister I may add, *in private*, who acts as my typist and private secretary in Edinburgh, while Mrs. Wingate Rinder sees to matters for me in London) a translation which he made for his article on the Dramas of D'Annunzio in the *Fortnightly* about a year ago, but was then unable to use intact? mainly because of copyright I understand. And that reminds me: — Mr. Sharp has just sent me two copies of his just published "Tauchnitz" selection from Swinburne — made with Mr. Swinburne's concurrence — (one from abroad, and one since arrival in London — the second "lest the first should have been confiscated or have miscarried") — and it gives me pleasure at once to send one of these copies to you, begging your acceptance of it from me as some slight acknowledgement of your courtesy with regard to "Mimes" etc. I must close this long letter without replying to your question about what I have on hand, and project, — I find. But I have so much to do, in my limited time, with the dispatch of these copies — and, too, want to be sure of catching this mail — that I know you will excuse what after all is only a postponement till (probably) next mail, or as soon as practicable.

So again thanking you for these beautiful books, and for the kind promise about the copies of "Celtic" — of which I am very glad —

Believe me, dear Mr. Mosher, | Very sincerely yours | Fiona Macleod

*ALT New York Public Library, Berg Collection*

**To William Butler Yeats, October 31, 1901**

Midlothian, Scotland | 31 October 1901

My dear Mr. Yeats

Now that at last I have an address to which I can write to you with surety I wish I could do so on magical matters; but that, I truly regret, is not possible yet. I have never known such continuity of hostile will, of which I am persuaded: and though, owing to the visionary power of our common friend [William Sharp], much has been seen and overcome; and much seen and avoided, there is still something to avoid, something to overcome, and something to see. But very soon now, possibly in this very month of November where the dark powers prevail (and if so, a double victory indeed!) that which has been impossible may become possible. Even yet, however, there is much to work against: and not only here: for you, too, move often into the Red and the Black, or so at least it seems.

So now I have only to send you a copy of the much changed, cancelled, augmented, and revised American edition of *From the Hills of Dream*. It is, in effect, a new book, though there will be much in it familiar to you. But even here there are changes which are re-creative — as, for example, in the instance of "The Moon-Child," where one or two touches and an added quatrain have made a poem of what was merely poetic.

The first 10 poems are those which are in the current (October) *Fortnightly Review*.<sup>45</sup> But when these are reprinted in a forthcoming volume of new verse, (perhaps in January), they will have a changed sequence, with other (and I think better) additions: and the present 10th will be transposed to its right place in the "Dirge of the Four Cities".<sup>46</sup>

In the new book in question (which will also contain some of the 40 "new" poems now included in this American edition) the chief contents will be the remodeled and re-written poetic drama "The Immortal Hour," and with it many of the notes to which I alluded when I wrote last to you. In the present little volume it was not found possible to include the lengthy, intimate, and somewhat esoteric notes: among which I account of most interest for you those pertinent to the occult myths embodied in "The Immortal Hour".<sup>47</sup>

You will see, however, that one or two dedicatory pages — intended for the later English new book — have here found a sectional place: and will, I hope, please you.<sup>48</sup>

Believe me | Your friend truly, | Fiona Macleod

P.S. I should much like to have your opinion as to the title of the new book of verse — whether

(1) For a Little Clan | (2) The Immortal Hour: and Poems | (3) The Silver Flutes

*Partly in Memoir, p. 334. Text from Letters to Yeats I, pp. 91–92*

### ***To Grant Richards, November 3, 1901***

Edinburgh 1901 | Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> Nov.  
c/o. Mrs. Wingate Rinder | 11 Woronzow Road | London. N. W.

My dear Sir

I am sorry for the delay in response to your letter — but I have been away for some time, and only yesterday, on my arrival in Edinburgh for a day or two on my way west, found your note among many others awaiting me.

I have been much occupied at times with the pros and cons of this Anthology. Some months ago I thought it was done — but on looking at the material put together I was wholly dissatisfied. The idea-in-view was too ambitious to be fulfilled save very slowly, with long and

scrupulous thought and judgment. At present, it stands thus: I cannot promise to forward the completed copy before next summer — unless you are willing that the original scheme be modified to a collection *wholly* of poetry, and of poetry in English only. But perhaps you do not care for this, and wish a mixt book like "The Open Road"? If so, I can only say that I cannot see my way to complete it sooner than next summer (early June at soonest, though I now think I could promise it then). If of verse only, as in some ways would certainly be the more preferable, would it not? I think I could let you have it by the end of December. Please let me have a line from you in return, as my movements are very uncertain, and I should like to hear from you at once so as to arrange accordingly.

Believe me, | Yours very truly, | Fiona Macleod.

*TLS Stanford University*

**To Benjamin Burgess Moore, November 12, [1901]**

(Letter-Address) | Miss Macleod  
c/o Mrs. Wingate Rinder | 11 Woronzow Road |  
London | N. W.

12<sup>th</sup> Nov.

Dear Mr. Moore.

You will before this have proof that I have not forgotten you — that is, if Mr. Mosher has done as I asked, and sent you a copy of the new American edition of the much revised, rearranged, much cancelled and more augmented "Hills of Dream." I hear from our common friend that you have had a delightful time in Greece and Italy. The fortune of health may take me there also for this winter and spring. I hope, above all, for leisure: that to me is, with sunshine, the great desideratum.

I would like you to get a copy of the little *Bibelot* for November pubd. By Mr. Mosher (my augmented essay "Celtic.")

I can write but a brief letter: but it carries friendly thought and much good will.

Most sincerely yours, | Fiona Macleod

*ALS Huntington Library*

**To William Butler Yeats, November 12, 1901<sup>49</sup>**

12<sup>th</sup> Nov. 1901

Temporary address:

Miss Macleod | 22 Ormidale Terrace | Murrayfield | Midlothian

Dear Mr. Yeats

I have been hoping to hear from you — but as I have another little book to send to you (the augmented reprint of an essay<sup>50</sup>) I would like to know if you are still at the Dublin address

(8 Cavindish Place?) Row?

Yours sincerely always | Fiona Macleod

*ALS National Library of Ireland*

**To Thomas Mosher, November 12, 1901<sup>51</sup>**

Letter-Address: Miss Macleod

c/o Mrs. Wingate Rinder | 11 Woronzow Road | London N. W.

Dear Mr. Mosher

What a lovely book *Mimes* is! It is a pleasure to look at it, to handle it. The simple beauty of the cover-design charms me. And the contents ... yes, these are beautiful, too. I think the translation has been finely made, but there are a few slips in interpretative translation, and, (as perhaps is inevitable) a lapse ever and again from the subtle harmony, the peculiar

musical undulant rhythm of the original. It seems to me a mistake to put accentual signs on certain Greek names, either familiar or obvious (and certainly so when, as in at least one instance, the accent is placed wrongly, with cruel effect!) In a creative translation, the faintest jar can destroy the illusion: and more than once I was rudely reminded that a foreigner mixt this far-carried honey and myrrh! Yet this is only "a counsel of perfection," by one who perhaps dwells overmuch upon the ideal of a flawless raiment for beautiful thought or dreams. Nor would I seem ungracious to a translator who has so finely achieved a task almost as difficult as that set to Liban by Oisin in the Land of the Ever-Living, when he bade her take a wave from the shore and a green blade from the grass and a leaf from a tree and the breath of the wind and a man's sigh and a woman's thought, and out of them all make an air that would be like the single song of a bird. Do you wish to tempt me? Tempt me then with a proposal as to "The Silence of Amor" (though I think now that "The Silence of Love" would be better, everyway), to be brought out as *Mimes* is!<sup>52</sup>

The short prose-poems would have to be materially added to, of course: and the additions would for the most part individually be longer than the short pieces you know. Or, if you do not think this would justify your devoting a book like "*Mimes*" to it (and the expense must be considerable), what of the poetic drama called "*The Immortal Hour*" with or without the short prose drama "*The House of Usna*" [somewhat crudely printed in *The National Review*, and produced at the Strand Theatre in London by the Stage Society].<sup>53</sup>

Once more, how would such a "short book" as this do: to be called, say, *In This Kingdom By The Sea*, and to consist of the more strictly personal parts of "*Iona*" (and one or two papers in *The Divine Adventure* volume) with some added early reminiscent matter. In several ways I would much prefer this. But alas, my circumstances (and the more so as it is now settled that I must not risk the middle-winter in Scotland, but must go abroad, probably to the Mediterranean) make it imperative that I take up no work, however gladly, that is not in some measure remunerative. [of the other matters of which I have before written to you I am not in a position at present to say more. At all times a slow worker, reasons of health make that slowness still tardier.] Every day now (and while I am still in Edinburgh, I hope) I expect the "Celtic" essay copies,

as the *Bibelot* is published on the first of the month, is it not? The *Hills of Dream* has, as to its format, been greatly admired, and I know of at least two or three instances of the book being ordered from U. S. A.

As I have much to arrange, please let me hear from you as to the "Iona" proposal (or other) at your early convenience. And, by the way, after this (till the Spring) it will be quicker to address me as at the top of this letter.

Believe me, dear Mr. Mosher, |  
Most Sincerely yours | Fiona Macleod

*ALS New York Public Library, Berg Collection*

**To Marion Crawford, November 13, [1901]**

Wedny | 13 Nov.

15 Grossfield Road | South Hampstead | London N.W.

Dear Mr. Marion Crawford,<sup>54</sup>

When we met at luncheon with our common friend Alec Hood<sup>55</sup> last July [a meeting I recall with great pleasure] you kindly said that I was to let you know if we should chance to be within reach of you. At that time we intended to go to the Basque provinces — but several reasons, primarily health & relative isolation for work, have decided for a return to Sicily. We intend to spend (from Xmas or soon after) all January and till mid-February at Taormina, & then to go for a long stay with Alec Hood at Castle Maniace [where we were last February & which you know also]

We think of leaving London about the 7<sup>th</sup>–8<sup>th</sup> December — to go first to our friends Mr. & Mrs. Eugene Lee Hamilton | Villa Benedettini | San Gervasio | Firenze and stay there about a week. Then my wife and I intend to go South, but would be very glad to break the journey at Sorrento if we thought we could see something of you & Mrs. Crawford. Will you be at Sorrento about the date in question [probably about the 20<sup>th</sup> or 21<sup>st</sup> Dec.]? Hoping you are well & happily at work

Believe me | Very Sincerely Yours | William Sharp

P. S. I find I have omitted to tell you with what great pleasure I am now reading (and all but finished) your beautiful romance of Venice. "Marietta" ought to delight your great circle of readers.

*ALS Yale University*

***To William Butler Yeats, November 23, 1901***

Midlothian, | Scotland | 23 November 1901

Dear Mr. Yeats

I send you a reprint of my "Celtic" essay, which has been so widely read and discussed — with a new introductory part which I would much like you to read. I believe you do not care for the "Celtic" essay: for that I am sorry, for I think it of my best, and that it will sink deeper and go further and last longer than anything I have written. Well, "the star-crowned" will see to it, whether it go out on the flow or disappear on the ebb.

I hope to hear that you have found something to care for in the book I sent you and in what was addressed to you.<sup>56</sup>

Your friend | Fiona Macleod

*Letters of Yeats I, p. 93*

***To Thomas Mosher, November 26, 1901***

26: 11: 1901

Dear Mr. Mosher

I am still in Edinburgh, having been detained by a severe chill. Many thanks for the advance 12 copies of "Celtic" which came four or five

days ago. I suppose the others of the number promised, and the Special copies you kindly wrote to me about, will follow soon.

In haste | Sincerely | F. M.

*ACS New York Public Library, Berg Collection*

**To Dr. John Goodchild, [December 1901]<sup>57</sup>**

... I had hoped by this time to have had some definite knowledge of what I am to do, where to go this winter. But circumstances keep me here.... Our friend, too, (meaning himself as W. S.) is kept to England by the illness of others. My plans though turning upon different issues are to a great extent dependent, later, on his.... .

I have much to do, and still more to think of, and, it may be, bring to life through the mysterious resurrection of the imagination.

What long months of preparation have to go to any writing that contains life within it. — Even the slightest, the most significant, as it seems. We, all of us who live this dual life of the imagination and the spirit, do indeed mysteriously conceive, and fare thereafter in weariness and heaviness and long travail, only for one small uncertain birth. It is the common law of the spirit — as the obverse is the common law of womanhood.... .

Life becomes more and more strange, complex, interwrought, and *intentional*. But it is *the end* that matters — not individuals.... .

[Fiona Macleod]

*Memoir, pp. 337–38*

**To Thomas Mosher, December 12, 1901**Thursday 12th Dec<sup>r</sup> 1901

My dear Mr. Mosher,

I began a letter to you here in Skye three days ago, and two days ago found that it was washed into nothingness by having been left near an open window into which the rain and sea-spray from a sudden gale had been flung! So I saw it swirl away across the rocks below the old house whence I write to you, and disappear amid the foam of these churned seas as though it were a flattened gull! But this forenoon I have an opportunity to send a package of books, letters and proofs to my typist in Edinburgh — and so shall enclose this to be posted there with other notes — ... partly because I am "stampless" at the moment.

How friendly and good you are to me! What pleasure I had in opening the packet that reached me a few days ago, brought by a boy on a pony almost as wild and shaggy as himself, who complained too with sad lamentations in Gaelic against the weight of the parcel on a day when decent folk were all indoors! And the pleasure of finding the two Bibelot vols and the superb edition of Walter Pater's masterpiece was enhanced by the friendly gift of your photograph, which I am sincerely glad to have, as that not only of a publisher for whom I have in all ways a high regard, but of one whom I feel to be, and look upon, as a friend. And now I feel so more than ever, which is the best thing one can say after acquaintance through a photograph, is it not?

I hope that which I sent you (as I explained — reluctantly — necessarily only on loan, and even thus on certain conditions) duly reached you.

I am so glad to have that beautiful edition of "Marius the Epicurean." It is indeed good of you to send it to me. I am going to re-read it during these long winter nights. What a library of beautiful things you have published altogether! Among the many desirable things are a few more beautiful renderings of beautiful foreign things, as *Mimes*. And I think I have already suggested (from my own wish) a volume of just the finest of Stevenson's letters, and, again, of Keats's. Have you ever read the lovely *Book of Orm* of Robert Buchanan?<sup>58</sup> It has always seemed to me singularly beautiful. And, at least, a Bibelot could be made to comprise

the most wonderful thing in it, "The Dream of the World Without Death" (and "The Last Man"). And have you ever thought of a selection of the finest part of Swinburne's "Tristram of Lyonesse"?<sup>59</sup> A good translation of an ideal selection from Gerard De Nerval<sup>60</sup> would also be very welcome. And how I wish you could give us a good Catullus, a good Theocritus: or a fine ... but oh, I must write no more: already you will be saying, "if Miss Macleod were not a privileged friend I would say confound her and her suggestions etc. etc. etc."!! I wonder if you ever know such gales at Portland as we have in Western Scotland and above all in the Atlantic Isles? Last night the sea was like a jungle on fire, filled with howling beasts of prey — so vast was the roar of the furious waves, so shrill and various and inexpressibly wild and melancholy and savage the multitudinous cries of the wind. This morning the wild coast is strewn with wreckage, and close upon a score of sea-fowl lie dead, having been dashed against the rocks or these old walls, blinded by the beacon-light always set afame on nights of storm. Even now clouds of spray are in the air, it is all a white world, — the mountains in snow, and the sea a mass of foaming billows.

Well, I send a breath of the mystery and wonder of the north to you

Ever most cordially yours | Fiona Macleod

*ALS New York Public Library, Berg Collection*

***To Thomas Mosher, December 15, 1901***

Dec 15, 1901

My Dear Friend,

Please do not think me ungracious. I am sure you know me well enough to be sure that neither a foolish "fad," nor still less any ungraciousness towards a request so natural and from one whose friendship I value, is responsible for my asking you not to press the point of my photograph. It is not merely a superstitious idea with me, but has thrice been so disastrously confirmed (mere coincidence possibly, but I'm afraid that is neither here nor there with me) that I could not accede without a

continual subsequent nervous apprehension, in itself very bad for work and well-being.

I may add that I was very unwell, and that the doctors could not understand the serious nervous drain which affected me, during that period I sent you my photograph and its return.<sup>61</sup> [It is not, however, wholly "a morbid idea" of my own, it is only fair to add.] I feel refusing you as much as I did a like refusal to my venerated friend Mr. George Meredith: and others with as much right to ask.

If I should die, one will go to you. Again, if this idea should be overcome — or I should feel that distance and circumstances made your instance less perilous (laugh if you will, but also understand and sympathize) then I promise to send you one. I hope you will understand that I am truly sorry not to gratify you in so slight a thing, and that you will trust to my promise to send it when I can.

Your friend, | F. M.

ALS New York Public Library, Berg Collection

**To Thomas Mosher, December 16, 1901**

16: Dec: 1901

Dear Mr. Mosher

I am sending this with other letters to Edinburgh — the others to be typed and this one to have an international Postal Order for Ten Shillings enclosed in it, as I cannot get that in the remote place whence I write. After deducting 3<sup>s</sup>/ (75 cents) for my subscription to the *Bibelot* for 1902, please send me what I note over page. If, by the way, I am wrong in estimating the shilling as equivalent to 25 cents, let me know.

I want the following single *Bibelot*'s

From Vol. III. No 9. Botticelli etc. 6<sup>d</sup> net

No 11. Odysseus etc. 6<sup>d</sup> net

Vol IV. No 2. Verlalne	6 <sup>d</sup> net
No. 9 Giorgione	6 <sup>d</sup> net

[If by any chance there are odd copies of Nos. 6 and 10 in Vol. V I should be very glad to have them.]

In the Old World Series | No XII. (Modern Love etc.) | 4<sup>s</sup>/ net 7

7/

Foreign Subscription to *Bibelot* for 1902

3/

10<sup>s</sup>/.

You may remember promising me last autumn a special number of the November Bibelot "Celtic," partly in lieu of the new copies to be done larger size on vellum. The latter may not have proved to be convenient, and the former matter you may have very naturally overlooked in so kindly sending me a dozen on publication — or these may now be on their way — but I draw your attention now simply lest there has been any miscarriage. I see that the *Hills of Dream* and other vols in same series are also issued at a dearer price on vellum: does this mean a larger format as well as being on vellum?

There are several things I would like to order from your seductive list, including the earlier Bibelot vols, but alas I dare not — as my uncertain health with prospect of having to go to Italy or somewhere for the first three months of the year now necessitates a scrupulous economy in all that is not really essential — a difficult virtue for me, alas!

I must close abruptly I find.

In haste (the steamer is due)

Ever Sincerely yours | Fiona Macleod

*ALS New York Public Library, Berg Collection*

**To Grant Richards, [mid-December, 1901]**

(Letter-address meanwhile)

Miss Macleod | 22 Ormidale Terrace |  
Murrayfield, (Midlothian)

Dear Sir,

Although I am now well advanced with the anthology "The Hour of Beauty," it will be impossible for me to finish it till next Spring at earliest — for I find our Scottish climate, not only in Edinburgh, where I seldom am, but in our milder west, much too trying for me now in its continual damp: and it has just been decided that I am to go abroad at once for the winter. Inconvenient as this is for me, as regards my literary work on hand and also for other reasons, I am fortunate in that I am to go with friends in a yacht for an intermittent winter-and-spring-cruise in the Mediterranean, Adriatic, and Greek seas; with the pleasant prospect, too, of a visit to Sicily, first to friends who live in the interior, and afterward, to Mr. and Mrs. William Sharp at Taormina, where indeed they probably are by this time, or else en route.

I very much regret the delay, for my own sake as well as for any possible inconvenience to you: but, on the other hand, regret it the less since, when I do return, it will not now take me long to finish what is so far advanced.

Pray excuse a type-written note, as I am not at present allowed to use my right hand (the doctor threatens this may be for 7 or 8 months, possibly for a year!)

Believe me, | Yours very truly, | Fiona Macleod

P. S. As I am just about to leave, and am indeed now awaiting a telegram which will probably involve my leaving tomorrow morning, I may add that any letter will be at once forwarded to me, though probably (unless posted tomorrow) it would be surer (travelling as I am with no immediate certain addresses) to address to me on this occasion, Miss Macleod, | c/o Il Duca di Bronte, | Castello di Maniace, | BRONTE, | (SICILIA).

**To Mrs. J. H. Philpot, December 20, 1901<sup>62</sup>**

Hastings | Dec. 20, 1901

Dear Friend,

You would have enjoyed “being me” yesterday. I had a most delightful day at Rye with Henry James who now lives there for many months in the year. I went over early, lunched, and then we went all over that wonderfully picturesque old Cinque Port. A lovely walk in a frost-bound still country, and then back by the sombre old Land Gate, over the misty marshes down below, and the flame red Cypress Tower against a plum coloured sunset, to Henry James’ quaint and picturesque old house to tea. It was in every way a memorable and delightful day, and not least the great pleasure of intercourse with that vivid brilliant and alive mind. He is as of course, *you* realise, an artist to the fingertips. *Et ils sont rares ces diables d'esprit.* I wish it were spring. I long to hear the mistle thrush in the blossoming pear tree: and the tingling of the sap, and the laughter in the blood. I suppose we are all, all of us ever dreaming of resurrections...

[William Sharp]

*Memoir*, p. 338

**To Louise Chandler Moulton, December 26, 1901**

72 Inverness Terrace | Bayswater | London |  
[Hastings] | Boxing Day

My dear Louise

It is only illness that prevented my writing in time for Christmas — but now that I am at Hastings “convalescing” I can send a brief line.

No, all idea of a visit to America had to be relinquished, & for several reasons, perhaps the most immediate being the dangerous illness of my mother-in-law, which kept Lill tied to a sick-bed.

We were ourselves to have spent Xmas in Florence en route for Sicily — but alas!

And it was from there I hoped to send you a small Xmas present in the guise of a copy of my recent Tauchnitz selection from Swinburne. I can't get copies here — & so must now wait till I do get abroad before long.

I am very glad indeed you liked FM's "From the Hills of Dream." I felt sure you would when I asked her to send you (or rather to ask Mosher to send you) a copy. I wish she were stronger: at present she is far from well, though now fortunately on her way to the sunshine lands.

Pour moi, in a week hence I shall be able to leave for abroad. I shall go first to Bordighera for 10 days or so, & then hope (or soon after) to meet Lill at Genoa & so together to Sicily till the end of February & then to Rome: I am a wretched correspondent, but I am a leal friend & don't forget! So let me send you much love dear Louise, & many many hopes & wishes for you in 1902.

Ever Your Affectionate Friend, | Will

*ALS Library of Congress, Louise Chandler Moulton Collection*



# Chapter Twenty-Two

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## Life: 1902

At the beginning of January, Sharp went to the Riviera in Bordighera where his friend Dr. John Goodchild was caring for his English patients. Elizabeth had planned to join him shortly in Genoa, but instead remained in London caring for her ailing mother. After a few days Sharp went south to Rome where, as he told Ernest Rhys, he had a brief but severe recurrence of the fever which he suffered in December. Once recovered, he went on to Sicily where he planned to spend two months in and near his “beloved ‘Greek’ Taormina.” In late January he boarded a narrow gauge rail car, the Circumetnea, which took him up to the town of Maletto, high on the northwestern slopes of Mt. Etna, where he was met and taken by donkey-cart to Alexander Nelson Hood’s “wonderful old Castle-Fortress-Monastery-Mansion — the Castle Maniace,” as he described it to Rhys. Elizabeth joined him there in early February, and they remained as guests of Hood for what Elizabeth called “a month of sunshine and flowers” (*Memoir*, p. 339). On February 10, Sharp told Watts-Dunton that he was “convalescent” from his “gastric attack” and “happy to be in this beautiful & “romantic” place with my dear friend Alex Nelson Hood (in Sicily, the Duke of Bronte).” Spring had come, he continued, “Everywhere is a mass of purple iris, narcissus, Asphodel, & thousands of sweet — smelling violets.”

A fellow guest and British composer, Maud Valerie White, suggested Sharp compose a poem to commemorate their time together which she would set to music and dedicate to their host, Alec Hood. The result was Sharp’s “Buon’ Riposo” or “Good Rest” which became a song that must have put the group to sleep once the bagpipers, employed by Hood to march up and down the main hall playing Christmas airs, had left.

## BUON' RIPOSO

When, like a sleeping child  
 Or a bird in the nest,  
 The day is gathered  
 To the earth's breast ...  
 Hush! ... 'tis the dream-wind  
 Breathing peace,  
 Breathing rest  
 Out of the gardens of Sleep in the West.

O come to me ... wandering  
 Wind of the West!  
 Gray Doves of slumber  
 Come hither to nest. ...  
 Ah, sweet now the fragrance  
 Below the dim trees  
 Of the White Rose of Rest  
 That blooms in the gardens of Sleep in the West.<sup>1</sup>



Fig. 10. Maude Valérie White. Photograph by Herbert Rose Barraud, published by Eglington & Co. Carbon print, published 1889. © National Portrait Gallery, London. Some rights reserved.

Before the Sharps left Maniace on March 7, Sharp wrote a letter to Dr. Goodchild in which he said he was glad to leave, though with regrets. He went on to describe a defining trait of his personality:

My wife says I am never satisfied, and that Paradise itself would be intolerable for me if I could not get out of it when I wanted. And there is some truth in what she says, though it is a partial truth only. I think external change as essential to some natures as passivity is to others.; but this may simply mean that the inward life in one person may best be hypnotized by a "still image," that of another may best be hypnotized by a wavering image or series of wavering images. It is not change of scene one needs so much as change in these wavering images (*Memoir*, pp. 340–41).

He went on to say he "should now, in many ways, be content to spend the most of [his] life in some quiet place in the country, with a garden, a line of poplars and tall elms, and a great sweep of sky." This wavering image, with echoes of the English countryside, briefly occupied Sharp's mind after a month in the relatively barren landscape of Hood's estate, but, as Elizabeth knew, he would not be content to spend much time in such a place.

On March 7, the Sharps returned to Taormina where they spent another month in the warmth and beauty of that town perched high above the Bay of Naxos. Taormina's landscape is quite different from that of the slopes of Mt. Etna though the volcano is visible as a backdrop in the distance. During their first trip to Sicily in 1901, Elizabeth thought her husband's opinions were tarnished by the island's troubled past.

When I suggested how much the fascination of the beautiful island had seized hold of me he would say: "No, I cannot feel it for the ground is sodden and every leaf drips with blood." To his great relief, on his return there he found, as he said, that he had got beyond the surface of things, had pierced down to the great essentials of the ancient land, and had become one of her devoted lovers (*Memoir*, p. 343).

A March 1902 letter to Catherine Janvier conveyed his new-found love of the land. Sometime, he wrote, he would like to come to Taormina without anything to do so he could simply dream and

relive many of the scenes of this inexhaustible region of romance: to see in vision the coming and going of that innumerable company — from Ulysses and his wanderers, from Pythagoras and St. Peter, from

that Pancrazio who had seen Christ in the flesh, from Aeschylus, and Dionysius and Hiero and Celon [three Sicilian rulers in the fourth and fifth centuries B. C.], from Pindar and Simonides and Theocritus, to Richard Coeur-de-Lion and Garibaldi and Lord Nelson — what a strange company (*Memoir*, p. 342).

The beauty of Taormina impelled Sharp to some of his most effective word-painting in an April 3 letter to Mrs. J. H. Philpot:

From my room here in the Castello-a-Mare — this long terraced hotel is built on the extreme edge of a precipitous height outside the Messina Gate of Taormina — I look down first on a maze of vividly green almond trees sloping swiftly down to the deep blue sea, and over them the snowy vastness of Etna, phantom-white against the intense blue, with its hitherside 11,000 feet of gulf of violet morning shadow. ....



Fig. 11. Taormina on the east Coast of Sicily with Mt. Etna in the distance. The view resembles that of Sharp's view from his hotel outside the Messina Gate. Photograph by Migueltorres (2011), Wikimedia, CC BY-SA 3.0, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=17133090#/media/File:Taormina\\_and\\_Mt\\_Etna.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=17133090#/media/File:Taormina_and_Mt_Etna.jpg)

My French windows open on the terrace, it is lovely to go out early in the morning to watch sunrise (gold to rose-flame) coming over Calabria, and the purple-blue emerald straits of Messina and down by the wildly picturesque shores of these island coasts and across the Ionian sea, and

lying like a bloom on the incredible vastness of Etna and its rise from distant Syracuse and Mt. Hybla to its cone far beyond the morning clouds when clouds there are — or to go out at sunrise and see a miracle of beauty being woven anew — or at night when there is no moon, but only flashing of the starry torches, the serpentine glitter of lights, the soft cry of the aziola, and the drowsy rhythmic cadence of the sea in the caves and crags far below. Just now the hum of bees is almost as loud as the drowsy sighing of the sea: among the almonds a boy is singing a long drowsy Greek-like chant, and on the mass of wild rock near the cypresses a goatherd is playing intermittently on a reed pipe. A few yards to the right is a long crescent-shaped terrace garden filled with roses, great shrub-like clumps of white and yellow marguerite, myrtle, lilies, narcissus, sweet-scented blossom-covered geranium, oranges hanging in yellow flame, pale gold lemons. Below the branches a "Purple Emperor" and a snow- white "May Queen" are hovering in butterfly wooing. On an oleander above a wilderness of pink and scarlet geraniums two blue tits are singing and building, building and singing.

While in Taormina, Sharp wrote "Italian Poets Today," a lengthy survey which appeared in the July issue of the *Quarterly Review*. He also read Greek history and Italian literature and worked on a Greek drama, never completed, titled "The Kôrê of Enna."

Shortly after returning to England in the spring, Sharp succumbed to what he called malarial fever, followed by a bout of pneumonia. He was able to spend a week or two in Brittany in late May, and then, in mid-June, he suffered a serious financial blow. Elizabeth attributed their financial difficulties to her husband's ill health and consequent inability to generate income. He no longer had the "energy and buoyancy" to counter "the stress of circumstances," and his need to leave England for a warmer climate in winter forced Elizabeth to give up her journalistic work, primarily her art criticism for the *Glasgow Herald*, and with it her income. Many times in the past, Sharp had run out of money and asked for loans from friends and advances from editors to sustain his lifestyle and support his constant travels. This time there was an added problem.

In a July 21 letter to Alden, he described the "very serious disaster" as "the complete & final loss, without any warning, of all I had to depend upon, except what I can make by the pen." It was

the worse as coming when I was still very "down" from a prolonged & health-shaking malarial fever. ... The loss, though it might seem small to others, is a very material one to me, and above all I miss it as a surety, the

one thing I could look to. ... The trouble was complicated by coincident loss to others dear to me (thro' the mismanagement and defalcations of an agent in Australia) — & what with a pneumonic attack after return to England, & worry, etc., I have had anything but a satisfactory time of it! ... However, I am now feeling much better in health, & if only health keeps hope to emerge from my present pressing embarrassments, & though I cannot replace the sure income lost forever still I hope I can make enough to get along on. ... I hope very much, therefore, that one or two of the proposals made to you may appear to you "commissionable."

Sharp and others in his immediate family were beneficiaries of a trust set up by a relative in Australia. He learned in mid-June the trust had suddenly disappeared due to mismanagement by an agent. His description of the loss in this letter to Alden highlights its seriousness. His description of the effects of the loss in a Fiona letter to Mosher is equally compelling: "Through an unforeseen financial disaster affecting one who had money in trust for me I find myself not only in a most difficult position for the present but strained to get away abroad when the late autumn damps begin, as I am strongly advised to do." Alden would be able to help him financially by accepting his articles for *Harper's*, and Mosher by publishing the Fiona books.

When Alexander Hood returned to England from Sicily in the summer and learned of Sharp's financial problems, he started a petition to have him placed on the Civil Pension List. He began by enlisting the support of Alfred Austin, the Poet Laureate, to whom Sharp wrote on July 12 to thank him for his concern and his "prompt and generous action." He hoped Austin's influence with James Arthur Balfour, First Lord of the Treasury, would be successful, and he sent names of friends in case others were needed to endorse the petition: George Meredith, A. C. Swinburne, Thomas Hardy, Theodore Watts-Dunton, Dr. Richard Garnett, Austin Dobson, W. G. Prothero, Editor of the *Quarterly Review*, and the Duke of Sutherland. He went on to describe his need in a compelling manner:

To show you how urgent things are with me, let me add therefore that I have only a few pounds left, enough with care to carry us on till the middle or end of August (& this because of an advance cheque for a long article of mine on contemporary Italian poetry in the forthcoming "Quarterly Review" July—Sept) — and that at the present moment I see no way, without borrowing (which I am most loth even to consider, apart

from being already £50 in debt to my Bank) to meet the living-expenses of the autumn-months, or the winter (& alas, it is even more imperative than before, the doctor says, that I should get abroad before the fogs and damps begin — by the 1st of November, he says, if at all possible). By the turn of the year, of course, I hope that what I am now variously busy upon will begin to bring in money — if health holds, tho' worry and anxiety are heavy handicaps.

That Sharp felt he had to convey these personal details to a man he knew only slightly shows the seriousness of his plight. Recognizing the petition for a Civil List Petition might fail, he also asked Austin to use his position on the Board of the Royal Literary Fund to obtain a one-time grant.

By the time Sharp wrote to Alden on July 21, he had heard there was "little or no chance of success, as party & private influences are all potent, & for other reasons." On July 11, Balfour, to whom Austin had appealed, succeeded his uncle, Lord Salisbury, as Prime Minister. Though Balfour surely had other matters on his mind during July, he managed to send word to Alexander Hood that "the writings of William Sharp, considered alone, would not constitute a sufficient claim." Hood then asked Sharp "to allow him to acquaint the Prime Minister with the authorship of the Fiona Macleod writings, and of the many sacrifices their production had entailed." According to Elizabeth, her husband consented providing that Mr. Balfour were told "confidentially" and orally (*Memoir*, pp. 345–49). Word came back to Hood in mid-August that the confidential message was insufficient. "A statement of entire claims to consideration" would have to be "laid upon the table of the House of Commons for the inspection of members." Informing Sharp of this requirement, Hood first declined to offer an opinion and then proceeded to do just that: "If you will sacrifice your unwillingness to appear before the world in all the esteem and admiration which are your due, then (I may say this) perhaps you will obtain freedom — or some freedom — from anxiety and worry that will permit you to continue your work unhampered and with a quiet mind."

Sharp decided not to disclose Fiona Macleod's identity to members of Parliament since word would soon leak from there to the British press. His letter to Hood of August 21 (*Memoir*, pp. 346–49) is Sharp's clearest and most affecting statement of how he came to view the Fiona Macleod

phenomenon. A few sentences from the letter illustrate the effort he devoted to understanding the matter and his conclusions:

Rightly or wrongly, I am conscious of something to be done — to be done by one side of me, by one half of me, by the true inward self as I believe — (apart from the overwhelming felt mystery of a dual self, and a reminiscent life, and a woman's life and nature within, concurring with and often dominating the other) — and rightly or wrongly I believe that this, and the style so strangely born of this inward life, depend upon my aloofness and spiritual isolation as F. M. To betray publicly the private life and constrained ideal of that inward self for a reward's sake would be a poor collapse.

The genesis of Fiona Macleod was “no literary adventure, but a deep spiritual impulse and compelling circumstances of a nature upon which I must be silent.” Even to his good friend Hood, Sharp did not identify Edith Rinder, but only alluded to the crucial role she played in the genesis of Fiona. Elsewhere, he claimed Fiona was born within him under the influence of Edith and gradually developed into a second personality. For the single issue of his *Pagan Review* in 1893, Sharp wrote all the items and printed them under different pseudonyms. In experimenting with different persona, he was able to express a variety of different selves. As he turned to the composition of the first Fiona novel, *Pharais, A Romance of the Isles*, he had the sense it was being written by a distinct personality that was decidedly feminine. On completing the novel in 1894, he feared it would be mocked if published under his name. It needed a pseudonym whereupon he invented the name Fiona and attached it to the surname of an old man of the Inner Hebrides named Seumas Macleod who had filled his mind with Celtic myths and Gaelic lore when he was a boy.

Reflecting his grounding in myth and legend and his association with W. B. Yeats and Dr. John Goodchild in spiritualist activities, Sharp offered another explanation of the Fiona presence in his letter to Hood:

In a word, and quite simply, I believe that a spirit has breathed to me, or entered me, or that my soul remembers or has awakened (the phraseology matters little) — and, that being so, that my concern is not to think of myself or my “name” or “reward,” but to do (with what renunciation, financial and other, may be necessary) my truest and best.

Fiona Macleod, the female who had emerged and gained by his agency a wide readership in Britain and America, was both a second personality and a spirit speaking through him from another realm.

Sharp was not compelled to choose between the two explanations of Fiona; he experienced both as true. He had explored both the psychological and the spiritualist approaches to the mysteries of the human mind — indeed of human life — that vied for adherents in a post-Darwinian world which had rejected the comforting beliefs of established religions. The scientific, or materialist, approach recognized the presence of dual or even multiple personalities some of which, according to his friend Havelock Ellis, might be male and others female. The spiritualist approach manifested itself in many movements and organizations, among them the Order of the Golden Dawn (Sharp was a nominal member of the London branch), Madame Blavatsky's Theosophical Society, Yeats' Celtic Mystical Order, and Dr John Goodchild's Avalonians who fixated on the Holy Grail and sites in and around Glastonbury. Powerfully attracted to spiritualism, Sharp had engaged in elaborate rituals of evocation. Even the sensible, down-to-earth Elizabeth Sharp visited mediums after her husband died to communicate with his spirit. Sharp's letter to Hood of August 31, 1902 shows the psychological and spiritualist explanations of Fiona Macleod living together in his mind.

In the letter to Hood, Sharp attributed his decision not to reveal the truth to his need for "aloofness and spiritual isolation as F.M." He had convinced himself he would no longer be able to write as Fiona Macleod if her true identity was revealed, and he feared the truth would subject him to endless derision and mockery in the popular press and literary journals. That, in turn, would diminish editors' interest in publishing the pseudonymous writings. The impact on their finances would be devastating. Small wonder Sharp was able to assure Hood Elizabeth, though on a visit to Fife, would wholeheartedly endorse his decision.

Unable to inform Parliament Sharp was Fiona, but responsive to the appeals of Hood, Austin and others, Balfour, now Prime Minister, arranged for a one-time government grant. Sharp heard the news directly from Balfour's secretary and later from Austin. In his letter of appreciation to Austin, Sharp asked him to withdraw his request to the Royal Literary Fund since the grant from the government freed him from

"present embarrassments and immediate exigencies." In fact, the grant, along with some payments and advances for his writings, enabled the Sharps to leave Britain for warmer weather at the end of October.

Shortly after learning about the lost trust in mid-June, the Sharps decided to go to the west of Scotland and live as frugally as possible. On June 23, Sharp wrote to John MacLeay from St. Abbs, a coastal fishing village in Berwickshire. He planned to leave for Edinburgh two days later. Elizabeth would join him at the end of July, and they would spend August and September in the Highlands before going to Sicily at the beginning of November. Macleay was planning to write an article about Sharp, and he asked for material he could use. Sharp replied he was reluctant, and frankly too exhausted, to say much about himself in a letter. He suggested they meet sometime during his stay in Scotland; his tongue would be less reticent than his pen. Near the end of June, Elizabeth joined her husband in Edinburgh, and they went on to Glasgow, southwest to the Isle of Arran, north to Oban, and rented a room in the ferryman's cottage at the northern point of "'the Green Isle' of Lismore in the sea-mouth of Loch Linnhe within sight of the hills of Morven" (*Memoir*, p. 344). In his July 21 letter to Alfred Austin, which carries the return address "Point House | Island of Lismore | (by Oban)," Sharp said he had come to the "quiet farm house (already known often) so as to live with the utmost possible saving of expense."

Despite her husband's worries about finances, Elizabeth remembered her month on Lismore as happy, disease-free, and productive (pp. 344–45): "We spent much of our time on the water in a little rowing boat. A favourite haunt was a little Isle of Seals, in the loch, where we one day found a baby seagull, fat and fully fledged, but a prisoner by reason of a long piece of grass that had tightly wound round and atrophied one of its feet." The ferryman sometimes served as their oarsman and guide: "One day when we were out on the loch at sundown, and an exquisite rosy flush lay over hill and water, he stopped rowing and leant over his oars, silent for a time, and at last murmured in his slow Highland English 'Tis-the-smile-of-God-upon-the-waters.'"

The isolated ferryman's cottage proved a good place for work. While there, according to Elizabeth and quoting her husband, Sharp wrote as Fiona: "'The Four Winds of Eirinn' (long); 'The Magic Kingdoms' (longer and profounder), one of the best things F. M. has ever written;



Fig. 12. North Lismore from Port Appin, with the hills of Kingairloch beyond.

Photograph by Alan Partridge (2004), Wikimedia, CC BY-SA 2.0, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Lismore\\_Island.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Lismore_Island.jpg)

‘Sea-Magic’ (a narrative and strange Sea-Lore); ‘The Lynn of Dreams’ (a spiritual study); and ‘Seumas’ (a memory).” He revised for American publication a Fiona review of Yeats’ *Wind Among the Reeds* which appeared in 1899 in the *Dublin Daily Express*. The revised review was published in the October 1902 issue of *The North American Review* as “The Later Works of W. B. Yeats.” Sharp also arranged a selection of Fiona stories for a Tauchnitz book to be called *Wind and Wave*, and he prepared *The Silence of Amor* for publication by Thomas Mosher in Maine. This small book contained the prose poems, or as Sharp preferred to call them, “prose-rhythms,” from “The Silence of Amor” section of the 1896 edition of *From the Hills of Dream*.

After leaving Lismore, Sharp wrote the introduction to a Canterbury Poets edition of the poems of his friend Eugene Lee-Hamilton. The June 1902 issue of *Harper’s* contained his essay called “Sir Walter Scott’s Land.” This was the first of several “pot-boiling” articles in which he wrote about the home locations of famous writers. *Harper’s Magazine* published a second — “Robert Louis Stevenson’s Country” — in September. Sharp’s

boyhood friend George Halkett, who edited the *Pall Mall Magazine* from 1900 to 1905, published seven of these articles during the remainder of 1902, and they were collected in a volume titled *Literary Geography* which was published by the Pall Mall Press in 1904 and dedicated to Halkett (see Sharp's letter *To Theodore Watts-Dunton* dated August 1, 1901 in this volume). Both Editors — Alden and Halkett — were motivated in part by their desire to help their friend through a financial crisis. Under the pressure of such a crisis and in spite of what Elizabeth called his "increasing delicacy," Sharp managed to write an amazing amount during the summer and fall in order to generate income.

After their month on Lismore, the Sharps went north to Nairn for a week where Sharp met John Macleay in nearby Inverness. His lips must indeed have been less reticent than his pen, since Macleay produced an article and sent it to Sharp for review and comment. In a list of articles about William Sharp in the bibliography at the close of the two-volume edition of her *Memoir* (p. 447), Elizabeth included under the year 1903 an article entitled "A Literary Wanderer: The Career of William Sharp" in a publication named *The Young Man*. I have not found that publication, but the article's title indicates MacLeay was its author since Sharp in his July 23 letter to MacLeay called himself a "homeless wanderer."

From Nairn, Elizabeth went home to London, but Sharp stayed in Edinburgh for the remainder of August and half of September in a room rented from a Mrs. Rhind at 53 Castle Street. In early September, he spent a long weekend with a friend in Linlathen where he received from Alfred Austin the good news that the Prime Minister had arranged a government grant. He became ill again in Edinburgh and then, according to an October 31 letter to Grant Richards, he had "hardly recovered when, on my return to London, I was seized with a dangerous & painful illness through catching a bad internal chill in a fog on the morning of my arrival." It did not take long for London to make Sharp ill, but the illness provided a convenient excuse for avoiding a meeting with Grant Richards regarding a dispute over what he believed to be a mistaken debt which he could not afford to repay. In any case, the income from his writings and the government grant made it possible for both Sharps to go to Sicily.

The couple left London in mid-October, and Sharp wrote to Catherine Janvier from Taormina on October 30: "We reached Messina

all right, and Giardini, the Station for Taormina, in fair time; then the lovely winding drive up to unique and beautiful and wildly picturesque Taormina and to the lovely winter villa and grounds of Santa Caterina where a warm welcome met us from Miss Mable Hill, with whom we are to stay till the New Year" (*Memoir*, p. 349). Santa Caterina, formerly a convent and now a hotel, was renovated as a winter home by Sir Edward Stock Hill (1834–1902). An English politician who was made a Knight Commander of the Order of the Bath by Queen Victoria in 1892, Hill contributed substantially to the well-being of the English community in Taormina. His daughter, Mabel Hill, carried on her father's tradition of philanthropy focused on improving the condition of Taormina's native residents. She established, for example, an embroidery school where many women learned the art for which the town became famous and earned money of their own. Arriving in Taormina revived Sharp's spirits and again moved him to word-painting in a letter to Catherine Janvier:

I have for study a pleasant room on the garden terrace, at the Moorish end of the old convent-villa with opposite the always open door windows or great arch trellised with a lovely "Japanese" vine, looking down through a sea of roses and lemon and orange to the deep blue Ionian Sea. The divine beauty, glow, warmth, fragrance, and classic loveliness of this place would delight you. ... Beneath my Moorish arch I look down through clustering yellow roses and orange and lemon to green-blue water, and thence across the wild-dove's breast of the Ionian Sea.

On November 7, the Sharps and Mable Hill took the narrow-gauge railroad up and around the slopes of Etna to stay with Alexander Nelson Hood at the Castello Maniace. Writing the next day to Catherine Janvier, Sharp described the journey:

We three came here yesterday (Elizabeth, Miss Hill and I) and enjoyed the marvelous mountain-climbing journey from the sea-level of Giarre (near Catania) up to beautiful Linguaglossa, and Castiglione 2000 ft. high and so on to Randazzo and Maletto (3000 ft.) where we got out, and drove thro' the wild lava-lands of this savage and brigand haunted region to Castello di Maniace where il Signor Ducino Alessandro gave us cordial and affectionate welcome.

The ladies stayed a week, and Sharp a week longer before returning to Taormina with Hood who went on to Venice.



Fig. 13. The Ferrovia Circumetnea is a narrow-gauge railway which encircles Mount Etna. From its terminal in Catania the line loops around Mount Etna and eventually reaches the other terminal at the seaside town of Riposto. Its rolling stock has been updated several times, but the route is the same as when the Sharps boarded the train to travel back and forth between Taormina and the Castello Maniace in the early twentieth century. Photograph by Arbalete (2011), Wikimedia, CC BY-SA 3.0, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mappa\\_ferr\\_Circumetnea.png](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mappa_ferr_Circumetnea.png)



Fig. 14. The Randazzo station of the Ferrovia Circumetnea where the Sharps entered and left the train on their trips to the Castello Maniace. Photograph by LuckyLisp (2005), Wikimedia, CC BY-SA 3.0, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Circumetnea\\_stazione\\_di\\_randazzo.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Circumetnea_stazione_di_randazzo.jpg)

During November, Sharp worked on a story about Flora Macdonald entitled "The King's Ring" which appeared as the work of Fiona Macleod in the *Pall Mall Magazine* in May and June 1904. Flora MacDonald (1722–1790) was a member of the MacDonalds of Sleat, who helped Charles Edward Stuart evade government troops after the Battle of Culloden in April 1746. Her family supported the government during the 1745 Rising, and Flora later claimed to have assisted Charles out of sympathy for his situation. After her release from the Tower of London in 1747, she married and moved to North Carolina. Sharp's story focused on her life there, and her support of Britain during the American Revolution. In his October 30 letter to Catherine Janvier, Sharp wrote that as soon as he had finished some "pot-boiling" essays, he planned to put together for publication in Britain "two F. M. volumes, one a vol. of Gaelic essays and Spiritual studies to be called *For The Beauty of an Idea* and the other a volume of Verse to be called probably 'The Immortal Hour and Poems'

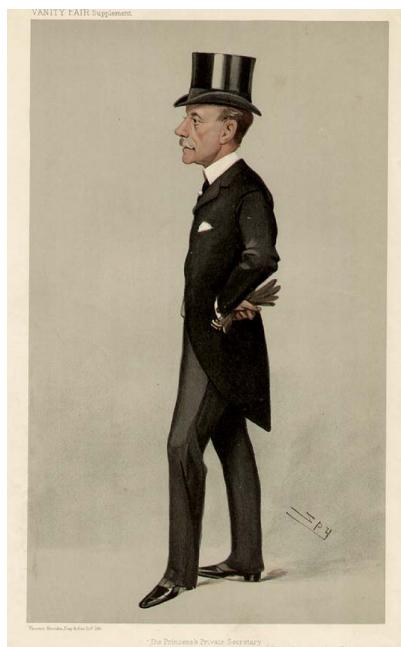


Fig. 15. Sir Alexander Nelson Hood, 5<sup>th</sup> Duke of Bronté (1854–1937). "The Princess's Private Secretary," Caricature by Spy (Leslie Ward), published in *Vanity Fair* in 1905. Wikimedia, Public Domain, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander\\_Hood,\\_5th\\_Duke\\_of\\_Bront%C3%A9#/media/File:Alexander\\_Nelson\\_Hood,\\_Vanity\\_Fair,\\_1905-10-26.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander_Hood,_5th_Duke_of_Bront%C3%A9#/media/File:Alexander_Nelson_Hood,_Vanity_Fair,_1905-10-26.jpg)

or else 'The Enchanted Valley''. When the volume of essays and spiritual studies was published in 1904 by Chapman and Hall in London, it had expanded significantly. "For the Beauty of an Idea" became the second half of a 400-page book called *The Winged Destiny: Studies in the Spiritual History of the Gael*. The volume of Fiona Macleod poems did not materialize until two years after Sharp died when Elizabeth organized it as her husband had directed: *From the Hills of Dream: Threnodies, Songs and Later Poems* (London: William Heinemann, 1907).

Sharp's letter of thanks to Hood exemplifies the renewal he experienced in the warmth and beauty of Sicily: "what a happy time I had at Maniace, and how pleasantly I remember all our walks and talks and times together, and how the true affection of a deepened friendship is only the more and more enhanced and confirmed." Hood was in Venice to collect information for a romance he was writing called *Adria: A Tale of Venice* which was set in that city and dealt with its occupation by Austria after that country received it in a trade with Napoleon. When Hood's book was published in 1904 it contained the following dedication:

TO  
WILLIAM SHARP  
IN TOKEN OF FRIENDSHIP AND GRATEFUL REMEMBRANCE  
OF PLEASANT COMPANIONSHIP, THIS "SAGA OF  
A BELEAGUERED CITY" — THIS TALE OF  
THAT VENICE OF WHICH WE BOTH  
HAVE SO GREAT A LOVE

In Hood, Sharp found late in life another man with whom he forged an intimate friendship, as he had earlier with Hall Caine, J. Stanley Little, and R. Murray Gilchrist. That Hood tried so hard to obtain a government pension for Sharp and continued to entertain him for weeks at a time in his Bronte Castle reveals the affection expressed in this dedication was genuine. In late August, Sharp concluded a letter to Hood by saying "I am more than ever glad and proud of a friendship so deeply sympathetic and intuitively understanding. | Ever affectionately yours, dear Friend, | Will." The bond formed between the two men endured until December 1905 when Sharp died at the Castle Maniace, whereupon Hood arranged his burial in the estate's Protestant cemetery and commissioned and oversaw the installation of a large Celtic cross to mark his grave.

Letters: 1902

***To Ernest Rhys, early February, 1902***

Il Castello di Maniace

My Dear Ernest,

As I think I wrote to you, I fell ill with a form of fever, — and had a brief if severe recurrence of it at Rome: and so was glad some time ago to get on to my beloved "Greek" Taormina, where I rapidly "convalesced." A few days ago I came on here, to the wild inlands of the Sicilian Highlands, to spend a month with my dear friend here, in this wonderful old Castle-Fortress-Monastery- Mansion — the Castle Maniace itself being over 2,000 feet in the highlands beyond Etna, and Maletto, the nearest station about 3,000.

How you and Grace would rejoice in this region. Within a day's easy ride is Emma, sacred to Demeter, and about a mile or so from Castle Maniace, in a wild desolate region of a lava wilderness, is the lonely heron-haunted moorland-lake wherein tradition has it Persephone disappeared. ...

W. S.

*Memoir, p. 339*

***To Thomas Mosher, January 6, 1902***

c/o Mrs. Wingate Rinder | 11 Woronzow Road | London | N. W.  
Edinburgh | (En Route)

6th Jan. 1902

My dear Mr. Mosher

How charming, those "Celtic" copies on Japan Vellum, and how glad I was to get them. They are beautiful little booklets, and have been very greatly appreciated by recipients. How much distinction and charm you

do give to your publications. And it was so good of you to send me so many.<sup>2</sup> I am perhaps leaving day after tomorrow for Menton on the Riviera for my health as the Scottish winter is so inclement from now till March.<sup>3</sup> So excuse this brief word — and any delay for some time to come in correspondence. I hope to write to you about "The Silence of Amor" — possibly with copy — in a fortnight or three weeks. Meanwhile again thanking you (and — how stupid of me to forget — for the safely returned photograph and all your friendly heed and expressions).<sup>4</sup> Believe me, again with all New Year Greetings and hopes,

Your friend, | Fiona Macleod

*ALS New York Public Library, Berg Collection*

*To Theodore Watts-Dunton, February 10, 1902*

Monday, 10<sup>th</sup> Feby | 02

Italia, | Castello di Maniace, | Bronte, | Sicily

Address: | Telegrams, | Maletto Station | c/o Il Duca di Bronte | Bronte |  
Sicily

My dear Watts-Dunton

I have heard nothing more either from "Literature" ("as was") or the "Academy"—neither returned MS, nor payment, nor even acknowledgment of any kind of my letter.

I am now convalescent from my gastric attack, & happy to be in this beautiful & "romantic" place with my dear friend Alex. Nelson Hood (in Sicily, the Duke of Bronte).

We are only some 20 miles from ancient Enna — & about a mile from here (in a desolate wilderness) is the lonely heron-haunted moorland Lake wherein tradition has it Persephone disappeared.

Altho' of course it is not so warm here as at Taormina (whence I came last & hope to return in 3 weeks or so), Spring is come. Everywhere is a mass of purple iris, narcissus, Asphodel, & thousands of sweet-smelling violets.

(Just off with my host to be at the opening of some ancient Greek (Saracane? Roman?) tombs, newly discovered by the washing away of a divergent watercourse.)

I hope you are now feeling all right, & that all goes well with your projects. (My regards to Mr. Swinburne whose Tauchnitz selection has won much appreciation.)

Ever affectly yours | William Sharp

*ALS University of Leeds, Brotherton Library*

**To Dr. John Goodchild, Friday, March 7, 1902**

Friday, 7th March, 1902

... Tomorrow we leave here for Taormina<sup>5</sup>. ... And, not without many regrets, I am glad to leave — as, in turn, I shall be glad (tho' for other reasons) when the time comes to leave Taormina. My wife says I am never satisfied, and that Paradise itself would be intolerable for me if I could not get out of it when I wanted. And there is some truth in what she says, though it is a partial truth, only. I think external change as essential to some natures as passivity is to others: but this may simply mean that the inward life in one person may best be hypnotised by "a still image", that of another may best be hypnotized by a wavering image or series of wavering images. It is not change of scene one needs so much as change in these wavering images. For myself, I should, now, in many ways be content to spend the rest of my life in some quiet place in the country, with a garden, a line of poplars and tall elms, and a great sweep of sky.... .

Your friend affectionately, | William Sharp

*Memoir, pp. 340–41*

**To Catherine Ann Janvier, [March, 1902]**

Taormina

It is difficult to do anything here. I should like to come sometime without anything to do — without even a book to read: simply to come and dream, to re-live many of the scenes of this inexhaustible region of romance: to see in vision the coming and going of that innumerable company — from Ulysses and his wanderers, from Pythagoras and St. Peter, from that Pancrazio who had seen Christ in the flesh,<sup>6</sup> from Aeschylus, and Dionysius and Hiero and Gelon,<sup>7</sup> from Pindar and Simonides and Theocritus, to Richard Coeur-de-Lion and Garibaldi and Lord Nelson — what a strange company! ...

As for my own work, it is mostly (what there is of it:) dealing with the literature, etc., of the south. I do not know whether my long article on Contemporary Italian Poetry is to be in the April-June issue of *The Quarterly*,<sup>8</sup> or the summer issue. I am more interested in a strange Greek drama I am writing — The Kôrê of Enna<sup>9</sup> — than in anything I have taken up for a long time. My reading just now is mostly Greek history and Italian literature. ... Looking on this deep blue, often violet sea, with the foam washing below that perhaps laved the opposite shores of Greece, and hearing the bees on the warm wind, it is difficult to realise the wet and cold you have apparently had recently in New York — or the fogs and cold in London. I wish you could bask in and sun yourself on this sea-terrace, and read me the last you have written of "Captain Dionysius"<sup>10</sup> while I give *you* tea! ...

[William Sharp]

*Memoir, pp. 342–43*

*To Mrs. J. H. Philpot, April 3, 1902<sup>11</sup>*

Taormina, | April 3, 1902

Dear Friend,

... It would take pages to describe all the flowers and other near and far objects which delight one continually. Persephone has scattered every treasure in this her birth-island. From my room here in the Castello-a-Mare — this long terraced hotel is built on the extreme edge of a precipitous height outside the Messina Gate of Taormina — I look down first on a maze of vividly green almond trees sloping swiftly down to the deep blue sea, and over them the snowy vastness of Etna, phantom-white against the intense blue, with its hitherside 11,000 feet of gulfs of violet morning shadow. About midway this is broken to the right first by some ancient cactus-covered fragments of antiquity at the corner of a winding path, and then by the bend of Santa Caterina garden wall with fine tall plume-like cypresses filled with a living green darkness, silhouetted against the foam-white cone.

My French windows open on the terrace, it is lovely to go out early in the morning to watch sunrise (gold to rose-flame) coming over Calabria, and the purple-blue emerald straits of Messina and down by the wildly picturesque shores of these island coasts and across the Ionian sea, and lying like a bloom on the incredible vastness of Etna and its rise from distant Syracuse and Mt. Hybla to its cone far beyond the morning clouds when clouds there are — or to go out at sunrise and see a miracle of beauty being woven anew — or at night when there is no moon, but only flashing of the starry torches, the serpentine glitter of lights, the soft cry of the aziola, and the drowsy rhythmic cadence of the sea in the caves and crags far below. Just now the hum of bees is almost as loud as the drowsy sighing of the sea: among the almonds a boy is singing a long drowsy Greek-like chant, and on the mass of wild rock near the cypresses a goatherd is playing intermittently on a reed pipe. A few yards to the right is a long crescent-shaped terrace garden filled with roses, great shrublike clumps of white and yellow marguerite, myrtle, lilies, narcissus, sweet-scented blossom-covered geranium, oranges hanging in yellow flame, pale gold lemons. Below the branches a "Purple Emperor" and a snow- white "May Queen"

are hovering in butterfly wooing. On an oleander above a wilderness of pink and scarlet geraniums two blue tits are singing and building, building and singing. ...

Since I wrote the above Easter has intervened.<sup>12</sup> The strange half pagan, half Christian ceremonies interested me greatly, and in one of the ceremonials of one processional part I recognized a striking survival of the more ancient Greek rites of the Demeter and the Persephonae-Kôrê cult.

[William Sharp]

*Memoir*, pp. 341–42

**To John Macleay, May 23, 1902**

Edinburgh | 23<sup>rd</sup> May 1902

Dear Mr. Macleay

This is just a line to say you may certainly select for your book “Deirdre’s Lament” and anything else you consider suitable and desirable. I have not a copy (except a severely revised one for use later) of the American revised and amplified edition of “From the Hills of Dream”—but I asked Mr. Sharp if he would lend you his if he had it at hand; and I hear that he has sent it to you. I hope your book will find the right way, and reach many readers. It is to be regretted there are so few good translators of Gaelic verse: indeed, except Dr. Douglas Hyde and possibly Mr. Rolleston I can think of none at the moment whose work is in itself excellent.

Personally I have a great objection to a certain kind of periphrastic translation (the interjectional, loose-measured kind affected by Prof. Blackie for example): and, indeed, doubt if adequate verse-translation of Gaelic poetry be practicable, save in the few instances where a Mangan or a Douglas Hyde can as exceptions further emphasize the rule.

Do you know the verse of an Anglican-Gaelic writer who has contributed frequently to our own and to American periodicals — Ethne Carbery, the recently deceased wife of the well-known Irish writer

Seumas McManus? If I remember rightly she did some things that might suit you. And of course you have one or more of the beautiful home-longing lyrics of Moira O'Neill? Are you giving anything in Gaelic? . . . if so, of course you could draw upon much beautiful and pathetic poetry. Yet I doubt if there is anywhere anything in kind to equal Clarence Mangan's "Dark Rosaleen."

Much of the best imaginative work of the Celtic, certainly of the Gaelic peoples, is inspired by longing, and generally by the peculiar and acute longing caused by the pressure of uncongenial circumstances in a foreign atmosphere, or by absence, or by forced exile. That, and the deeper and insatiable spiritual longing that has ever characterized our race.<sup>13</sup>

I am writing you almost en route, from Edinburgh, as I am leaving at the earliest moment feasible for the Hebrides. (As before my correspondence-address remains that of my friend and agent | Mrs. Rinder | 11 Woronzow Road | London. N. W.

With all good wishes | Believe me, dear Mr. Macleay,  
Yours most sincerely | Fiona Macleod

*TLS National Library of Scotland*

***To Mr. Black, June, 1902<sup>14</sup>***

London, | June, 1902

My Dear Mr. Black,

As soon as possible after my return from Brittany I read your MS. It is full of the true sentiment, and has often charm in the expression: but I think you would do well to aim at a style simpler still, freer from mannerisms, and above all from mannerisms identified with the work of other writers. As I am speaking critically, let me say frankly that I have found your beautiful tale too reminiscent ever and again of an accent, a note, a vernacular (too reminiscent even in names), common to much that I have written. You are sympathetic enough to care for much of my work, and loyal enough to say so with generous appreciation:

but just because of this you should be on guard against anything in my style savouring of affectation or mannerism. You may be sure that whatever hold my writings may have taken on the imagination of what is at most a small clan has been in despite of and not because of mannerisms, which sometimes make for atmosphere and verisimilitude and sometimes are merely obvious, and therefore make for weakness and even disillusion. Be on guard, therefore, against a sympathy which would lead you to express yourself in any other way than you yourself feel and in other terms than the terms of our own mind. Mannerism is often the colour and contour of a writer's mind: but the raiment never fits even the original wearer, and is disastrous for the borrower, when the mental habit of mannerism is translated into the mental incertitude of mannerisms. You have so natural a faculty and so eager a desire, that I have no hesitation in urging you to devote your best thought and time and effort to a worthy achievement.

But no work of the imagination has any value if it be not shaped and coloured from within. Every imaginative writer must take his offspring to the Fountain of Youth, and the only way is through the shadowy and silent avenues of one's own heart. My advice to you, then, is not to refrain from steeping your thought and imagination in what is near to your heart and dream, but to see that your vision is always your *own* vision, that your utterance is always your own utterance, and to be content with no beauty and no charm that are dependent on another's vision of beauty and another's secret of charm.

Meanwhile, I can advise you no more surely than to say, write as simply, almost as baldly, above all as *naturally* as possible. Sincerity, which is the last triumph of art, is also its foster-mother. You will do well, I feel sure: and among your readers you will have none more interested than

Yours Sincerely, | Fiona Macleod

*Memoir, pp. 360–61*

**To [?], [June, 1902]<sup>15</sup>**

... Rhythmic balance, fluidity, natural motion, spontaneity, controlled impetus, proportion, height and depth, shape and contour, colour and atmosphere, all these go to every *living* sentence — but there, why should I weary you with uncertain words when you can have a certainty of instance almost any time where you are: you have but to look at a wave to find your exemplar for the ideal sentence. All I have spoken of is there — and it is alive — and part of one flawless whole.... .

[William Sharp]

*Memoir*, pp. 361–62

**To Thomas Mosher, June 19, 1902**

c/o Mrs. Wingate Rinder | 11 Woronzow Road |  
St. John's Wood | London

19th June 1902

My Dear Friend,

I am very chagrined to infer from your note (with enclosure) that you do not seem to have received either a telegram (cablegram) or a long letter I sent to you from Italy. As a matter of fact I, also, have been wondering at your silence. I forget the date in the late “fall” when last I wrote to you about the “Silence of Amor” etc — but at any rate I became very unwell before Christmas, and was recommended to spend the spring in the East. That I could not possibly afford, but through a friend’s offer I was able to go on a long yachting cruise in the Mediterranean, and later to spend some time in Sicily, Venice, and elsewhere.

Before I left I sent you, for New Year’s Day, a very small but personal present (a little seal that I valued, and had taken from a ring I had long worn, but had accidentally broken). Wrapped round this was a letter, thanking you for several gracious courtesies in what you had sent me, and telling you of my temporarily relinquished work, and plans. I was

very unwell at the time, and dictated all my correspondence. Well, that (fortunately registered) package came back from America, I forget whether through Mrs. Rinder or my cousin at Murrayfield, and in the course of time reached me while on a brief passing-visit to Southern Sicily. And no wonder it had not reached you! ... for I discovered that despite my having dictated the full address my temporary amanuensis had curtailed it to "Mr. M. Portland, Maine, New York City" (the last words being a freak of her own distempered imagination!! Luckily the address-heading was inside. I alluded to all this in a long letter I sent to you from Syracuse in Sicily: and added that you could still have the much travelled seal if you cared (of no value, as I said, but sent in sign of personal friendship). But before that you should have received my cablegram. Looking in my journal I find I cabled to you "*In Italy convalescent Am writing.*" I gave both the telegram and the letter to one whom I thought I could trust — but apparently the temptation proved too great. (The telegram I find cost, with address and signature, about 12 lire — i.e., nearly 10<sup>s</sup>/ and the letter had six 2½<sup>d</sup> stamps — and this, I am told, would be almost irresistible to most Sicilians of the poorer class!)

I did not know till recently that in Italy, and particularly in Sicily, one should always obtain a receipt for a telegram, as otherwise there is but slight chance of foreign telegrams ever being dispatched at all. In that letter I enclosed a few examples of the proposed changes in and additions to "*The Silence of Amor*" — and also asked you to reply to me on certain other matters (particularly the "personal reminiscence" part of "*The Divine Adventure*" volume and elsewhere, for a vol. to be issued by you as "*From A Kingdom By The Sea*"). So, you see, if you have been waiting for me, I too have been waiting for you! After Italy I was a long time in Brittany, and there gathered much new material. I returned a few weeks ago, feeling quite well: but the wretchedly inclement weather which has prevailed all May and June till a day or two ago, threw me back, and I became very unwell with what just escaped being severe pneumonia. I am better, and now am "in," I hope, for a long spell of creative work (a good deal to revise, much to finish, and an ambitious book just begun after long planning out and thinking over) — but both for reasons of work and health (for I am never so well as on or near the sea) I am going away very shortly for a long yachting

cruise among the Western Isles, to Iceland perhaps, to the Shetlands and Faroes, and to Norway, and back again by the Hebrides — so that I shall not be in Scotland again till October at earliest, and possibly only en route for the South again. Except when I am in the near Hebrides, where I hope to spend some time at first, I shall be at some distance from postal places at times — but shall always be in close telegraphic connection with my two correspondence addresses. If you write to me for my receipt before or up till the end of July, please do so c/o Mrs. Rinder as usual: during August and September the safest and quickest will be Miss Macleod | at 22 Ormidale Terrace | Murrayfield | Midlothian. (marked in left hand corner "Please Forward") At and after close of September, to "c/o Mrs. Rinder" as before (as she keeps record of my literary correspondence, and sees to my affairs for me). Do you still wish "The Silence of Amor"? Is there a public for a book of the kind? And the other? I should much like to hear about that: and, if so, what you can propose.<sup>16</sup>

I began this note as a private letter, and have ended it with a business question! Forgive me, and believe me in both relationships, dear Mr. Mosher,

Sincerely yours | Fiona Macleod

*TLS New York Public Library, Berg Collection*

**To John Macleay, June 23, 1902**

"The Rest" | St. Abbs' | Berwickshire | 23<sup>rd</sup> June | 02  
Letter address on or after Wdny: | Murrayfield | Midlothian

Dear Mr. Macleay,

The book duly reached me, thanks.

It is very good of you to wish to write an article on me. Unfortunately I have preserved few of those which have appeared at times during the last 10 or 12 years, and Heaven knows where even these few may be — for I don't! Probably they are lost in some book-and-manuscript wilderness in some trunk deposited in the Furniture Stores where most

of my worldly goods have long been (and are likely long to remain)!  
And I'm a very bad hand at this kind of thing, alack!

You'll find all formal literary particulars in *Who's Who* etc. and I don't think there's much else! I've lived my life so fully, travelled so much, lived so much abroad, that (looking back on it) I cannot see how it would fit into more than a sentence. ... a sentence or a book! — and as I'm not "book-worth," so to say, I think the sentence the better!

Of course I've seen much of eminent men, in our country and abroad and in America: & here, of course, I have many reminiscences. Some day, I suppose, when nearer some kind of settledness than so homeless a wanderer as myself foresees meanwhile, I may take up the reminiscent pen. As yet, the vanity of the author (let us call it that anyway) prompts me to do a good-deal more first myself before I (to use an Americanism) "reminiss."

But if we should meet in Scotland ... why, I daresay my tongue would be less reticent than my pen, whose shocking apathy at the sight of ink is growing into a disease!

I do not know for certain where I shall be between the 1<sup>st</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> of August — but it is very unlikely I shall be in Edinburgh then. There is just a dim chance that I might be there at the end of July or the 1<sup>st</sup> — but too dim to calculate on. In all probability my wife will join me from London towards the close of July, to spend August & Sept in the West Highlands or Islands, & then returning via Edinburgh. We shall probably go to Sicily again at the beginning of November. (I am working a good deal at the Latin literatures and developments.)

I have pleasure in sending to you herewith a brief line of the kind you specify, which I hope is what you want.

Sincerely yours / William Sharp

*ALS National Library of Scotland*

*To Alfred Austin<sup>17</sup> July 12, 1902*

Point House | Island of Lismore | (by Oban) | 12th July 1902

Dear Poet and Friend,

I have heard from Alec Hood of the friendly concern with which you learned what he told you, and of your prompt and generous action. Believe me, I am very grateful. I hope very much, more than I allow myself to say, that your influence with the first lord of the Treasury may, either by itself or (if routine demands) supported by other eminent names, be successful. If others should have to be asked to endorse the "petition," I am sure that application might be made to George Meredith, A. C. Swinburne, Thomas Hardy, Theodore Watts-Dunton, Dr. Richard Garnett, Austin Dobson, W. G. Prothero (Editor of *The Quarterly*) and others if necessary — and, in another direction, to the Duke of Sutherland, and one or two others of whom Alec Hood would tell you as knowing me.

Probably he explained the circumstances to you — & how I find myself now in an entirely unforeseen way deprived by no fault of my own of all I had to depend upon — in uncertain health and after ten months of an almost continuous trouble affecting my working capacity — and now with almost nothing in hand, a small but nonetheless embarrassing debt of £50, and, though now working hard again, with no likelihood of returns for months to come, much of it not till next Spring or later (you know what is involved in literary work — the often inevitably deferred appearance, and consequent deferred payment). I left London shortly after mid-June & came to this quiet farm house (already known often), so as to live with the utmost possible saving of expense. My wife has been staying with her mother, but will join me soon.

It is disagreeable to have to be explicit on so personal a matter, and to trouble *you*, good friend as you are: but since the matter has been mooted (& at first most reluctantly on my part) then frankness is best, is indeed called for.

To show you how urgent things are with me, let me add therefore that I have only a few pounds left, enough with care to carry us on till the middle or end of August [& this because of an advance cheque for a long article of mine on contemporary Italian poetry in the forthcoming

"Quarterly Review" July–Sept] — and that at the present moment I see no way, without borrowing (which I am most loth even to consider, apart from being already £50 in debt to my Bank) to meet the living-expenses of the autumn-months, or the winter (& alas, it is even more imperative than before, the doctor says, that I should get abroad before the fogs and damps begin — by the 1st of November, he says, if at all possible).

By the turn of the year, of course, I hope that what I am now variously busy upon will begin to bring in money — if health holds, tho' worry and anxiety are heavy handicaps.

Another reason why I write all this detail is the thought that came to me last night that you are on the Board of the Royal Literary Fund. If I am right in this supposition & you could use your influence to obtain me a grant, it would be an obligation of vital moment. I confess that the idea goes very much against the grain — & the more so as one's pride shrinks from any publicity, or even from those knowing whom one would rather not have know. However, I do not want help as one who has failed or is laid low: simply as one whom unforeseen & and unavoidable disaster has overtaken, and who is ready & willing to take up the struggle afresh. In another year or two I hope to be "all right" again — certainly it won't be for want of trying, or for belief that "it will all come right after a bit."

Of course, the Pension's the all important thing — both to immediate welfare & for mental relief (and a surety — that is, indeed, where it could replace what is lost). So disregard the other, if you think it wiser, or would rather not, or are not in a position. (I have said nothing of this to any one — so it can "drop," if need be)

And if, some day, you can send me word that the dispenser of Pensions has favourably considered Mr. W. S. then you will have earned once again my true gratitude. Meanwhile I'll hope to manage somehow.

Ever sincerely & gratefully yours, | William Sharp

*ALS Princeton University*

**To Thomas Mosher, July [19?], 1902**

Temporary Letter Address | Miss Macleod |  
22 Ormidale Terrace | Murrayfield, Midlothian  
(Please Forward) | July 1902

Dear Mr. Mosher

I am not waiting to hear from you in reply to my letter of about a month ago [June 19], which I hope you duly received. Since I wrote, my plans have had to be materially modified, and my projects brought into line with pressing needs.

Through an unforeseen financial disaster affecting one who had money in trust for me I find myself not only in a most difficult position for the present but strained to get away abroad when the late autumn damps begin, as I am strongly advised to do.

I have had to set aside, therefore, certain work I had on hand, and to see to what will bring me in more immediate returns.

As regards yourself, I cannot now set myself to complete the little "Silence of Amor" volume — that is, for the present.

I should very much like, however, to do the other proposed volume (for you exclusively) to be called say *Island Memories* or other such title [e.g. the already suggested "In This Kingdom by the Sea"]; to comprise the personal matter already scattered through the long essay on Iona, and in other pages of *The Divine Adventure* volume — which, as you know, has not been reprinted in U. S. A. — with added new material. If I were to do this, could you pay me the sum of £50, a sum of course very much below what I would ask if I were trying to arrange elsewhere. But apart from having already suggested it to you, I am persuaded by the beautiful format (particularly if it be possible to issue it like "Mimes")<sup>18</sup>, and by the relative privacy of your publications. [The conditions would be that you would have the American copyright of said book, but not disposably, and for a specified term, say seven years (that is how my English contracts are made out) renewable if mutually desired. On account of copyright and other reasons it is very unlikely I should be able to republish in this country — even if I wished to do so — so that any of my readers here desirous of this volume would have to write to you for it.]

Now as to another proposal.

You do not as a rule issue quite new books, I know: but possibly you may care for the following, which I had intended to suggest to Messrs Harper, first for serial use, and then for publication in book form: — namely the complete romance of Tristram and Yseult — “l'incomparable épopée de l'amour” as Gaston Paris, the great French specialist on the subject calls it — retold from the several medieval and later sources, or else from the latest synthetical relation by Joseph Bédier, of which indeed it might in effect be a carefully wrought and perhaps augmented re-rendering. It would be a volume of about 250 pp. of ordinary wide-leaded 8vo. pages, and would be in 19 or 20 chapters. It could be called either *Tristram and Yseult* (or *Tristran and Yseud*) or, if preferred, *Yseult of the White Hands*. I could not undertake this for less than £100, but you would of course have complete American rights, and, whatever other arrangements might ultimately be made by me over here, the book would appear first in America.

In alluding again to the romance of Tristran and Yseult, Gaston Paris speaks of it as unquestionably belonging to the enduring world literature (“cette littérature du monde”) of which Goethe wrote.

And now, finally, for a third suggestion for your consideration — a volume of a scrupulously limited anthology of the best Anglo-Celtic poetry — far less eclectic than Mr. and Mrs. William Sharp's *Lyra Celtica*, I should add — to be called, let us say, *A Little Treasury of Celtic Poetry*. It would come down to the latest (and even some of the unpublished work) of Mr. Yeats and others, including the recently deceased Ethna Carbery about whose poetry I am now writing a brief essay for a magazine. And I would have something to say on the subject, as well as on the matter of the book and the writers represented. [Here again the same terms, and exclusive and final American rights to you: the book probably to be an American publication only.]

I ought to wait for your reply to my recent letter — where, indeed, I did make allusion to the *Island Memories* volume — but time presses and so I do not delay.<sup>19</sup>

I hope all goes fortunately with you. Doubtless this may find you either about to enjoy a holiday or already in that enjoyment — In any case, Gu'm a math a bhios sibh ... May it be well with you.

Believe me | Most cordially your | Fiona Macleod

**To Thomas Mosher, July 21, 1902**

Monday morning | 21st July, 1902

Dear Mr. Mosher

Your welcome and friendly double letter reached me in Appin of Argyll, and just after I had posted a letter to you. If it does not reach you along with this, there can hardly be more than a "post" between them. I write now hurriedly to catch the first outgoing mail, and shall send by a messenger going in any case to Edinburgh today, as there is no post now from here till late tomorrow. Fortunately I was within a mile or two of where I could have a telegram sent off, though too late for Saturday evening, but it was to go off the first thing yesterday, the date you mentioned as the latest by which you should hear. I telegraphed "Agree Essays and Amor. Posting MSS. fortnight hence," for the occasion seemed to justify the outlay. And by that of course I meant that I concur with and authorize your suggested reprint of "By Sundown Shores," and, also, since you say it is your own wish, "The Silence of Amor" — and that by *about* the end of July (possibly a few days before, possibly a few days later, but I hope before) I shall post "copy" to you. [As I shall be travelling to the north of Scotland about the 30th I shall for every reason do my best to send by then.]

"By Sundown Shores"

I shall be very glad to see these pieces reprinted. I shall send a few revisions, with a prefatory paper as you suggest (and just possibly an added piece, not published in book-form, that would fall into line with them) — and so make it more of a new book than merely a reprint.

"The Silence of Amor"

My feeling about these short compositions [in a sense, rather the canticles of a single song, the *Chant D'Amour*] is that (1) they seem to me too slight and (2) that they might not have enough readers to justify you in publication. However, if you are willing, I am of course pleased to accede. Doubtless they would help "From the Hills of Dream," and, too, it is certain that "The Silence of Amor" is best read apart, as a distinct production, and not as an apparent series of prose poems at the end of a volume of verse. [I remember, too, that one or two critics on your side, notably Mr. Bliss Carman, spoke very highly of these "prose rhythms" when the original edition of "From the Hills of Dream" appeared.] So,

about the date mentioned, I shall send "The Silence of Amor" revised, with some added matter. Then or before then I shall also write to you privately — today I have time for no more, and must indeed at this very moment abruptly close.

Most sincerely yours, | Fiona Macleod

*ALS New York Public Library, Berg Collection*

**To Henry Mills Alden, July 21, 1902**

(Though in the Western Isles | I write you from here,

as best | address for the next two months)

72 Inverness Terrace | Bayswater | London | 21st July/02

My dear Alden,

I send this, though editorial, to your private address, as I want to add a private word with it, and also because Miss Macleod is writing to you editorially by same post to Franklin Square. I am also sending a letter about a suggested book to you or the firm direct.

I am afraid that you never got a long private letter, purely with matters of personal interest and enquiring about you & yours written in February last — not so much because I have not heard from you, for there was nothing specially calling for immediate response, but because I have discovered that at least three other letters (one of them important) posted per same source in Italy and at same time never reached their destinations.

Well, anyway, the plans & projects alluded to in that letter were carried out only so far as concerned the late Spring.

Then, unfortunately, a very serious disaster happened to me — & the worse as coming when I was still very "down" from a prolonged & health-shaking malarial fever — namely the complete & final loss, without any warning, of all I had to depend upon, except what I can make by the pen. The loss, though it might seem small to others, is a very material one to me, and above all I miss it as a surety, the one thing I could look to. It is the mental loss of this small but sure

standby that has meant so much to me. The trouble was complicated by coincident loss to others dear to me (thro' the mismanagement and defalcations of an agent in Australia) — & what with a pneumonic attack after return to England, & worry, etc., I have had anything but a satisfactory time of it! Some friends, knowing the circumstances, made an appeal to the Govt. for a pension from the Civil List, but: I have just heard with little or no chance of success, as party & private influences are all potent, & for other reasons. However, I am now feeling much better in health, & if only health keeps hope to emerge from my present pressing embarrassments, & though I cannot replace the sure income lost forever still I hope I can make enough to get along on. I am sorriest at having to relinquish certain things I had long projected or been at work on. But it is absolutely imperative I must work at what will bring in some material and speedy return: & all more so as my medical man leaves me no option but to go abroad again if at all possible & before the November damps & fogs set in. I hope very much, therefore, that one or two of the proposals made to you may appear to you "commissionable."

There is, of course, no chance now of our getting to U. S. A. this autumn or winter — but I still cherish I dare not say an intention but at least a hope that this may prove practicable sometime next year. With you, and yours, I hope all goes well. I would give much to be able "to run over" to Metuchen for a week-end! (You will be pleased to know that our friend Miss F. M.'s influence & circle of readers both continually increase.)

With all cordial remembrances to those at Metuchen and my affectionate greetings to yourself,

Ever Sincerely Yours | William Sharp

ALS University of Delaware Library

**To Thomas Mosher, August 2, 1902**

August 2<sup>nd</sup> | (Nairn)

My Dear Mr. Mosher,

Just before I came north (I write to you from Nairn, on the Moray Firth, from Nairn near Inverness) I managed, as I had hoped and half promised, to post to you from Oban (Port-Appin) in Argyll the completed "copy" of new matter, revisions, and memda [sic] for "By Sundown Shores" and "The Silence of Amor", which (registered) I hope will have duly reached you by the time you receive this by subsequent mail.

You will see that I have dedicated this American edition of the revised and augmented *By Sundown Shores* to you: and in I think, the best way, a dedicatory prologue. I hope you will accept this tribute of friendship. (I am glad that in itself I think it as good as anything I have written — though both underthought and style may be too foreign for some readers.)

When I alluded to your writing something preliminary to "*The Silence of Amor*" I was thinking of the Bibelot series. Perhaps a booklet like "*The Silence of Amor*" is best to come out without foreword of any kind (certainly without any from me). But decide just as seems best to you, and for your readers. (I expect that those who would go the length of buying such a book would understand at once that the little series of prose-rhythms (I don't like "prose-poems"!) deals throughout with the all but inexpressible subtleties of love lost or relinquished, but that from first to last the word love is never mentioned in the book — hence the title of "Silence" and even the use of abstract and impersonating "Amor" instead of "Love".)

If, however, you think it better to have a foreword from you, by all means let it appear.

I am glad indeed that despite some days of indisposition from a chill I was able, by setting aside all other work, to devote the last fortnight to completing these volumes for you. As to the matter of honorarium you know best what your expenses in connection with production enable you to offer with justice to your own share: so I leave the matter with you, content to do so. I am very glad you are able to bring them out this autumn-season.

(In whatever sum you allow deduct say 20 copies of each, for my own use)

By this post I am sending to you the little crystal seal that has already travelled to you from Italy and returned from America. This time I hope it will reach you safely. I enclose it in a little box for stamps made of the green marble of Iona. Some other time I will reply to your private letter — but now must catch this mail.

Believe me, dear Mr. Mosher | Ever Sincerely Yours, | Fiona Macleod

*ALS New York Public Library, Berg Collection*

***To Thomas Mosher, August 6, 1902***

Nairn | 6th Augt

After all, I wrote and typed an Introduction to "The S. of Amor," and left it to be posted by next mail. I had at first a reluctance, hence what I wrote to you: but I see that this introduction is well, and advisable. On looking through my dup. typed copy I see that on the 5th line of page 4 I have "desiderate" instead of "desiderated". Also cancel the final few words, and end at "inward ear."

Please both in this and other Prologue exercise all care in collation of proofs.

F. M.

*ACS New York Public Library, Berg Collection*

**To Alfred Austin, [August 8, 1902]<sup>20</sup>**

Till Mid-Sept | c/o Mrs. Rhind | 53 Castle Street | Edinburgh

My dear Alfred Austin

Many thanks for your p/c of the 4th just received after some reforwarding. Again sincere thanks for all your trouble. Without being sanguine I still hope something may come of it — though for the moment I am so harassed by immediate pressing exigencies as almost to think more of the possibility of assistance meanwhile from the Roy. Lit. Fund. [My health has had a severe strain, & I'm not feeling right at all, but still I hope that by early in 1903 I'll have a pen-income again, but meanwhile it is the present & immediate future that causes me so much anxiety, for I was literally left with almost nothing on hand, & handicapped besides.] Hence my hope that even a grant, if not a pension from the Government or from the Roy. Lit. Fund, to which you so kindly wrote, may come to help me to tide over this too engulfing wave of present difficulties.

What a dreary summer, in weather. But perhaps it has been better with you in the South?

I hope all goes well with tomorrow's Coronation.

Ever sincerely yours | William Sharp

*ALS Yale University*

**To Grant Richards, August 8, 1902**

(Temporary) | c/o Mrs. Rhind | 53 Castle St. | Edinburgh | 8th Augt/02

My dear Grant Richards

Will you kindly instruct your clerk or manager not to solicit me further for an account that is not due.

A similar "a/c" came last year, which I took to be inadvertence. When it came again this year I put it in the fire. And now this note comes.

I have no account due to you that I am aware of. You published two books for me, with a small advance on each. That of course was without

any stipulation as to repayment, if sales short. By the given record of sales you have not actually lost money by the books: on the other hand I lost materially through your failure to advertise adequately on the head of the excellent reviews which appeared. At the time, when, one day, I expostulated, you explained that the heavy outlay on advertising "No. 5 John St"<sup>21</sup> etc. was chiefly accountable: — at another time another reason was given (in the same terms as to R. Murray Gilchrist, & one or two other friends of mine with equal good cause for dissatisfaction).

However, what is to the point now is that your manager is writing to me for settlement of an a/c which does not exist.

When I return to London next month I should look in & have a talk with you about this & other matters.

Yours truly | William Sharp

*ALS State University of New York at Buffalo*

*To Alexander Nelson Hood, August 21, 1902*

Edinburgh, | 21st Aug, 1902.

My Dear Alec,

You will have anticipated my decision.<sup>22</sup> No other was possible for me. I have not made many sacrifices just to set them aside when a temptation of need occurs. Indeed, even writing thus of "sacrifices" seems to me unworthy: these things are nothing, and have brought me far more than I lost, if not in outward fortune. It is right, though, to say that the decision is due to no form of mental obstinacy or arrogance. Rightly or wrongly, I am conscious of something to be done — to be done by one side of me, by one half of me, by the true inward self as I believe — (apart from the overwhelmingly felt mystery of a dual self, and a reminiscent life, and a woman's life and nature within, concurring with and oftenest dominating the other) — and rightly or wrongly I believe that this and the style so strangely born of this inward life, depend upon my aloofness and spiritual isolation as F. M. To betray publicly the private life and constrained ideal of that inward

self, for a reward's sake, would be a poor collapse. And if I feel all this, as I felt it from the first (and the *nominal* beginning was no literary adventure, but a deep spiritual impulse and compelling circumstances of a nature upon which I must be silent) how much more must I feel it now, when an added and great responsibility to others has come to me, through the winning of so already large and deepening a circle of those of like ideals or at least like sympathies in our own country, and in America — and I allude as much or more to those who while caring for the outer raiment think of and need most the spirit within that raiment, which I hope will grow fairer and simpler and finer still, if such is the will of the controlling divine wills that, above the maze, watch us in our troubled wilderness.

That is why I said that I could not adopt the suggestion, despite promise of the desired pension, even were that tenfold, or any sum. As to "name and fame," well, that is not my business. I am glad and content to be a "messenger," an interpreter it may be. Probably a wide repute would be bad for the work I have to do. Friends I want to gain, to win more and more, and, in reason, "to do well": but this is always secondary to the deep compelling motive. In a word, and quite simply, I believe that a spirit has breathed to me, or entered me, or that my soul remembers or has awaked (the phraseology matters little) — and, that being so, that my concern is not to think of myself or my "name" or "reward," but to do (with what renunciation, financial and other, may be necessary) my truest and best.

And then, believing this, I have faith you see in the inward destiny. I smiled when I put down your long, affectionate, and good letter. But it was not a smile of bitterness: it was of serene acceptance and confidence. And the words that came to my mind were those in the last chorus of Oedipus at Kolônos, "Be no more troubled, and no longer lament, for all these things will be accomplished."

Then, too, there's the finitude of all things. Why should one bother deeply when time is so brief. Even the gods passed, you know, or changed from form to form. I used to remember Renan's "Prayer on the Acropolis" by heart, and I recall those words "Tout n'est ici-bas que symbole et que songe. Les dieux passent comme les hommes et il ne serait pas bon qu'ils fussent éternels."<sup>23</sup>

Elizabeth, who is on a visit to Fife, will, I know, wholeheartedly endorse my decision. Again all my gratitude and affection, dear Alec,

Your friend, | Will

*Memoir*, pp. 346–48

**To Alexander Nelson Hood, August 23, [1902]**

23rd Aug

Dear Julian,

A little line to greet you on your arrival in Venice, and to wish you there a time of happy rest and inspiration. May the spirit of the Sea-Queen whisper to you in romance and beauty.

How I wish I could look in on you at the Casa Persico! I love Venice as you do. I hope you will not find great changes, or too many visitors: and beware of the September heats, and above all the September mosquito!

“Julian” ought to have a great lift, and not the least pleasure in looking forward to seeing you again early in October is that of hearing some more of your book of Venice and of the other Julian.<sup>24</sup>

If all goes well — and I have been working so hard, and done so much, that things ought to go smoothly with me again — then we hope to leave London for Sicily about the 21st Oct., and to reach Taormina about the 26<sup>th</sup> of that month.

I need not say how glad I am that you knew I could not decide otherwise than I did: and I am more than ever glad and proud of a friendship so deeply sympathetic and intuitively understanding.

Ever affectionately yours, dear Friend, | Will

P.S. By the way, you will be glad to know that Baron Tauchnitz is also going to bring out in 2 vols. a selection of representative tales by Fiona Macleod. The book called *The Magic Kingdoms* has been postponed till next year, but the first part of it will appear in *The Monthly Review*<sup>25</sup> in December probably. Stories, articles, studies, will appear elsewhere.

Your friend W. S. has been and is not less busy, besides maturing work long in hand. So at least I can't be accused of needless indolence.

*Memoir, pp. 348–49*

**To Alfred Austin, [late August, 1902]**

53 Castle St. | Edinburgh

My dear Alfred Austin,

You were right in your prognostication — for Alec Hood's efforts added to yours, and with the Memorial signed by you and George Meredith and Thomas Hardy and Swinburne have been set aside by other exigencies or reasons. There seems, however, a strong likelihood that a small Government Grant will be made to me — indeed Mr. Balfour affirmed as much to Alec Hood, as (I fancy) he directly or indirectly indicated to you.<sup>26</sup> Its immediate value will be in present relief. The need of rest, and the doctor's imperative urgency about my getting away before the November damp etc. must meanwhile "await events." I am still hopeful that something may come of your kind intervention on my behalf with the Board of the Roy. Lit. Fund.

I shall let you know the result, when finally I hear, as to the other. Hoping you are now having the long delayed Summer weather, and are well, and with song in the heart,

Ever yours sincerely, | William Sharp

*ALS, Yale University*

***To Alfred Austin, [early September, 1902]***

Linlathen | Broughty Ferry | Saty

Dear Alfred Austin

I am here at a friend's for the week-end. It is indeed good news, what you write of, & of which I heard also from Mr. Balfour's Secretary. To you, as to Alec Hood, who have both done so much to bring about this happy outcome to my difficulties I am most truly grateful.

Of course as this now frees me from my present embarrassments and immediate exigencies it is proper that the application to the Roy. Literary Fund should be withdrawn — as that Fund (as I understand) is only for relief in urgent circumstances. In the circumstances, therefore, the best thing would seem to be that you should write to the secretary, and withdraw the application, before the matter comes up for consideration at all.

I am very thankful, too, at the prospect of getting abroad soon, on a/c of the doctor's urgency about my heart etc.

Ever sincerely and Gratefully Yours, | William Sharp

*ALS Yale University*

***To George Hutchinson, September 15, 1902***

Murrayfield | Midlothian | 15/9/1902

Dear Mr. Hutchinson<sup>27</sup>

Very many thanks for your kind Birthday Greetings. I am now very busy getting ready (& literary "material" is my worst care) to go to Sicily next month. I have been, and am continuously and arduously occupied with pen-work (the articles in the July & Sept, *Harper's*, the poem in the August issue, the long article (unsigned of course) in the July-Sept "Quarterly Review" on Contemporary Italian Literature, etc. are but overthrows of work done last winter) and have now alack added to my

labours by undertaking to complete another volume (of a more general nature) for the Tauchnitz Series before I go!

Hoping that all goes well with you | Sincerely yours | William Sharp  
*ALS Princeton University*

***To Thomas Mosher, October 14, 1902***

Edinburgh | Tuesday Night | 14th. October

Dear Mr. Mosher,

I was very glad to hear from you. I feared that a letter had miscarried; perhaps that you were ill: possibly that some of my MS. (as happened to me once) had gone astray.

I thank you for your business letter and the accompanying draft for Ten Pounds (£10). I have, of course, absolute confidence that whatever you propose will be an equipoise of interests on both sides. So I accept the arrangement you suggest. As you kindly say you will forward the other Eight Pounds (£8) on hearing from me, to this effect, will you please do so, but to avoid delay and chances of complicated confusion, will you please make the draft payable, not to me, but to Mrs. E. Wingate Rinder and post it direct to her at 21 Woronzow Road | London. N. W. | (Cancel the hitherto No. 11, as her house has been renumbered 21.) with a brief note saying that as requested by Miss Macleod you forward the enclosed draft direct to her, to be passed to Miss Macleod's credit; and asking her kindly to send you a brief word of acknowledgment.

For the copyrighting and all other kind consideration of my interests, accept my cordial recognition.

I see that you say you will send the earliest copies to the Murrayfield address. If this reach you in time please send all there. I much look forward to seeing the two little volumes, though I fear none will arrive before I leave for Italy, namely on Monday next, the 20th. I have unfortunately been seriously ill, but the doctors say that the South and still more the Mediterranean sea-air will soon restore me to health. I hope it: but, meanwhile, I wish the long and tiresome journey were over.

Did I tell you that besides a French and a German translation in process, Baron Tauchnitz commissioned me to make a "representative" volume for his famous series. This also is to appear this month (or early in November). It is called *Wind and Wave* and is in two sections: tales "Of the World That Was" and tales "Of The World That Is." Many of the tales are considerably revised, and there is an explicatory preface. I shall send you (either direct from me, or from Mrs. Rinder, or from my cousin at Murrayfield ... as the vols. happen to come) one of the earliest copies.

And I shall write to you more personally two or three weeks hence, from the South.

Most Sincerely Yours | Fiona Macleod

P.S. I forgot to say that I should be gratified if you will kindly send me 3 or 4 copies of the "Biblot" for November, as I see that Mr. Rhys' "New Mysticism" article is to be reprinted there (I suppose with some little foreword?) ... or is it a new and different article by Mr. Rhys. Also I should like the four volumes marked in enclosed list, the cost of which can be deducted from the draft you send to Mrs. Rinder. These, however, I should like to have sent to me direct (*registered*)

Miss Macleod | c/o Il Duca Alessandro di Bronte | Castello Maniace |  
Bronte | Sicilia | (Italy)

Once more, if this reach you before all the copies of my two vols. are sent off, please send with above *one of each* to above address.<sup>28</sup>

*TLS New York Public Library, Berg Collection*

***To Catherine Ann Janvier, October 30, 1902***

... We reached Messina all right, and Giardini, the Station for Taormina, in fair time; then the lovely winding drive up to unique and beautiful and wildly picturesque Taormina and to the lovely winter villa and grounds of Santa Caterina where a warm welcome met us from Miss Mabel Hill,<sup>29</sup> with whom we are to stay till the New Year... . I have for study a pleasant room on the garden terrace, at the Moorish end of the

old convent-villa with opposite the always open door windows or great arch trellised with a lovely "Japanese" vine, looking down through a sea of roses and lemon and orange to the deep blue Ionian Sea. The divine beauty, glow, warmth, fragrance, and classic loveliness of this place would delight you.... Overhead there is a wilderness of deep blue, instinct with radiant heat and an almost passionate clarity. Forza, Mola, Roccafiorita, and other little mountain towns gleam in it like sunlit ivory. Over Forza (or Sforza rather) the storm-cloud of the Greco, with a rainbow hanging like a scimitar over the old, pagan, tragic, savagely picturesque mountain-ridge town. The bells of the hill-chapels rise and fall on the wind, for it is the beginning of All Souls festa. It is the day when "things" are abroad and the secret ways are more easily to be traversed.

Beneath my Moorish arch I look down through clustering yellow roses and orange and lemon to green-blue water, and thence across the wild-dove's breast of the Ionian Sea. Far to the S. E. and S., over where Corinth and Athens lie, are great still clouds, salmon-hued on the horizon with pink domes and summits. An intense stillness and the phantasmagoria of a forgotten dreamland dwell upon the long western promontories of the Syracusan coast, with the cloud-like Hyblaean hill like a violet, and a light as of melting honey where Leontinoi and Syracuse lie....

Nov. 8: This is a week later. I have accidentally destroyed or mislaid a sheet of this letter. Nothing of importance — only an account of the nocturnal festa of All Souls, with the glittering lights and the people watching by the graves, and leaving lights and flowers on each, the one to show the wandering souls the way back to the grave, the other to disguise the odor of mortality and illude them with the old beauty of the lost world — and the offerings of handfuls of beans, to give them sustenance on this their one mortal hour in the year. We three came here yesterday (Elizabeth, Miss Hill and I) and enjoyed the marvelous mountain-climbing journey from the sea-level of Giarre (near Catania) up to beautiful Linguaglossa, and Castiglione 2000 ft. high and so on to Randazzo and Maletto (3000 ft.) where we got out, and drove thro' the wild lava-lands of this savage and brigand haunted region to Castello di Maniace where il Signor Ducino Alessandro gave us cordial and affectionate welcome.

Sunday 9<sup>th</sup>. The weather is doubtful, but if it keeps fine we are going to drive down the gorges of the Simalthos (the Simeto of today) and then up by the crags and wild town of Bronte, and back by the old Aetnean hill-road of the ancient Greeks, or by the still more ancient Sikelian tombs at a high pass curiously enough known not by its ancient fame but as the Pass of the Gypsies. As the country is in a somewhat troubled and restive state just now, especially over Bronte, all pre-arrangements have been made to ensure safety. . . .

I hope you have received the Tauchnitz volume of "Wind and Wave." The text of Selected Tales has been revised where advisable, sometimes considerably. The gain is very marked I think, especially in simplicity. I hope you will like the preface. The long collective-article in the *Contemporary* for October "Sea-Magic and Running Water" I have already written to you about. One can never tell beforehand, but in all probability the following F. M. articles will appear in December (if not January) issues, viz.: | In *The Monthly Review* — The Magic Kingdoms | In *The Contemporary* — The Lynn of Dreams | In *The Fortnightly* — The Four Winds of Eirinn.<sup>30</sup>

As soon as I can possibly work free out of my terribly time-eating correspondence and am further ahead with my necessary and commissioned pot-boiling articles etc., I want to put together two F. M. volumes, one a vol. of Gaelic essays and Spiritual studies to be called *For The Beauty of an Idea* and the other a volume of Verse to be called probably "The Immortal Hour and Poems" or else "The Enchanted Valleys."<sup>31</sup> But I have first a great deal to get off as W. S. and F. M.

What is dear old Tom doing now? Give him my love, and affectionate hug, bless the old reprobate! I was delighted to meet an American admirer (and two hanger-on American admiresses) of his in Florence, who spoke of his work with much admiration as well as personal delight. So I warmed to them mightily in consequence, and had the pleasure of introducing the latest production — the delightful "Consolate Giantess."<sup>32</sup>

What a letter in length this is! too long for even *you*, I fear.

[William Sharp]

*Memoir*, pp. 349–51

**To Grant Richards, October 31, 1902**

Santa Caterina | Taormina | Sicily | 31st: Oct:02

My dear Grant Richards

I became unwell in the autumn soon after I heard from you — & had hardly recovered when, on my return to London, I was seized with a dangerous & painful illness through catching a bad internal chill in a fog on the morning of my arrival.

Altho' I did not at all approve of, & do not now condone, the tone of your letter to me — or, rather, that sentence in it in which you set aside my statement as "sheer rubbish" (or words to that effect) I am willing to overlook what was doubtless written in irritation, &, I am ready to believe, & indeed feel sure, was not really meant offensively. I maintain the exact literalness of my own assertion (& can back it up with month & day & hour, as I noted it at the time in my diary) — and you, on the other hand, say I am wrong or speaking under a delusion.

Well, let it go. If it's worth clearing up, we can do so some day in the Spring (when I'll be back in London) in a friendly way.

As for what I *am* wrong in — in having confused a request for an outstanding debt [which, strangely enough, I had long since cancelled as "settled"] with a demand for an identical sum (following sending of the Statement to last date) for nominal deficit — & for any ill-considered remarks made in my note, I frankly apologise. We are old acquaintances, with pleasant memories of the past: & I certainly don't want foolish words on either side to interrupt that acquaintanceship.

I forget the *exact* amount of the a/c sent to me — but *think* it was £3. 2. 6. So I send you my cheque for that sum, for which please send me acknowledgment.

Yours faithfully | William Sharp

*ALS State University of New York at Buffalo*

*To Thomas Mosher, November 11, 1902*

Castello di Maniace | Sicily | Tuesday, Nov. 11

My Dear Mr. Mosher

Yesterday I received from Murrayfield two copies of "By Sundown Shores."<sup>33</sup> You have made a beautiful little book of it. Personally, I have a distinct preference for small books, if only the type be clear and legible. I like large, or at any rate very clear and distinct type, and that is not often got with small and dainty format. A few days ago I heard from Mrs. Rinder, and it may interest you to hear what she writes: "Ten copies of "By Sundown Shores" have arrived and after seeing to the others as arranged, I have selected one for myself. I am sure that you will be delighted with the beautiful little book. I know your fondness for soft ivory-toned paper, vellum or other, for wide marginal spaces, & for clearly cut type; and in all these respects I am sure you will be pleased. The other book you are expecting (*The Silence of Amor*) has not come by this mail, tho' possibly copies have gone to Murrayfield. Meanwhile I have only glanced thro' the delightful little volume, and on Sunday afternoon I shall give myself up to its enjoyment, and particularly to the new "Lynn of Dreams", the name, idea, and look of which fascinate me. But I have reread the "Children of Water" Forward, and think it, and particularly the close, one of the most beautiful things you have done."

Today I hear from Murrayfield that the remaining copies of "Sundown Shores" have arrived there: and I learn also that you have, in your customary friendly kindness, included a separate set of picked volumes. I have written to have these sent on to me at once, if, as is probable, they are not already on the way. Please accept my cordial thanks for this very pleasant courtesy and friendly gift. As it happens the set includes two vols. I have specially wished to have — "Nature and Eternity" and "Immensee," the last-named a book I have never read.<sup>34</sup>

But while certain books are certainly best in a small format, there are others which almost as inevitably call for the embodiment in a larger form, and of these none is, to my mind, nearly so seductive as the post-octavo. It is with great pleasure, therefore, that I see you announce the "Silence of Amor" as a post 8vo. vol. I am very curious to see this volume and it will be a pleasure to me to have a copy of this book in a

separate form and in the beauty and distinction with which you have the happy gift to clothe the publications now so widely associated with your name.

By the way I would be much obliged if you will kindly send a copy of "By Sundown Shores" (if you have not already done so) to Mr. H. M. Alden, Editor of "Harper's Magazine," Franklin Square, New York.

I am glad to learn that both in America and in Great Britain my article in a recent issue of the "North American Review" has been so well thought of and noticed — that, I mean, on the work of Mr. Yeats, in poetry and poetic drama.<sup>35</sup> As to other magazine work of mine to appear / probably in the December numbers / I would like to draw your friendly attention to the longish paper or essay entitled "The Magic Kingdoms," which I expect will be in the Dec. issue of the "Monthly Review;" and the more critical article, "The Four Winds of Eirinn" in "The Fortnightly Review," if not in Dec. then probably in the January number. It is possible, too, that, despite its publication by you in "By S. S." the "Lynn of Dreams" may appear in the "Contemporary."

Apart from what else I am engaged on here, I hope soon to put together (for English publication) a small volume of collected essays and studies, with possibly one or two that are new. Some friends are anxious for me to include "The Wayfarer," a Spiritual Study which appeared three or four years ago, but of which I do not possess a copy, and cannot decide until I do so. It appeared in "Cosmopolis."

I am also hoping to get together a new volume of verse, to comprise also the "dramatic-form" poems I have not yet published in book form. I am, however, hesitating as to whether

(1) to print the new and uncollected short poems in a small vol. by themselves and to print in a separate vol. "The Immortal Hour," "The Enchanted Valleys," and "The House of Usna" — or, again, as "The Immortal Hour" is in verse, to include it with the poems, and to print separately the other two along with another not yet finished.

(2) or, to make one largish volume, and include in it not only these poems and dramatic pieces, but also a small selection of about a score of those already printed in "Hills of Dream."

I have not yet had the leisure to think out these points, and must also wait to see if I am likely to make any material progress with my long projected poetic drama, "Drostan and Yssul".

I hope that you have duly received the copy of the "Tauchnitz" volume, "Wind and Wave," which I sent to you about a week ago, and that you approve the selection, which, I may add, has been textually a good deal revised and improved with a short explicative introduction.

At your leisure, will you let me know if, for later publication, you would like to have for your "Miscellaneous" series the already mooted volume, to be called, say "In This Kingdom By The Sea" — and to consist of the more biographical and personal part of the "Iona" section of "The Divine Adventure" volume, with a little added matter. As I think I said before, I am tempted by a format akin to (or as near as "affordable") the beautiful "Mimes." Certainly I should like it to be a post-8vo. vol [sic].

You will now, I know, care to have a word about myself. I am in certain respects feeling considerably better since I reached the Mediterranean, and came to these balmy and beautiful shores of Sicily. On the other hand, at the friend's where I am at present staying the elevation is too great for me (between 3000 & 4000 feet) and the climate too inclement and changeable at this late season of the year. In that respect, I shall be glad in a few days to leave here for the southern warmth and beauty of the lovely coasts of the Ionian or Greek Sea. And then, I hope, I shall soon begin to get stronger, and in the course of the winter and spring, at first in southern Sicily and perhaps Greece, and later possibly in southern Spain and much of the time on the water in a friend's beautiful yacht, win from sunshine and leisure somewhat of what mentally and bodily I so much need. What does bother and retard me very much just now is this disabling trouble in my right arm, whether it be "writer's cramp" or neuritis (possibly one and the same thing). I have always been so accustomed to the use of the pencil, stylograph, or quill, that I find the typewriter irksome as well as fatiguing. However, I am now sufficiently expert with it to be able to write with it as quickly as with the pen, and for the rest I dictate all save my private correspondence and most intimate imaginative work. And the doctors say that, with scrupulous refraining from putting pen to paper for a few months I may get quite quit of an annoying trouble that otherwise would become chronic. I remember that some years ago Grant Allen wrote to me warning me to be on guard, and giving me the instance of his own embarrassing and prolonged experience.

I hope that you are yourself keeping well, and are both busy and happy in projecting new volumes which will be a delight to many who love books to be beautiful in raiment as well as in soul. With all friendliest greetings,

Believe me, Dear Mr. Mosher, | Most cordially and sincerely Yours |  
FIONA MACLEOD

P. S.

I had just finished this note when I had a most delightful surprise — for the hill-rider who brings the post to this remote place (a wonderful old mediaeval castle some eight miles from the half- civilised hill-town of Bronte, in the interior of Sicily) arrived, and I found several packets for me — and among them to my great pleasure copies from Murrayfield of "The Silence of Amor," and also a packet direct from you containing a copy of the same beautiful volume, with others (I think those for which I asked you, but have not had time to look into yet, as the hill-rider is waiting to take today's mail, and there may not be an opportunity for 2 or 3 days to come) — though I notice with pleasure that "Empodocles on Etna" is among them, as I want to give it to my host, along with the list of your publications.

"The Silence of Amor" is a most beautifully got-up volume, and gives me the keenest pleasure. The size of type is that I like best, and the beautiful pages, with their wide margins, are most pleasant and restful to the eye. I wish that the unfortunate slip, in the strange separation of the mid-sentence on p. xi of Foreword, had been noticed in time, but fortunately the connection of meaning will be sufficiently obvious to the at first puzzled reader to enable him to see just where and how the printer has interrupted the sequence of a continuous sentence by paragraphical division.

I hope very much that all your care and thought over these beautiful vols will be repaid by sufficient support on the part of your public.

I must close this long letter abruptly, I find, or rather this Ps., which I am delighted to be able to add.

P. S. Do not address here again, of course.

***To Thomas Mosher, November 11, 1902***

*PS. | Italia | Castello di Maniace | Bronte, Sicily*

(Dictated)

Dear Mr. Mosher,

Merely a brief supplementary line to acknowledge the copies of the Nov. *Bibelots*, which I had not noticed at first in the packet. I am so glad to see this essay of Mr. Rhys reissued in the Bibelot series, and I feel at once grateful and humble for the generous and sympathetic words you have prefaced it with.

Again most sincerely, | F. M.

*TL New York Public Library, Berg Collection*

***To Thomas Mosher, [November 12, 1902]***

*Italia | Castello di Maniace | Bronte, Sicily*

Dear Mr. Mosher,

As a messenger is going down to Catania this morning I find myself able to supplement my long registered letter of yesterday: and to repeat as to the great pleasure given me by your beautiful book, for, in a sense, I feel that you are here my collaborateur.

The book is so charming in its format, and is much a book of my heart that I do not want to be without one or two copies in reserve. And as to keeping any of the copies you so generously sent me, I know I shall be quite unable to disappoint any of those for whom I had already intended a copy! And now, by a fortunate chance, I find myself possessed of a U. S. A. five-dollar note (sent me by an unknown reader, wanting "The Divine Adventure") — and so I am able to ask you at once to let me have other four copies — which I could hardly have otherwise brought myself to do, knowing as I do your ever too generous and swift

responsiveness. But on this occasion, at least, I am able to approach you as I ought, in a business matter!

So, for the enclosed five-dollar note, please send me four other copies of "The Silence of Amor": and please direct that they be addressed to me as the others, namely, Miss Macleod, 22 Ormidale Terrace, Murrayfield, Midlothian — but marked "Not to be forwarded".

I do not know whether the enclosed few blooms from the country of Theocritus will keep their fragrance in the long passage to America, but perhaps they may. I gathered them today, by the banks of the Simeto, the Symaethos of Theocritus.

Your friend of oversea | Fiona Macleod

*TL New York Public Library, Berg Collection*

**To Elizabeth A. Sharp, November 15, 1902<sup>36</sup>**

Castello Di Maniace, | 15th Nov., 1902.

How you would have enjoyed today! ... one of the most beautiful of its kind I've ever had. It was quite dark when we rose shortly before six, but lovely dawn by 6.15, and after a gigantic breakfast we all set off all armed with rifles and revolvers. We drove up to the cutting to the left,  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a mile below Otaheite, and there diverged and went up the wild road of the Zambuco Pass, and for another five miles of ascent. Then we were met by the forest guard and Meli with great jennets (huge hill-mules as big as horses) and rode over the Serraspina (6,000 feet). To my great pleasure it was decided we could risk the further ascent of the great central Watershed of Sicily, the Serra del Rè (8,000 ft.) and I shall never forget it. All the way from about 4,000 ft. the air was extraordinarily light and intoxicating — and the views of Central Sicily magnificent beyond words. When we had ridden to about 7,500 feet thro' wild mountain gorges, up vast slopes, across great plateaux, and at last into the beginning of the vast dense primeval beech-forests (all an indescribable glory of colour) we dismounted and did the remaining half hour on foot. Then at last we were on the summit of the great central watershed.

Thence everything to the south flows to the Ionian Sea, everything to the north to the Tyrrhenian and Mediterranean.

And oh the views and the extraordinary clarity! Even with the naked eye I saw all the inland mountains and valleys and lost forgotten towns, Troina on its two hills, Castrogiovanni and Alcara, etc. etc. And with the powerful binoculars I could see all the houses, and trace the streets and ruined temples etc. in Castrogiovanni on its extraordinary raised altar-like mountain plateau. Then, below us, lay all the northern shores of Sicily from Capo Cefalú to Milazzo on its beautiful great bay, and Capo Milazzo, and the Lipari Islands (so close with the glass I could see the few houses on their wild precipitous shores, from "Volcano", the original home of Vulcan, and Lipari itself to Stromboli, and white ships sailing. Enna (Castrogiovanni) immensely imposing and unforgettable. And, behind us, Etna vaster, sheerer, more majestic, more terrible, than I had ever dreamed of it.

Then we lunched, amid that extraordinary and vast panorama — seeing 2,000 feet below us the "almost inaccessible" famous Lake of Balzano, with its Demeter and Persephone associations (itself about 6,000 feet among the mountains!) All enjoyed it unspeakably, except poor old Meli, very nervous about brigands — poor old chap, a ransom of 800 francs had to be paid to the capitano of the brigand-lot to free his nephew, who is now ill after his confinement for many days in a hole under the lava, where he was half suffocated, and would have soon died from cold and damp and malaria.

On the way down (in the forest, at about 6,000 feet) Alec suddenly without a word dashed aside, and sprang through the sloping undergrowth, and the next moment I saw him holding his revolver at the head of a man crouching behind a mass of bramble, etc. But the latter had first managed to hide or throw away his gun, and swore he hadn't got one, and meant no harm, and that the ugly weapon he carried (a light, long axe of a kind) was to defend himself from the wolves! His companion had successfully escaped. The man slunk away, to be arrested later by the Carabinieri.

[William Sharp]

*Memoir, pp. 352–54*

**To John Macleay, November 18, 1902**

Address now and for the winter, / Santa Caterina / Taormina / Sicily  
18 Nov '02

Dear Mr. Macleay,

Yesterday morning early [after which I rode up & over the Serraspina & the Serra del Ri, a wild brigand-haunted mountain region of over 6000 feet elevation] I sent you a postcard and by same post a book I know you will be glad to have, if it "get through," namely Miss Macleod's *Wind & Wave*, not of course to be obtained in England. It is the representative selection of tales she has made at the request of Baron Tauchnitz for continental circulation, & with an explicatory preface. I understand that the text has been a good deal revised in places — but I have not had time yet to look into the book, three copies of which I've just had sent to my order on learning that the book is actually out.

Herewith I return the MS. (with a few amendments or added words) with my apologies for my delay.<sup>37</sup> I am pleased with your sympathy & friendliness.

I am now practically well again. Tomorrow I leave this old medieval castle of Maniace in the wilds of inland Sicily, & return to beautiful Taormina by the blue Ionian sea, & its divine warmth & beauty, & hope to be there till the end of February at any rate. Then I hope to go to southern Greece for a bit — and, later, to sail thence to the south of Spain — spend some time at Seville, Madrid, Toledo, etc. — then into the Basque Highlands — & then, somehow, as God wills, and a depleted purse permits, & work demands, back to London for as long (a few weeks!) as the roaming fever in my blood will allow.

Let me hear that you receive Miss M's book (I shall see her shortly in Sicily, for she is to spend the winter on the Southern waters, & will be at any rate a week or two, & perhaps weeks, in Sicily, where we have intimate friends & connections in common.) And also what you think of Neil Munro's new story in *Blackwood's*. Is it of his best?

Ever yours cordially / William Sharp

This note private of course.

*ALS National Library of Scotland*

**To Alexander Nelson Hood, November 19, 1902**

Taormina, | 19th Nov., 1902

Caro Fra Giuliano,

To my surprise I hear from our common friend, Mr. Aurelio Da Rù, the painter of Venice, that you are at present staying at San-Francisco-in-Deserto. This seems to me a damp and cold place to choose for November, but possibly you are not to be there long: indeed, Da Rù hints at an entanglement with a lady named "Adria."<sup>38</sup> Perhaps I am indiscreet in this allusion. If so, pray forgive me. The coincidence struck me as strange, for only the other day I heard our friend Alec Hood speaking of an Adria, of whom, to say the least of it, he seemed to think very highly. By the way, I wouldn't tell him (A. H.) too much of your affairs or doings — or *he may put them in a book.* (He's a "literary feller" you know!)

I have just been staying with him — and I wish when you see him you would tell him what a happy time I had at Maniace, and how pleasantly I remember all our walks and talks and times together, and how the true affection of a deepened friendship is only the more and more enhanced and confirmed.

It is a lovely day, and very warm and delightful. Sitting by the open French-window of my study, with a bunch of narcissus on my table, there is all the illusion of Spring. I have just gone into an adjoining Enchanted Garden I often frequent, and gathered there some sprays of the Balm of Peace, the azure blossoms of Hope, and the white roses of Serenity and Happiness and sending them, by one of the wild-doves of loving thought and sympathy and affection, to Alec at Maniace.

Ever, dear Fra Giuliano, with love to Da Rù, the Graziani, the Manins,  
and above all to Alec, Yours, | Will

*Memoir, pp. 354–55*

**To Alexander Nelson Hood, [November 21, 1902]**

Shar Shan, Bor!

Which, being interpreted, is Romany (Gypsy) for "How d'ye do, Mate!" — I fear you are having a bad day for your return to Maniace. Here, at any rate, 'tis evil weather. Last night the wind rose (after ominous signals of furtive lightnings in every quarter) to the extent of tempest: and between two and three a.m. became a hurricane. This lasted at intervals till dawn, and indeed since: and at times I thought a cyclone had seized Taormina and was intent on removing "Santa Caterina" on to the top of Isola Bella. Naturally, sleep was broken. And in one long spell, when wind and a coarse rain (with a noise like sheep that has become sleet) kept wakefulness in suspense, my thoughts turned to Venice, to Giuliano in the lonely rain-beat wave-washed sanctuary of San-Francisco-in- Deserto; to Daniele Manin, with his dreams of the Venice that was and his hopes of the Venice to be; and to Adria, stilled at last in her grave in the lagunes after all her passionate life and heroic endeavour. And then I thought of the Venice they, and you, and I, love: — and recalled lines of Jacopo Sannazaro which I often repeat to myself when I think of the Sea-City as an abstraction —

"O d'Italia dolente  
Eterno lumine  
Venezia!"

And that's all I have to say to-day! ... except to add that this very moment there has come into my mind the remembrance of some words of Montesquieu I read last year (in the *Lettres Persanes*) to the effect (in English) that "altho' one had seen all the cities of the world, there might still be a surprise in store for him in Venice" — which would be a good motto for your book.

Your friend, Will

*Memoir, pp. 355–56*

# Chapter Twenty-Three

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## Life: 1903

Sharp began a diary at that start of the New Year and, as was his habit, abandoned it a few days later. On New Year's Day, the Sharps had dinner with the novelist Robert Hichens at the beautiful Hotel Timeo just down the hill from the Greek Theater in Taormina. On January 3, they lunched there with Hichens, and, after walking around the theater, called on Maud Valerie White, a member of Taormina's British community admired for her musical settings of poems and ballads. Also, on the third, according to Sharp's diary, he finished the Fiona Macleod story about Flora Macdonald and sent it off to Edinburgh for Mary to type. The Fiona letter sending the story to George Halkett, Editor of the *Pall Mall Magazine*, is dated May 9, 1903. The delay suggests Sharp tried unsuccessfully to have the story accepted elsewhere before sending it to the *Pall Mall*. In any case, Halkett accepted the story, and it appeared in the May/June 1904 issue of the magazine. On January 4, Sharp began an account of the rugged land and the hardy people who occupied the vast Nelson estate which he called "Through Nelson's Duchy." He finished it four days later, and it was published as the work of William Sharp with photographs selected by Alexander Nelson Hood in the *Pall Mall Magazine* in October 1903.

The Sharps continued to enjoy the beautiful weather and active social life of Taormina, with Sharp working sporadically on his writing and correspondence, until about January 20 when he set off by himself on a trip to Greece to gather material for a book he planned to call *Greek Backgrounds*. After crossing from Messina to Reggio di Calabria, at the western point of the toe of Italy's boot, Sharp took a train to Crotone on the east side of the toe. There he boarded a ferry which took him

to the port city of Taranto on the west side of the boot's heel. A train called the Agamemnon took him from Taranto to Brindisi, a port city on the east of the heel, where he boarded a ship bound for Greece. Appropriately named the Poseidon, the ship crossed the Aegean, and as it approached the coast of Turkish Albania the shaft of its main screw broke. In a January 23 letter to his wife written aboard the stranded ship, he described the beauty of the mountainous shoreline and the joy he felt in being on his own amidst scenery that reminded him of his native Highlands. He was soon rescued by another steamer that took him to Kerkyra on Corfu where he boarded yet another ship which took him to Athens.

Once there, he was delighted by the ancient sites familiar from years of reading. "It is a marvellous home-coming feeling I have here," he wrote to Elizabeth on January 29, "and I know a strange stirring, a kind of spiritual rebirth." On February first, he wrote again:

Yesterday, a wonderful day at Eleusis. Towards sundown drove through the lovely hill-valley of Daphne, with its beautifully situated isolated ruin of the Temple of Aphrodite, a little to the north of the Sacred Way of the Dionysiac and other Processions from Aonai (Athenai) to the Great Fane of Eleusis. I have never anywhere seen such a marvellous splendour of living light as the sundown light, especially at the Temple of Aphrodite and later as we approached Athens and saw it lying between Lycabettos and the Acropolis, with Hymottos to the left and the sea to the far right and snowy Pentelicos behind. The most radiant wonder of light I have ever seen.

Not since 1892 when, in the company of Edith Rinder, he had reveled in the beauty of the Roman countryside and its ruins had Sharp experienced such joy in exploring a landscape and its monuments.

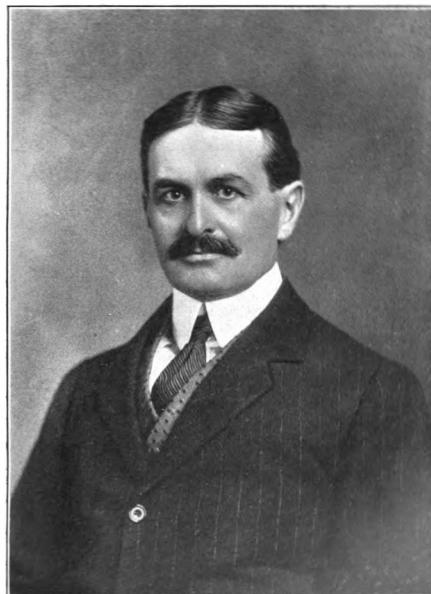
In early February, Sharp returned to Taormina where he found a letter Robert Hichens had written on his return from Taormina to England. Hichens was a young man of twenty-nine, some twenty years younger than Sharp, but he was a frequent visitor to Taormina and a friend and sometimes a guest of Alexander Nelson Hood. He was also an established writer, having published ten novels between 1886 and 1904. One of those novels, *The Green Carnation*, was published pseudonymously in 1894 and withdrawn from publication in 1895. Despite its disappearance, it was widely read, and many were aware Hichens was its author. By defining and satirizing the relationship



Fig. 16. View over the excavation site towards Eleusis. Eleusis was the site of the Eleusinian Mysteries, or the Mysteries of Demeter and Kore, which became popular in the Greek-speaking world as early as 600 BC and attracted initiates during the Roman Empire before declining mid-late 4th century AD. Photograph by Carole Raddato (2005), Wikimedia, CC BY-SA 2.0, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:General\\_view\\_of\\_sanctuary\\_of\\_Demeter\\_and\\_Kore\\_and\\_the\\_Telesterion\\_\(Initiation\\_Hall\),\\_center\\_for\\_the\\_Eleusinian\\_Mysteries,\\_Eleusis\\_\(8191841684\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:General_view_of_sanctuary_of_Demeter_and_Kore_and_the_Telesterion_(Initiation_Hall),_center_for_the_Eleusinian_Mysteries,_Eleusis_(8191841684).jpg)

between his friends, Oscar Wilde and Lord Alfred Douglas, Hichens contributed to Wilde's public humiliation and imprisonment. Following the Wilde debacle, Hichens, himself a recognized and unapologetic homosexual, spent most of his time away from England, in Switzerland, Egypt, Northern Africa, and Taormina where he found a group of men, including Alexander Nelson Hood, who shared his sexual preference. Sharp formed a bond with Hichens, as he had with Alex Hood and R. Murray Gilchrist, but their friendship was short-lived as Sharp would be dead in two years.

The letter awaiting him in Taormina concluded by urging Sharp to winter with him in Africa the following year. Hichens planned to return to Italy in early May and then go on to Africa in November. Staying at a fancy hotel in Biskra, Algeria, they would be very happy. Hichens continued:



**ROBERT HICHENS**

Fig. 17. Robert Smythe Hichens (1864–1950). Photograph taken by unknown photographer (1912), in Frederic Taber Cooper, *Some English Story Tellers* (New York: Henry Holt & Co, 1912). Wikimedia, Public Domain, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Robert\\_Hichens\\_001.jpg#/media/File:Robert\\_Hichens\\_001.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Robert_Hichens_001.jpg#/media/File:Robert_Hichens_001.jpg)

We must often go out on donkey-back into the dunes and spend our day there far out in the desert. I know no physical pleasure,— apart from all the accompanying mental pleasure,— to be compared with that which comes from the sun and air of the Sahara and the enormous spaces. This year I was more enchanted than ever before. Even exquisite Taormina is humdrum in comparison. Do try to come then as November is a magnificent month (*Memoir*, p. 365).

Sharp must have shared with Hichens his newly formed fascination with Greece and his intention to spend the next winter there since Hichens closed his letter by writing, “I can’t help being rather sorry that you won’t go to Sicily again for a long while. I always feel as if we all had a sort of home there.” After reproducing this letter in her *Memoir*, Elizabeth added that Hichens wrote to her: “I still think Taormina the most exquisite place in Europe. On a fine morning it is ineffably lovely.” In the fall of 1905, according to Elizabeth, “it had been planned that

after the New Year Mr. Hood, Mr. Hichens, my husband and I should go together to Biskra. But as the autumn waned, we realized the unwisdom of making any such plans" (*Memoir*, pp. 365–66, 413).

On February 18, Sharp wrote to Catherine Janvier: "with this foreign life in a place like this, with so many people I know, it is almost impossible to get anything like adequate time for essential work — and still less for the imaginative leisure I need, and dreaming out my work — to say nothing of reading, etc." He described the strains of his double life:

As you know, too, I have continually to put into each day the life of two persons — each with his or her own interests, preoccupations, work, thoughts, and correspondence. I have really, in a word, quite apart from my own temperament, to live at exactly double the rate in each day of the most active and preoccupied persons. No wonder, then, that I find the continuous correspondence of "two persons" not only a growing weariness, but a terrible strain and indeed perilous handicap on time and energy for work.

A March 17 Fiona Macleod letter to Benjamin Burgess Moore, who was about to move to Paris, assured him the city had a "manifold fascination," though it lacked "the glow and colour of life in Italy and Spain and Greece." Fiona thanked him for his concern about her health and continued: "I am much better for being in the south, but it has not been a really good winter anywhere, and I feel that I would like a year of nothing but sunshine and serene life. One tires of everything except illusions and dreams: and longs often for nothing but warm sunshine and rest." Burgess must have written to Fiona in care of Sharp in Sicily for she concluded by bringing him up short: "Mr. Sharp is still in Sicily, but will be leaving any day: but apart from that please do not address to me again c/o him, as he does not like it, nor do I. My correspondence-address is Miss Macleod, | c/o Mrs. Wingate Rinder, | 21. Woronzow Road, | London. N. W." Fiona could be quite forceful whenever Sharp suspected one of her correspondents might be approaching the truth.

When and how the Sharps returned to London is unclear, but they were back in late April. On the 24<sup>th</sup>, Sharp composed a Fiona letter to Thomas Mosher describing, in addition to his plans for her writings, how he would keep her out of the way should Mosher decide to visit Scotland and England anytime soon.

There seems little doubt that I cannot expect to regain assured health unless I remain in the South from the early autumn till May for a year or two to come at any rate and, indeed, I am strongly advised to remain in the South (or, if not, in the Summer, on Scandinavian waters) all this year unbrokenly. Nothing is yet definitely decided: except that I shall not be staying in London or Edinburgh this season, and if in Scotland at all will only be for a flying visit to the West in September, or else much sooner instead. Later, I'll be better able to give you an idea of my whereabouts during the summer and autumn. By October, this year, at least, I hope and expect to get south again. It is extraordinary the difference in health it makes, though I fear it makes one lazy, and far more inclined to read and dream, than to write and revise and be continually exercised by the forces of the mind and the spirit.

The travel plans are an interesting amalgam. Sharp had been advised to go south each fall for his health and stay as long as possible. The Scandinavian waters were only a means of keeping Fiona hidden, but the Sharps did go south in October with Fiona trailing behind.

In the *Memoir*, Elizabeth said nothing about their activities after returning from Sicily, but the Fiona letters from mid-May to mid-June have her visiting the Lake District, going on to the Inner Hebrides (the Isles of Bute, Mull, and Iona), and then heading south again to the Lake District. Whether or not Sharp visited the Lake District, a June 6 Fiona letter to Yeats has him tracing “sculptured symbols of the Centaur and the Salmon” on “ancient Pagan stones” in the Hebrides. If Yeats will be in London until after mid-June, Sharp will show him some of the tracings after he returns to London on June 14. Among them will be a tracing Fiona has made of a “horse-headed salmon” which she supposes to be “unique”

From these Fiona letters we also know Sharp was revising and writing prefatory material for three Fiona Macleod books Thomas Mosher would publish in the fall: *Deirdrê and the Sons of Usna*, *The Divine Adventure*, and *The House of Usna: A Drama*. The first of these received special attention in a June 3 Fiona letter to Mosher: “Herewith I send you the MS of my dedicatory foreword to *Deirdrê*. Please take great care in comparison of the text in proof with this MS.” As described in Chapter 21, the dedicatory foreword of *Deirdrê* was addressed to Esther Mona, Edith Rinder’s daughter. The June 3 Fiona letter asked Mosher to send three unbound proof sets of the book as soon as they are revised and

"materially before publication" for a "'birthday' use." Esther's second birthday would occur on June 26, 1903. Sharp must have sent a copy of the unbound proofs to Edith for her daughter's birthday, but Esther Mona (Rinder) Harvey had never seen the proofs, the book, or the dedication when I showed it to her many years later.

When he returned to London, Sharp joined his wife in "temporary lodgings" at 9 St. Mary's Terrace in Paddington near Elizabeth's brother (and William's cousin) Robert Farquharson Sharp, who lived nearby at 56 St. Mary's Mansions. Elizabeth's and Roberts' mother, Agnes Farquharson Sharp, was quite ill and living with Robert and his wife. On June 22, Sharp made a day trip to Box Hill to see George Meredith who had been ill. He described the visit in a letter to someone Elizabeth named only as a friend. Both men, Sharp wrote, felt this would be their last meeting; Meredith's death would mark "the passing of the last of the great Victorians." Sharp wished Meredith had known "a certain secret: but it is better not, and now is in every way as undesirable as indeed impossible." He wanted Meredith to know he was the author of the writings of Fiona Macleod, but since Meredith thought so highly of her work and since Sharp had taken Edith Rinder to Box Hill to impersonate Fiona, he was afraid Meredith would be upset if he were to be told the truth.

If there is in truth, as I believe, and as he believes, a life for us after this, he will know that his long-loving and admiring younger comrade has also striven towards the hard way that few can reach. What I did tell him before has absolutely passed from his mind: had, indeed, never taken root, and perhaps I had nurtured rather than denied what had taken root. If in some ways a little sad, I am glad otherwise. And I had one great reward, for at the end he spoke in a way he might not otherwise have done, and in words I shall never forget. I had risen and was about to lean forward and take his hands in farewell, to prevent his half-rising, when suddenly he exclaimed "Tell me something of her — of Fiona. I call her so always, and think of her so, to myself. Is she well? Is she at work? Is she true to her work and her ideal? No, that I know!"

Meredith had come to know Fiona so well through her writings that he could refer to her by only her first name. The extent of Meredith's elaborate praise suggests he suspected his friend had some role in the production of her work:

It was then he said the following words, which two minutes later, in the garden, I jotted down in pencil at once lest I should forget even a single

word or a single change in the sequence of the words. "She is a woman of genius. That is rare . . . so rare anywhere, anytime, in women or in men. Some few women 'have genius,' but she is more than that. Yes, she is a woman of genius: the genius too, that is rarest, that drives deep thoughts before it. Tell her I think often of her, and of the deep thought in all she has written of late. Tell her I hope great things of her yet. And now . . . we'll go, since it must be so. Goodbye, my dear fellow, and God bless you." Outside, the great green slope of Box Hill rose against a cloudless sky, filled with a flowing south wind. The swifts and swallows were flying high. In the beech courts thrush and blackbird called continually, along the hedgerows the wild roses hung. But an infinite sadness was in it all. A prince among men had fallen into the lonely and dark way.

Though misdirected, Sharp relished Meredith's praise for his writing. As it happened, the way into which Meredith had fallen was less dark than that of Sharp. Elizabeth observed: "Goodbye it was in truth; but it was the older poet who recovered hold on life and outlived the younger by four years" (*Memoir*, p. 368).

In a July 5 letter, Sharp thanked Richard Garnett for a copy of a new and augmented edition of his *Twilight of the Gods* which Grant Richards recently published. He was looking forward to seeing Garnett and hopefully his wife the next day, Monday, July 3, at a "literary At Home" he and Elizabeth were hosting not at their St. Mary's Terrace lodgings, but at Sharp's club, the Grosvenor at the northeast corner of Dover Street and Piccadilly. Amidst their social obligations in London, the Sharps were dealing with the death of Elizabeth's mother — and William's Aunt — who had been ill for over a year. Although I lack the precise date, her death must have occurred after the July 6 "At Home" and before a July 13 letter from Sharp to Grant Richards and another to Watts-Dunton on July 14 as both are written on black-bordered mourning stationery.

In the July 13 letter to Richards, Sharp said he meant to speak to him the other night during their "At Home," but the opportunity vanished in the "rapid dispersal" of their company after the "speechifying." The July 14 letter to Theodore Watts-Dunton, Sharp said it was difficult "to snatch a moment at this season, when there seems a mysterious social conspiracy against every hour of day and night," but he could free himself on Thursday the 16<sup>th</sup> if Watts-Dunton could manage to have tea with him in the late afternoon at his club. A July 15 Fiona letter to

Mosher, typed by Edith Rinder and unsigned, apologized for a “hurried line” as she was just returning to Edinburgh from London where she had been “on a matter of sudden urgency and illness.” This letter expresses her disappointment that Mosher might not publish *The House of Usna, A Drama* in the fall as she had spent so much time preparing it and had taken such care over its lengthy introduction. It was, she thought, the thing she cared most for. Having received this appeal, Mosher published the volume, which Fiona dedicated to Mona Caird, in a beautiful edition of 500 copies, 450 on handmade Van Gelder paper and 50 on Japanese vellum, signed by the publisher and all with green printed Japan vellum wraps over boards.

A June 23 Fiona letter to Mosher conveyed plans for the summer so he would know where to send correspondence and payments. Any letters directed to Edith Rinder’s London address must reach her by the end of July since she and her family would be spending August and September in the Lake Tarbert area west and south of Glasgow. Sharp’s mother and sisters would be near the Rinders in Kilcreggan in August and return to their Edinburgh home where Mary would receive any Fiona correspondence. The Sharps would also go to Scotland in late July. After stopping near Falkirk to visit friends, they would join his family in Kilcreggan for August.



Fig. 18. The Firth of Clyde at Kilcreggan, with PS *Waverley* approaching across Loch Long. Photograph by Dave Souza (2018), Wikimedia, CC-BY-SA-4.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=73771868>

During August Sharp continued to revise and write introductions for the three Macleod books Mosher had agreed to publish. Since the content of those books had already appeared in England, the revisions and introductions were a means of avoiding copyright difficulties. On August 4, he sent Bliss Perry, editor of the *Atlantic Monthly*, an article on the remoter regions of Sicily called "The Sicilian Highlands" which appeared in the April 1904 issue of the magazine. On August 25 Sharp described for his American friend Henry Alden, editor of *Harper's Magazine*, the literary geography essays he was writing for the *Pall Mall Magazine*. These ten essays described the places where nineteenth-century British writers lived and worked. After they appeared in the magazine, they were published by the Pall Mall Press in 1904 as book called *Literary Geography*. Beautifully assembled and lavishly illustrated, the book sold so well that a second edition was issued in 1907. Sharp also described and outlined for Alden his "projected Greek book, to comprise Magna Grecia as well, i.e. Hellenic Calabria and Sicily, etc." Unfortunately, he died before he was able to make much progress with this project.

When Sharp's mother and sister left their rented Kilcreggan house at the end of August, the Elizabeth and William went northeast to Perthshire to stay with Mrs. Glassford Bell, formerly Marion Sandeman, a childhood friend of Sharp's. While there, according to Elizabeth, her husband, having suffered through a wet spring and a still damper summer, "became so ill we went to Llandrindod Wells for him to be under special treatment." On September 13, the day after his forty-eighth birthday, Sharp wrote a letter to thank Isabella Gilchrist, his friend R. Murray Gilchrist's mother, for sending him birthday greetings. The letter is interesting as its tone projects Sharp coming to terms with his serious illness and the likelihood of his early death.

But as one grows older, one the more recognizes that "climate" and "country" belong to the geography of the soul rather than to that secondary physical geography of which we hear so much. The winds of heaven, the dreary blast of wilderness, the airs of hope and peace, the tragic storms and cold inclemencies these are not the property of our North or South or East, but are of the climes self-made or inherited or in some strange way become our "atmosphere".

Sharp recognized he, like Mrs. Gilchrist who was sixty-three years old, might soon need to forsake physical travel for what he calls the "geography of the soul." Whether this letter was written in Perthshire

or after he reached Llandrindod Wells, it was influenced by his illness. For Sharp, who could not stay long in one place, inability to travel raised thoughts of the afterlife: “the country we dream of, that we long for” which “is not yet reached by Cook nor even chartered by Baedeker.”

The journey from Perthshire to the spa town in the middle of Wales was a long and difficult one, but it had a desirable result. From Llandrindod Wells in late September, he described his condition to Ernest Rhys: “things have not gone well with me. All this summer I have been feeling vaguely unwell and, latterly, losing strength steadily.” After arriving in Llandrindod Wells, “the rigorous treatment, the potent Saline and Sulphur waters and baths, the not less potent and marvellously pure and regenerative Llandrindod air — and my own exceptional vitality and recuperative powers — have combined to work a wonderful change for the better.” It might prove to be no more than “a splendid rally,” and he must not be “too sanguine.” The end might be nearing, but he was not troubled: “I have lived, and am content, and it is only for what I don’t want to leave undone that the sound of ‘Farewell’ has anything deeply perturbing.”



Fig. 19. Llandrindod Wells, Wales, Great Britain, Junction of South Crescent with Temple Street. The Information Bureau is straight ahead, and the Oxford Chambers is on the left. Photograph by Penny Mayes (2009), Wikimedia, CC BY-SA 2.0, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Llandrindod\\_Wells-Junction\\_of\\_South\\_Crescent\\_with\\_Temple\\_Street.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Llandrindod_Wells-Junction_of_South_Crescent_with_Temple_Street.jpg)

In a September 29 birthday letter to E. C. Stedman, following his return to London, Sharp describes his illness as “a subtle malady” which had claimed him for a comrade. “His name is Diabetes, but he’s no enemy, & refrains as much as he can, & even promises to disappear for a time, & be content with psychical Marconigrams [messages sent by radiotelegraphy].” A month previously, a specialist thought he had “got well into Chapter Last,” but he surprised his friends and even himself by “an apparent complete recovery.” It is only a “splendid rally,” he continued, but “I take it smiling,’ as the lady said when she saw she ‘couldn’t help it,’ when the amorous Brigand wooed her.” Writing to Catherine Janvier on the 30th, he claimed to be “cheerful as a lark — let us say as a lark with a rheumatic wheeze in its little song-box, or gout in its little off-claw.” He knew the combination of illnesses would soon claim him, but he was determined to “laugh and be glad and take life as I find it, till the end. The best prayer for me is that I may live vividly till ‘Finis,’ and work up to the last hour.”

Shortly after writing and posting these letters, Sharp received a long letter from Stedman which raised his spirits. “It has been a true medicine,” he wrote again to Stedman on October 2, “for, as I told you, I’ve been gravely ill. And it came just at the right moment and warmed my heart with its true affection.” Sharp was also pleased by a recent visit to his doctor who had sanctioned his trip to Sicily and then to Greece for the winter. “When I’m once more in the land of Theocritus (and oh how entrancing it is),” he wrote to Stedman, “I’ll be quite strong and well again... Indeed, I’m already ‘a live miracle’!” Sharp then described in detail the itinerary he and Elizabeth intended to follow:

We sail by the Orient liner “Orizaba” on the 23<sup>rd</sup> [of October]; reach Naples (via Gibraltar and Marseilles) 9 to 10 days later; and leave by the local mail-boat same evening for Messina — arrive there about 8 on Monday morning — catch the Syracuse mail about 10, change at 12 at Giarre, and ascend Mt. Etna by the little circular line to Maletto about 3,000 ft. high, and thence drive to the wonderful old Castle of Maniace to stay with our dear friend there, the Duke of Bronte — our third or fourth visit now. We’ll be there about a fortnight: then a week with friends at lovely and unique Taormina: and then sail once more, either from Messina or Naples direct to the Piraeus, for Athens, where we hope to spend the winter and spring.

Sharp was glad to know he will have a loving friend waiting if he and Elizabeth ever cross the Atlantic.

As planned, the Sharps boarded the *Orizaba* on October 23, and the trip south was not a pleasant one. The weather was bad, the sea rough, and, according to a letter Sharp wrote to Catherine Janvier during the voyage, he suffered a heart attack soon after leaving Plymouth. After they passed Gibraltar and entered the Mediterranean, they encountered a “wild gale” in the Gulf of Lyon, “one of the wildest we had ever known,” according to Elizabeth. They planned to visit briefly with the Janviers when the ship docked in Marseilles, but the storm by then had become “almost a hurricane.” After taking shelter in a cove, they sailed directly to Naples. Elizabeth reproduced in the *Memoir* a short unrhymed poem, called “Invocation,” her husband wrote during the storm. “It was his way of mental escape from a physical condition which induced great nervous strain or fatigue, to create imaginatively a contrary condition and environment, and so to identify himself with it, that he could become oblivious to surrounding actualities” (*Memoir*, pp. 374–75).

A November 6 letter to Mosher in Mary Sharp’s Fiona script, supposedly written near Gibraltar, thanked him for sending newly printed copies of *The House of Usna* to Edinburgh. One copy of the “beautiful little book” had been forwarded to her. In fact, Sharp received this book when he reached Hood’s Castle Maniace in the first week of November, where he drafted the Fiona letter and sent it for Mary to copy and mail from Edinburgh. He was establishing the fiction that Fiona was a week or so behind him in her travels. After spending some time in Algeria, she would sail to Athens for a month or so with the Sharps. By shadowing his own travels with the imagined travels of Fiona, Sharp was able to describe the same people and places in both sides of the double correspondence. He could also keep Fiona on the move, carefully track her travels, and avoid the possibility of anyone asking to meet her. In the same vein, Fiona’s various ailments shadowed his own with one important exception. He did not suffer the neurology in his writing hand that made it difficult for Fiona to write and thus explained the typed letters that were sometimes necessary.

In a November 11 letter to Mrs. Philpot from the Castle Maniace, Sharp described how the location did not appeal to him at that time of

year. It was "too high between 2,000 and 3,000 feet." And it was "too much under the domination of Etna, who swings vast electric current, and tosses thunder charged cloud-masses to and fro like a Titan acolyte swinging mighty censers at the feet of the Sun." Nonetheless, he looked forward to an excursion planned for the next day which he described in vivid detail:

Tomorrow if fine and radiant we start for that absolutely unsurpassable expedition to the great orange gardens a thousand feet lower at the S. W. end of the Duchy. We first drive some eight miles or so through wild mountain land till we come to the gorges of the Simeto and there we mount our horses and mules and with ample escort before and behind ride in single file for about an hour and a half. Suddenly we come upon one of the greatest orange groves in Europe — 26,000 trees in full fruit, an estimated crop of 3,000,000! stretching between the rushing Simeto and great cliffs. Then once more to the saddle and back a different way to barbaric Bronte and thence a ten-mile drive back along the ancient Greek highway from Naxos to sacred Enna.



Fig. 20. Valle del Simeto, Catania. Photograph by Davide Restivo (2007),  
Wikimedia, CC BY-SA 2.0, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Valle\\_del\\_Simeto\\_3.jpg#/media/File:Valle\\_del\\_Simeto\\_3.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Valle_del_Simeto_3.jpg#/media/File:Valle_del_Simeto_3.jpg)

Still he looked forward to the following Tuesday when they would go down to Taormina and its

divine beauty and not less divinely balmy and regenerative climate sitting as she does like the beautiful goddess Falcone worshipped there of old, perched on her orange and olive-clad plateau, hundreds of feet above the peacock-hued Ionian Sea, with one hand as it were reaching back to Italy (Calabria ever like opal or amethyst to the North-east), with the other embracing all the lands of Etna to Syracuse and the Hyblaean Mount, the lands of Empedocles and Theocritus, of Aeschylus and Pindar, of Stesichorus and Simonides, and so many other great names — and with her face ever turned across the Ionian Sea to that ancient Motherland of Hellas, where once your soul and mine surely sojourned.

This may be the most elaborate and geographically correct description among the many Taormina has received.

After stopping there for ten days or so, the Sharps left for Athens. When they arrived at the end of the month, the weather turned cold, and Sharp suffered a relapse. Near the end of December, he was able to tell Mrs. Philpot, in whom he had found a kindred spirit and confidant, "I've come out of my severe feverish attack with erect (if draggled) colors and hope to march 'cock-a-hoopishly' into 1904 and even further if the smiling enigmatical gods permit!" He described his pleasure in reading the works of the ancient Greek dramatists in the theatre where they were first performed. There he could imagine hearing "upon the wind the rise and fall of the ancient lives, serene thought-tranced in deathless music." He was trying to remain focused on material for the book he was planning: a close "study of the literature and philosophy and ethical concepts and ideals of ancient Hellas and of mythology in relation thereto." He also wanted to address many other aspects of the life and culture of ancient Greece, 'from sculpture to vase paintings, from Doric and Ionic architecture to the beauty and complex interest of the almost inexhaustible field of ancient Greek coins.' Finally, he wanted to describe in his book, or in succeeding books, Graecia Magna, the remnants of the extensive Greek settlements in southern Italy and Sicily.

On December 29, he sent New Year's greetings to Richard Garnett and told him he and Elizabeth were comfortably settled in a "pleasant

large house' within walking distance of the Temple of Olympian Zeus and the banks of the river "Ilissos (alas, usually as void of original matter as an Essay by Sir John Lubbock or a poem by Sir Lewis Morris)," two British writers whose work he thought derivative rather than original. They had met members of the British community and several Greek friends, "(one of whom, named Embiricos, claims unbroken descent from a friend & a pupil of Plato!)." He ended his letter to Garnett by referencing two lines from Pindar's "Nemean Ode" which can be translated as: "Respite is sweet in every deed. Even honey may cloy, and the delightful flowers of Aphrodite." Echoing his time with Edith Rinder in Rome a decade earlier, Sharp had met a young woman in Athens whose love warmed the landscape and lifted temporarily the weight of his physical condition.

### Letters: 1903

#### *To Thomas Mosher, [January 1903]*

Health, Happiness, and the achievement of Beauty, to you, in 1903, with all sincerity, and friendly hopes and greetings.

F. M.

P. S. And grateful thanks for the beautiful Pater volume which I have just learned has arrived for me.<sup>1</sup> How kind you are.

*ACS New York Public Library, Berg Collection*

#### *To Karl Walter, January [?], 1903*

Taormina, | Jan., 1903

My Dear Walter,

... In some respects your rendering of your sonnet is towards improvement. But it has one immediate and therefore fatal flaw. Since the days of Sophocles it has been recognized as a cardinal and

imperative law, that a great emotion (or incident, or idea, or collective act) must not be linked to an ineffective image, an incongruous metaphor. Perhaps the first and last word about passion (in a certain sense, only, of course, for to immortal things there is no mortal narrowing or limiting in expression) has been said more than two thousand years ago by Sappho and today by George Meredith. "The apple on the topmost bough" ... all that lovely fragment of delicate imperishable beauty remains unique. And I know nothing nobler than Meredith's "Passion is noble strength on fire." ... But turn to a poet you probably know well, and study the imagery in some of the Passion sonnets in "The House of Life" of Rossetti — of Passion

... "creature of poignant thirst  
And exquisite hunger" ...

— the splendid sexual diapason in the sestet of the sonnet called "The Kiss" — or, again to "the flame-winged harp-player."

... thou art Passion of Love,  
The mastering music walks the sunlit sea.

Perhaps I have said enough to illustrate my indication as to the opening metaphor in your sonnet. Apart from the incongruity of the image, it has no logical congruity with the collateral idea of Fear. The sonnet itself turns on a fine emotion in your mind: let that emotion shape a worthy raiment of metaphor and haunting cadence of music, *not* as the metricist desires but as the poet au fond compels. Yes, both in sonnet-writing and in your terza-rima narrative (cultivate elision here, also fluent terminals, or you will find the English prosody jib at the foreign reins) you will find G. useful. But the secret law of rhythm in a moving or falling wave, in the cadence of wind, in the suspiration of a distant song, in running water, in the murmur of leaves, in chord confluent upon chord, will teach you more if you will listen long enough and know what you listen to.

I hope I have not discouraged you. I mean the reverse of that.

Your friend, | William Sharp

**To Elizabeth A. Sharp, January 23, 1903**

23d Jan., 1903

... Where of all unlikely places do you think this is written from?<sup>2</sup> Neither Corfu nor Samothrace nor Ithaka nor Zante, nor any Greek isle betwixt this and the Peloponnesus, but in Turkey! ... i.e., in Turkish Albania, surrounded by turbaned Turks, fezzed Albanians, and picturesque kilted Epeirotes, amid some of the loveliest scenery in the world.

You will have had my several cards en route and last from Taranto. The first of a series of four extraordinary pieces of almost uncanny good fortune befell me *en route*, but it would take too long now to write in detail. Meanwhile I may say I met the first of three people to whom I already owe much and who helped me thro' every bother at Brindisi. (He is a foreign Consul in Greece.)

(By the way, the engine from Taranto to Brindisi was called the *Agamemnon* and the steamer to Greece the *Poseidon* significant names, eh?)

I had a delightful night's rest in my comfortable cabin, and woke at dawn to find the *Poseidon* close to the Albanian shore, and under the superb snow-crowned Acrokerannian Mountains. The scenery superb — with Samothrace, and the Isle of Ulysses, etc., etc., seaward, and the beautiful mountainous shores of Corfu (here called *Kepkuga* (*Kérkyra*) on the S. W. and S. There was a special Consul-Deputation on board, to land two, and also to take off a number of Turks, Albanians, and Epeirotes for Constantinople. We put in after breakfast at Eavri Kagavri — a Greco-Albanian township of Turkey. The scattered oriental "town" of the Forty Saints crowns a long ridge at a considerable height — the harbour-town is a cluster of Turkish houses beside an extraordinary absolutely deserted set of gaunt ruins. Hundreds of Albanians and Epeirotes, Moslem priests and two Greek *papas* (or popes) were on the shore-roads, with several caravans each of from 20 to 50 mules and horses. Costumes extraordinarily picturesque, especially the white-kilted or skirted Albanian mountaineers, and the Larissa Turks. We were 3 hours — and I the only "privileged" person to get thro' with the consul. We took many aboard — a wonderful crew, from a wonderful place, the fairyland of my Greek resident from Paris — who is on his way to spend a month with his mother in Athens, and has asked me to visit him at his house there.... .

Well, the *Poseidon* swung slowly out of the bay,—a lovely, exciting, strange, unforgettable morning—and down the lovely Albanian coast—now less wild, and wooded and craggy, something like the West Highlands at Loch Fynne, etc., but higher and wilder. When off a place on the Turkish Albanian coast called Pothlakov (Rothroukon) the shaft of the screw suddenly broke! The engineer told the captain it would be five hours at least before it could be mended—adding, a little later, that the harm could probably not be rectified here, and that we should have to ride at sea till a relief boat came from Corfu or Greece to take off the passengers, etc.

As no one has a Turkish passport, no one can get ashore except lucky me, with my influential friend, in a Turkish steam-pinnacle! (It is so beautiful, so warm, and so comfortable on the *Poseidon*, that, in a sense, I'm indifferent—and would rather *not* be relieved in a hurry.)

(Later.) Late afternoon on board—still no sign of getting off. No Corfu to-day, now, though about only an hour's sail from here! *Perhaps* tonight—or a relief steamer may come. I'll leave this now, as I want to see all I can in the sundown light. It is all marvelously strange and lovely. *What* a heavenly break-down! *What* luck!

Just had a talk with another passenger stamping with impatience. I didn't soothe him by remarking I hoped we should drift ashore and be taken prisoners by the Turks. He says he wants to get on. Absurd. "There's more beauty here than one cans take-in for days to come" I said—"Damn it, sir, what have I got to do with beauty,"—he asked indignantly. "Not much, certainly," I answered drily, looking him over. An Italian *maestro* is on board on his way to Athens—now playing delightfully in the salon. A Greek guitarist is going to play and sing at moonrise. No hills in the world more beautiful in shape and hue and endless contours—with gorgeous colours. Albania is lost Eden, I think. Just heard that a steamer is to come for us in a few hours, or less, from Corfu, and tow us into Kerkira (the town)—and that another Austro-Lloyd from Trieste or Brindisi will take us on to-morrow sometime from Corfu to Athens.... . The only perfectly happy person on board.

Yours, | Will

**To Elizabeth A. Sharp, January 29, [1903]**

Athens, | 29th Jan.

... This lovely place is wonderful. How I wish you were here to enjoy it too. I take you with me mentally wherever I go. It is a marvelous *home-coming* feeling I have here. And I know a strange stirring, a kind of spiritual rebirth.

[William Sharp]

*Memoir*, p. 365

**To Elizabeth A. Sharp, February 1, [1903]**

Athens, | Feb. 1st. 1903

... Yesterday, a wonderful day at Eleusis. Towards sundown drove through the lovely hill-valley of Daphne, with its beautifully situated isolated ruin of the Temple of Aphrodîte, a little to the north of the Sacred Way of the Dionysiac and other Processions from Aonai (Athenai) to the Great Fane of Eleusis. I have never anywhere seen such a marvellous splendour of living light as the sundown light, especially at the Temple of Aphrodite and later as we approached Athens and saw it lying between Lycabettos and the Acropolis, with Hymottos to the left and the sea to the far right and snowy Pentelicos behind. The most radiant wonder of light I have ever seen.... .

[William Sharp]

*Memoir*, p. 365

*To Catherine Ann Janvier, February 18, 1903*

Taormina, | 18th Feb., 1903

... In fact, letters are now my worst evil to contend against for, with this foreign life in a place like this, with so many people I know, it is almost impossible to get anything like adequate time for essential work and still less for the imaginative leisure I need [for] dreaming out my work — to say nothing of reading, etc. As you know, too, I have continually to put into each day the life of two persons — each with his or her own interests, preoccupations, work, thoughts, and correspondence. I have really, in a word, quite apart from my own temperament, to live at exactly double the rate in each day of the most active and preoccupied persons. No wonder, then, that I find the continuous correspondence of "two persons" not only a growing weariness, but a terrible strain and indeed perilous handicap on time and energy for work.... .

[William Sharp]

*Memoir, p. 362**To Benjamin Burgess Moore, March 17, 1903*

March 17th, 1903

My dear Mr. Moore

I am sorry for the long delay in response to your letter, but I had instructed that letters were not to be forwarded to me for some time past and it is only now on my temporary return (by sea) that I am able to catch up with some of my delayed correspondence.

You will be glad to be in Paris, I daresay, for it is at least nearer to what you care for, and has much of a manifold fascination: but it has not the glow and colour of life in Italy and Spain and Greece.

Owing to M. Davray's<sup>3</sup> ill-health the French volume of representative translation has been delayed: but I understand that it is really to appear this year. The translator is M. Henry Davray of the *Mercure de France*.

A Mr. Gottfried Pavlik<sup>4</sup> is also to bring out a German translation, and (at a later date) a Signor Cervesato<sup>5</sup> an Italian one, after preliminary magazine appearance. The Tauchnitz representative vol. (which I put together myself, at the request of Baron Tauchnitz, and revised much of the contents) was published some time ago, with a preface, under the title *Wind and Wave* and can no doubt easily be procured in Paris if you wish to see it.<sup>6</sup>

Yes, thanks, I am much better for being in the south, but it has not been a really good winter anywhere, and I feel that I would like a year of nothing but sunshine and serene life. One tires of everything except illusions and dreams: and longs often for nothing but warm sunshine and rest. As to my recent magazine work, there was an essay on "The Magic Kingdoms" in the "*Monthly Review*" for (I think) January: and one in the "*Fortnightly*" for February on "The Four Winds of Eirinn": and probably the *Contemporary* for April (or May) will have a series of four collectively entitled "The Sunset of Old Tales".<sup>7</sup> I hope to publish a volume of essays and "spiritual studies" this early summer.

Mr. Sharp is still in Sicily, but will be leaving any day: but apart from that please do not address to me again c/o him, as he does not like it, nor do I. My correspondence-address is Miss Macleod, | c/o Mrs. Wingate Rinder, | 21. Woronzow Road, | London. N. W.

I hope you will have both prosperity and happiness in your new life.

Believe me, | Sincerely yours, | Fiona Macleod.

*ALS Huntington Library*

***To Thomas Mosher, April 24, [1903]***

Edinburgh | 24th April

Dear Mr. Mosher,

As you have surmised, my postponement of response is not due to heedlessness on my part, but to other causes. In the first place, there was long delay in the arrival of your letter, which followed me by many circuitous ways along the Mediterranean coasts between Athens

and Naples, Naples and Gibraltar, etc. Then, when it came, I was ill and unable to attend to it or any other letters. Later, all plans were cancelled by the serious illness and subsequent death of one near and dear to me, — necessitating my return home for a time. And now, my personal plans still remain very uncertain. There seems little doubt that I cannot expect to regain assured health unless I remain in the South from the early autumn till May for a year or two to come at any rate — and, indeed, I am strongly advised to remain in the South (or, if not, in the Summer, on Scandinavian waters) all this year unbrokenly. Nothing is yet definitely decided: except that I shall not be staying in London or Edinburgh this season, and if in Scotland at all will only be for a flying visit to the West in September, or else much sooner instead. Later, I'll be better able to give you an idea of my whereabouts during the summer and autumn. By October, this year, at latest, I hope and expect to get south again. It is extraordinary the difference in health it makes, though I fear it makes one lazy, and far more inclined to read and dream, than to write and revise and be continually exercised by the forces of the mind and the spirit. And now about your letter of proposals, for which I thank you.<sup>8</sup>

(*Old World Series*)

(I) Although personally I prefer the idea of "In This Kingdom By The Sea," there is no reason this should not stand over till, say, next Spring, if you care for it then.

So, since you wish it, let "The Divine Adventure" appear in your Old World Series. There is not much to revise, except a little deletion and dovetailing near the end. But I'll go over it again carefully, and hope to see my way to add somewhat. And I shall write some prefatory matter. This I shall see to as soon as practicable.

(*Brocade Series*)

(II) I should prefer "Deirdrê" to the "Tale of the Four Swans" — but if you specially wish the latter, so be it. In either instance, I'll write an Introduction.

(III) For the third vol. in the Brocade Series (and I quite see the advantage you indicate of having a set of three in this series) I would suggest either

the poetic drama of "The Immortal Hour" (which I see the American author of an article on my writings considers the best thing I have done) — considerably revised, with entirely rewritten opening pages, since its appearance in the *Fortnightly Review* for Nov. 1900.

*or else*

The shorter prose drama of "The House of Usna" (performed in London at the Strand Theater, under auspices of the Stage Society) revised from its stage-version and also (I intend) from that in the *National Review* for (I forget when, probably Spring or Summer of 1901) — with a preface dealing with Tragic Drama, and the Theater as I think of it in one of its potential forces, and its possible development.

As to the new vol. of Poems, I can say nothing yet. All my arrangements and projects have been seriously interfered with, much to their and my detriment. I shall not now be able to achieve or even work towards this volume till the early autumn at earliest I expect.

And my projected volume of Essays and Spiritual Studies, which I had hoped to see out this April or May, is also perforce postponed. (Some of it has appeared in the *Contemporary*, *Fortnightly*, etc. — and it is likely that the June "Fortnightly" (or July) will contain another section called "The Sunset of Old Tales")

I shall have to set aside much in order to revise and add to those "Old World" and "Brocade" books. For the three ["The Divine Adventure," "The Four Swans" or "Deirdrê," and "The House of Usna" or "The Immortal Hour"] I do not think I am asking more than right if I ask if you can pay me Fifty Pounds (£50) not later than Midsummer. Frankly, I doubt if I dare undertake them for less — and even thus I am (though only financially) the loser.

Perhaps the best way will be for you to cable after receipt of this letter — when I shall at once proceed with the work involved. If physically and mentally able, I shall meanwhile, as soon as practicable, take up "The Divine Adventure." In cabling please say if "Swans" or "Deirdrê", if "Usna" or "Immortal" — and it will suffice if you cable direct to Mrs. Rinder in London (thus, as an example, if you agree, Rinder, 21 Woronzow Road, London Agree Terms Adventure Swans Usna, Mosher.)

I hope you are well, and that all goes well with you. (I hope some of my friends to whom I have given your volumes have ordered others — the

Duchess of Sutherland, for one, told me that she wanted several things from you, and was going to write to you for your catalogue. If she has not done so, you could address one to her, The Duchess of Sutherland, Dunrobin Castle, Scotland.) I do not feel very well, or eager for work, or for anything but sun, warmth, and rest — but soon, I hope, I may feel differently. All friendliest greetings, dear Mr. Mosher, from

Yours most sincerely | Fiona Macleod

*ALS New York Public Library, Berg Collection*

**To Benjamin B. Moore, April 25, [1903]**

Miss Macleod | c/o Mrs. Wingate Rinder |  
21 Woronzow Road | London N.W. |  
25th April [1903]

My dear Mr. Moore

You must have thought me very discourteous, or at any rate very heedless, to leave your letter so long unanswered. But by an extraordinary series of postal delays, it always reached some "forwarded-to" address just after I had left, and seems to have stopped almost everywhere between Naples and Algiers! Then, when at last I did get it, I was on my hurried way to Scotland (whence I write to you), and on account of illness and death of a near relative have since been unable to attend to my terrible accumulation of correspondence — some of it, alas, (including an urgent "publishing" letter from Mr. Mosher, of January-date!!) only just come to hand. I was very glad to hear that you had settled in Paris. It is not the South: it is not the place for work or dream, in a certain order of work or for a certain order of "dream." But it has its charm and fascination and many interests: if for me, only at early midsummer, i.e. from mid-May till end of June — and then I would prefer it only to London, and far rather be in any of a thousand other places, for I weary more and more of towns, save for the swift transient interest of novelty.

M. Henri Davray fell ill, and had to go to Italy for a year or more, and so all his literary undertakings were indefinitely postponed. But when I last heard from him (about January I think) he wrote of being at work finishing the remainder of his volume of Selected Tales, and that it would be out in 1903, at least he hoped so. Herr Gottfried Pavlik's translation has also been delayed. There is, later, I believe, to be an Italian one. But the "Tauchnitz" selected edition came out last November, under the title *Wind and Wave* — selected by myself, at Baron Tauchnitz's request, and here and there a good deal revised, with a Preface.

Forgive so bare a note (I have I see forgotten to thank you for speaking of my work to Eleanora Duse<sup>9</sup> — to have her among appreciative readers would indeed be a pleasure to me) but I am sadly pressed. (I have sent on your address to W. S. who, I know, wished to write to you.)

Sincerely yours, | Fiona Macleod

*ALS Huntington Library*

**To George Halkett, May 9, 1903<sup>10</sup>**

Saturday, 9th May.

Dear Sir,

I have written a story somewhat distinct in kind from the work associated with my name, and think it is one that should appeal to a far larger public than most of my writings do: for it deals in a new way with a subject of unpassing interest, the personality of Flora Macdonald. "The King's Ring," however, is not concerned with the hackneyed Prince Charlie episode.<sup>11</sup> It is, in a word, so far as I know, the only narrative presentation of the remarkable but almost unknown late life experiences of Flora Macdonald: for few know that, long after her marriage, she went with her husband and some of her family and settled in South Carolina, just before the outbreak of the War of Independence: how her husband was captured and imprisoned, how two of her sons in the Navy were lost tragically at sea: and how she herself with one daughter with difficulty evaded interference, and set

sail from a southern port for Scotland again, & on that voyage was wounded in an encounter with a French frigate. True, all these things are only indicated in "The King's Ring," for fundamentally the story is a love-story, that of Flora M.'s beautiful eldest daughter Anne and Major Macleod, with the tragical rivalry of Alasdair Stuart, bearer of the King's Ring.

Practically the facts of the story are authentic: save the central episode of Alasdair Stuart, which is of my own invention.

I think the story would appeal to many not only in Scotland and England but in America. Whether it may suit the "Pall Mall Magazine," or meet your requirements, is another matter, for you to decide.

I send you a typed copy, and perhaps you could let me hear at your early convenience, as I have an application from a Syndicate, of which however I know nothing. And, if you care to have "The King's Ring" will you kindly inform me what terms of payment you can offer (i.e. for British and American serial use).

Believe me | Yours very truly, | Fiona Macleod

*ALS National Library of Scotland*

**To Thomas Mosher, May 14, 1903**

Thursday evening. 14th May, 1903

Thanks for your letter. Shall write by next mail, with "D. A."<sup>12</sup> I sent word to Mrs. W. R.<sup>13</sup> today with several directions — among them, to cable you "Proceed Adventure." The alterations will be towards end only.

F. M.

P.S. Yes, "*Usna*" not "*Immortal*" (& *Deirdrê* not *Darthool*)

*ACS New York Public Library, Berg Collection*

**To Thomas Mosher, May 26, 1903**

(Island of Bute) | 26th May. 1903

Dear Mr. Mosher

I hope you have duly received the revised “for press” copy of “The Divine Adventure” I sent to you by last mail, from Bowness on Lake Windermere — where I was on a brief “passing” visit to friends.

I now send you MS of the brief dedicatory introduction for this reprint.

As soon as I can, by next Wednesday’s mail I hope, I shall send you the “for press” copy of “Deirdrê” with its several pages of “forward”: and either with it, or a week later, “The House of Usna” with Introduction. I am very glad about the reissue of “Usna.” Among my imaginative work it stands foremost in my own liking, I think: and though short, carries, I hope, much of old dream and emotion made new and near.

I am still not feeling well, and am suffering from severe nervous headaches, so excuse a brief note meanwhile.

Most sincerely yours, | Fiona Macleod

P.S. I hope that you will be able to reprint *Usna* in the early rather than the late autumn. (Part of my new book is to appear, under title “The Sunset of Old Tales,” in the June *Fortnightly* I believe.) All three reprints are to come out in the autumn, I understand.<sup>14</sup>

P.S. I have intentionally kept the preliminary part of “The Divine Adventure” as brief as practicable — so that the volume as it stands should not exceed the desired length for the particular format. “Usna” will have a longish introduction, and “Deirdrê” also has a fairly long dedicatory introduction.<sup>15</sup>

(I forgot to add that as I have not my typewriter with me or anyone here to whom I can dictate at the moment I have written out the “D. A.” foreword in MS. but I think so clearly that with ordinary care in setting-up and proof-revision there can hardly be any room for mistakes.)

Please send word acknowledging safe receipt.

*ALS New York Public Library, Berg Collection*

***To Miss Moore, May 27, 1903***

The Royal Route | David MacBrayne | R.M.S. Iona | May 27, 1903<sup>16</sup>

My dear Miss Moore.

I have received your letter while I am en route for the Hebrides — so, obviously, I cannot give myself the pleasure of seeing you. I recall with gratification your very kindly and sympathetic writings on my work, and am now glad cordially to thank the writer in person. I shall be away all summer and autumn, in the north and in Norway possibly, and then go to the south of Europe; so, you see, I shall not be in London this year.

Thanking you for your kind letter.

Believe me | Yours most truly | Fiona Macleod

*ALS Private*

***To Thomas Mosher, June 3, 1903***

The Royal Route | David MacBrayne | R. M. S. |  
Wednesday | 3rd June 1903

Dear Mr. Mosher

Herewith I send you the MS if my dedicatory forward to Deidrê. Please take great care in comparison of the text in proof with this MS. Also, under separate cover, registered, I send the revised 'copy' of the text, to be carefully followed. (I have everywhere altered "Darthool" into "Deirdrê.")

Except where obviously called for in the text, I have removed the few footnotes to the appendical Notes. [Kindly send me 3. unbound proof-ssets of the book (after revision) as soon as ready — i.e., if materially before publication for a "birthday" use.]<sup>17</sup>

I am working with these "reprints" just now against difficulties of health and pressing exigencies so excuse a letter so baldly to the purpose.

By next Wednesday's mail if possible (I shall then probably be with my friends at Windermere again, but not certain — and if I miss Wednesday's mail then I hope to catch Saturday's) I expect to send you "The House of Usna" with Introduction.

When you write next, perhaps you could kindly let me know when you can conveniently let me have the £50 agreed upon as health and heavy travelling expenses and restricted work have told seriously against income by the pen.

In great haste for the post

Believe me | Dear Mr. Mosher | Most sincerely yours |  
Fiona Macleod

*ALS New York Public Library, Berg Collection*

***To Thomas Mosher, June 6, 1903***

6th June 1903

Dear Mr. Mosher

With this I send to you the text of "The House of Usna." The Introduction I must send to you by a later mail — a week hence I expect.

The number of the "National Review" which contained this drama (after its production at the Strand Theater in London, by the Stage Society, in July 1900) is out of circulation, and so I have to send it in a single part, instead of (as I had wished) with the two parts so arranged that the printer would have one side only to follow. However, with careful attention there should be no room for any mistake. You will see that I have everywhere looped the name of the Person speaking, so that it should come above the words uttered. This is the only way tolerable to the reader — and in the magazine-form the names were prefixed to the utterances solely for editorial exigencies.

These names should be in Roman, not Italic type.

And please direct the printer to delete all the "periods" following the names etc.

Certain interlusive words or phrases, and certain chanted words or refrains — as indicated — should be italicized. I am, however, not quite sure about the emphasized Roman of the final chorus-refrain in the "Macha" poem.

As the first page is so "cut-up" I have also written out the explanatory note to the drama which in any case the printers had better follow.

You, of course, know best as to what format to print "The House of Usna" in. For myself, I am sorry if it cannot be in either the same or some such format as "The Silence of Amor" or else "The Hills of Dream" (in which, I understand, the "Divine Adventure" is to be?) — as dramatic literature naturally looks best with a long page and ample spacing. However, it is as you will.

Both "Deirdrê" and "The House of Usna" will now reach you at the same time — so you can judge at once as to lengths, etc.

If it were only a question of a companion volume to "By Sundown Shores" that, doubtless, would be better obtained from one or other part of my new book (new in the sense of regatherings — for the most part) "For The Beauty of an Idea" — which, if too late to publish this summer, as almost certainly it now is, will appear I hope in the autumn.

From two sections in particular two small volumes could be drawn: imaginative narrative, from that called "The Sunset of Old Tales" [the main portion of which is published in the June number of the *Fortnightly Review*, a copy of which I suppose you can easily see in Portland] — and more explicative or critical, as in that called "Carmina Gadelica" (consisting of an essay on "The Gael and His Heritage" reprinted from the "Nineteenth Century": "The Four Winds of Eirinn" from the "Fortnightly": "The Later Poetic and Dramatic work of Mr. Yeats": and "A Triad.")

Ill health, much "broken-upness" in sudden and inevitable as well as in sought change, and other more or less regrettable distractions, have not only thrown me back this year but will prevent my publishing my volume of verse till next Spring I fear — at any rate not this autumn.

Much to my annoyance I find that the temporary improvement in my neuritic or writer's-cramp affliction has not been maintained, and I am again threatened with an absolute prohibition against any writing

whatsoever except a needed signature, and even that to be avoided when feasible!

(At the moment, however, it is not convenient to dictate, and I have not my small typewriter with me)

With all friendly regards

Believe me, dear Mr. Mosher, | Sincerely Yours, | Fiona Macleod

*ALS New York Public Library, Berg Collection*

***To William Butler Yeats, June 6, 1903<sup>18</sup>***

June 6th, 1903

Letter Address | Miss Macleod | C/o 22 Ormidale Terrace |  
Murrayfield | Midlothian

Dear Mr. Yeats,

I hear that you want to know from me any hint or clue to a Gaelic "Centaur" from the notes on the subject you were told I had.

In a sense I cannot say that I do know anything of a Gaelic Centaur — for though I have twice at first hand come upon as it were the fragmentary crest or tail of an all but vanished legend, I have no reason to believe the latter to be authentically Gaelic. For example, one day last summer an old man of the island of Skye told me a story he said was "an old ancient *seal* of the Gael, older than the grey brow of Ben More yonder that the minister's brother The Professor was for telling us was once no more than a *machar* (i.e. a sandy plain) by the sea or maybe was a ledge below the sea itself, though I misdoubt me where he got that wisdom — too many books, too many books... they get sore confused they who read owre many books."

Well, to give it as briefly as I can, his story was of a woman named Alb — "because she was white, or because all her long hair was white, tho' for sure I don't see the why o' that for I've never heard *alb* put upon any whiteness at all at all" — who came to the West out of the East, and had two sons born there and that near a great river. And she died there. And the heap of the cairn that was afterwards made upon her was like

a cairn of mountains so big and high and great was it: and it could be seen from the three oceans and the two seas. But the two sons would have died, had not a grey wolf come to them, and suckled them, (and then certain strange phrases and allusions with which I needn't trouble you): and when they were grown they were called Alpein and Crumein, "and they made the biggest Dun in the world and a great city and that no other than Dunedin (Edinburgh)." And nations came of them like to the tribe of the saran in the sea or the salmon in the river. And they called the land after their mother."

Now this sounds Gaelic, but it is only familiar history gone through the sieve of men's minds in days when there were no books, and since then handed on with Gaelic names and Gaelic colour and the ingenuity or mythopoeic fancy of the Gaelic teller. For it is just the tale of Rome and of Romulus and Remus. Alba or Albyn is the old gaelic (and Gaulish or European-Celtic) name for Scotland, the land of high hills or white (i.e. snow-capped) mountains — preserved in the familiar Alp — and the cairn of great rocky heights in Scotland itself, seen from the three oceans (on the east, on the north, and on the West) and from the two seas (the Moyle or Mull of Cantyre, or Irish Sea, and the Solway Firth dividing Scotland from England). As for the names, they are the two most ancient in gaelic Scotland — for no clan-names go back so far as MacAlpine and MacCrimmon (and the latter, curiously enough, is also in old Gaelic readable as Son of the Wolf ... the house-name *Crimthann*, the Wolf, too, you will remember, was given to St. Columba in boyhood).

And so, too, one may find the Tale of Troy with Gaelic names and colour, though it is not Gaelic but only like many other tales sucked along on the ebb from old history. So inevitable is this tendency that I would undertake (if among peasant Gaels unable to speak English) that a story told let me say of Charlemagne or the Cid would be retold among them a year or two thence with a gaelic colour, and say in seven years thence would be "an old ancient seal of the Gael" that had been told "to my mother's mother by her that was old then and had all the old tales and poems."

Well, this long preamble is to explain why I do not believe there is any authentic "Centaur" legend.

I have, however, gone into the matter in one of the sections [ "The Sunset of Old Tales ... of which a part appears in the *Fortnightly* of this

month] in my forthcoming book of essays and studies in Gaelic literature and legend, which has been delayed for a year past by illness and other causes.

My essay in question is on the sculptured symbols of the Centaur and the Salmon, as found on a few of the most ancient Pagan stories [stones?] in Scotland. The "Centaur" is so rare as to be practically unknown except to a few specialists. I have drawings and all particulars of the only three that exist: and of these one is remarkable — tho' the concurrent secondary symbolism is difficult to determine. (W. S. has made a tracing — and could show you in London if you are to be there till after mid-June: he is getting there about the 14th.)<sup>19</sup>

The puzzling thing is that most of the sculptured symbols of which these are two are practically found only in Gaelic Scotland — which would seem to tell against their being solely derivative from Roman sources. But the whole thing was [has?] to be gone into very carefully. (I have also, I may add, a very curious tracing of an ancient symbol on a stone in the north of Scotland — of a horse-headed salmon, unique I suppose.)

However, W. S. will I am sure show you all the tracings and memda he has made, when you see him in London. (It is likely I may reproduce the remarkable forest-branch bearing Centaur to which I allude above.)

It may interest you to hear that Mr. Mosher of Portland, Maine, is to reissue this autumn a revised edition of my version of "The Tale of Deirdré and the Sons of Usna" (from the "Old Tales Retold" volume) and also of the drama of the close of the Deirdré-cycle, "The House of Usna."<sup>20</sup> I much wish the latter could be performed by the Irish Literary Theatre.

I have read your new book with deep interest, apart from its charm and beauty.<sup>21</sup>

Sincerely yours | Fiona Macleod

*Transcribed from ALS Private*

To \_\_\_\_\_, June 22, 1903<sup>22</sup>

Monday, June 22 1903

I am so glad I went down to see George Meredith to-day. It was goodbye,<sup>23</sup> I fear, though the end may not be for some time yet: not immediate, for he has recovered from his recent severe illness and painful accident, though still very weak, but able to be up, and to move about a little.

At first I was told he could see no one, but when he heard who the caller was I was bidden enter, he gave me a sweet cordial welcome, but was frail and weak and fallen into the blind alleys that so often await the most strenuous and vivid lives. But, in himself, in his mind, there is no change. I felt it was goodbye, and when I went, I think he felt it so also. When he goes it will be the passing of the last of the great Victorians. I could have (selfishly) wished that he had known a certain secret: but it is better not, and now is in every way as undesirable as indeed impossible. If there is in truth, as I believe, and as he believes, a life for us after this, he will know that his long-loving and admiring younger comrade has also striven towards the hard way that few can reach. What I *did* tell him before has absolutely passed from his mind: had, indeed, never taken root, and perhaps I had nurtured rather than denied what *had* taken root. If in some ways a little sad, I am glad otherwise. And I had one great reward, for at the end he spoke in a way he might not otherwise have done, and in words I shall never forget. I had risen, and was about to lean forward and take his hands in farewell, to prevent his half-rising, when suddenly he exclaimed "Tell me something of *her* — of Fiona. I call her so always, and think of her so, to myself. Is she well? Is she at work? Is she true to her work and her ideal? No, *that* I know!"

It was then he said the following words, which two minutes later, in the garden, I jotted down in pencil at once lest I should forget even a single word, or a single change in the sequence of the words. "She is a woman of genius. That is rare ... so rare anywhere, anytime, in women or in men. Some few women "have genius," but she is more than that. Yes, she is a woman of genius: the genius too, that is rarest, that drives deep thoughts before it. Tell her I think often of her, and of the deep thought in all she has written of late. Tell her I hope great things of her yet. And now ... we'll go, since it must be so. Goodbye, my dear fellow, and God bless you."

Outside, the great green slope of Box Hill rose against a cloudless sky, filled with a flowing south wind. The swifts and swallows were flying high. In the beech courts thrush and blackbird called continually, along, the hedgerows the wild-roses hung. But an infinite sadness was in it all. A prince among men had fallen into the lonely and dark way.

[William Sharp]

*Memoir, pp. 367–68*

**To James Carleton Young,<sup>24</sup> June 23, 1903**

Murrayfield, Midlothian | Scotland | 23/June/03

Dear Mr. Carleton Young

You will pardon any seeming courtesy in delayed response when you learn that your letter was forwarded to me abroad, thence returned to my London address, thence followed me to Scotland, and only a day or two ago found its way to me here in London again.

It will give me pleasure to inscribe the volumes you allude to, as it is already a pleasure to know that one so truly a book-lover cares to include, in what must be not only a most interesting and valuable but also unique collection anything of

Yours very cordially, | William Sharp

P. S. I find I have forgotten to add that, if the same to you, it will be much more convenient for me, if you will postpone dispatch of the vols till say about 21st, or between 20th and 30th September, *for my receipt in London early in October*, at | c/o | R. Farquharson Sharp Esq. | 56 St. Mary's Mansions | Paddington | London W. If for any reason expressly wished earlier, they could be sent in the first week of August (marked "Not to be forwarded"), for my receipt any time after August 15th till 25th, to | c/o Mrs. Glassford Bell | Kinloch-Meigle | Scotland. But, even thus, there is risk of delay & miscarriage.

*ALS Pierpont Morgan Library*

**To Thomas Mosher, June 23, 1903**

C/o 22 Ormidale Terrace | Murrayfield | Midlothian | June 23, 1903

Dear Mr. Mosher,

On arriving in Edinburgh today for a flying visit I found your note forwarded from Mrs. Rinder, with he Cheque for £25 for which she signed receipt.<sup>25</sup> Many thanks for thus sending in advance half of the sum agreed upon for the three autumn-books.<sup>26</sup>

When again remitting, please *if feasible* do not have the envelope stamped "Personal Receipt to be obtained" as in this instance. In the first place Mrs. Rinder was away from home the day the postman called and, later, he wanted "the personal receipt of Miss Fiona Macleod" and not of Mrs. Rinder — and delivered only on remonstrance. Does ordinary postal registration in America involve this "personal receipt demanded" stamp?

During August and September Mrs. Rinder will be away from London and house closed — so if posting after or about 20th July please, until end of September (from U. S. A.) post to me as follows,

- (1) for my receipt up till end of August | Miss Macleod | Springhill | Kilcreggan | Argyll. Scotland
- (2) Till end of September to | Miss Macleod | C/o 22 Ormidale Terrace | Murrayfield.| Midlothian

In great haste, | Most sincerely yours, | Fiona Macleod<sup>27</sup>

P.S. My long introduction to "The House of Usna" is now being typed, and shall be posted I hope by either the first or second ensuing mail. (I hope you received the Deirdrê material, etc., all right.)

*TLS New York Public Library, Berg Collection*

**To Richard Garnett, [July 5?, 1903]**

Sunday Evg<sup>28</sup>

My dear Garnett

It is most good of you to give me your book.<sup>29</sup> [I have been worrying my library to get it, since I saw it announced.] I am always deeply interested in all you write — for two things I know that always will be there, the expression of a fine critical & sympathetic mind, & distinction in that expression. What I have already read of the book interests me greatly: to reread all, and later to reread, will be a pleasure.

Altho' late, I still hope (& believe) I may be able to say what I think of it, in print. I am glad we are to see you, & Mrs. Garnett I hope, at our literary "At Home" at the Grosvenor Club tomorrow.

Ever cordially yours William Sharp

*ALS University of Texas, Austin*

**To Grant Richards, July 13, 1903**

(Temporary) | 9 St. Mary's Terrace | Paddington | W. | 13/July/03

My dear Grant Richards

It was on my mind to speak to you on a matter of "Shop" the other night, after the speechifying, but the occasion vanished in the rapid dispersal of our company. I am sending to you for your consideration a striking novel by Arthur Tomson. He sent it to me recently for my advice, & asking if I would send it to Macmillan's with a line of introduction (as they are the publishers of Hardy's novels, & as this book is of the Purbeck Hills & Wareham Flats, & chiefly as Hardy much likes Tomson's work & admires this story) — but I do not know any of Macmillan's now, except Mr. Craik who is only a "business" partner. So, on my own responsibility, I am now first sending "Many Waters" to you.<sup>30</sup>

If, as I hope & believe, you will like it, & prefer to negotiate direct with Arthur Tomson his address is Yew Tree House | Wareham | Dorset Otherwise please see that the MS be sent back to me.

Kind regards | Yours faithfully | William Sharp

*ALS State University of New York at Buffalo*

**To Theodore Watts-Dunton, [July 14?, 1903]**

9 St. Mary's Terrace | Paddington | W.

My Dear Watts-Dunton

I was most sorry to miss you yesterday as it is so long since we had a chat.<sup>31</sup>

You know how difficult it is to snatch a moment at this season, when there seems a mysterious social conspiracy against every hour of day and night.

But by postponing an engagement of a less exigent kind I find I can manage Thursday afternoon, if that will suit you. Failing Thursday I might be able to meet at my club on Saty about 4, as over: but it is uncertain.<sup>32</sup>

Were it at all feasible I w<sup>d</sup> gladly go out to Putney, but that I simply cannot manage in the present pressure, along with arduous pressure of exigent literary work.

So could you manage, do you think, to come and have tea with me on Thursday at the | Grosvenor Club | Dover St. | East corner of Dover St. and Piccadilly) | at, say, 4:30.

The club, removed to new premises, is at present in the hands of the decorators — & there is but one small room available. Still, we can have tea there, & a chat.

Saw Rhys today.<sup>33</sup> His wife is very unwell, I fear.

Please let me know soon as you can if this arrangement is feasible for you.

Yours sincerely | William Sharp

Read with interest the recent "Great Thoughts" article. How wide & deep Alwin has reached.<sup>34</sup>

*ALS University of Leeds, Brotherton Library*

***To Thomas Mosher, July 15, 1903<sup>35</sup>***

C/o Mrs. Wingate Rinder | 21 Woronzow Road | London N.W.

Dear Mr. Mosher,

Excuse a hurried dictated line, just as I am returning from London, where I have been on a matter of sudden urgency and illness.

It will be a disappointment to me if you do not use "The House of Usna," apart from the trouble I took in preparing it for you and the Introduction over which I spent much time and care. It is, I think, the thing I care most for, of mine.<sup>36</sup>

If however, you are unable to use it this autumn or before Christmas will you kindly do two things at once: first, telegraph "Rinder, 21 Woronzow Road, London." ... "Returning Usna": and, second, repost the copy and prefatory matter to me.

If you wish to use the Swan story, you are certainly welcome to do so. It is, unfortunately, now quite impracticable for me to send you at this late date any other matter from what will be my next volume to be published here.

If you do use the Swan story, it need have no introduction from me, as you say it is already long enough. Instead, will you print a dedicatory page as follows,<sup>37</sup>

I suppose of course you will publish "Deirdrê" this autumn as well as "The Divine Adventure."

You will already have received my preceding note, about addresses etc., and also with particular request as to not sending by registered "personal receipt" post. There was again a good deal of delay as well as trouble involved for Mrs. Rinder (as well as indirectly for myself, for seeing a specially registered letter Mrs. Rinder naturally thought it contained a remittance, and telegraphed to me as to what was to be done with the cheque ... not noticing till later that there was none enclosed.)

Anything up to 27th or 30th July (if leaving New York by that date, that is) can be sent to her care, now: after that as advised.

I am very glad indeed to learn that you are the better for your holiday. You must now be on your guard against letting the fall put its spell of languor on you.

[Fiona Macleod]

*TL New York Public Library, Berg Collection*

***To Richard Garnett, July 28, 1903***

South Bantaskine | by Falkirk | 28/July/03<sup>38</sup>

My Dear Garnett,

A word of thanks for so kindly sending this delightful new book — for it is that rather than a new edition.<sup>39</sup> I had just given a copy of it to a friend as a birthday present, who writes to me "I am more than delighted with Richard Garnett's book. It fulfills all you said of it — and I find in it, besides, a quality very different from almost any other modern English book I know. But that, however, I remember you did tell me before. And I am sure you are right in what you say of its unique quality of style."

Tonight, if, as I anticipate, opportunity occurs, I intend to introduce it (probably by reading something) to our present hosts, a delightful family keenly interested in literature. Later, when I have read all the new & reread all the old contents I'll drop you another line on the subject: meanwhile I am delighted with the four new I have read, with recollection of having enjoyed one of them two or three years ago in some magazine or periodical.

Ever cordially yours | William Sharp

P.S. It goes almost without saying that if even at this late date I can (as I hope) write anything about it publicly I will do so.

*ALS University of Texas, Austin*

**To Thomas Mosher, August 3, 1903**

Springhill | Kilcreggan, Scotland | August 3, 1903

Dear Mr. Mosher,

Many thanks for so kindly sending the second cheque for Twenty-Five Pounds (£25), so promptly. I received it last night when the yacht on which I am spending this month lay off Kilcreggan for the week-end.

I am glad that you like the "Usna" introduction so well, as I gave much time and thought to it: and glad that you are going to issue it in a suitable format, though I hope that the extra outlay involved will soon or late be recovered.

Let me say at once that in view of this extra outlay, and your having already paid me what I asked for revised reissue of the three volumes, and for the presentation copies which I hope you will send me (say 10 of "Divine Adventure", and 12 of "Deirdrê", and 12 of "Usna"). ... in view of this, I propose that you hold over the "Four Swans" (with dedication-Ms. sent to you) and another volume to be selected from my forthcoming volume of essays (or otherwise as may be arranged), for issue in the Brocade series, without further honorarium. (I can send a brief foreword and a few textual amendments for the latter for copyright purposes.)

As to the title of the "Usna" volume, I prefer simply "*THE HOUSE OF USNA.*"

I am sure the correct lection of the Proofs with typed MS. may safely be left to your care, since you kindly undertake to see to the final revision yourself. (Please tell the printer to adhere scrupulously to my spelling and punctuation: he and the proof reader will need to keep a careful eye on the Greek names, as I have not given these in the pseudo-Latin form commonly adopted but in their correct transliteration.)

From 20th August, and till I write to the contrary, please address letters and all else to me c/o 22 Ormidale Terrace, Murrayfield (Midlothian).

I should much like if you would kindly let me have a copy of the June "Biblot" (I mean that with Yeats's little play)<sup>40</sup> which, if sent, did not reach me.

I am now feeling better than I have done this past inclement spring and delayed summer, except for the recurrent neuritic trouble in my

arm, which may again necessitate the disuse of all penmanship for a time, I fear (the doctor even threatens "from now till next summer"!). You, I hope, are well and happy both in work and leisure. And so, dear Mr. Mosher, believe me, with all kind regards and good wishes,

Yours most sincerely, | Fiona Macleod

P.S. The quotation about myself which I enclose is from a book by someone unknown to me, a Mr. George Eyre-Todd — "Byways of Scottish Literature,"<sup>41</sup> first published three or four years ago, but only now seen by me in a new cheap edition just issued — I thought you might care to see it

*TLS New York Public Library, Berg Collection*

*To Bliss Perry, August 4, 1903<sup>42</sup>*

Murrayfield | Midlothian | (Scotland)

My Dear Sir,

It is now a long time since our last communications, and many things have interfered with the fulfillment of the project in part arranged by Mr. Scudder, and later broached again by Mr. Page.

For the last three winters & springs I have had to leave London for health's sake to go abroad, to the South. It was from Taormina in Sicily this spring that I wrote to you with enclosed — but, as I now find by its return, by some strange mischance, addressed to Australia instead of to U.S.A.

During these last three years I have become familiar not only with the visited regions of Sicily but also the all but unvisited remote and uncivilized interior and the wild Sicilian Highlands — starting generally from the inland Castle of Maniace, the residence of the Duke of Bronte (Nelson's descendant & representative, by the female side).

An editorial friend, for whom I was writing, kindly "set-up" the article for me — in its voyage to and from Australia instead of U.S.A. the back page of it got damaged, & so I have had the final 2 pp. typed.<sup>43</sup>

I hope it is an article you will care to have for the *Atlantic Monthly*. Certainly every writer now sees hundreds more, year by year, of American & British visitors to Sicily, & though all of these hear much of the interior few penetrate it, or see much even of the relatively more accessible southern Highlands. So far as I know this is the first article on the subject which has appeared, topographical or archeological: nor have I heard of any who has visited remote Polizzi or the Petralias.

Believe me, Dear Sir, | Yours faithfully | William Sharp

The Editor | "The Atlantic Monthly" | Boston: Mass.

*ALS Harvard University, Houghton Library*

**To Henry Mills Alden, August 25th, 1903**

... in the *Pall Mall Magazine* you may have noticed a series of topographical papers (with as much or more of anecdotal and reminiscent and critical) contributed, under the title of "Literary Geography," by myself. The first three were commissioned by the editor to see how they "took." They were so widely liked, and those that followed, that this summer he commissioned me to write a fresh series, one each month till next March. Of these none has been more appreciated than the double article on the Literary Geography of the Lake of Geneva. Forthcoming issues are The English Lake Country, Meredith, Thackeray, The Thames, etc. In the current issue I deal with Stevenson.

... About my projected Greek book, to comprise Magna Grecia as well, i.e. Hellenic Calabria and Sicily, etc. ... I want to make a book out of the material gathered, old and new, and to go freshly all over the ground. ... I intend to call it *Greek Backgrounds* and to deal with the ancient (recreated) and modern backgrounds of some of the greatest of the Greeks — as they were and are as, for example, of Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Empedocles, Theocritus, etc. — and of famous ancient cities, Sybaris, Corinth, etc.; and deal with the home or chief habitat or famous association. For instance:

- (1) Calabria (Crotan and Metapontum) with Pythagoras.

- |   |                                   |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| (2) Eleusis in Greece,<br>Syracuse and Gela in Sicily | with life and death of Aeschylus. |
| (3) Colonos   | Sophocles                         |
| (4) Athens etc.                                       | with Euripides.                   |
| (5) Syracuse and Acragas (Girgente)                   | with Pindar etc etc.              |

[William Sharp]

*Memoir*, pp. 369–70

**To Thomas Mosher, September 10, 1903**

c/o 22 Ormidale Terrace | Murrayfield |  
Midlothian | 10: Sep<sup>t</sup>: 1903

Dear Mr. Mosher

The copies of “The Divine Adventure” safely reached me, and the little book looks very well in its new raiment: a charming format in all ways. I have noticed no printer’s error save the use of kin with a capital *K* in the second page of prefatory dedication — in part my own fault, as I find I write words beginning with *k* with too large a letter.<sup>44</sup> This, and a slip of “logically” for “logical” in the Note at end. I suppose that, before long, copies of *Deirdrê* will be coming. I am very curious to see *The House of Usna*, and am sure it will be beautiful in its format.

I am afraid that several causes, chiefly broken health and the disintegrating effect of many interruptions this summer, will prevent my bringing out my announced volume this autumn-winter.<sup>45</sup> There is still a chance, but no more: and, if not, it will not be out till February. I have again to go abroad for the winter and early spring, but am not yet certain where it will be. I want much to join friends in Greece, but if that does not suit for me I may go to south of Spain or to Algiers. But I hope to get to Greece.

No more just now

Believe me, dear Mr. Mosher, | Sincerely yours, | Fiona Macleod

*ALS New York Public Library, Berg Collection*

***To Isabella (Murray) Gilchrist, <sup>46</sup> September 13, 1903***

Dear Mrs. Gilchrist,

It is at all times a great pleasure to hear from you, and that pleasure is enhanced by hearing from you on my birthday and by your kind remembrance of the occasion.... .

We look forward to Athens greatly, though it is not (as in Elizabeth's case) my first visit to that land of entrancing associations and still ever-present beauty. But as one grows older, one the more recognizes that "climate" and "country" belong to the geography of the soul rather than to that secondary physical geography of which we hear so much. The winds of heaven, the dreary blast of wilderness, the airs of hope and peace, the tragic storms and cold inclemencies these are not the property of our North or South or East, but are of the climes self-made or inherited or in some strange way become our "atmosphere". And the country we dream of, that we long for, is not yet reached by Cook nor even chartered by Baedeker. You and yours are often in our thought. In true friendship, distance means no more than that the sweet low music is far off: but it is there.

Your friend, | William Sharp

*Memoir, p. 372*

***To Ernest Rhys, Late September, 1903***

Llandrindod Wells, | Sept, 1903

My Dear Ernest,

... I know that you will be sorry to learn that things have not gone well with me. All this summer I have been feeling vaguely unwell and, latterly, losing strength steadily.... . However, the rigorous treatment, the potent Saline and Sulphur waters and baths, the not less potent and marvelously pure and regenerative Llandrindod air — and my own exceptional vitality and recuperative powers — have combined to work a wonderful change for the better; which may prove to be more "than

a splendid rally," tho' I know I must not be too sanguine. Fortunately, the eventuality does not much trouble me, either way: I have lived, and am content, and it is only for what I don't want to leave undone that the sound of "Farewell" has anything deeply perturbing.

W. S.

*Memoir*, pp. 368–69

**To Edmund Clarence Stedman, September 29, [1903]**

The Grosvenor Club | Piccadilly | London W. | 29th Sept for 8th Oct.

My ever dear Poet and Friend,

I hope this will reach you either (as I calculate it shd.) on your birthday morning or on the eve of that important event. And in any case, whenever it reach you, it will carry to you the affectionate & loyal greetings of one who ever bears you in loving remembrance & holds you in rare esteem. I had hoped the Fates would have haled me once more across the dividing seas ere this, or that you would have carried your youthful heart to this old land. But we can meet often in print, & in dear memories.

We may or may not meet again — I dare not now be over-sanguine: for a subtle malady has claimed me for a comrade. His name is Diabetes, but he's no enemy, & refrains as much as he can, & even promises to disappear for a time, & be content with psychical Marconigrams. At any rate, tho' a month ago a specialist thought I'd got well into Chapter Last, I have surprised him & all my friends (& even myself) by an apparent complete recovery. I know of course it is only a splendid rally — but then it is a rally that may last years. Any way, it's all in the order of the day, and "I take it smiling," as the lady said when she saw she "couldn't help it," when the amorous Brigand wooed her.

And I've work to do, & shall live to do it I believe. But to you, dear E. C. S., long long years, & green bays, & the love of men & women among whom none is more leal than your friend

William Sharp

All affectionate remembrances to your dear wife — & to other friends.  
(The Janviers are now here I'm glad to say. In 3 weeks or so my wife & I leave for Athens & Greece for the winter & spring.

*ALS Private*

***To Catherine Ann Janvier, September 30, 1903***

London, | Sept. 30, 1903.

... Thanks for your loving note. But you are not to worry yourself about me. I'm all right, and as cheerful as a lark — let us say as a lark with a rheumatic wheeze in its little song-box, or gout in its little off-claw.... . Anyway, I'll laugh and be glad and take life as I find it, till the end. The best prayer for me is that I may live vividly till "Finis," and work up to the last hour.... .

My love to you both, and know me ever your irrepressible,

Billy

*Memoir, p. 369*

***To Edmund Clarence Stedman, October 2, 1903***

The Grosvenor Club, | Oct. 2, 1903.

My Dear E. C. S.,

Two days ago, on Wednesday's mail, I posted a letter to reach you, I hope, on the morning of your birthday — and today, to my very real joy, I safely received your long and delightful letter. It has been a true medicine — for, as I told you, I've been gravely ill. And it came just at the right moment, and warmed my heart with its true affection.

... I know you'll be truly glad to hear that the tidings about myself can be more and more modified by good news from my physician, a man in whom I have the utmost confidence and who knows every

weakness as well as every resource and reserve of strength in me, and understands my temperament and nature as few doctors do understand complex personalities.

He said to me today "You look as if you were well contented with the world." I answered "Yes, of course I am. In the first place I'm every day feeling stronger, and in the next, and for this particular day, I've just had a letter of eight written pages from a friend whom I have ever dearly loved and whom I admire not less than I love." He knew you as a poet as well as the subtlest and finest interpreter of modern poetry — and indeed (tho' I had forgotten) I had given him a favourite volume and also lent your Baltimore addresses.

When I'm once more in the land of Theocritus (and oh how entrancing it is) I'll be quite strong and well again, he says. Indeed I'm already "a live miracle"! We sail by the Orient liner "Orizaba" on the 23rd; reach Naples (via Gibraltar and Marseilles) 9 to 10 days later; and leave by the local mail-boat same evening for Messina — arrive there about 8 on Monday morning — catch the Syracuse mail about 10, change at 12 at Giarre, and ascend Mt. Etna by the little circular line to Maletto about 3,000 ft. high, and thence drive to the wonderful old Castle of Maniace to stay with our dear friend there, the Duke of Bronte — our third or fourth visit now. We'll be there about a fortnight: then a week with friends at lovely and unique Taormina: and then sail once more, either from Messina or Naples direct to the Piraeus, for Athens, where we hope to spend the winter and spring.

How I wish you were to companion us. In Sicily, I often thought of you, far off Brother of Theocritus. You would so delight in it all, the Present that mirrors the magical Past; the Past that penetrates like stars the purple veils of the Present.

Yes, I know well how sincere is all you say as to the loving friend awaiting me — awaiting *us* — if ever we cross the Atlantic: but it is gladsome to hear it all the same.

All affectionate greetings to dear Mrs. Stedman, a true and dear friend,

Ever, dear Stedman, | Your loving friend, | William Sharp  
*Memoir, pp. 370–72*

**To Grant Richards, October 6, 1903**

Letter address | Miss Macleod | C/o. 22 Ormidale Terrace |  
Murrayfield | Midlothian |  
6th Octr. 1893.

My dear Sir

I have just written to my typist and secretary at Murrayfield with this letter to copy, which she will then at once forward to you.

I had no wish *myself* to relinquish "The Hour of Beauty" anthology: on the contrary.<sup>47</sup> But owing to the long delays, my uncertain health, and the difficulties involved in the slow and gradual achievement of the book along the lines thought out, made me think it fairer to you to suggest relinquishment of undertaking for whose fulfillment you have already been patient in disappointment. I shall, therefore, make a point of taking the work up again as soon as I am able to resume fresh literary work (a rest of some months at least I *must* have, save for some proof-correcting). Anything more definite than this I must not allow myself to consider just now. But, I can honestly hope that, at latest, I may be able to take up the anthology from where it now stands, at latest in May or June next (and earlier if practicable) and with intent to finish it as soon thereafter as at all possible. In this way, I do sincerely hope, both for your sake and my own, that I shall be able to place it in your hands for Autumn publication. My plans are very uncertain. My doctors want me to take a voyage (India or Japan or Australia) but there are almost insuperable difficulties in the way.

My Kinsman Mr. William Sharp and his wife are going to Greece for the winter, and it is a great temptation to me to join them there later: but if that falls through, as climatic and other reasons may determine, then I may go to either Algiers or Madeira, preferably the former.

I trust this letter will, in the circumstances, be quite satisfactory to you (which, by the way, I ought not to be writing, as I'm told either to dictate or to use a typewriter for some months yet!)

Believe me | Yours very truly, | Fiona Macleod

*ALS Private*

*To James Carleton Young, October 23, 1903*

(Orient SS. Orizaba) | 23rd Oct

Dear Mr. Carleton Young

Just a line as leaving for Greece (first for 2 or 3 weeks in Sicily with friends, en route) to thank you most cordially for your very kind letter & friendly letter of introduction to your Athenian friend.

In greatest haste | Most sincerely yours | William Sharp

I shall write to you from Athens & thank you again for your most friendly courtesy & to "report."

*ALS Private*

*To Catherine Ann Janvier, October 31, 1903*

R.M.S. *Orizaba* | Oct. 31, 1903

It seems strange to write to you on the Festival of Samhain — the Celtic Summer-end, our Scottish Hallowe'en — here on these stormy waters between Sardinia and Italy. It is so strong a gale, and the air is so inclement and damp that it is a little difficult to realise we are approaching the shores of Italy. But wild as the night is I want to send you a line on it, on this end of the old year, this night of powers and thoughts and spiritual dominion.

It was a disappointment not to get ashore at Marseilles — but the fierce gale (a wild mistral) made it impossible. Indeed the steamer couldn't approach: we lay-to for 3 or 4 hours behind a great headland some 4 or 5 miles to S.W. of the city, and passengers and mails had to be driven along the shore and embarked from a small quarry pier... . We had a very stormy and disagreeable passage all the way from Plymouth and through the Bay... . The first part of the voyage I was very unwell, partly from an annoying heart attack. You may be sure I am better again, or I could not have withstood the wild gale which met us far south in the Gulf of Lyons and became almost a hurricane near

Marseilles. But I gloried in the superb magnificence of the lashed and tossed sport of the mistral, as we went before it like an arrow before a gigantic bow.

It is now near sunset and I am writing under the shelter of a windsail on the upper deck, blowing "great guns" though I don't think we are in for more than a passing gale. But for every reason I shall be glad to get ashore, not that I want to be in Naples, which I like least of any place in Italy, but to get on to Maniace ... where I so much love to be, and where I can work and dream so well.... .

[William Sharp]

*Memoir*, pp. 372–73

**To Thomas Mosher, November 6, 1903<sup>48</sup>**

(Gibraltar) | 6th November, 1903

My dear Mr. Mosher

Just a brief note (for, as you know, I am not supposed to be using my hand in penmanship at present, for that annoying neuritic trouble has again made enforced rest from writing inevitable) to thank you cordially for the copies of "Usna" safely delivered at Murrayfield. A copy has just reached me here *en passant*. It is a beautiful little book in format, and I think the red-ink lettering of the verses very effective. So far as I've seen, there are no misprints — and I thank you for all your careful supervision over what must have been a very difficult "copy" to set up correctly, with so many Greek names in Greek spelling and unfamiliar Gaelic names and words. What a delight *all* your publications afford: and naturally I am deeply pleased with this beautiful version of "Usna."

My plans are still uncertain. I shall probably remain near here (at Algeciras, on the Spanish gulf, opposite Gibraltar) for a week or so: then perhaps we sail to Algiers: then, possibly, may for a month or so join Mr. and Mrs. William Sharp, now in Athens. But health, weather, and other considerations must take precedence over inclination, so I

cannot say yet. I'll write to you privately on this etc. later. Will you make me a present I should much like to have? ... viz.: your edn of Pompilia, with A. Symons' introduction. I take you at your generous word, you see!

Ever most sincerely yours | Fiona Macleod

*ALS New York Public Library, Berg Collection*

**To Mrs. J. H. Philpot, November 11, 1903**

11 November, 1903

... At this season of the year, beautiful and unique in its appeal and singular wild fascination as it is, this place does not suit me climactically, being for one thing too high between 2,000 and 3,000 ft. and also too much under the domination of Etna, who swings vast electric current, and tosses thunder charged cloud-masses to and fro like a Titan acolyte swinging mighty censers at the feet of the Sun.<sup>49</sup> We drive to Taormina on Tuesday and the divine beauty and not less divinely balmy and regenerative climate — sitting as she does like the beautiful goddess Falcone worshipped there of old, perched on her orange and olive-clad plateau, hundreds of feet above the peacock-hued Ionian Sea, with one hand as it were reaching back to Italy (Calabria ever like opal or amethyst to the North-east), with the other embracing all the lands of Etna to Syracuse and the Hyblaean Mount, the lands of Empedocles and Theocritus, of Aeschylus and Pindar, of Stesichorus and Simonides, and so many other great names — and with her face ever turned across the Ionian Sea to that ancient Motherland of Hellas, where once your soul and mine surely sojourned.

We shall have a delightful "going" and one you would enjoy to the full... . Tomorrow if fine and radiant we start for that absolutely unsurpassable expedition to the great orange gardens a thousand feet lower at the S. W. end of the Duchy. We first drive some eight miles or so through wild mountain land till we come to the gorges of the Simeto and there we mount our horses and mules and with ample escort before

and behind ride in single file for about an hour and a half. Suddenly we come upon one of the greatest orange groves in Europe — 26,000 trees in full fruit, an estimated crop of 3,000,000! stretching between the rushing Simeto and great cliffs.<sup>50</sup> Then once more to the saddle and back a different way to barbaric Bronte and thence a ten mile drive back along the ancient Greek highway from Naxos to sacred Enna. And so, for the moment, à revedèrla!

[William Sharp]

*Memoir*, pp. 374–75

**To Thomas Mosher, December 6, [1903]**

6th December.

Dear Mr. Mosher

I have just received (I write from the Ionian isles, off Greece) a copy of a short article that appeared in *Country Life* — (socially & otherwise) influential weekly periodical to which I occasionally contribute, and where by a special arrangement [including some such special indication of the source whence they come, as is afforded by the article now enclosed] the editor agreed to print, *after* your publication in U.S.A., my Dedicatory “Deirdrē” paper and the Dramatic prelude to “The House of Usna.” So, as you are not likely to see it, I send this copy to you. [If I cannot find it — it has mysteriously disappeared — I shall send this to Edinburgh or London to be posted and to await a copy to be got and enclosed.]<sup>51</sup>

I hope to send to you later that which you asked me for — if not quite what you asked, at any rate the best I can do, in the circumstances of which I wrote.

All my literary undertakings and hopes have been sadly interfered with this year, and particularly this past autumn. I am hopeful, however, that with the New Year may come not only more assured health but also better conditions for the sole life and the sole aims to which I wish to give all my thought and all my energies.

I hope you are in fortunate health, and happy in your work, and that all things go well with you.

Most sincerely yours and with all most earnest good wishes for Christmastide,

Fiona Macleod

P.S. As a Christmas-card I am sending you a Christmastide number of "*Country Life*" with a long poem of mine called "The Cross of the Dumb," and a shorter poem.

*ALS New York Public Library, Berg Collection*

**To Mrs. J. H. Philpot, [late December, 1903]<sup>52</sup>**

Maison Merlin, | Athens

Dear Friend,

This is mainly to tell you that I've come out of my severe feverish attack with erect (if draggled) colours and hope to march "cock-a-hoopishly" into 1904 and even further if the smiling enigmatical gods permit! ... Today I heard a sound as of Pan piping, among the glens on Hymettos, whereon my eyes rest so often and often so long dream. Tomorrow I'll take Gilbert Murray's fine new version of Hippolytus or Bacchae as my pocket companion to the Theatre of Dionysus on the hither side of the Acropolis; possibly my favourite Oedipus at Kolonus and read sitting on Kolonus itself and imagine I hear on the wind the rise and fall of the lonely ancient lives, serene thought-tranced in deathless music. And in the going of the old and the coming of the new year, a friend's thoughts shall fare to you from far away Athens... . As far as practicable I am keeping myself to the closer study of the literature and philosophy and ethical concepts and ideals of ancient Hellas and of mythology in relation thereto, but you know how fascinating and perturbing much else is, from sculpture to vase paintings, from Doric and Ionic architecture to the beauty and complex interest of the almost inexhaustible field of ancient Greek coins, and those of Graecia Magna, — And then (both Eheu and

Evoe!) I have so much else to do — besides "Life" the supreme and most exciting of the arts!

[William Sharp]

*Memoir, pp. 375–76*

**To Richard Garnett, December 29, 1903**

Maison Merlin | Athens | 29th/Dec/03

Σπιτα Μερλιν | Οδος Σεκερη | Αθηναι<sup>53</sup>

My dear Garnett

May this bring you all cordial New Year Greetings and good wishes for 1904 for you and yours tho' it reach you just after the New Year has become a *fait accompli*.

We are very comfortably settled here in a pleasant large house — a kind of Hotel Garni, on an agreeable "suspension" plan: on the S.E. slope of Lycabellos, and about 5 minutes walk down the ... to the beautiful columns of the Temple of Olympian Zeus, and to the banks of the Ilissos (alas, usually as void of original matter as an Essay by Sir John Lubbock or a poem by Sir Lewis Morris<sup>54</sup>). We hope to see something of the rest of Attica, of the nearer Isles, and of the Peloponnesus, in the Spring. Meanwhile Athens & its vicinage suffices. On fine days Kolonus is but a short walk, and Hymettos is close at hand, with its many deep-cloven valleys: or the high woodlands of Tafoi: or the vale of Daphnī & the Sacred Way: or the Bay of Salamis or the Shore with its lovely perspectives along by old Phaleron. We see much of Mr. & Mrs. Bosanquet at the British School — charming people. Among several Greek friends (one of whom, named Embiricos, claims unbroken descent from a friend & a pupil of Plato!) there is one whose name you will know, Demetrios Bikélas, in all ways a most interesting man. I wish I cd. do nothing but "idle" yet ... as ... λλ γ ρ νάπαυςις ν παντ γλυκε α etc down to κα μέλι etc and νθ Αφροδίσια, as Pindar saith!<sup>55</sup>

My wife joins with me in cordial messages, and I am ever, dear Poet,  
sincerely yours

William Sharp

*ACS University of Texas, Austin*



# Chapter Twenty-Four

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## Life: 1904

During his two weeks in Greece in the winter of 1903, Sharp fell in love with its landscape, its classical monuments, and a young American archaeologist. In early December 1904, he returned to Greece, this time with Elizabeth, and stayed four months. Besides renewing his friendship with the young woman, he wanted to make notes for a travel book for English speaking visitors describing the classical associations of landmarks and monuments. Shortly after arriving, his plans were cut short by illness. According to Elizabeth, “the winter was very cold and at first my husband was very ill — the double strain of his life seemed to consume him like a flame” (*Memoir*, p. 374). In the following late December letter to Mrs. Philpot, he assured her he had come out of his “severe feverish attack with erect (if draggled) colours”. He continued,

Today I heard a sound as of Pan piping, among the glens on Hymettos, whereon my eyes rest so often and often so long dream. Tomorrow I'll take Gilbert Murray's fine new version of Hippolytus or Bacchae as my pocket companion to the Theatre of Dionysus on the hither side of the Acropolis; possibly my favourite Oedipus at Kolonus and read sitting on Kolonus itself and imagine I hear on the wind the rise and fall of the lonely ancient lives, serene thought-tranced in deathless music. And in the going of the old and the coming of the new year, a friend's thoughts shall fare to you from far away Athens

The optimism of this letter was short-lived. He became ill again in early January and remained so through most of the month. .

Late in January, he began to feel better and wrote to Ernest Rhys describing his plan to visit “Mycenae and Argos & Tiryns to Nauplia and if possible, to Sparta.” Rhys included portions of this letter in his

*Letters from Limbo* (p. 80) and described Sharp as “wandering abroad after his deadly enemy diabetes had attacked him.” This observation led to an insightful comment about Sharp’s attitude toward the disease which would soon claim his life:

Not a bad way-bill for a sick wanderer, but whatever else he might be he always took his ailments and his threatened fate with courage and at times with a histrionic relish of his own predicament. [...] In truth it might be said he took both his mortal ailment and his early death with a light heart, and he would do nothing to delay the step of fate. He ate a pound of Turkish delight in Athens one day when the doctor had warned him he must eat nothing sweet, and at Newport, Isle of Wight, he took a plate of cakes one day out of a confectioner’s window and ate them all with amazing gusto.

While mentioning her husband’s illness, Elizabeth recalled the friendships they made at the Maison Merlin. They enjoyed the “pleasant companionship with members of the English and American Schools of Archeology — of which Mr. Carl Bosenquet and Prof. Henry Fowler were respectively the heads — with Dr. Wilhelm head of the Austrian School.” They also befriended “a Greek poet, at whose house we met several of the rising Greek men of letters, and other residents and wanderers” (*Memoir*, p. 375).

“With Spring sunshine and warmth,” Elizabeth wrote (*Memoir*, p. 378), “my husband regained a degree of strength, and it was his chief pleasure to take long rambles on the neighboring hills alone, or with the young American archaeologist, Mrs. Roselle L. Shields, a tireless walker.” Sharp described one of those walks in a late February letter to Rhys:

Yesterday I had a lovely break from work, high up on the beautiful bracing dwarf-pine clad slopes of Pentelicos, above Kephisia, the ancient deme of Menander — and then across the country behind Hymettos, the country of Demosthenes and so back by the High Convent of St. John the Hunter, on the north spur of the Hymettian range, and the site of ancient Gargettos, the place of Epicurus’ birth and boyhood. At sundown I was at Heracleion, some three or four miles from Athens — and the city was like pale gold out of which peaked Lycabettos rose like a purple sapphire. The sky beyond, above Salamis, was all grass-green and mauve. A thundercloud lay on extreme Hymettos, rising from Marathon: and three rainbows lay along the violet dusk of the great hill-range.

Sharp assured Rhys he felt much better: "I am apparently well and strong again, hard at work, hard at pleasure, hard at life, as before, and generally once more full of hope and energy."

A Sharp letter to E. C. Stedman many months later (August 29) casts further light on his illness in Greece and the nature of his recovery:

I was all but done for in the autumn by a severe seizure of a form of diabetes, and after the rigorous treatment at Llandrindod Wells & elsewhere I went to Greece for the winter & spring. I got worse & worse all the same till about February. Then spring came over Hymettos, and new life came to me, & in more ways than one, & Attica became a garden of Eden, & I grew swiftly and continuously better. A heavenly trip in the Peloponnesus put an additional touch to it and a month or so later I sailed from Athens a new man.

"Hard at pleasure," "hard at life, as before," "a new life came to me, & in more ways than one, & Attica became a garden of Eden." In writing to Stedman through the years, Sharp often adopted the persona of a romantic Lothario. In this instance, there was some truth behind those phrases for Sharp was captivated with the young American archaeologist, the tireless walker, Roselle Lathrop Shields.

A previously unknown letter dated February 9, 1906 (following Sharp's death in December 1905) from Catherine Janvier to Mrs Shields, casts further light upon their relationship. The letter is transcribed in Appendix 2 in this volume. Having sent Roselle an inscribed copy of her book about cats, *London Mews* (Harper & Brothers: New York, 1904), Catherine wrote on February 8 to say "the cats are crossing the ocean and I hope will reach you safely." The letter, along with a newspaper clipping of a portrait of Sharp, was in Roselle Shields' copy of the cat book when it sold a few years ago. Roselle had written to Catherine about her regret in not being with Sharp at Alexander Hood's Castle Maniace in Sicily when he died. Catherine responded: "My dearie, I am beginning to think that it is you and I who best know and understand our dear boy. Do not be influenced by others or their opinions. How I wish you could have been with him." She then expressed her regret at not receiving any letters from Sharp after his final arrival at Maniace (though she did receive two brief letters from him),

How I envy you your four last letters — had I but one! Well, I feel I know how he longed for his wee "Roseen." How weary he was of many things.

It breaks my heart to think of him there — alone — I know that the best of care was taken of him, that every comfort was his, but I know that he was "alone," he knew too, I am sure, that it had to be.

Of the many letters Catherine received from Sharp since their first introduction in 1889, only a small number remained; "many letters were destroyed, otherwise he would not have written with the freedom that he did." She does not know what Sharp did with her letters. "Should E. [Elizabeth] read them, if he kept them, she will be greatly puzzled."

Catherine continued: "What you say about P. and Mary and E. not knowing coincides with what I thought. In the letter that never was written he promised full details of P. and directions as to some matters — I never can know now. How I wish I were near, there is so much to ask, so much for us — you and I — to talk of." The "E" who did not know — presumably how close Roselle's relationship with her husband had been — was Elizabeth since Catherine referred to her as "E" earlier in the letter. The "Mary" was either Sharp's sister who provided the Fiona handwriting or Mary Wilson who accompanied the Sharps to Italy, perhaps to help Elizabeth care for her husband whose health was failing quickly. The "P" may have been Mrs. J. H. Philpot with whom Sharp had been corresponding and who loaned some of her letters, including one from Greece dated December 1903, to Elizabeth for the *Memoir*. She was the author of *The Sacred Tree in Religion and Myth* (London and New York: Macmillan, 1897) and other popular books and pamphlets about spiritualist associations with trees. Little is known about Sharp's relationship with her though he may have met her through Dr. John Goodchild since the three shared the conviction that spirits inhabited the natural world and communicated frequently with those attuned to their messages. She was among the company of women with whom Sharp had developed special relationships of dependency. Catherine agreed with Roselle that neither P, nor Mary, nor E, were aware of the intimacy of Sharp's relationship with Roselle. She also shared Roselle's regret that the woman he loved and the woman who often acted as his mother confessor could not be with him during his last hours.

Catherine Janvier's letter expresses her opinion of the state of Sharp's mind and feelings before he died. Its purpose was to console Roselle and assure her that despite Sharp's close relationships with

other women, she, Roselle, was Sharp's true love. After describing what Sharp had left for her during his last visit to New York in late November 1904, including the manuscript, in his handwriting, of Fiona's long dedication to her ("Prologue to Kathia") in *The Washer of the Ford* (1896), Catherine concluded, "as soon as I can, I will hunt up all he said of you. Unfortunately, much is destroyed." Then she affixed this postscript:

Sunday Oct. 22. Venice — 1905 (In reference to our, yours and my, first meeting) 'Remember that her all surrounding love saved me, I am sure, in far away Greece, and what it has meant ever since to me.' I cannot get at the earlier ones yet.

Here Catherine asserts that less than two months before he died, when he and Elizabeth were in Venice on their way to Sicily(October 22), Sharp wrote Catherine a letter in which he said the surrounding love of Roselle, his "sweet Roseen," saved his life in Greece in the spring of 1904. Sharp and Roselle cannot have met in person often, if at all, following the Sharps' departure from Greece in April 1904, but it is certainly the case that their relationship echoes that he began a decade earlier with Edith Wingate Rinder. His "long rambles" among classical ruins with Roselle in Greece were like those he took with Edith in the Roman Campagna. His relationship with Edith lasted many years and led to the birth of Fiona Macleod. Both married to others and neither couple with children, William and Edith often spoke and wrote of Fiona as the child they could not have. Their relationship had begun to cool and devolve into one of close friendship by the time Edith gave birth to a baby girl on July 26, 1901. In December 1903, Sharp found another young woman in Greece who returned his love. How their relationship might have developed had Sharp lived longer, we cannot know, but it brought a measure of joy and happiness — a welcome renewal of youth — to his final years.

Two photographs of Sharp illustrate the toll taken by his illnesses. In the 1894 photograph, he was a forty years old, handsome, virile man with dark hair. In less than ten years, at the age of fifty, he had become an old man with grey hair and a sad, if not worried, demeanor.

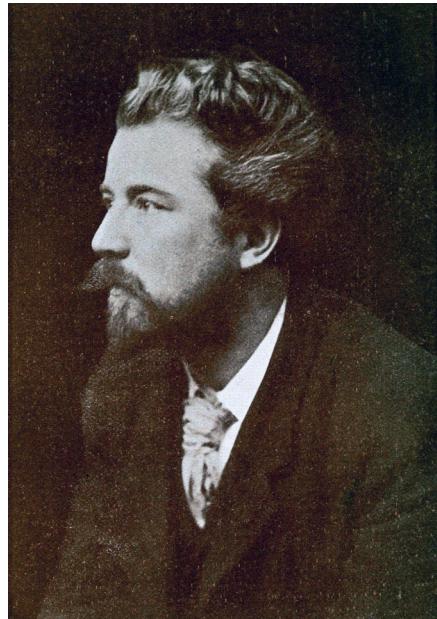


Fig. 21. William Sharp from a photograph by Frederick Hollyer, *The Chap-book*, September 15, 1894, Wikimedia, Public Domain, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:William\\_Sharp\\_1894.jpg#/media/File:William\\_Sharp\\_1894.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:William_Sharp_1894.jpg#/media/File:William_Sharp_1894.jpg)

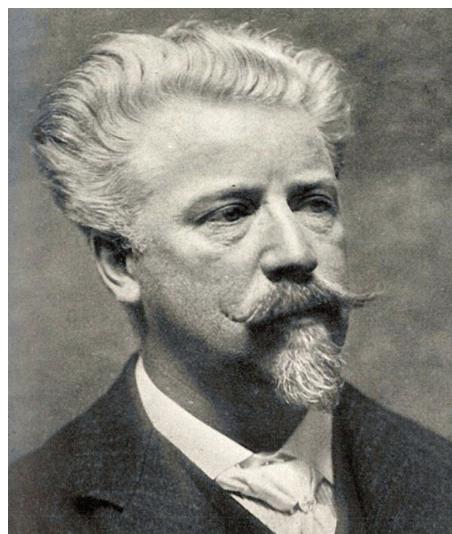


Fig. 22. Photograph of William Sharp, taken by Alexander Nelson Hood, the Duke of Bronte, at his Castle Maniace in November 1903. Reproduced by Elizabeth Sharp in her *Memoir*, p. 358.

It is hard to believe Sharp approached his relationship with Roselle Shields in Greece with the same ardor that characterized his relationship with Edith Rinder in Rome in 1892. Despite all that Catherine Janvier said and implied in her letter, one suspects Sharp viewed his relationship with Roselle as a father views his relationship with a daughter.

In 1906, shortly after Sharp died, Catherine Janvier began an essay describing the genesis of Fiona Macleod and her discovery upon reading the first Fiona book that its author was William Sharp. Her essay first took the form of a paper she read to the Aberdeen branch of the Franco-Scottish society in June 1906, and then a lengthy article in *The North American Review* in April 1907. After reproducing parts of her surviving letters from Sharp in the article, Catherine made some of them available to Elizabeth Sharp who used them amply in her *Memoir*. Roselle Shields may have also shared some of her letters from Sharp with Elizabeth as she is likely the unidentified friend to whom several are addressed near the end of the *Memoir*. Elizabeth maintained a friendship with Roselle Shields, and she facilitated the publication by Thomas Mosher in 1908 of *A Little Book of Nature Thoughts*, poems by Fiona Macleod selected by Mrs. William Sharp and Roselle Lathrop Shields with a forward signed R. L. S.

We have skipped ahead to Sharp's death in December 1905 to cast light on his experience in Greece in the first three months of 1904. In early February of that year, he constructed a Fiona letter to the Celtic scholar and London publisher, Alfred Nutt, which he sent to Edinburgh where Mary copied and dated it February 18. Nutt had written to ask if Fiona would like to write a comprehensive retelling of Gaelic stories which he thought Lady Gregory had done only partially and not very well in *Poets and Dreamers: Studies and Translations from the Irish*, published in 1903. Writing as Fiona, Sharp reflected the distance that had developed between the Scottish and the Irish Celtic movements. Fiona had recently reread Lady Gregory's book and found it

not nearly so "original" as I thought it — I mean, in the sense that far more of the book is "lifted," as you say, than I had first noticed. And more than ever I realized how often the old is weakened in the retelling. There are certain episodes and even chapters which I reread with a chill indifference, when not with impatience.

If she were ever to attempt the retelling Nutt proposed, Fiona would proceed with the "utmost simplicity and directness, and not at all unless in imaginative recovery of mood."

She would have liked to take up Nutt's suggestion, but she was in too great a doubt of her "powers to do with the finality of achievement what otherwise is best left undone." Nutt must have asked Yeats to undertake the project for Fiona wrote:

I too had hoped Mr. Yeats might do this thing. It is not to be thought of from him, now: not from lack of genius, or even scope of vision, but from his growing preoccupation with so many matters and conflicting interests and perhaps too from his lack of withdrawal from continuous personal influences, which rarely do much for the imaginative writer but oftener disintegrate what isolation has achieved.

Sharp believed Yeats's involvement in the cause of Irish nationalism and his relationship with Maud Gonne, an active Nationalist, interfered with his imaginative work. Fiona could not think of others fitted for the work; perhaps someone who has been influenced by her own imaginative work will emerge. If so, she will be pleased at having done a "truly good thing." Some day she may be able to take up Nutt's suggestion, but now she is busy finishing a volume of essays (which became *The Winged Destiny*) and preparing a volume of verse which appeared only after Sharp died. Then Sharp approached the real reason he had Fiona turn down Nutt's proposal: he was simply too weak, too exhausted, too busy to undertake a project of that dimension however desirable the financial package might be.

When the Sharps left Greece on March 24, 1904, their destination was the French Riviera. They travelled by ship at least part of the way, and a Fiona letter to Mosher dated March 30 and written "At Sea" suggests they may have stopped briefly in Naples. When she "put in" there, Fiona wrote, she found in her forwarded mail Mosher's April *Bibelot* which contained "a too generously worded appreciation." It also contained a Fiona essay entitled "Sea Magic and Running Water" (101-32), which caused Sharp to hurriedly draft the March 30 Fiona letter and sent it to London for Edith Rinder to type and send to Mosher. Fiona informed Mosher she had not authorized him to publish that essay since it was to appear in *The Winged Destiny*, a volume Chapman and Hall planned to publish later in 1904 both in England and the United States. She claimed, improbably, the publisher saw the *Bibelot* and decided to delay publication and reconsider an American edition. In his introduction to "Sea Magic and Running Water" in the *Bibelot*, Mosher wrote: "Later we

hope to give some further studies, should what is here reprinted find favour,— more especially three very beautiful contributions to recent English reviews." He listed them: "The Magic Kingdoms" (published in *The Monthly Review* of 10 January, 1903, 100–11); "The Sunset of Old Tales" (published in *The Fortnightly Review* of April 1, 1903, 1087–110); and "The Woman at the Crossways" (published in *The Fortnightly Review* of November 2, 1903, 869–73). Since these essays would also be included in *The Winged Destiny*, Mosher must not print them in his *Bibelot*. "If people in America," she wrote, "can buy the best part of my new book for 10 cents, [the price of a single issue of the *Bibelot*] they will not be likely to pay for imported copies [of the book] at a dollar and a half or whatever the selling price may be." She went on to mentioned essays not destined for *The Winged Destiny* which Mosher might wish to print in the *Bibelot*.

On their way to the French Riviera, the Sharps may have stopped in Bordighera on the Italian Riviera to see Dr. John Goodchild as they had done in the spring of 1903. As Elizabeth recalled in the *Memoir*, they "loitered" for a time in Hyeres on the French Riviera "in the month of cherry blossoms." After stopping for a time with the Janviers and other friends in Provence, they continued northwest toward Bordeaux. Writing to Catherine Janvier from La Puy on the eighteenth, Sharp described the "magnificent old feudal rock-Chateau fortress of Polignac, erected on the site of the famous Temple of Apollo (raised here by the Romans on the still earlier site of a Druidic Temple to the Celtic Sun God)." The time he spent in Sicily and Greece had quickened his interest in the remains of earlier civilizations in Western Europe. The site caused him to realize "how deep a hold even in the France of today is maintained by the ancient Pagan faith." By early May, the Sharps were back in London where they rented rooms for the summer in Leinster Square, Bayswater.

In June, Alexander Jessup asked Sharp if he would like to write a volume in a *French Men of Letters* series he was editing for the J. P. Lippincott Company in Philadelphia. Sharp responded enthusiastically on June 14, noting that he was a specialist in "Sainte-Beuve in criticism, Hello in philosophy & criticism, Leconte de L'Isle, Baudelaire, and Villiers de L'Isle Adam—These with Chateaubriand, of whom I have long been intimate, are the names with which I am most at home." For the pleasure he would have in writing and because of concurrent

work, he would prefer to write a volume on Mistral, Leconte de L'Isle, or Villiers de L'Isle Adam. Before committing, he would need to know and approve the terms. If satisfactory, he would begin drafting the book in the coming winter and finish it by mid-summer. It was decided he would do the Leconte de L'Isle volume, and he began collecting material for it during the summer. Sharp's undertaking this work indicates his continuing need for money and his recurring optimism about his health. It was a much easier project than the elaborate comprehensive retelling of Gaelic stories Alfred Nutt proposed for Fiona in February.

Sharp remained well throughout July and into August, but his thoughts were on the nature and quality of his accomplishments as a writer. In early July, he wrote under his own name to an unidentified friend who was also a writer and who knew he was Fiona. He thanked the friend for feeling "so deeply the beauty that has been so humbly and eagerly and often despairingly sought." He then reflected on the "long long road, the road of art":

those who serve with passion and longing and unceasing labour of inward thought and outward craft are the only votaries who truly know what long and devious roads must be taken, how many pitfalls have to be avoided or escaped from, how many desires have to be foregone, how many hopes have to be crucified in slow death or more mercifully be lost by the way, before one can stand at last on "the yellow banks where the west wind blows," and see, beyond, the imperishable flowers, and hear the immortal voices.

He concluded with a reference to Fiona's *The Winged Destiny* which was about to appear:

Destiny puts dust upon dreams, and silence upon sweet airs, and stills songs, and makes the hand idle, and the spirit as foam upon the sea. For the gods are jealous, O jealous and remorseless beyond all words to tell. And there is so little time at the best ... and the little gain, the little frail crown, is so apt to be gained too late for the tired votary to care, or to do more than lie down saying "I have striven, and I am glad, and now it is over, and I am glad!"

Having reflected on his life, Sharp recognized it might soon be over.

On the second of August he wrote again to the same friend. Yesterday had been "one of the loveliest days of the year, with the most luminous atmosphere I have seen in England — the afternoon and evening

divinely serene and beautiful." He spent the day in the "glowing warmth and wonderful radiance" of Glastonbury and its neighbourhood. His companion was John Goodchild who put him "unknowing to a singular test." Goodchild

hoped with especial and deep hope that in some significant way I would write or utter the word "Joy" on this 1st day of August (the first three weeks of vital import to many, and apparently for myself too) — and also to see if a certain spiritual influence would reach me.

Well, later in the day (for he could not prompt or suggest, and had to await occurrence) we went into the lovely grounds of the ancient ruined Abbey, one of the loveliest things in England I think. I became restless and left him and went and lay down behind an angle of the East end, under the tree. I smoked, and then rested idly, and then began thinking of some correspondence I had forgotten. Suddenly I turned on my right side, stared at the broken stone of the angle, and felt vaguely moved in some way. Abruptly and unpremeditatedly I wrote down three enigmatic and disconnected lines. I was looking curiously at the third when I saw Dr. G. approach.

"Can you make anything out of that," I said — "I've just written it, I don't know why." This is the triad.

From the Silence of Time, Time's Silence borrow.

In the heart of To-day is the word of To-morrow.

The Builders of Joy are the Children of Sorrow.

With Goodchild, Sharp could indulge his belief, as he had earlier with W. B. Yeats, that the spirit world surrounds and sometimes intervenes in the natural world.

Sharp's fascination with the realm of spirits is a controlling motif in the stories and essays in *The Winged Destiny* which began with a "Dedicatory Introduction" to Goodchild (pp. vii–xii). The spirit of the book and the nature of Sharp's relationship with Goodchild are exemplified by the last paragraph though Goodchild was unaware it was Sharp speaking through Fiona:

But you — you are of the little clan, for whom this book is: you who have gone upon dark ways, and have known the starless road, and perchance on that obscure way learned what we have yet to learn. For you, and such as you, it is still a pleasure to gather bindweed of thoughts and dreams, these thoughts, to the airs and pauses and harmonies of considered speech. So, by your acceptance of this book, let me be not only of your

fellowship but of that little scattered clan to whom the wild bees of the spirit come, as secret wings in the dark, with the sound and breath of forgotten things.

Elizabeth included in the *Memoir* (p. 385) part of a July letter from Goodchild which she called his “first acknowledgement of the dedication.” The official publication date of *The Winged Destiny* was October 7, 1904. If Elizabeth’s dating is correct, Goodchild saw a draft or a proof of the dedication three months earlier.

Some of the stories and essays in *The Winged Destiny* were written in the summer of 1902 when Sharp was in the west of Scotland (*Memoir*, p. 344). In an August 23, 1902 letter, he told Alexander Nelson Hood the book — then to be called “The Magic Kingdom” — had been postponed until the following year. In an October 1902 letter to Catherine Janvier, he said he intended to put together a volume of Gaelic essays and Spiritual studies called *For the Beauty of an Idea*. In Fiona’s March 30, 1904 letter to Mosher, the book had become *The Winged Destiny* and “For the Beauty of an Idea” had become a section containing the essays “Celtic” and “The Gaelic Heart.” The beautiful idea set forth in these two essays and the “Preface” to the section is that of pan-Celticism, that writers in Scotland, Wales, and especially Ireland should set aside their nationalistic passions and support each other as they write in English about myths and legends of the Gael, thereby contributing to the large canon of British literature. Most of the essays had appeared in British periodicals, but Sharp made some revisions and additions and settled on the internal arrangement of the book while he was in Greece. He thought Chapman & Hall would publish the book in April or early May 1904; the delay until October may have been due to the “modification of contract” occasioned by Mosher jumping the gun.

One story in *The Winged Destiny*, “The Lynn of Dreams” (pp. 134–40), had a special meaning for Sharp. It tells the story of a writer — “let us call him John o’Dreams” — who loved words and was able to do marvellous things with them. “But he had a fatal curiosity. Year by year this had grown upon him. He desired to know the well-springs: he desired the well-spring of all literature.” He sought it everywhere in the great masters of literature and failed to find it. One day as he lay dreaming by a pool in the woods, “Dalua, the Master of Illusions, the Fool of Faery” appeared and offered to take him to the Lynn of Dreams

where he would reveal “the souls of words in their immortal shape and colour, and how the flow of a secret tide continually moves them into fugitive semblances of mortal colour and mortal shape.” Reaching the Lynn of Dreams, John o’Dreams saw “his heart’s desire bending like a hind of the hill and quenching her thirst.” He saw the “mortal shape and colour of words” and, looking deeper, he saw “the souls of words, in their immortal shape and colour.” Having found paradise, “his soul cried out for joy.” But soon Dalua reappeared and told him to drink from “the Cup of which Tristran drank when he loved Yseult beyond the ache of mortal love, the Cup of Wisdom that gives madness and death before it gives knowledge and life.” After drinking from the cup, the writer lost all his creative ability, “the master-touch, the secret art, the craft. He became an ‘obscure stammerer.’ At the last he was dumb. And then his heart broke, and he died.” Sharp identified with John o’Dreams who, like Faust, came to the realization that perfection in art as in life is inseparable from death. Writing through the Fiona persona enabled him to tell his personal story while avoiding the tincture of autobiography.

The first half of the book’s final essay, “The Winged Destiny” (pp. 341–64), which gave the volume its title, was the “Foreword” to Fiona Macleod’s “The House of Usna” when Thomas Mosher published it as a book in 1902. It asserts the need to move beyond Ibsen’s realism to plays like “The House of Usna” which portray the mystery of life and the spiritual forces at work in the world. Sharp had written the play as Fiona Macleod in response to Yeats’ request in 1896 to join him in producing dramas about mythological Celtic figures and the spiritual forces that moved them. The second half of “The Winged Destiny” essay was written in Greece, and its title is that of “a beautiful image which troubled all who looked on it” created long ago by a young, unknown sculptor at Delphi. The sculptor may have been a student of Agathon who created a statue of Destiny as a woman with “downward looking eyes” which were nearly closed. Agathon’s student, however, created a Destiny that was a male

with upward lifted face, and eyes looking out through time and change and circumstance: young, yet with weight of deep thought on the brows: serene, yet somehow appalling, as though a most ancient presence out of eternity looked from the newly carved marble. He was winged too, with great wings, as though he had come from afar, and was but a moment earth-lit.

Most would say he was Anteros, the God of requited love, brother of Eros, the God of unrequited love. Without revealing its intended subject, the sculptor died the day after finishing the statue, reinforcing Sharp's point that attaining perfect beauty in art is synonymous with death. His handyman, however, said the statue was to be named "The Winged Destiny." Since there seems to be no such statue at Delphi, Sharp, writing as Fiona, may have had in mind the figure Albert Gilbert sculpted for the top of the Lord Shaftesbury Memorial fountain in London's Piccadilly Square. Commonly called Eros, the figure was designed to be Anteros, his opposite. It was erected in 1892–1893 to commemorate the philanthropic works of Anthony Ashley Cooper, seventh Earl of Shaftesbury, who expressed his forward-looking love by establishing schools for childhood education and eliminating the scourge of child-labour.



Fig. 23. Statue of Anteros, Shaftesbury Memorial, Piccadilly Circus, London. Sculpted by Alfred Gilbert and erected in 1893. Photograph by Diego Delso (2014), Wikimedia, CC BY-SA 4.0, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Fuente\\_Eros,\\_Piccadilly\\_Circus,\\_Londres,\\_Inglaterra,\\_2014-08-11,\\_DD\\_159.JPG](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Fuente_Eros,_Piccadilly_Circus,_Londres,_Inglaterra,_2014-08-11,_DD_159.JPG)

After ruminating on the mystery of Fate, Fiona declared there are two mighty forces at work in what we call Destiny. First, there is the “sombre and inscrutable Genius of this world, which weaves with time and races and empires, with life and death and change, and in the weft of whose web our swift-passing age, our race, our history, are no more than vivid gleams for a moment turned to the light.” Second, there is also a

Winged Destiny, a Creature of the Eternal, inhabiting infinitude, so vast and incommensurable that no eye can perceive, no imagination limn, no thought overtake, and yet that can descend upon your soul or mine as dew upon blades of grass, as wind among the multitudinous leaves, as the voice of sea and forest that can rise to the silence of mountain-brows or sink in whispers through the silence of a child’s sleep — a Destiny that has no concern with crowns and empires and the proud dreams of men, but only with the soul, that flitting shadow, more intangible than dew, yet whose breath shall see the wasting of hills and the drought of oceans.

Beyond the lower force of Fate and the higher force of Destiny there is a Winged Destiny that leans

from Eternity into Time, and whispers to the soul through symbol and intuition the inconceivable mystery of the divine silence. ... the Shepherd with whom, in the dark hour, we must go at last, to whose call we must answer when the familiar passions and desires and longings are as dust on the wind, and only that remains which so little we consider, only that little shaken flame of the spirit, which is yet of the things that do not pass, which is of the things immortal.

These passages reveal what was on Sharp’s mind as he finished the essay in Greece in the spring of 1904. He knew he did not have long to live, and he must have shared his thoughts about the Winged Destiny, about the end of life, with Roselle Shields who, he told Catherine Janvier, saved his life during their long walks in the Grecian landscape.

In the “Foreword” of *A Little Book of Nature Thoughts* (pp. i–xi), Roselle Shields asserted the ancient Greeks “felt and showed Beauty is the essence of life.” Sharp convinced her the Celtic vision was a “reawakening of the old Hellenic harmony between the eternal love of beauty and the passionate longing for truth.” With Elizabeth’s help, Roselle selected and reproduced three quotations — one from Richard Jeffries and two from Emerson — which equate the highest life with the search for Beauty. “The Lynn of Dream” expressed the belief that the attainment

of perfect beauty is synonymous with death. The conclusion of Fiona's "The Winged Destiny" expressed the belief that a shepherd descends at the moment of death and leads the spirit into the realm of immortals. Elizabeth shared her husband's belief in the survival of the spirit. After he died, she spent considerable time and energy communicating with his spirit through mediums, and she recorded her efforts in a journal now in the British Library. Similarly, Roselle Shields stated in the "Foreword" her belief in an "indefinable something, veiled, exquisite, and sombre, which hovers above the commonplace and illumines the sentiments and passions." In this context, her disappointment in not being with Sharp when he died is understandable. She missed the chance to hold his hand and comfort him as the shepherd descended and led his soul across the boundary that separates life and death. Such was the power William Sharp exercised through the Fiona writings and the force of his presence over the many women and men who returned the love he, like Anteros, expended.

Following "an ideal summer of warmth and radiance," Sharp fell ill again. On August 29, he wrote to E. C. Stedman

And now I am again at Llandrindod Wells in Wales [where he had gone to recuperate the previous fall], & under the specialist's rigorous regime as to waters, diet, exercise, & so forth — but (despite a recent & sudden & somewhat severe access of the ailment, now got well in hand however) more precautionarily than of necessity. Damp & raw cold are my worst enemies, & so, as for years past, there is no thought of our spending the winter in England. But being in so much greater general health than I was last year (in Sept. last the specialist gave me "a few months!") it is not necessary to leave at October-end for Sicily, Greece, or Egypt. In fact, we had projected going to Stockholm, & then via Berlin & Leipzig to Dresden & Munich: & then later to Italy.

It is still our intention to spend January, February, & March in Rome — which for me is the City of Cities.

But we are going to it via New York!

He went on to say he and Elizabeth intended to leave England near the end of October, spend six weeks or so in New York, and then sail directly to the Mediterranean. He asked if it would be convenient for them to stay with the Stedmans for a few days upon arrival "till we are able to look about & see what we can settle as to quarters within the limited reach of our very restricted finances." He mentioned his

"Literary Geography" articles, which had been running serially in the *Pall Mall Magazine*, would be out in book-form in October. Elizabeth's little book on Rembrandt (London, Methuen & Company, 1904) was having an exceptionally good reception. He was busy collecting and revising his literary essays which had appeared in various periodicals over the years. He and Elizabeth would return to London in a week or two "for a month's hard work before [getting ready] for New York."

In a September 20 letter to Alexander Jessup he withdrew his plan to write a book about Leconte de L'Isle for the *French Men of Letters* series. He described his deteriorating health:

Several of my immediate plans and later projects have to be relinquished, materially modified, or indefinitely postponed. My health, which despite a strong physique has long been far from what it ought to be, is now seriously complicated by what the doctors have discovered, namely an acute and dangerous attack of Diabetes. It has been arrested by rigorous dieting and the famous treatment at Llandrindod Wells — but it has not only weakened me and brought out certain climatic and other sensitiveness, but renders imperative the medical advice given me to lessen my work to the minimum compatible with well-being and the means to live, and to spend at least six months of the year in the South of Europe in as dry and sunny a winter-climate as I can afford to obtain. In the circumstances it is out of the question for me to consider further the writing of the Leconte de Lisle volume.

Aside from ill health, Sharp found Jessup's proposed terms unacceptable; another American, he claimed, had offered much better terms for a shorter manuscript.

Helen Bartlett Bridgman, an American writer and friend of Mosher, had written to Fiona, praising her work and asking why she was so reclusive. Sharp responded cordially as Fiona in mid-September. The letter has the usual excuses designed to pre-empt any requests for a meeting and one masterfully constructed sentence that cuts two ways:

I am content to do my best, as the spirit moves me, and as my sense of beauty compels me; and if, with that, I can also make some often much-needed money, enough for the need as it arises; and, further, can win the sympathy and deep appreciation of the few intimate and the now many unknown friends whom, to my great gladness and pride, I have gained, then, indeed, I can surely contentedly let wider "fame" (of all idle things the idlest, when it is, as it commonly is, the mere lip-repute of the curious

and the shallow) go by, and be indifferent to the lapse of possible but superfluous greater material gain.

Just as it was necessary for Fiona to seek solitude and reject wider fame, so the fiction of Fiona kept her creator from the fame that would be his if he could claim the Fiona writings.

By September 22, Sharp had received a letter from Mrs. Stedman saying she and her husband were not well enough to have overnight house guests, but that her granddaughter would try to find suitable lodgings for the Sharps in the city. In his reply on the twenty-second, Sharp expressed sorrow in hearing about their illnesses and assured her he understood why they could not have guests. In his August 29 letter to Stedman Sharp said they intended to spend six weeks in New York, but now, "for health's sake & other reasons," they would spend only a month in America and part of that in Boston. They would be glad to have Laura Stedman, Mrs. Stedman's granddaughter, help them find modestly-priced adjacent rooms, "if possible roomy & pleasant enough to use also occasionally for writing in," centrally located and "preferably well up Central Park Way." They planned to sail on the *SS. Menominee* on November 3 which was due in New York on the thirteenth. By the end of September, their New York plans had crystallized. The Janviers were going to Mexico in mid-November, Sharp explained, and had offered their rooms to the Sharps: "They will be back by about the 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> of December — & as we don't sail from New York for the Mediterranean till either December 10th or 12th (12th I think is the date — & the last date the doctors want me to be in a cold & damp climate, where I shouldn't be at all, tho' I am wonderfully better) we'll see something of them." By late October, the couple had decided to spend the last week of their American visit in Boston and sail from there to Naples on December 10.

The trip's "immediate object," Elizabeth wrote, "was that I should know in person some of the many friends my husband valued there, and I was specially interested to make the acquaintance of Mr. and Mrs. Stedman, who gave me a warm welcome, of Mr. and Mrs. Alden, Mr. and Mrs. R. Watson Gilder, Mr. John Lafarge, Mrs. Julia Ward Howe, and Miss Caroline Hazard whom we visited at Wellesley College" (*Memoir*, p. 393). Upon arriving in New York, they went directly to the Janvier's apartment on West 49<sup>th</sup> Street and were entertained during the following weeks by the Aldens in Hoboken and the Gilders in New York, amongst

others. They spent Thanksgiving Day with the Stedmans in Bronxville, and Sharp used a piece of their "Lawrence Park" stationery for a letter to Bliss Perry who was editing the *Atlantic Monthly* in Boston. Enclosing a note of introduction from Stedman, Sharp asked Perry if he could see him on one of the four days he would be in Boston before sailing for Italy.

Soon after the Janviers returned to reclaim their apartment, the Sharps, on December 1, went to Newport, Rhode Island to spend a long weekend with Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Livingston Mason. Arthur Mason derived a fortune from The Rhode Island Locomotive Company which produced more than 3,400 steam locomotives between 1866 and 1899. The Masons lived in Halidon Hall, a twenty room Gothic structure with a commanding view of the harbor built by a Scottish stone mason in 1853. The invitation to the Sharps was from Arthur's wife, Edith Bucklin Hartshorn Mason (1855–1906), a formidable woman who founded the Rhode Island chapter of the National Society of Colonial Dames and served on the board of the Rhode Island Sanitary and Relief Association which provided aid and comfort to men fighting in the Spanish American War and support for their families. Catherine Janvier arranged the invitation, either directly or through her friend Carolyn Hazard, President of Wellesley College, who was a native of Newport. In any case, the Sharps enjoyed a long weekend amid the cream of Newport society. On Monday, December 5 they boarded a train to Boston to have dinner and spend the night with Carolyn Hazard in the house she built with her own funds on the Wellesley campus, a house that would become her home and those of her successors for many years. On the sixth, the Sharps went to the Thorndike Hotel where they spent four days before boarding their ship.

Miss Hazard's generosity to the Sharp's did not end on Monday evening with the celebration of the opening of a new residence hall. She arranged for Elizabeth Sharp to tour Wellesley on Monday and Radcliffe College on Wednesday; for both Sharps to call on Julia Ward Howe on Thursday; and, best of all, to visit "Fen Hall to see Mrs. Gardiner's Collection" on Friday, the day before they set sail for Naples. Isabella Stewart Gardner (1840–1924) was a wealthy art collector, philanthropist, and patron of the arts who was said to be the model for Isabel Archer in Henry James' *Portrait of a Lady*. After her marriage to the wealthy John

Lowell "Jack" Gardner in 1860, they settled in Boston and began to build a world class collection of paintings and statues, tapestries, photographs, silver, ceramics, and manuscripts. Following the death of her husband in 1898, Isabella carried through his plans to build a home for their collection, modelled on the Renaissance palaces of Venice. Located in the fens area of Boston, the building, called Fenway Court, surrounds a glass-covered garden courtyard, the first of its kind in America. Isabella designed for herself an apartment on the building's top floor which is now the museum's offices. For the museum's opening night, January 1, 1903, she invited four hundred guests who were entertained by members of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Two years after its opening, the Sharps, both former London art critics for the *Glasgow Herald*, received a private tour of Fenway Court, the beautiful building and the world class collection that is now the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum.



Fig. 24. Interior Courtyard of the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston, built in 1903 to house the Gardner collection. The building replicates a fifteenth-century Venetian palace. Photograph by Sean Dungan (2017). Wikimedia, CC BY 4.0, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Courtyard,\\_Isabella\\_Stewart\\_Gardner\\_Museum,\\_Boston.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Courtyard,_Isabella_Stewart_Gardner_Museum,_Boston.jpg#/media/File:Courtyard,_Isabella_Stewart_Gardner_Museum,_Boston.jpg)

Sharp's correspondence before and during the American trip reflects his continuing concerns about money, and he managed to meet with editors of the country's most prominent magazines with proposals for articles he would not live to write. When he called on Bliss Perry at the *Atlantic* on December 6, he was introduced to Roger Livingston Scaife (1875–1951), one of the Editors and a Director of Messrs. Houghton Mifflin & Co. Following this meeting, he stayed up late to write a detailed letter to Scaife proposing the publication of his "Greek Backgrounds" in two volumes, the first describing Greek remains in Sicily and Cambria and the second those in Greece itself. The editors accepted the proposal for the first of two volumes with the second contingent on the success of the first. Sharp acknowledged the acceptance in a letter from the Thorndike Hotel late Friday night before boarding his ship on Saturday.

On November 28, Sharp wrote to Thomas Mosher from New York: Fiona had asked him to meet with Mosher. Might he be available to come to Boston from Portland, Maine on one of the four days Sharp would be there. A letter to Mosher from Fiona on December 28, indicates the meeting took place, probably on Friday, December 9. Given the close bond Mosher and Fiona had formed through their correspondence and with Mosher unaware he was meeting the author of all the Fiona letters he had received and the Fiona books he had published, and with Sharp conveying proposals for even more Fiona books, one can only wish to have overheard their conversation. Through it, Sharp managed to maintain the secret since Mosher remained in the dark until Sharp died. In addition to conveying directly to Mosher several proposals from Fiona Macleod, Sharp during his month in America, proposed articles to the editors of three important periodicals, subsequently he obtained a commitment from Houghton, Mifflin for one and possibly two books. The Sharp's visit to America was a social and commercial success, but the good feelings that marked their departure soon began to fade.

They boarded the *Romantic* on December 10 during a snowstorm, an ominous start for what became a very rough passage. They arrived in Naples in time to travel by train to Bordighera on the Italian Riviera to spend Christmas with John Goodchild and other friends. From there Sharp wrote to his friend R. Murray Gilchrist: "we are back from America (thank God) and are in Italy (thank Him more) . . . For myself I am crawling out of the suck of a wave whose sweep will I hope be a big one

of some months and carry me far." The cold waves had so penetrated his consciousness that they became a metaphor for his physical and mental condition. The Sharps remained in Bordighera until mid-January when they went south to Rome and rented rooms at the top of a hotel on the Via Sallustiana where they planned to stay for two or three months.

## Letters: 1904

### *To Ernest Rhys, January, 1904<sup>1</sup>*

Maison Merlin | Athens | January 1904

... itely (confound it, excuse this already begun sheet. I must be getting "dotty"! — this is the third time since New Year's Day I've begun a letter on a sheet already otherwise dated etc. I often do this just before a mail, work in a fury, but must now leave it off, I see!) to postpone. In the one case, he<sup>2</sup> seemed to think £20 would be a godsend to me. (& a paralysingly high rate of payment!!) Probably he did not believe it when I wrote the other day that, because of pressure of commissioned work I had not only to decline this & that but even a very good offer of £100 for something of about 20,000 words wanted at once. He's a good fellow — but not God's Vicar upon Earth! Long friendship, & knowing all his fine and estimable sides prevents my feeling "the intolerable egotism" so trying to most people, particularly those annoyed by his superior airs, as though he and Swinburne lived in a sphere infinitely beyond that of "potboiling up-and-downers" (to quote poor George Gissing, whose death I sincerely lament as man and writer) ... <sup>3</sup>

then south-east by Mycenae and Argos & Tiryns to Nauplia and if possible to Sparta, which after Delphi and Olympia ....

William Sharp

*Letters from Limbo, pp. 78–79*

*To Alfred T. Nutt, February 18, [1904]<sup>4</sup>*

18th. Feby

Dear Mr. Nutt,

Your letter was duly forwarded and reached me not long after I had left Athens, where I went with a friend and relative, but remained longer entranced, unable to leave till the last moment.<sup>5</sup> The Hellenic genius ... the genius of Hellas the ancient and the Hellas that endures impressed me more than I can say. It is beauty and austerity made one.

Pray excuse the apparent long delay in answering your kind letter. It took a week or so to reach me — and now I shall have to send this, with other delayed letters, proofs and MSS, to be stamped and posted in London or Edinburgh.

Your letter came at an opportune moment. A few days earlier I had received a request from the editor of a monthly magazine for an article upon Lady Gregory's book,<sup>6</sup> and though I had no intention to accede I did take up the book and re-read it. And I must admit that, reading critically, I was somewhat disillusioned, and in more ways than one. The subject and the attempt had both so won my sympathy, and Mr. Yeats' extraordinarily high claim had so prejudiced me, that I came to the book while the rainbow was on it. In certain respects it is a fine and notable achievement, but is not nearly so "original" as I thought it — I mean, in the sense that far more of the book is "lifted", as you say, than I had first noticed. And more than ever I realized how often the old is weakened in the retelling. There are certain episodes and even chapters which I reread with a chill indifference, when not with impatience.

More and more I realise that these beautiful old Gaelic tales must be given either in the crude simplicity of direct translation or else in a modern retelling that shall be as far as possible identical in erudition and outlook and as exactly correspondent as is practicable in another and more modern language and in other and more complicated exigencies of art.

Personally, I care for very few retellings. And if ever I attempt anything more in this kind, it shall be with the utmost of simplicity and directness, and not at all unless in imaginative recovery of mood.

As to what — in generous terms — you urge me to do, I can say only that I too wish it could be done.<sup>7</sup> If my private circumstances left unhampered my dreams and hopes, I might well adventure upon so splendid a thing to do: but even then I stand in too great doubt of my powers to do with the finality of achievement what otherwise is best left undone. I too had hoped Mr. Yeats might do this thing. It is not to be thought of from him, now: not from lack of genius, or even scope of vision, but from his growing preoccupation with so many matters and conflicting interests and perhaps too from his lack of withdrawal from continuous personal influences, which rarely do much for the imaginative writer but oftener disintegrate what isolation has achieved.<sup>8</sup>

There may be others fitted for the work. I cannot think of any, but then I know few. As for myself, I think I am rather one of those who, more or less obscurely, light the sacred fires in other minds. If it be so, I am content. Perhaps someone fitted for the work you adumbrate may be impelled to it, torch-lit by something born of my own love of and ceaseless reliving in the Gaelic life: and if that be so, I shall truly have done a good thing. (It is this very preoccupation, this voluntary isolation, which is one of the chief reasons — the chief reason, apart from private considerations, and the imperious demand of temperament — why I consistently maintain an apparently exaggerated reticence as to my "personality" and private life — a reticence more than ever advisable, imperative indeed, if I am to achieve even a moiety of what I hope to do.)

But even granting that, with what knowledge I have and what powers I have, I could achieve the great task in question — and, as you truly say, no one could do more than believe it might be done, so constant and great are the many difficulties — it could only be attempted with a renunciation of the many intentions, hopes, and material interests which at present I could hardly dare contemplate, — could not, at any rate, contemplate unless with an inward certainty that I and I alone could achieve the end. And, honestly, I hold that infinitely to be desired achievement so high that I feel as though all my iron must be rewelded into flawless steel, and all my crude art be transmuted to perfect rhythmic life, before I could even approach it.

If, some day, I do, it will be largely owing to the belief in and encouragement of myself, as one of the few servants of an old and beautiful ideal, so generously revealed to me by yourself and others.

In reply to your other enquiry — no, I am not meanwhile thinking of issuing "Celtic Runes." I am now finishing the revision of a volume of essays<sup>9</sup> and other studies of a kindred spirit and intention, and hope to see it published this late Spring: then I have a volume of verse to complete: and, apart from commissioned things and other things in part done to be finished, I am deeply preoccupied with an ambitious work of imaginative reliving of the ancient life — in line with, if distinct from what you write to me about — which, if at all possible, I hope to finish this year.<sup>10</sup> I am more hopeful of it than I was, for I have learned a severe lesson in Greece.

Believe me, | Yours very truly, | (Signed Fiona Macleod)

*ALS National Library of Scotland*

***To Ernest Rhys, February 26, 1904***

Maison Merlin, Athens, | Friday, 26th Feb., 1904.

My Dear Ernest,

... Yesterday I had a lovely break from work, high up on the beautiful bracing dwarf-pine clad slopes of Pentelicos, above Kephisia, the ancient deme of Menander<sup>11</sup> — and then across the country behind Hymettos, the country of Demosthenes and so back by the High Convent of St. John the Hunter, on the north spur of the Hymettian range, and the site of ancient Gargettos, the place of Epicurus' birth and boyhood. At sundown I was at Heracleion, some three or four miles from Athens — and the city was like pale gold out of which peaked Lycabettos rose like a purple sapphire. The sky beyond, above Salamis, was all grass-green and mauve. A thunder-cloud lay on extreme Hymettos, rising from Marathon: and three rainbows lay along the violet dusk of the great hill-range.... .

We intend to spend April in France, mostly in Southern Provence, which we love so well, and where we have dear French friends.

I am apparently well and strong again, hard at work, hard at pleasure, hard at life, as before, and generally once more full of hope and energy.

Love to you both, dear friends, and a sunbeam to little Stella.

Ever yours, | Will

*Memoir, p. 379*

***To ... [March 24, 1904]***

... How you would love this radiant heat, this vast solitude of ruins, the millions of flowers and dense daisied grass. This fragment of vast Olympia is the most ancient Greek temple extant. It lies at the base of the Hill of Kronos, of which the lowest pines are seen to the right and overlooks the whole valley of the Alpheios....

And the millions of flowers. They are almost incredible in number and density. The ground is often white with thick snow of daisies. Wild plums, pears, cherries, etc. The radiant and glowing heat is a Joy. I am sad to think that this day week beautiful Greece will be out of sight.<sup>12</sup>

[William Sharp]

*Memoir, p. 378*

***To Thomas Mosher, March 30, [1904]***

Copy from MS. Pencil letter received from Miss Macleod from abroad, with instructions to copy and forward. | Secy. For Miss Macleod.

(At Sea) 30th March<sup>13</sup>

Dear Mr. Mosher,

When we "put in" at Naples the other day I found, among other forwarded postal matter, the April "Bibelot." While I read the too generously

worded appreciation with interest and pleasure (tempered by the sense that the best I have done is still far short of such eulogy) I felt somewhat "taken aback" by this reprinting of in-book-matter to follow, without prior communication with me. I have also just heard from my publishers, Messrs. Chapman & Hall, and have had to modify my contract as to my new book, to be out at the end of April or early in May, under the title "The Winged Destiny" (instead of For the Beauty of an Idea ... now used sectionally only) — on account of matter reprinted in U. S. A. One of the chief sections in the book is "The Children of Water," the greater portion of which now appears in the *Bibelot* in advance. The first section is "The Sunset Of Old Tales," which you speak of also reprinting. If people in America can buy the best part of my new book for 10 cents, they will not be likely to pay for imported copies at a dollar and a half or whatever the selling price may be. Private circumstances — with this prolonged health-seeking abroad and on the sea — make such considerations still more exigent for me: so you will understand why I write to you at once, or may possibly telegraph when I reach the French Riviera. In the circumstances you will see the advisability of not publishing any further uncollected matter till after "The Winged Destiny" has been published, and some chance of an American sale been allowed. There will be no issue of the book now in U. S. A. but only for such copies as may be ordered. (The third section, "For the Beauty, of an Idea" is in Part I a reissue of the two "Celtic" essays, revised, with an added part, "The Gaelic Heart": and in Part II, "Anima Celtica", of various reprinted essays &c from the "Fortnightly", "Nineteenth Century", &c, and also, under the title "The Ancient Beauty" of the "Deirdré" volume.)

As to the paper called "The Magic Kingdoms," it is the prelude to another volume, not yet ready: and it would be a mistake to forestall its interest and applicability, by a reissue in the *Bibelot*.<sup>14</sup>

I am confident you were under the impression you had already communicated with me before issuing this April *Bibelot*: and did not foresee what a loss of sales it must almost inevitably cause the new book in U. S. A., especially in conjunction with the statement as to what is to appear later.

In all likelihood my new volume of poems will also appear this summer: (if not, the autumn — but most likely towards end of May) either under the title "Threnodies and Dreams," or else as

Where the Forest Murmurs.

(Threnodies and Dreams)

or, just possibly, as

"The Immortal Hour: Threnodies and Dreams."<sup>15</sup>

The volume will include the poems that were newly added to your edition of "The Hills of Dream," a considerable number of uncollected and as yet unpublished lyrical pieces, and the revised poetic drama "The Immortal Hour".

How would it do for you to issue an Amer. edition

- (1) Either intact
- (2) Without the poems already in Hills of Dream ... i.e., those added to the original edition, for the Amer. edition (which I should regret)
- (3) Separately —  
i.e. one Lyrical  
one The Immortal Hour

Also, what about reprinting a selection of new matter from "The Winged Destiny" under one of the sectional (or better some quite new) title, either in one volume, or separately.<sup>16</sup> If so, please let me hear your suggestions and proposals.

I am now in considerably better health than when I wrote last, but still not so well as I had hoped to be by now. In all probability I shall not be in Great Britain at all this spring or summer (except for a possible rapid visit, by sea, to the Western Isles) — but cannot say yet. There is some idea of Norway and Sweden, and even Iceland, later. Health, means, private affairs, all combine to make work after my heart a very arduous and difficult thing, alas.

I believe Mons. Davray's long-delayed French translation of selected tales &c is to be out this May or June.<sup>17</sup> Also (I understand) either in the April or May number of the important monthly called the Mercure de France, there is to be a translation by a French poet of the "prose-poems" of "The Silence of Amor" (Amer. edn.) with an essay by someone else on the Pagan or Scandinavian aspect & of my earlier writings.

Will you please let me have a few copies of the April "Bibelot" (I presume the one sent is all that you dispatched?) Also, please, post a copy, marked "sent at request of Miss Macleod," to

Miss Vine Colby  
3934 Shenandoah Avenue  
St. Louis.

(an enthusiastic admirer! ... one of the many eager American correspondents who now write to me).

Believe me, dear Mr. Mosher, |  
Sincerely yours, | FIONA MACLEOD

P.S. I would like to know the name and read the review of the American reviewer to whom you allude in your *Bibelot* preface.<sup>18</sup>

P.S. From the Secy. To Miss Macleod. | The packet of six *Bibelots* received and have been dispatched to Miss Macleod.<sup>19</sup>

TL New York Public Library, Berg Collection

**To Catherine Janvier, April 18, 1904**

18 April, 1904

... What has most impressed my imagination in this region is what I saw today outside of fantastic Le Puy — namely at the magnificent old feudal rock-Chateau fortress of Polignac, erected on the site of the famous temple of Apollo (raised here by the Romans on the still earlier site of a Druidic Temple to the Celtic Sun God). I looked down the mysterious hollow of the ancient oracle of Apollo, and realised how deep a hold even in the France of today is maintained by the ancient Pagan faith.... .

[William Sharp]

*Memoir*, pp. 379–80

**To Alexander Jessup,<sup>20</sup> June 14, 1904**

60 Leinster Square | London W. |  
14th June/04

My Dear Sir,

I am in receipt of your kind letter of the 28th inst., which comes somewhat in the guise of coals of fire!

The French writers upon whom I have “specialized” are Sainte-Beuve in criticism, Hello in philosophy & criticism, Leconte de L'Isle, Baudelaire, and Villiers de L'Isle Adam — These with Chateaubriand, of whom I have long been intimate, are the names with which I am most at home. I do not mention Musset and Geo. Sand & Victor Hugo, as these are certain to have been arranged for amongst the first. But I may add that I am one of the very few foreign specialists on the subject of Modern Provencal literature, which I know intimately [vide e.g. my long etude, a couple of years or so ago, on Modern Provencal Literature, in the *Quarterly Review*, one of my several unsigned, foreign specialistic studies there], and not only know all the work of Frederic Mistral, the greatest Frenchman in the Midi,<sup>21</sup> but also of Aubanel, Rounsville, and all allied with him in the past & present. I have also lived in Provence, visited Mistral & know him well, & others. So, of course, I could take up Mistral, if you like.

For pleasure in the work, I should prefer Mistral, Leconte de L'Isle, or Villiers de L'Isle Adam: though, as I have let you infer, I could treat (and I hope adequately) any of the others named. (I wrote a special study on St. Beuve some years ago, prefatory to a translation of selected essays which still sells steadily).

It is because of concurrent work, however, that Mistral or Leconte de L'Isle (or Villiers too, tho' not so closely) would suit me best. For the same reason, if I took it up, if editorially approved by you, I should do the book this coming winter, & let you have by next Spring (April or May) or at latest before Midsummer: and, *possibly*, earlier.

But, in your letter, you do not specify terms. Of course I can undertake no volume till I learn them.<sup>22</sup>

Again thanking you for your courtesy in writing to me.

Believe me | Yours very truly | William Sharp

Alexander Jessup, Esquire

PS. I shd think Hillaire Belloc the best man to get for *Villon*. Thereafter, I fancy Arthur Symons would be the best. I think Mr. Ernest Rhys could treat "Chateaubriand" well. You know Madame Duclaux (Mary Robinson) by name, of course. She wrote an admirable study of "Renan."

*ALS University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee*

**To "a friend," [July?, 1904]<sup>23</sup>**

It is a happiness to me to know that you feel so deeply the beauty that has been so humbly and eagerly and often despairingly sought, and that in some dim measure, at least, is held here as a shaken image in troubled waters. It is a long long road, the road of art ... and those who serve with passion and longing and unceasing labour of inward thought and outward craft are the only votaries who truly know what long and devious roads must be taken, how many pitfalls have to be avoided or escaped from, how many desires have to be foregone, how many hopes have to be crucified in slow death or more mercifully be lost by the way, before one can stand at last on "the yellow banks where the west wind blows," and see, beyond, the imperishable flowers, and hear the immortal voices.

A thousand perils guard the long road. And when the secret gardens are reached, there is that other deadly peril of which Fiona has written in "The Lynn of Dreams".<sup>24</sup> And, yet or again, there is that mysterious destiny, that may never come, or may come to men but once, or may come and not go, of which I wrote to you some days ago, quoting from Fiona's latest writing: that destiny which puts dust upon dreams, and silence upon sweet airs, and stills songs, and makes the hand idle, and the spirit as foam upon the sea.

For the gods are jealous, O jealous and remorseless beyond all words to tell. And there is so little time at the best ... and the little gain, the little frail crown, is so apt to be gained too late for the tired votary to care, or to do more than lie down saying "I have striven, and I am glad, and now it is over, and I am glad!"

[William Sharp]

*Memoir*, pp. 382–83

*To a friend, August 2, [1904]<sup>25</sup>*

... one of the loveliest days of the year, with the most luminous atmosphere I have seen in England — the afternoon and evening divinely serene and beautiful.

I had a pleasant visit to Bath, and particularly enjoyed the long day spent yesterday at Glastonbury and neighbourhood, and the glowing warmth and wonderful radiance.

As usual one or two strange things happened in connection with Dr. G. We went across the ancient "Salmon" of St. Bride, which stretches below the hill known as "Weary-All" (a corruption of Uriel, the Angel of the Sun), and about a mile or less westward came upon the narrow water of the ancient "Burgh". Near here is a very old Thorn held in great respect... .

He put me (unknowing) to a singular test. He had hoped with especial and deep hope that in some significant way I would write or utter the word "Joy" on this 1st day of August (the first three weeks of vital import to many, and apparently for myself too) — and also to see if a certain spiritual influence would reach me. Well, later in the day (for he could not prompt or suggest, and had to await occurrence) we went into the lovely grounds of the ancient ruined Abbey, one of the loveliest things in England I think. I became restless and left him, and went and lay down behind an angle of the East end, under the tree. I smoked, and then rested idly, and then began thinking of some correspondence I had forgotten. Suddenly I turned on my right side, stared at the broken stone of the angle, and felt vaguely moved in some way. Abruptly and unpremeditatedly I wrote down three enigmatic and disconnected lines. I was looking curiously at the third when I saw Dr. G. approach.

"Can you make anything out of that," I said — "I've just written it, I don't know why." This is the triad.

From the Silence of Time, Time's Silence borrow.

In the heart of To-day is the word of To-morrow.

The Builders of Joy are the Children of Sorrow.

[William Sharp]

*To Edmund Clarence Stedman, August 29, 1904<sup>26</sup>*

60 Leinster Square | London W. |  
29th August 1904

Dear Poet,

I hope the world goes well with you and yours, & that at last you are in more assured health.

This is not an advance birthday letter, as you may think! It is to convey tidings of much import to my wife and myself, & I hope of pleasure to you and other friends over sea — namely that this late autumn we are going to pay a brief visit to New York. I had hoped to do so last year, but considerations of health made it impossible, for I was all but done for in the autumn by a severe seizure of a form of diabetes, and after the rigorous treatment at Llandrindod Wells & elsewhere I went to Greece for the winter & spring. I got worse & worse all the same till about February. Then spring came over Hymettos, and new life came to me, & in more ways than one, & Attica became a garden of Eden, & I grew swiftly and continuously better.<sup>27</sup> A heavenly trip in the Peloponnesus put an additional touch to it, and a month or so later I sailed from Athens a new man. Then we went to the Provencal Riviera for a month — & then back to England & to that rare thing in London, an ideal summer of warmth and radiance. And now I am again at Llandrindod Wells in Wales, & under the specialist's rigorous regime as to waters, diet, exercise, & so forth — but (despite a recent & sudden & somewhat severe access of the ailment, now got well in hand however) more precautionarily than of necessity. Damp & raw cold are my worst enemies, & so, as for years past, there is no thought of our spending the winter in England. But being in so much greater general health than I was last year (in Sept. last the specialist gave me "a few months!") it is not necessary to leave at October-end for Sicily, Greece, or Egypt. In fact, we had projected going to Stockholm, & then via Berlin & Leipzig to Dresden & Munich: & then later to Italy.

It is still our intention to spend January, February, & March in Rome — which for me is the City of Cities.

But we are going to it via New York!

In a word, we intend to leave England somewhere between the 23rd and 26th of October, according as steamers & our needs fit in. Then

after six weeks or so in New York etc we intend to sail direct to the Mediterranean by one of the Hamburg-American or North-German-Lloyd special Mediterranean line sailing to Genoa and Naples.

And what I am now writing to you for is to ask if you and Mrs. Stedman (to whom my love) could take us on arrival for a few days and till we are able to look about & see what we can settle as to quarters within the limited reach of our very restricted finances. Needless to say it would be a deep pleasure to me to visit you both again, and my wife is looking forward eagerly to seeing something of friends of whom she has ever heard me speak lovingly and appreciatively. It would be an additional pleasure and great convenience if we could go to you at Lawrence Park directly on arrival (presumably somewhere between 1<sup>st</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> November). Will you please let me know if this would be agreeable to Mrs. Stedman and yourself, & if you can manage it. I do not doubt your loving welcome & goodwill, but of course health or other considerations may make our visit inopportune.

In the meanwhile (unless they broach the matter) say nothing of it to the Janviers or others, as I wanted to write to you first, & if possible have some definite place to go to on arrival — or if you do mention it inadvertently, or if they should speak of it (and we may advise them of our plans immediately) say nothing of our exact dates.

I have been very busy of late, & for one thing have been occupied with collecting & revising the (mostly unsigned, "Quarterly Review" & other) literary studies of some years past — & much else of which I'll tell you when we meet. My "Literary Geography" which has been running serially in the "Pall Mall Magazine" for the last 14 or 15 months, & been, there, a great success, will be out in book-form in October.<sup>28</sup> My wife's recently published little book on Rembrandt has had an exceptionally good reception I am very glad to say.<sup>29</sup>

We go back in a week or two to London (at above address) — for a month's hard work before we get ready for New York. I am delighted at the thought of it.

With all affectionate greetings to you both —

Ever, dear Stedman, | Affectionately your friend, | William Sharp

*ALS Columbia University Library*

*To Editor of The Daily Chronicle,<sup>30</sup> September 14, 1904*

With reference to a paragraph in your Writers and Readers column, in your issue of Friday, will you permit me to say that as there is *no* mystery (beyond the privacy I have ever sought to maintain, and have a right to ask to be respected) as to the authorship of my forthcoming book, "The Winged Destiny", and of its predecessors, there is neither necessity nor courtesy in the use of inverted commas when you honour me by quoting my name, nor in the implication that I am any other than —

Yours very truly, | Fiona Macleod

*London Daily Chronicle*

*To Thomas Mosher, September 17, 1904*

C/o 22. Ormidale Terrace | Murrayfield |  
Midlothian | Scotland | 17th Sept.

Dear Mr. Mosher

My thanks for your letter and for its enclosed most sympathetic and gratifying reviews by Mrs. Bridgman. Although I think you already know my position as to publicity, as to interviews, wider repute, and all the rest of it, I enclose my reply to Mrs. Bridgman that you may read it before sending it on to her. Neither material advantage to myself or others is likely to make me alter a decision not lightly or perversely arrived at. (If either she or you meet my intimate friend and kinsman, Mr. William Sharp, on his forthcoming visit to New York etc. for a few weeks from mid-November till mid-December, perhaps certain circumstances I have before alluded to could be made a little clearer).

Yes, thanks, please let me have a few copies of "The Four White Swans" and "Ulad of the Dreams" — say six of "Ulad" and twelve of "The Swans." (Do not register in sending, as that sometimes causes delay and trouble at this end.)<sup>31</sup>

Will you also gratify me by letting me have a copy of "The Romance of Tristan and Iseult"?

I enclose a cutting from the London "Chronicle" of the 14th inst. to let you see that I occasionally do take note of the chronic (but now more rare) willful or other perversity as to my right to my own name.<sup>32</sup>

I shall send you from myself a copy of "The Winged Destiny" after its publication on Oct. 7th by Messrs. Chapman & Hall. You already know some of it of course, and may have seen in the *Fortnightly* or elsewhere a good further proportion. I do not think I can publish my new volume of poems before Christmas. My chief "output" just now is a series of papers which will make a volume by next May. Some six or seven have already appeared, and appear to be well liked. I may use as collective title "Nature and Dream," or something of the kind: or "Wind, Wave, and Hill." I hope you are well, and that all is going well with you. (Are you far from Boston? If Mr. Sharp is there, as I suppose he will be for a day or two at least, I would like that you should meet.)

Believe me, dear Mr. Mosher | Most sincerely yours | Fiona Macleod

*ALS New York Public Library, Berg Collection*

**To Helen Bartlett Bridgman,<sup>33</sup> [September 17, 1904]**

My Dear Friend,

(For if deep sympathy and understanding do not constitute friendship, what does?) It would be strange indeed if I did not wish to write to you after what Mr. Mosher has told me, and after perusal of what you have written concerning what I have tried to do with my pen. There are few things so helpful, perhaps none so pleasant to a writer in love with his or her work and the ideals which are its source, than the swift understanding and sympathy of strangers. So much of my work is aside from the general temper and taste, and not only in its ideals but in its "atmosphere," indeed even in its writer's methods and manner, that I have to be content (as I gladly am content) to let the wind that blows through minds and hearts carry the seed whithersoever it may perchance take root, and this with the knowledge that the resting places must almost of necessity, as things are, be few and far between. But it

is not number that counts, and, as I say, I am well content — would be content were my readers far fewer than they are. It seems enough to me that one should do one's best in a careful beauty and in the things of the spirit. It is enough to be a torch-bearer, whether the flame be a small and brief light or a beacon — it is to take over and to tend and to hand on the fire that matters. As I say in my very shortly forthcoming new book, *The Winged Destiny*, I desire to be of the horizon-makers; if I can be that, however humbly, I am glad indeed. This would be so with anyone, I think, feeling thus. To me outside sympathy means perhaps more; for I stand more isolated than most writers do, partly by my will, partly by circumstances as potent and sometimes more potent. It is not only that I am devoid of the desire of publicity, of personal repute, and that nothing of advantage therefrom has the slightest appeal to me (though, alas, both health and private circumstances make my well-being to a large extent dependent on what my work brings me), but that I am mentally so constituted that I should be silenced by what so many are naturally and often rightly eager for and that so many seek foolishly or unworthily. In this respect I am like the mavis of the woods that sings full-heartedly in the morning shadow or evening twilight in secret places, but will be dumb and lost in the general air of noon and where many are gathered in the frequented open to see and hear.

It is for these, and other not less imperative private reasons, why I am known personally to so very few of my fellow-writers: and why in private circles the subject is not one that occurs. I cannot explain, though not from reluctance or perversity or any foolish and needless mystery. The few who do not know me, as you know me, but with added intimacy, are loyal in safe-guarding my wishes and my privacy. That explains why I refuse all editorial and other requests of "interviews," "photographs," "personal articles" and the like. In a word, I am blind to all the obvious advantages that would accrue from my "entering the arena" as others do. I have all that frequently borne in upon me. But still less so do I ignore what would happen to my work, to its quality and spirit, to myself, if I yielded. I may be wrong, but I do not think I am. I am content to do my best, as the spirit moves me, and as my sense of beauty compels me; and if, with that, I can also make some often much-needed money, enough for the need as it arises; and, further, can win the sympathy and deep appreciation of the few intimate and the now

many unknown friends whom, to my great gladness and pride, I have gained, then, indeed, I can surely contentedly let wider "fame" (of all idle things the idlest, when it is, as it commonly is, the mere lip-repute of the curious and the shallow) go by, and be indifferent to the lapse of possible but superfluous greater material gain. . . .

[Fiona Macleod]

*Memoir*, pp. 383–85

***To the Editor of The Daily Chronicle, September 19, 1904***

Private | Miss Macleod | c/o 22. Ormidale Terrace |  
Murrayfield | Midlothian

Dear Sir,<sup>34</sup>

I thank you for your courtesy as to insertion of my note. I thought it was not customary to give an address in letters intended for publication, and in any case the one address I give for my literary correspondence and for all save a few intimate friends is that of my private secretary and typist as above — a sister I may add of my Kinsman Mr. William Sharp, with whose name mine has so often been associated by paragraphists, in part no doubt because at one time he acted for me, and also because of his kindred sympathies and interests and our known intimacy and relationship. (Many, too, because my name is somewhat unusual [though of course not unique] thought it must be a pseudonym.)

I trouble you with this private note because of the courtesy implied in your few prefatory words to the note you printed. I need hardly add the request that you will kindly so consider it.

Believe me, | Yours very truly, | Fiona Macleod  
19<sup>th</sup> Sept. 1904.

*ALS Princeton University*

*To [Alexander Jessup], September 20, 1904*

60 Leinster Sq | London W. | 20th Septr/04

My dear Sir,

You know the familiar proverb "L' homme propose, mais Dieu dispose," well, I am sorry to have to adduce it now, in writing to you editorially.

Several of my immediate plans and later projects have to be relinquished, materially modified, or indefinitely postponed. My health, which despite a strong physique, has long been far from what it ought to be, is now seriously complicated by what the doctors have discovered, namely an acute and dangerous attack of Diabetes. It has been arrested by rigorous dieting and the famous treatment at Llandrindod Wells — but it has not only weakened me and brought out certain climatic and other sensitiveness, but renders imperative the medical advice given me to lessen my work to the minimum compatible with well-being and the means to live, and to spend at least six months of the year in the South of Europe in as dry and sunny a winter-climate as I can afford to obtain. In the circumstances it is out of the question for me to consider further the writing of the Leconte de Lisle volume.<sup>35</sup> I am sorry, but it can't be helped, & I can only express regret at the disappointment of inconvenience to you. (I was asked about a fortnight ago from America to do a much simpler literary study of the kind for a series — about 40,000 words, with £100 on receipt of MS. and thereafter a royalty: but, tho' I would have liked the subject, I have had to decline this also. How much less, then (speaking on the line of terms) could I afford in these new circumstances to take up a book of 75,000 words for an advance honorarium of £20 — less than I receive for any of my special articles in "Harper's," the "Pall Mall Magazine," etc.)

For some weeks prior to the event alluded to I had been preparing the notes for the general scheme of the Leconte de Lisle volume — & was just on the point of writing to you to suggest a material modification or change in the contents of the volume. It is out of the question to make a good volume of that great length (for a critical study etc.) out of Leconte de Lisle. His life was eventless in the ordinary sense: his work is limited in scope. It could not be done without excessive quotation and much padding: & rather than add another useless because overdone book of

the kind to the limbs of like superfluous volumes I would relinquish it forthwith. The only justification for a book of the kind would be that it should have no padding in the sense of superfluity. I was therefore going to propose that the volume should be on "Leconte de Lisle and the Parnassians," & deal with French poetry (along the "Parnassian" lines) from DeVigny to Glatigny to Heredia: with L. de L. no more than the central and most imposing figure.<sup>36</sup>

I write of this now only to hand on to you my friendly advice. I feel assured that this advice is in all ways sound.

Are you ever in New York? I expect to be there (with possibly a day or two in Boston later in December) from about mid-November till mid-December — as private matters make it advisable for me to be there for a few weeks: & thereafter my wife & I sail direct for Italy. It would be a pleasure to meet you if feasible. (We sail about the beginning of November.)

Yours faithfully, | William Sharp

P. S. Please let me have a line from you by return to let me know that you have received this.

*ALS Yale University*

**To Mrs. Edmund Clarence Stedman, September 22, [1904]**

60 Leinster Square | London W. | 22/Sept.

Dear Mrs. Stedman

Just a hurried line to catch the mail — and a short one because my wife (at the moment at Tunbridge Wells) told me before she left this morning that she was going to write more fully to you — to thank you for your affectionate letter — and to add how very sorry I am to learn that both you two dear friends are so far from well. May things soon go better, I wish from my heart. Of course we quite understand. You must not let either yourself or Mr. Stedman have a moment's worry about that. What we do hope for is to find you both well enough to be at Lawrence Park, and to let us come to you some afternoon.

In any case, now, for health's sake & other reasons we shall not remain long in New York. In all (including a few days in Boston) we do not intend to remain more than a month in all — as about 15<sup>th</sup> Dec. (accordingly as steamers sail) we hope to set out for Algiers.

What would suit us best (if it can be found — & if your granddaughter would help in the quest we should be grateful to her & to you) would be a small & as moderate as possible (but clean and airy) hotel on the European plan — i.e, where we could get two adjacent bedrooms (if possible roomy & pleasant enough to use also occasionally for writing in etc.) with morning coffee etc., & be free to have our other meals there or elsewhere. Are there any houses in New York like the foreign Hotels garnis? (i.e. simply rooms, attendance, fires, & morning coffee etc.)?

It shd. be in a fairly central position, but preferably well up Central Park Way. (We are so accustomed to foreign hotels, that if there are any good French or Italian small ones, one might do — but not likely, I fancy.) As my wife will explain I'm very restricted as to diet (for my serious ailment) & that's another reason for not "boarding," in any case unsuitable for so short a visit.

With all affectionate greetings to you and yours,

Ever most cordially yours, | William Sharp

*ALS Columbia University Library*

**To Mrs. Frederick Stedman?, [September 22, 1904]<sup>37</sup>**

60 Leinster Sq. | London W.

Dear Mrs. Stedman,

Since writing to Mrs. Stedman I find I've left myself almost no time to catch the mail — and besides, I need not reiterate: so let me only hurriedly thank you for your very kind letter, which I much appreciate. You may rest assured that we *quite* understand, and sympathize.

In great haste now,

Most sincerely yours | William Sharp

In my other note I forgot to say that we sail by the "Atlantic Transport" *SS. Menominee* on Nov. 3rd. due in N. Y. on Saty 13th, Nov.<sup>38</sup>

*ALS Columbia University*

**To Edmund Clarence Stedman, [late September, 1904]**

Murrayfield, Midlothian | For the 8th

My dear Stedman

I have been travelling all day from London to Scotland, and now that I have arrived and am feeling very tired I find that if I don't post tonight for the U. S. A. mail tomorrow morning there will be no other from here for 4 days.

So that must excuse my brevity, for I would gladly write a long letter. However short it may be it will carry to you my most fervent goodwill and affectionate greetings for your birthday.<sup>39</sup> May your new year bring you a better measure of serene health, and strength and leisure for what you most want to do, and quiet happiness within, without, and around you.

You will know by this time I dare say that my wife and I are to be in New York by the middle of November (on or about the 13th) — tho' only for 3 weeks. We go straight to the Janvier's rooms now, on arrival — as they have to go to Mexico, and have to keep on their rooms. They will be back by about the 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> of December — & as we don't sail from New York for the Mediterranean till either December 10th or 12th (12th I think is the date — & the last date the doctors want me to be in a cold & damp climate, where I shouldn't be at all, tho' I am wonderfully better) we'll see something of them.

It will be a very great disappointment if you are not to be at Bronxville, and if we cannot at least get a glimpse of you some afternoon — but a still greater one if indisposition be the cause. Get well, dear Poet, for all our sakes, who love the Singer and the Songs.

After so much of Sicily and Greece we are going no further south this year than to Rome — but I love Rome better than any winter-place, any winter city that is, and we hope to spend the spring. So poor William

McLennan is gone: I've just heard the sad news, and of his wife left at Leghorn (tho' it happened over a month ago I fancy).<sup>40</sup>

With love to dear Mrs. Stedman, to all near and dear to you, Ever dear Stedman,

Your ever affectionate friend, | William Sharp

P. S. I shall expect no answer to this. It is only a letter of loving wishes and greeting for your birthday and new year: and it is bad for you to write.

*ALS Columbia University Library*

**To Laura Stedman, [October 15, 1904]**

60 Leinster Square | London

My dear Miss Stedman

Many thanks for your letter. I find I have just time to answer it and no more, in order to catch today's mail — the next not being till 4 days hence.

Since we wrote of our projected visit, we have heard from our dear friends the Janviers that they are going to Mexico, and will not be back till a fortnight after our arrival — and as they are retaining their rooms (at 233 West 49th St.) in any case, they offer them to us to go there at first. This, of course, is a great convenience in every way, and also obviates all further trouble such as that you are so kindly ready to undertake.

If on the other hand the Janviers do *not* go, and make no other arrangement for us, I think with pleasure of the possible alternative on 54th St., and of your grandfather's kind suggestion. Very likely you'll know about what the Janviers have done before this reaches you.

In great haste | dear Miss Stedman, | Believe me most truly yours, |  
William | Sharp

*ALS Yale University*

**To Benjamin Burgess Moore, October 20, 1904**

(Address) | Miss Macleod | C/o 22 Ormidale Terrace  
Murrayfield, Midlothian | 20th Oct 1904.

My Dear Mr. Moore,

By a series of mischances your very kind and welcome letter of 11th September, from the French mail-steamer, reached me only yesterday. There seems a malign sprite interfering in our correspondence! The last time I wrote to you, about a year or perhaps 9 or ten months ago — and it was a long letter, "making up" for unavoidable tardiness — it was returned to me in another envelope! I hope this will reach you.

I am very glad you feel as you do about "The House of Usna." I wish you had seen it at the Strand Theater in London. The impersonation and acting left much to be desired — and yet, I think, many felt, as you feel, that something of the essential had been "got at." The ordinary literary drama seems to me to go blindly down a wrong alley.

Mr. Mosher has now reissued, in two charming little volumes, "The Four Swans of Lir" and "Ulad of the Dreams" — and so the story of "Deirdre" has its natural companion. It also, though briefly, is dedicated to the same little girl, "Esther Mona." You please me very deeply by your liking so well that dedicatory prelude to the story of "Deirdre."<sup>41</sup> It reappears as "The Ancient Beauty" in my just published new volume, *The Winged Destiny*.

If you see that book, you will gain from its forepage some idea of what I am now engaged on, though only in part. I am also writing a series of nature papers (*Nature and Dream* I may ultimately call them) every second week or so for *Country Life*.

As you will know (for he wrote to me that after hearing from you he had written to you) Mr. Sharp leaves in a fortnight for New York) though only for a month's stay, or less, as he and Mrs. Sharp sail from Boston on (I think he said) the 10th December direct for Genoa or Naples, as they are to spend the winter and spring in Rome. For myself, I leave soon also, and may sail straight from the Clyde to Algiers. I must be away from the damp and raw and cold from November till May, the doctors urge. If Algiers does not suit, I shall go elsewhere, and in any case, later in the spring, hope to join my friends in Rome for a time. Is there any

chance of your coming there? Please let me know if this reaches you. And if, later, you see "The Winged Destiny" I would be glad to hear from you if you care for it.

Believe me, dear Mr. Moore, | Most sincerely yours, | Fiona Macleod.

*ALS Huntington Library*

***To Richard Garnett, [October 24?, 1904]***

60 Leinster Sq. | W

My dear Garnett

I postponed writing till this evening after receipt of your letter yesterday — as I had a faint hope I might get Hampstead-ward to see you. But alas, impossible. And next week I go to New York.<sup>42</sup>

No, I have relinquished doing that book for Mr. Jessup in that American series.<sup>43</sup> I cannot well go into the matter here, but if your friend is not a man of leisure & quite indifferent to the question of remuneration, then I can only counsel him to refrain.

It will be a sincere pleasure to me to read the Shakespeare play:<sup>44</sup> as you know, I follow everything you write with vivid appreciation.

I do not know if I'll be at the B. M. any day this week, but I may be. Do you ever go? Have you any special days? If we meet, I'd explain about Mr. Jessup & his series. Of course my hint is "entre nous."

Do you know that my cousin Farquharson Sharp is about to be married to a charming Swedish girl, Miss Hildur Willebrand?<sup>45</sup>

Ever sincerely yours | William Sharp

*ALS University of Texas, Austin*

**To Caroline Hazard,<sup>46</sup> November 22, [1904]**

234 W. 49<sup>th</sup> Street | 22 Nov.

Dear Miss Hazard

Mr. Sharp and I accept with great pleasure your kind invitation to dinner and to stay the night with you on Monday, Dec 5th.

How very delightful that we may be present at the opening of one of the new halls, and it will be a pleasure to us to meet your friends, and yourself.

Indeed we look forward so much to the 5th Dec. We have known your name for long, through the Janviers. And I just missed you in London this summer, when the Lyceum Club of which I am a member, had the pleasure of seeing you. I was, unfortunately, in Scotland.

I look forward with deep interest to seeing the Colleges at Wellesley — if I may do so, on the following morning. I am making a study of the modern woman, under certain aspects — and it is one of my chief wishes in this country, to see what my limited time permits of women's colleges etc. etc.

We leave New York on the 1<sup>st</sup> and go to Newport to stay with Mrs. Livingstone Mason and shall go direct from Rhode Island to Wellesley. I hope to catch the 4.40 train; but I will [write] again about this from Halidon Hall.<sup>47</sup>

I hope it will not inconvenience you if we bring with us the trunk we shall have with us at Mrs. Mason's.

Mr. Sharp joins me in anticipatory greetings to you.

Sincerely yours, | Elizabeth

*ALS Wellesley College Library*

**To Henry Mills Alden, [late November, 1904]**

... Some months ago, by special request from the Editor of *Country Life* Miss M. began contributing one or two of these papers. From the first they attracted notice, and then the Editor asked her if she would

contribute a series to appear as frequently as practicable — averaging two a month — till next May when they would be issued in book-form. As Miss M. enjoys writing them, she agreed.... I have long been thinking over the material of an article on the Fundamental Science of Criticism, to be headed, say "A New Degree: D. Crit."<sup>48</sup>

[William Sharp]

*Memoir*, p. 392

**To Bliss Perry, November 24, 1904<sup>49</sup>**

234 West 49<sup>th</sup> Street | New York City

My Dear Sir,

I hope I may have the pleasure of seeing you in Boston, on one of the three or four days my wife & I are to be there prior to sailing thence to Italy on the 10<sup>th</sup> by the "Romanic."

We go from here on Thursday (1<sup>st</sup>) to stay till Monday with friends at Halidon Hall, Newport, R.I. — & then go on to spend that afternoon & evening with Miss Hazard at Wellesley College. We shall be in Boston (I think likely at a hotel called the "Thorndike," on Tu, Wed, Thurs, and Friday. If, as I hope, you are in town, would it be convenient for you if I were to call on Tuesday — or would you prefer some other day?

Believe me | Yours faithfully | William Sharp

D<sup>r</sup> Bliss Perry

P.S. Our common friend E. C. Stedman kindly (on hearing I was going to Boston) gave me the enclosed note to you.

*ALS Harvard University, Houghton Library*

**To Thomas Mosher, November 28, 1904<sup>50</sup>**

Nov. 28, 1904 | 234 West 49th St. | New York City

Dear Sir

Is there any likelihood of your being in Boston between Tuesday 6th Decr. and Friday 9th incl.? I fear it will be impracticable for me to get to Portland on Tuesday. How long does it take? Miss Macleod asked me to see you if I could manage it. (By the way she spoke also of a lady, a Mrs. Bridgman (?),<sup>51</sup> a friend of yours I understand, who lives in Brooklyn: but either she did not give me the address or I have mislaid it, and in any case I find myself too hopelessly pressed for time to call.

In case you are from home or cannot answer at once I may add that from Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> Dec. till morning of Monday 5<sup>th</sup> I shall be | c/o Livingston Mason Esq. | Halidon Hall | Newport | R. I.

I shall be in Boston only from Tuesday forenoon (the 6<sup>th</sup>) till night of Friday 9<sup>th</sup> — as I sail on Saty morning. I write thus early as I already have many engagements to fit in somehow.

Yours faithfully | William Sharp

*ALS New York Public Library, Berg Collection*

**To Thomas Mosher, December 2, 1904**

Halidon Hall | Newport, Rhode Island | Friday 2nd. Dec. 1904

Dear Mr. Mosher,

I received your note and your very kind and courteous despatch of the *Bibelot* for 1904 — a most delightful series (of which the last seems to me a peculiarly happy and welcome selection) just before leaving New York — after a day's delay through a mistake on the part of the post-man. And now this forenoon I have your friendly reminder in case of miscarriage.

As Friday is more convenient for you, by all means let us fix that date. At the moment I have no fixt engagements for that day, except a promise to go to the "afternoon" of an old friend, Mrs. Louise Chandler Moulton. (I have an idea that "Thursday or Friday" was given as a lunch date on behalf of Mrs. Julia Ward Howe<sup>52</sup> — if I find there is the alternative I'll so fix it). So, is it feasible for you to be in Boston by the early forenoon?

If not, shall you have occasion to come there on Thursday?

To my regret I find that a flying visit to Portland is quite impracticable for me now.

It will be a pleasure to meet you & Miss Macleod wants me to talk-over one or two suggestions or projects.

Yours faithfully | William Sharp

We leave here on Monday morning for Wellesley, and shall be from Tuesday at the Thorndike Hotel, Boylston St, Boston.

Thomas B. Mosher Esq.

*ALS New York Public Library, Berg Collection*

***To Roger Livingston Scaife, [December 6, 1904]<sup>53</sup>***

The Thorndike

Dear Mr. Scaife

Herewith the long letter, written fully & explanatorily as practicable in the circumstances.

By chance I found among some Memd<sup>a</sup> the enclosed five Sicilian ill<sup>s</sup> postal cards which will give some idea of the fine remains in one part alone of Sicily — also a photograph taken by Constantinos Embiricos (an eminent Athenian friend) at the few remains of the ancient temple & shrine of Aphrodite on the Sacred Way about halfway between Athens & Eleusis. Kindly let me have these again.

Let me thank you again for all your courteous friendliness today. I hope to see you again, sometime tomorrow or Thursday, either at Park St. or the Club.

In haste (to meet Mrs. Sharp on arrival), Sincerely yours  
William Sharp

*ALS Harvard University, Houghton Library*

**To Messrs. Houghton Mifflin & Co, December 6, 1904**

St. Botolph Club<sup>54</sup> | The Thorndike Hotel |  
Boylston St | Boston | 6<sup>th</sup> Dec. '06

Dear Sirs

The general scheme of the book (for which I have long been gathering material, and project under the indicative title Greek Backgrounds) of which I have spoken to Mr. Scaife and Mr. Greenslet, is as follows: —

Sicily, Southern Italy, and Greece are now receiving that general and wide interest which hitherto has largely been attracted to the Riviera, Northern Italy, & Spain: & this applies both to the great numbers of American & British visitors, last year to be numbered in thousands, and to the growing large public which has to be content with vicarious travel but is eager in that.

During the last four or five years (the greater part of four of which I have spent in Sicily, Calabria, & the Graeco-Italian & Graeco-French maritime regions — and the fifth in Corfu, the Isles, Athens, and the Peloponnesus etc. I have scores of times been asked to impart information as to books which would give more & in a different way than Baedeker or Murray and yet not be specialistically archaeological; or historical, too bulky & too technical for ordinary use & pleasure, and in particular for any book which would give, in a vivid way, some realisable idea of certain famous places & localities (or places & localities identified with famous persons or events) both as they are and as they were. From this arose my idea of writing Greek Backgrounds. So far as I know, no such book exists, Freeman's and Addington Symonds' travel-sketches are well

known, tho' now somewhat jejune; but they are without sequence or inter-relation, and are rather general impressions of certain places or regions in their aesthetic or historical relations than what is now indicated. (The only other books at all in the same way dealing with Magna Graecia are Charles Lenormant's standard & still valuable work on the Calabrian coast-towns & regions *La Grande Gréce*, Gissing's personal travel-notes *By the Ionian Sea*, and a vol. of travel-sketches by Paul Bourget.)

I would have begun the book a couple of years or so back had it not been that I realised it would be far more thorough & valuable if it were done systematically — therefore I contented myself with notes.

The general idea is to take those beautiful & more or less famous sites in Sicily, Southern Italy (Calabria, what is known as "By the Ionian Sea"), and Greece (including Corfu & the Isles) which have association with "the great ones" of old: to write of them as it were on the spot, conveying vividly an impression of these places as they are today, and then by one way or another, whether through the writer's themselves or Pausanias or other chronicler or historian, recreate some image of the places as they were of old, with, throughout, partly by interpretative narration, partly by excerpt, & otherwise, information as illuminative as possible concerning the story, achievement, & influence etc. of the great person immediately associated,

My aim is to write a book that will not only be desirable to those about to visit Sicily & Greece (& since the recent opening of the mainland route to Athens via Thebes from the Principalities this annual advent will be still further immensely enhanced), to those travelling or temporarily residing there, and to the many who already know one or both, but also that will appeal to that still greater public which wants to know more about places & countries now so much "in the air" to use a convenient colloquialism.

Places (to take at random a few instances) like Thebes, Eleusis, Kolonus (Athens), Lesbos, in Greece, or Crotone (Kroton) in Calabria, or Ithaka among the Ionian Isles, or Syracuse or Girgenti<sup>55</sup> in Sicily, are, respectively (for all readers for whom the past means anything vital & significant) inevitably associated with Pindar, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Sappho, Pythagoras, Homer, Theocritus, Empedocles. Sometimes, a great name will be closely associated with both Greece and Sicily — as Pindar in particular, as Aeschylus who lived long at Syracuse after he

left Athens, & died at Gela (now a strange & all but wholly unvisited place on the remote & somewhat wild south-western Sicilian coast, where I went a year ago), as Theocritus etc.

There are places, too, like Taormina, the chief tourist resort in Sicily & one of the most picturesque & beautiful places in Europe, which have a singular sequence of conflicting associations from Pythagoras to St. Paul, from Timoleon to Garibaldi.

At first I thought of one book. But the immense amount of material, combined with the dislike of travelers to bulky volumes, and other reasons, made me think, and still think, that it would be best to make the work in two distinct and self-contained volumes — i.e. each complete in itself, independent of the other, yet recognizably two divisions of one work, — "Greek Backgrounds,"

One vol. to be "Sicily and Calabria" (G.B. First Series)

One vol. "Greece and the Ionian Isles" Second Series

I believe they will be far more saleable thus separately issued. Thousands may visit Sicily without going to Greece, & many would-be buyers among these would be deterred by a half-volume dealing with a country they were not to visit, though others again, interested in the one part, whether Sicily or Greece, might desire to have the other.

[Indeed if the book or two series of Greek Backgrounds proved successful, there might well someday be a third series dealing with the Cyclades & Turkish Isles, Crete & Ephesos Smyrna, Alexandria etc etc on the Asian mainland.]

A real continuity & interrelation of interest would thus be maintained, for the two series of Greek Backgrounds would each supplement the other, while for reasons of convenience, price, etc as well as for literary reasons, the gain is obvious. I believe, too, this plan would give more enduring results.

I would rather the book were published primarily in this country — partly for copyright & connected reasons: and am agreeable to leave it so, — that is, to come to an agreement here, & leave the matter to be arranged from here later by the American publishers themselves as found convenient & suitable.

A difficulty to a "general agreement" exists in the fact that to write Greek Backgrounds, & especially without (as I had originally projected) using much of the material in magazines first, means so great an outlay of time & energy that for one who is dependent upon his pen an ordinary royalty arrangement becomes impractical. In a word I could not undertake Greek Backgrounds without as liberal an advance against royalties as could, agreeably to both, be arranged: the method, times, & amount etc etc. etc. to be discussed if you care to take up the book. Naturally, at the same time, I wish no one-side advantage arrangement, and fully understand where ordinary precautions must be observed by any firm in any such arrangement,

As to illustrations — not too many, I would like. I have already spoken to Mr. Scaife and Mr. Greenslet as to the fine Sicilian photographs I could get from my friend the Duke of Bronte (vide for example, my article on "Nelson's Duchy" in the *Pall Mall Magazine* of June last), as to Mr. Chas. Wood (a young Amer artist resident in Taormina) doing some Calabrian sketches — & as to photographs of Greek places.

As I leave for Italy on Saturday morning (& on Friday am pre-engaged for the greater part of forenoon, middle-day, & afternoon) I hope I may hear from you at your early convenience.

Believe me, | Dear Sirs, | Yours faithfully | William Sharp  
*ALS Harvard University, Houghton Library*

**To Caroline Hazard, [December 7, 1904]**

Thorndike Hotel | Boylston St. | Boston | (at the St. Botolph Club)

Dear Miss Hazard,

Just a brief line to thank you again most cordially for your most kind and friendly courtesy, and to tell you what very great pleasure it was to me in all ways to meet you, and in your beautiful home amid your interesting and in truth fascinating environment and work.

It is a happy memory to carry away oversea.

Most sincerely yours | William Sharp

P.S. Will you or your sister (whom also it was a very sincere pleasure to meet) kindly send a P/C with the name of the relatives (or friends?) who are also going by the "Romantic" — perhaps your sister will kindly remember her promise to write to them.

*ALS Wellesley College Library*

***To Thomas Mosher, December 7, 1904***

The Thorndike Hotel | Boylston St. | Boston | Wednesday 7 Dec. 04

My Dear Sir

Possibly you have written to Newport or to this address about when you will be in Boston. In case of miscarriage will you let me know by return when I may anticipate the pleasure of meeting you. If you are coming from Portland on Friday morning I presume you can't be in Boston till noon or later. I have an appointment at 2:30, and, in immediate sequence, others that will take me here and there till about 6. So I hope you may be here earlier on Friday than seems feasible to me *sans* railway time-tables. I am a pro-tem member of the St. Botolph Club, Arlington and Newbury Sts close by the Thorndike — and we could adjourn there whenever you call for me at the Thorndike. But so that I may be sure to be in, and also for the prearranging of my short remaining time here, I'm anxious to know just when I may see you.

If perchance you are to be in Boston on Thursday (tomorrow) evening, I should be free (I believe) from 8 or so.

Yours faithfully | William Sharp

*ALS New York Public Library, Berg Collection*

***To Caroline Hazard, [December 8, 1904]***

Hotel Thorndike | Thursday Evening

My Dear Miss Hazard,

Yesterday I made my pilgrimage to Radcliffe. Unfortunately Miss Irwin was not there, she was starting yesterday for Providence. But a Miss Shaw was kind enough to take me over the College buildings and to tell me points of interest.

And today we called upon Mrs. Julia Ward Howe<sup>56</sup> and had an interesting chat with her. Tomorrow we go to Fen Court to see Mrs. Gardner's Collection<sup>57</sup> and then my delightful Boston experience will be finished.

I carry away such happy, picturesque memories and impressions of Wellesley, and of your great kindness to us. There is plenty of material round about you, near that beautiful lake, for an enterprising painter!

Mr. Sharp joins me in friendly greetings to you, and in the hope that we may meet you again before very long.

Very sincerely yours, | Elizabeth A. Sharp

*ALS Wellesley College Library*

***To Miss Katherine Lee Bates, December [8], 1904<sup>58</sup>***

The Thorndike Hotel | Boylston St. | Boston

Dear Miss Bates,

How kind you are: — the very welcome copy of "Daphne"<sup>59</sup> and your "Bon Voyage" will help to make the trip to Italy a very pleasant one. It was a pleasure to meet you, and I hope we may meet again, in London, or Italy, or here, or elsewhere. I had already ordered your delightful book on Spain,<sup>60</sup> of which I had sometime ago a brief and seductive glance: so I shall have that too a-board.

Most sincerely yours | William Sharp

*ALS Private*

**To Mess<sup>rs</sup> Houghton Mifflin & Co., December 9, 1904**

Friday Night | 9<sup>th</sup> Dec. / 04 | The Thorndike Hotel | Boston

Dear Sirs

I have returned late tonight & just received your kind letter of this morning's date.

I have not time now (or paper! — as everything packed & dispatched) to recapitulate the several points in your letter: but as you will have a duplicate of it, that doesn't matter: So let me state, merely, that I concur in every item, including the P.S. as to the succeeding volume of Greek Backgrounds.<sup>61</sup>

With thanks for all your courtesy and consideration, and with the expression of my pleasure at having again met Mr. Mifflin

Believe me, | dear Sirs, | Yours faithfully | William Sharp

Mess<sup>rs</sup> Houghton Mifflin & Co.

*ALS Harvard University, Houghton Library*

**To Katherine Bates, December 15, [1904]**

C/o Sig. Karl Walter | The Eng. Agency & Bank |  
Bordighera | Italy | S.S. "Romanic"

Dear Miss Bates

I have just, so far as a heavy gale — continuous from one "airt" or another ever since in a snow-blizzard we emerged from Boston six days ago — permits one to write at all except in snatched intervals between roll and heave, written to Miss Sherwood to tell her with how much pleasure I have read "Daphne," truly an idyll of Italy, told with beauty, sympathy and distinction.

It was most kind of you to send it. Both Mrs. Sharp & I are not only grateful for the pleasant Italian interlude on this purgatorial voyage (tomorrow we reach the Azores — things then & thereafter will

doubtless be better) but to the giver for her kind thought and generous camaraderie in the matter of another's work.

It was a pleasure to meet you at Wellesley, & we both hope that the acquaintance so pleasantly begun may be continued & cemented. It w<sup>d</sup> be pleasant to meet in the Spain you have so charmingly depicted and sympathetically interpreted (& I hope your delightful book has met with the success it unquestionably deserves?) — or in Italy, whither we are now so gladly bound — or in London, where we'll be for May and June — or in Scotland which I think you also love.

It seems a long time since that pleasant evening at Miss Hazard's delightful home — but we shall always remember it with true pleasure.

Believe me, | dear Miss Bates, | Sincerely yours  
William Sharp

*ALS Wellesley College Library*

***To Murray Gilchrist, [late December, 1904]***

We are back from America (thank God) and are in Italy (thank Him more)... . For myself I am crawling out of the suck of a wave whose sweep will I hope be a big one of some months and carry me far.<sup>62</sup>

[William Sharp]

*Memoir, p. 393*

***To Ethel M. Goddard, December 27, 1904***

(On The Mediterranean) | 27th. Dec. 04

My dear Miss Goddard<sup>63</sup>

You may have been surprised why you have not heard from me before this; but I have been far away from our home-shores, now by the Canaries or the Azores, now off the Portuguese or Spanish or Algerian coasts, and

it was only on Christmas day, at Gibraltar, that I found among many letters etc. etc. a copy of the *Fortnightly* for December.

I have not time to write to you as fully as I would like for this must go in a packet of many other letters, proofs, etc, to my secretary in Edinburgh to be stamped & forwarded thence — which will be quicker than to send it c/o the editor of the *Fortnightly*.

I have read your article<sup>64</sup> with keen interest, and am grateful to you for so balanced and intimately sympathetic a criticism — one that has pleased me far more than anything else that has been written concerning "The Winged Destiny." But I value it most of all because of its suggestiveness. It has made me think more searchingly over certain matters connected with my work and its issues and the influences which have shaped and are shaping it: and it has touched forward to a greater surety much that I have of late pondered over and still more that has been more or less unconsciously "fermenting."

I had heard of your article from at least six or seven sources, and always appreciatively, and one Irish correspondent wrote (and with truth) ... "I shall be surprised if you are not more interested in this carefully thought out and suggestive paper than by anything else that has appeared on *The Winged Destiny*."

Perhaps someday later — tho' I seldom allude either in speech or writing to what is only in process of being thought out or while in process of achievement — I may write to you on certain matters touched upon in your article with so much sympathy and insight. But meanwhile let me add two things: namely, that I am not really turning aside from the things of the homeland and the ideals and hopes and lesser and greater destinies of our common Gaelic world, and, secondly, that I already think with you and other sympathetic critics that it would be a mistake for me to withhold myself from those tales and that Gaelic background where in every sense of the word I am most at home. Certainly before any further work of the nature of *The Divine Adventure* volume and *The Winged Destiny*, I hope to publish at least two books more in the nature of my earlier work, and perhaps a third (and much "bigger" one) on which I have long been silently at work.

Concurrently with the December number of the *Fortnightly* I received a *Mercure de France* with a gratifying notice of "The Winged Destiny" and also a copy of a charmingly printed and "got-up" copy of a German

selection of my tales published by Eugen Diederichs of Jena, and called *Wind und Woge*<sup>65</sup> (after the title, *Wind and Wave*, given to the Tauchnitz selection of my tales) — admirably translated by one Winnibald Mey. So you may imagine what pleasurable encouragement and elation Christmas day brought me.<sup>66</sup>

I hope you are at work yourself? I want much to see more from your pen. Have you tried fiction?

Let me wish you in the New Year peace and hope and joy, but also unrest and longing and the eager heart. An unknown Gaelic correspondent writes to me with a beautiful wish, in a simple and beautiful letter, so let me pass it on to you, a Gaelic sister. ... "May you walk by the Waters of Life, and may you rest by Still Waters, and may you know the mystery of God."

Believe me, | Dear Miss Goddard, | Your friend, | F.M.

*ALS National Library of Scotland*

**To Thomas Mosher, December 31, 1904**

C/o 22. Ormidale Terrace | Murrayfield, Midlothian |  
Scotland | 31: Dec. 1904

Dear Mr. Mosher,

I have made a flying visit to Scotland — for even the cordial welcome of those near to me at New Year's Tide cannot make East or West suitable for me at this season of cold and damp, and I must at once hasten back to the shores of the Mediterranean. I am always well at sea, whatever the weather is, but I cannot work or be well in land-cold and midwinter chills and damps. You will have received before this, I hope, my small Christmas card of greeting and the copy I sent you of Herr Winnibald Mey's German translation of selected tales etc. by myself, *Wind und Woge* (a title he has evidently "lifted" from the Tauchnitz edition of the selected tales I prepared at Baron Tauchnitz's request). Do you not think that the publisher (Herr Eugen Diederichs, of Jena & Leipsic) has brought it out exceptionally well for a cheap book? The type is new

and distinctive, and the Celtic designs of the green-ink head pieces and initial-letters are delightful. I forget if I sent you the cloth-bound or the cheaper paper-bound, but I find that I much prefer the latter. Did I write — I know I meant to do so, but in the confusion of much to see to and do I may have forgotten — to thank you for the books you so generously sent to me. They are a delight. As for the lovely "Tristram of Lyonesse," it is a joy to possess it. How delighted Mr. Swinburne must be with it. It is most kind of you to send me those books. Thank you again. Later I shall write to you on publishing matters, after I have seen our mutual friend, whom I hope to see shortly in Italy, as he has now arrived on the Riviera from Boston. I am glad you met. I send you a little spray of Highland heather in token of cordial New Year greeting, and with all friendliest good wishes for you and yours in 1905.

Believe me ever | Most sincerely yours | Fiona Macleod

*ALS New York Public Library, Berg Collection*

***To Lawrence Gilman, December 31, [1904]***

22 Ormidale Terrace | Murrayfield, 31st Dec.

Dear Mr. Gilman,

Some time ago a friend played to me one or two lovely airs by Mr. Loeffler, and I was so much impressed by their unique quality and their atmosphere of subtle beauty that I wrote to find out what I could about this composer, and also about another, Mr. MacDowell, whose beautiful Keltic Sonata I have heard. And now I have been sent a copy of your winsome and deeply interesting and informing little book, *Phases of Modern Music*. There I not only find much of deep interest to me about Mr. Loeffler and Mr. MacDowell,<sup>67</sup> but find your whole book at once informing and fascinating. In addition I had the great pleasure of coming unexpectedly upon allusions to myself and my writings: and I would like you to know how truly I appreciate these, and how glad I am that a critic touched to such fine issues in the great art of Music, and with so keen a sense for the new ideals of beauty, the new conceptions

of style and distinction, should care for what I am trying to do in my own art.

I hope you are writing another book. Whether on musical subjects only, or on literary and musical subjects in conjunction (which of course would appeal to a wider section of the reading public), any such book would I am sure, be welcomed by all who know *Phases of Modern Music*.

I wish I knew more of the music of these two composers. There is a spirit abroad just now, full of a new poignancy of emotion, uplifted on a secret wave of passion and ecstasy, and these men seem to me of that small but radiant company who have slept and dreamed in the other world and drank moon-dew.

Let me thank you again for all the pleasure you have given me, and

Believe me, | Most truly yours, | Fiona Macleod

*Memoir*, pp. 390–91



# Chapter Twenty-Five

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## Life: 1905

In a letter from Bordighera dated January 4, Sharp told Thomas Hardy he had been to San Remo to visit William Dean Howells who ranked Hardy's work as "foremost of all contemporary work in fiction." Howells was pleased to hear Hardy valued the "faithful realism" of his work. Sharp told Hardy he and Elizabeth had just returned from New York and Boston and were glad to be back in Italy though they had "a delightful time in the States." In mid-January, they left the Italian Riviera for Rome where they hoped to stay through March in rented rooms in a hotel on the Via Sallustiana. Sharp described their location in a letter to Howells:

We are settled here (instead of in rooms, or an apartment with a servant — which we found not to be had in accordance with our desires & needs & means) in a pleasant little suite of 3 or 4 rooms at the top of a sunny & charming new small hotel in the sunniest & healthiest part of Rome. Our rooms all face S.E. & S.W. — and so we have unbroken sunshine from sunrise till sunset: & from our windows & balconies of our Salotto we have superb views over Rome and to the hills & to the Campagna.

Despite the rooms and the views, the Sharps found Rome less desirable than anticipated. It was much colder than usual, and shortly after they arrived the flu overtook Elizabeth and spread to her husband with dire consequences for his diabetes.

Writing to William Dean Howells in mid-January, Sharp said they knew too many people in Rome, "Italian, English, Russian, American, & French — Society & Bohemia in a perpetual league against work." He doubted they would remain in Rome beyond the end of February: "I'm afraid Italy is not a good place for work: I think we of the Anglo-Celtic

stock need the northern bite of Great Britain or North America to do our best in the best way." According to Elizabeth, they "saw a few friends — in particular Mr. Hichens who was also wintering there; but my husband did not feel strong enough for any social effort." By the time Sharp wrote again to Howells in late January, they had decided to leave Rome at the end of February. He was sorry to cut their stay short, but he couldn't afford to be any place he couldn't work, and "in every way Rome is about the last place for that."

In a February 5 birthday letter to Lauretta Stedman, E. C. Stedman's granddaughter, Sharp described their charming rooms and continued,

For reasons of health (for my perilous diabetic ailment has been seriously touched up again, in consequence I suppose) & also for work-conditions, & other reasons, we have decided to leave Italy at the end of February for "The English Riviera," in other words for Ventnor in the South of the Isle of Wight — where, indeed, we think of some day making a home.... I am tired of so many years of continuous wandering, & I'm sure Mrs. Sharp is eager for a home, tho' she loves being in Italy also. For work's sake, too, (& I don't mean the financial side of the question) it is in all ways better for me to be more in touch with my own country.

For six years, the Sharps had been without a permanent residence; their furniture and belongings had been in storage since 1899. That he was thinking about ceasing his constant travel and finding a permanent home in Ventnor signalled his waning energy, but also his expectation of a longer life. Given its climate and his illness, the Isle of Wight seems an unlikely place to settle permanently, but Elizabeth was worried about his physical and mental condition and willing to accept any arrangements that appealed to him. He concluded by asking Lauretta to convey greetings to her grandparents and apologized for such a short letter, but he was not well and "under exhausting pressure of accumulated work & correspondence."

In a February 21 letter to Thomas Mosher, whom he met for the first time in Boston in December, Sharp thanked him for the leather-bound beautiful little books. Both he and their author [Fiona] preferred them to the parchment-bound copies, "both to handle and to look at." They are a reminder of their pleasant December meeting in Boston. He continued:

I am very glad we had time for that confidential chat, too, and I think you will now better understand certain reserves & puzzling things, &

the more readily see, or at any rate *feel*, how they are not all by any means arbitrary or foolish, but more or less inevitable. I have of course seen a good deal of my friend since I came to Italy, and before she left Rome the other day I explained to her about our talk, & how that whatever she wrote to you at any time in privacy would be kept absolutely private by you. I dare say now, too, you understand a good deal more than what was said, by inference. When we meet again, or someday, things may be made still clearer to you.

This passage suggests Sharp told Mosher that he and Fiona were lovers to explain their frequent, furtive meetings and her allusiveness. What might someday be made “still clearer” to Mosher was the true relationship between Sharp and Fiona, the woman he claimed to love.

Before leaving Rome, Sharp completed a two-part travel guide for Americans visiting Sicily and sent it to Richard Watson Gilder, Editor of the American *Century Illustrated Magazine*. Gilder accepted Sharp’s proposal for this article when they met in New York in December. It was published posthumously in three parts in the March, April, and May 1906 issues of the *Century*. In a letter transmitting the article, Sharp asked for quick payment since he would need the money when he reached Ventnor. The Sicilian articles were preceded in the February 1906 issue of the *Century* by “Portraits of Keats: With Special Reference to those by Severn,” the article Sharp wrote in the summer of 1905. Immediate payment was not forthcoming, but these four articles helped allay Elizabeth’s considerable financial worries following her husband’s death.

The Sharps left Rome on February 23 or 24 and arrived in Ventnor via Paris in mid-March where Sharp worked on several articles that appeared in *Country Life* under his own name and several Fiona books published by Mosher in the United States. Not lingering long in Ventnor, the Sharps departed at the end of March and rented rooms at 5 Gordon Place between Kensington Church Street and Holland Park. After a few days in the city, Sharp went to Edinburgh to visit his mother and convinced his sister Mary to go with him to the Inner Hebrides. They made their way west to the small island of Lismore in Loch Linnhe north of Oban to stay with the MacCaskills, the elderly Gaelic-speaking couple Sharp had known for years. On April 19, the day after their arrival, he described to Elizabeth, who had accompanied him to Lismore in the summer of 1902, his pleasure in being there again and in the stories of

strange apparitions which his host recounted by the fire at night. The weather was a drawback:

The cold is very great, & as it is damp cold you'd feel it hard. Even with a warm blanket below me, & six above I was cold — & when I got up and had a partial bath (for I scooted out of it to dress) my breath swarmed about the room like a clutch of phantom peewits. No wonder I had a dream I was a seal with my feet clammed on to an iceberg. You couldn't stand it. Even Mary said it was like mid-winter. A duck went past a little ago seemingly with one feather & that blown athwart its beak, so strong was the north wind blowing from the snowy mass of Ben Nevis.

Having arrived on Lismore on Tuesday, April 18, he told Elizabeth it was almost certain they would leave the next Tuesday as he could not stand the penetrating cold much longer. He was glad to have come as it was unlikely he would ever be in Scotland again so early in the year.

On April 23, he told Elizabeth he had decided not to go out to Iona as his presence there would be noted by islanders on the lookout for Fiona Macleod. Anything he heard there and later used in the Fiona writings could be traced to him. Neither would he visit other islands since he had much of what he wanted, "above all, the atmosphere: enough to strike the keynote throughout the coming year and more, for I absorb through the very pores of both mind and body like a veritable sponge." He added: "I love that quiet isolated house on the rocks facing the Firth of Lorne, all Appin to Ben Naomhir, and the great mountains of Morven." The weather played a major part in his decision to forego other islands and return Mary to the warmth of her Edinburgh home.



Fig. 25. The Lismore ferry. Photograph by Magnus Hagdorn (2012), Wikimedia, CC BY-SA 2.0, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Lismore\\_Ferry\\_\(8120112835\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Lismore_Ferry_(8120112835).jpg)

Despite the cold that required a large fire burning all day, Sharp was able to put the finishing touches on a revision of his "Iona" essay and send it to Mosher with a long letter copied by Mary into the Fiona handwriting. Fiona preferred *Iona* as a title for the volume in which it would appear, but Mosher settled on *The Isle of Dreams*, Fiona's second choice, as an appropriate title for the volume which Mosher published in his *Old World Series* before the close of the year. When they met in Boston, Sharp, acting on behalf of Fiona, obtained Mosher's agreement to publish a book of previously unpublished Fiona Macleod poems. In the Lismore letter, Fiona told Mosher the volume would not be ready until late May as she had to go to Wales "to be near one dear to me", one who was seriously ill. Sharp did not want Mosher to believe Fiona was ill, as that would threaten the flow of money. The one dear to her was, of course, Sharp, and it was he who had taken the cure for diabetes in Wales (at Llandrindod) in September 1903 and 1904. His proposal of *Runes of Women* as the title of the volume of new poems suggests it would contain at least some of the Runes, perhaps altered, that were in Fiona's first book of poems, *From the Hills of Dream*, which Patrick Geddes and Colleagues published in 1896 and which Mosher, through arrangements with the Geddes firm, published in America in 1901 with new editions in 1904, 1907, 1910, and 1917. Those volumes did more than any others to expand readership of Fiona in the United States. The volume of new poems discussed in his letter to Mosher materialized only after Sharp died when, in 1907, Mosher published a collection of Fiona Macleod poems, *The Hour of Beauty: Songs and Poems*, written between 1901 and 1905.

While on Lismore, Sharp learned Fiona had been made an honorary member of a French League of Writers "devoted to the rarer and subtler use of Prose and Verse." In an April 20 letter, he told Elizabeth he just received "a charming letter from Paul Fort acting for his colleagues." Fort was a well-known poet who founded and edited a literary review appropriately called *Vers et Prose*. He was writing on behalf of his colleagues, members of the League and well-known French writers, among them: Jean Moréas (1856–1910) who founded the periodical *La Symboliste* in 1886 and played a leading role in the French Symbolist Movement; Emile Verhaeren (1855–1916), a Belgian poet who wrote in French; and René François Armand (1839–1907), a Parnassian poet

who won the Nobel Prize for literature in 1901. Receiving this honor as Fiona must have caused Sharp to reflect on what might have been had he been able to claim her writing as his own. He put that thought aside in addressing Elizabeth: "We're glad, aren't we, you and I? She's our daughter, isn't she?" In the late 1890s, Sharp sometimes cast Fiona as his daughter with Edith Rinder. This stopped when Edith became pregnant and gave birth to a real daughter in 1901. Referring to Fiona as Elizabeth's daughter signalled Sharp's renewed love for her in the year of his death. It was Elizabeth after all who had looked after him, nursed him through illnesses, and would hold him in her arms as he died.

After their week on Lismore, Sharp and Mary crossed to the mainland on April 24, spent the night in Oban, and took the train back to Glasgow and on to Edinburgh. He was sorry to leave Lismore, Sharp wrote to Elizabeth, as it might be his last time in the Gaelic west. His friend and host was equally sad as he sensed it would be their last meeting. After dropping them off at Port Appin, MacCaskill "shook hands (with both his)" and said in Gaelic "My blessing on you — and goodbye now!" and then "he turned away & went down the pier-side & hoisted the brown sail & went away across the water, waving a last farewell." During the train ride between Oban and Glasgow, on April 25, Sharp wrote a note to Elizabeth that humorously echoed MacCaskill's speech: "Tarling | It will pe ferry difficult to write in this unusually shaky train, which to use a slight hyperbole will almost pe hitting the horizon on each side in its ferry pad swayings." He went on to marvel at the isolation of the MacCaskills. Mrs. M had not made the brief trip across the water to Appin for six years. From year end to years end, life is the same, save for the slow change of seasons, & the slower invisible movements of the tides of life. Such isolation

is restful for a time, but wd. be crushing after a spell, & mean stagnation for any not accustomed to daily manual toil or without local engrossing work. They on the other hand look with mingled awe & amusement at the to them inexplicable longing to get away from such conditions, & for the already strong desire to leave this gloomy & dull climate for abroad, where life is (for us) so far far easier as well as happier now. But even when I told MacC. that it was a matter of prolonged life & energy & "youth" for me, & that I invariably recede on an ebbing tide over here, & go high on a strong flowing tide over yonder, he'd only shake his head & say Ishe miann na lach an loch air nach bi I (i.e., in

effect, the duck's desire is to be on some other loch then that on which she happens to find herself!)

But Sharp was glad to have stayed with the MacCaskills on Lismore again. He learned a good deal, but nothing about his current interest in Gaelic astronomy. As it turned out, the man opposite him on the train was the Astronomer of the Edinburgh Observatory, Ralph Copeland. He was surprised by what Sharp knew: "When I told him about certain groups & constellations & said I had lists of many Gaelic star-names, gathered at long intervals, & thro' a hundred sources, he hinted he would like to know who I was, for, as he said, he hardly ever met anyone away from astronomical sets interested in these things." The two men lunched together and enjoyed each other's company. Both would be dead by year's end: Copeland in October and Sharp in December.

When Sharp returned to London's Gordon Place at the end of April, his health was in decline. Elizabeth attributed it to the cold weather on Lismore and said he was ordered by his doctor to Bad Neuenahr in Germany for treatment of his diabetes (*Memoir*, p. 399) It was early June before he complied as he felt compelled to spend May in London writing an article on Joseph Severn's portraits of John Keats. He proposed the article to the editors of the *Century* when they met in New York the previous December and he needed the money. He sent the article to New York on May 27 along with copies of Joseph Severn's portrait of Keats and a rendition of that portrait by William Hilton which, according to Sharp, was favoured by many over that of Severn. Though Sharp may have been paid upon submission of the manuscript, the article, "The Portraits of Keats: with special reference to those by Severn," did not appear until 1906 (Volume LXXI, p. 535 and following).

Sharp left London on June 10 or 11 to spend four weeks at the Villa Elsner in Bad Neuenahr. The warmth and beauty of the Villa, its gardens and the strict diet produced a dramatic improvement in his emotional and physical health. While there and on his way home, Sharp wrote a series of letters to his wife which she exempted from the mass of Sharp's papers she burned before she died in 1932. In preserving these letters (now in the National Library of Scotland) and printing portions in her *Memoir*, Elizabeth emphasized the happy times of her husband's last year and demonstrated his continuing love and affection for her as a



Fig. 26. John Keats (1793–1879), by Joseph Severn (1819). Oil on ivory miniature, 105 x 79 mm, National Portrait Gallery. Wikimedia, Public Domain, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:JohnKeats1819\\_hires.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:JohnKeats1819_hires.jpg)

counterbalance to the knowledge of his relationships with others which would emerge in coming years.

In one of these letters, Sharp said he was gaining in “nervous repair” at the Villa Eisner where it was “deliciously quiet and reposeful.” He hadn’t realized “to the full how much nervous harm I’ve had for long, & especially at the Gordon Pl. rooms, where the whole nervous system was frayed by the continual noise and old-exhaustedness of everything, from the air to the rooms themselves & the gas-poisoned atmosphere.” He had not undergone any treatments when he wrote this letter, but he was already feeling better due to

rest of mind & body, the sense of reposefulness, the escape from the perturbing & exhausting forces & influences of town life especially at this season, the absence at night and by day when I am in my room or in the garden of all noise, no sounds save the susurrus of leaves and the sweet monotony of the rushing Ahr, & the cries & broken songs of birds.



Fig. 27. John Keats, by William Hilton (c. 1822). Oil on canvas, 76.2 x 63.5 cm, National Portrait Gallery. Wikimedia, Public Domain, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:John\\_Keats\\_by\\_William\\_Hilton.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:John_Keats_by_William_Hilton.jpg)

A doctor could not understand why, given his condition, he was not more anxious. He explained his physical troubles meant little to him. They were “the bodily effect of other things, & might be healed far more by spiritual wellbeing than by anything else: also that nature & fresh air & serenity & light & sun warmth & nervous rest were worth far more than all else.” He wanted to be helped “but all the waters in the world & all the treatment in the world can only affect the external life.”

The treatment he was about to receive would, nonetheless, enable him to keep well when with Elizabeth and “away from England for the autumn to spring months.” Even in Germany the “difference climatically” was very great; he felt the immediate gain, and the “balmy warmth” suited him. He was convinced he and Elizabeth could regulate their lives “to suit better than any doctor.” They would continue to plan their future as though they had many years to live. In a brief note, he told Alexander Nelson Hood he had a “narrow squeak, [...] a hard tussle at the brink of ‘Cape Fatal’ and a stumble across ‘Swamp Perilous,’” but that was now all behind him. He will soon “be as well in

body" as he is "happy and serene in mind." It is only "a reprieve, not a lifetime-discharge," but who knows "how long the furlough may be extended." Sharp knew his diabetes and weak heart could end his life at any moment; early death was inevitable. But he took what cures he could, and he was "well content," determined to enjoy the world and his life until the end.

The positive effects of the Villa Elsner cure were dimmed in his final week by the excruciating pain of a passing kidney stone. He did not want Elisabeth to know about the incident, but someone at the Villa sent her a telegram. The stone passed on Saturday, July 8 shortly before he boarded a train in Neuenahr bound for Doorn in Holland where he stopped to visit the Grandmonts, a couple he and Elizabeth had come to know in Taormina. The next morning, he told Elizabeth he had "a beautiful and restful afternoon and evening in this most charming and simpatica home of dear and good friends — and a long sleep from about 9:30 p.m. till about 8 this morning, I feel perfectly well again." He regretted she had known about the kidney stone before it was a thing of the past. It troubled him to think of the distress of her "dear tender heart". He hoped his telegrams first from Neuenahr and then Doorn had reassured her. After a good breakfast, he was feeling fine.

Today there is not a trace of any kind of trouble. As I told you [in the telegrams] the stone penetrated no intestinal or other complications — & I am now of course ever so much better for having got rid of it & all the allied uric acid poison. Last night there was naturally the diabetic symptom of continuous thirst — but that was natural after the longish journey in great heat & in the vibration of a train. Today, despite that I woke to 75 degrees in my room (with both front and side French-windows wide open all night, and a large shadowy spacious room outlooking on sunlit green forest-glades a stone's throw away) I have had no thirst, no symptoms of any kind. The heat is very great, but to me most welcome and regenerative and strengthening.

Having survived another episode of the illness that would cause his death at year's end, Sharp pivoted quickly to a description of the beauty of his surroundings and how well he was being treated by his hosts; he planned to stay the week and leave on Saturday, July 15.

The Grandmonts were an established Dutch family, and their home, Witte Huis, was a large white structure in a park-like setting. Sharp's hostess was a well-known painter with an exceedingly long

name: Abrahamina Arnolda Louise “Bramine” Hubrecht (Donders) (Grandmont) (1855–1913). In 1888, Bramine Hubrecht, as she was known, married Professor Franciscus Donders (1818–1889) an ophthalmologist, a professor of physiology at the University of Utrecht, and a highly-regarded authority on eye diseases. He died within the year, but not before she had painted his portrait. In 1902, Bramine married Dr. Alphons Marie Antoine Joseph Grandmont (1837–1909) who was sixty-five (she was forty-seven). He died seven years later, but not before Bramine painted him reading to two young women. The Grandmonts were among the wealthy northern Europeans who wintered in Taormina. Bramine’s paintings of her two husbands reveal her considerable skill as an artist.

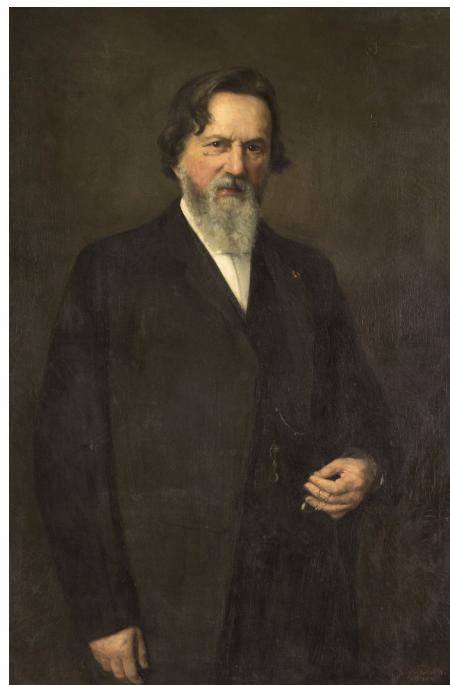


Fig. 28. Professor Franciscus Donders (1818–1889), by Bramine Hubrecht (1888). Oil on canvas, 142 x 95 cm, Rijkmuseum. Wikimedia, Public Domain, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Professor\\_Franciscus\\_Donders\\_\(1818-1889\)\\_Fysioloog\\_en\\_oogheelkundige,\\_SK-A-2508.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Professor_Franciscus_Donders_(1818-1889)_Fysioloog_en_oogheelkundige,_SK-A-2508.jpg)

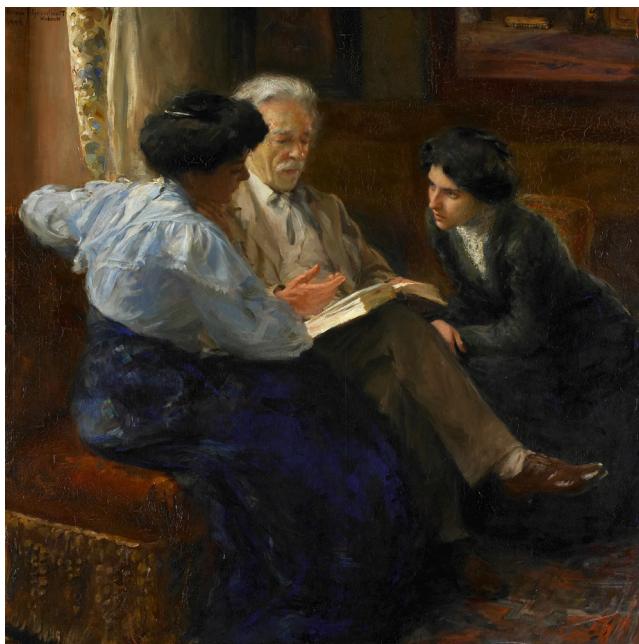


Fig. 29. Alphons Marie Antoine Joseph Grandmont (1837–1909), by Bramine Hubrecht (1900–1909). The painting depicts the artist's second husband tutoring two Italian girls. Oil on canvas, 100 x 100 cm, Rijkmuseum. Wikimedia, Public Domain, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Alphons\\_Marie\\_Antoine\\_Joseph\\_Grandmont\\_\(1837-1909\)\\_Tweede\\_echtgenoot\\_van\\_de\\_schilderes,\\_lesgevend\\_aan\\_twee\\_Italiaanse\\_meisjes\\_Rijksmuseum\\_SK-A-2794.jpeg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Alphons_Marie_Antoine_Joseph_Grandmont_(1837-1909)_Tweede_echtgenoot_van_de_schilderes,_lesgevend_aan_twee_Italiaanse_meisjes_Rijksmuseum_SK-A-2794.jpeg)

In his letter to Elizabeth on the morning of Monday, July 10, Sharp praised his hosts: "How good and dear the Grandmonts are. She is so thoughtful and tender, too; and so good when I was tired after my journey and yesterday in bringing cushions when I was lying in a chair outside — and seeing to everything about food, often at no little trouble here." In addition to executing over a hundred well-regarded paintings, Bramine had a full social life and an especially high regard for elderly, infirm men. His July 10 letter to Elizabeth is addressed to "Linky Blue Dear, | How you'd love to be here!" Now he planned to leave Wednesday July 12, since the Grandmonts had to go to Utrecht. After four days of leisure in a beautiful setting, Sharp took a train north to Rotterdam on the twelfth and an overnight ferry to England from Hoek von Holland on Saturday, July 15.

Upon his return to London, Sharp found a letter from Richard Underwood Johnson requesting revisions in the Severn article and asking if Sharp could obtain photographs of another Severn portrait of Keats mentioned in the article. Coincidentally, Sharp also had a letter from Nigel Severn — son of Walter Severn and grandson of Keats' friend Joseph Severn — asking him to examine and authenticate what he thought was the death mask of Joseph Severn. On Sunday July 16, Sharp asked if he could call the following Tuesday afternoon and added: "You have I suppose no other Keats-Severn portraits of any kind?" We know from a letter Sharp wrote to Johnson dated July 27 Severn said he had two — one a miniature that resembled Joseph Severn's portrait of Keats in the National Portrait Gallery and the other a painting, now well-known, titled "Keats and the Nightingale (the Spaniards, Hampstead Heath)." Sharp observed these two paintings and the death mask sometime during the week of July 16, revised his Severn article for Johnson and the *Century Magazine*, and arranged with Severn's agreement, for Frederick Hollyer to photograph the paintings for inclusion in Sharp's article. On Tuesday, July 25, Sharp mailed the revised manuscript to Johnson and left to visit friends in Yorkshire on his way to Scotland. The two Hollyer photographs caught up with him there, and he sent them on to Johnson. Sharp accomplished a good deal during his ten days in London, but they took a toll. In his July 27 letter to Johnson, he said he was glad to be out of the city again, and "With rest and fresh air and early hours" he would soon be well again. His recuperation in Germany and Holland was short-lived.

By July 30, Sharp was in Edinburgh writing apocalyptically to Dr. John Goodchild, his friend in all things mystical: "Between now and September-end (perhaps longer) many of the Dark Powers are going to make a great effort. We must all be on guard — for there will be individual as well as racial and general attack. But a Great Unloosening is at hand." Having stayed on in London, Elizabeth arrived in Edinburgh on the thirtieth where Sharp boarded her train, and they proceeded north to Nairn near Inverness where they had taken a cottage on the shore of the North Sea. Before leaving Edinburgh, Sharp received a letter from Thomas Janvier informing him of the death of Mrs. E. C. Stedman who had entertained the Sharps in her home north of New York City the previous December. He wrote a deeply moving letter of

sympathy to Stedman from the North British Station Hotel while waiting for Elizabeth's train.

I cannot let the first available mail go without sending you my deep and loving sympathy — to you and Lauretta and your daughter-in-law, but to you most who have lost a tender and loving and life-long companion. Nor is it only deep regret for you, dear friend, but on my own account, for I have ever had the truest affection for dear Mrs. Stedman. I know too how sorry my wife will be when she hears (I join her Mail Train for the North tonight) — for she drew closely to your dear wife during our recent visit.

Sharp had a deep and genuine affection for Stedman who had introduced him to American editors and writers and paved the way for his American publications. But the perilous state of his own health weighed heavily on his mind: "I am here in Edinburgh enroute for the North (after a narrow squeak for my life, with two distinct illnesses, & treatment for a month in Germany)."

In Nairn, Sharp found time to read a collection of John Masefield's stories, *A Mainsail Haul*, and to thank Masefield for sending him a copy of the book which gave him great pleasure. It was written with "delicate art," Sharp wrote, "and it was "rich in atmosphere — a much rarer thing." He moved on to some suggestions for improvement: "Is it not a mistake to introduce in 'Sea Superstition' words such as 'august' and 'wrought' in a sailor's mouth?" On August 19, Masefield replied to Sharp from Greenwich that he would make use of his suggestions if the book went to a second edition (*Memoir*, pp. 404–05). It was, he said, a product of his youth, and he had now passed into manhood. "Between those two times (forgive me for echoing Keats) one has little save a tag or two of cynicism, a little crude experience, much weariness, much regret, and a vision blurred by all four faults. One is weakened too by one's hatreds." In 1905, Masefield (1878–1967) was twenty-seven — half Sharp's age — and willing to accept help from an older writer. Named Britain's Poet Laureate in 1930, Masefield held that position until he died thirty-seven years later. When he wrote of Fiona Macleod — "I think the genius of a dead people has found re-incarnation in her" — he had no idea she was Sharp. His life and work spanned the great divide between the late romanticism of the 1890s and the post-war modernism of the 1920s and beyond.

After two weeks in Nairn, the Sharps returned to his mother and sisters in Edinburgh. From there, according to Elizabeth they visited, among other influential friends, Mary Wilson, D. Y. Cameron, and David Erskine. Mary Georgina Wade Wilson (1856–1936) was an accomplished artist who specialized in garden scenes and whose paintings, some depicting Venice and other locations in Italy, are valued by collectors and museums. She was the daughter of John Wilson (1815–1881) who had at the age of twenty-one inherited his father's coal mining business and turned it into one of the most profitable companies in Scotland. In 1860, he built South Bantaskine House on the field of the Battle of Falkirk to house his family of eight girls and one boy. Mary was about Elizabeth Sharp's age. Unmarried, she lived on the family estate with several sisters, also unattached. She and Elizabeth may have met when they were young girls. More likely, Elizabeth's position as art critic for the *Glasgow Herald* brought them together. They must have been close friends since Mary, in October, went to Italy with the Sharps and she was with Elizabeth at the Castle Maniace when Sharp died. D. Y. Cameron was, at the time, one of Scotland's most accomplished painters and engravers and a close friend of the Sharps. They had come together in the mid-nineties around Patrick Geddes' effort to foster a Celtic revival in Edinburgh. How the Sharps became friends with David Erskine is unclear, but his family and their estate in Linlathen near Dundee were deeply entrenched in Scottish history.

At the end of August, the Sharps returned to London and began preparing for Italy. On his birthday, September 12, Sharp posted two letters, one from Will to Fiona and another from Fiona to Will. He sent these letters every year, but only one other seems to have survived — a letter to W. S. from F. M. dated September 12, 1897. The letters, according to Elizabeth, helped him retain the separate identity of Fiona and take stock of the year's literary output. The 1897 Fiona letter *To William Sharp [September 12, 1897]* (Volume 2) was hard on "dear Billy":

I am very disappointed with you this past year. You have not been well, it is true: but you have also been idle to a painful degree, and your lack of method makes me seriously anxious. [...] But do for heaven's sake put your shoulder to the wheel, and get soon in good working trim at something worth doing. You ever put pleasure first, and think so much of youth that you don't like billiards merely because the balls are bald. This is sad, Billy.

The 1905 Fiona letter is hard but also accepting of the inevitable:

I note not only an extraordinary indolence in effort as well as unmistakable laziness in achievement. Now, either you are growing old (in which case admit dotage, and be done with it) or else you are permitting yourself to remain weakly in futile havens of ignoble repose or fretful pseudo rest. You have much to do, or that you ought to do, yourself: and as to our collaboration I see no way for its continuance unless you will abrogate much of what is superfluous, curtail much that can quite well be curtailed, and generally serve me loyally as I in my turn allow for and serve you.

Unless he can summon the strength to persevere in the face of declining health and attendant indolence, his own writing will suffer and that of Fiona will disappear.

Sharp's 1905 letter to Fiona projects a stronger sense of declining powers and a tone of regret that verges on the elegiac:

All that is best in this past year is due to you. [...] I have not helped you nearly as much as I could: in this coming year I pray, and hope, it may be otherwise. And this none the less tho' I have much else I want to do apart from our work. But we'll be one and the same au fond even then, shall we not, Fiona dear? [...] You say I can give you what you have not: well, I am glad indeed. Together we shall be good Sowers [...] I wish you Joy and Sorrow, Peace, and Unrest, and Leisure, Sun, and Wind, and Rain, all of Earth and Sea and Sky in this coming year. And inwardly swell with me, so that less and less I may fall short of your need as well as your ideal. And may our "Mystic's Prayer" be true for us both, who are one.

Sharp wanted to do more of his own work apart from the Fiona writings which he calls "our" work. He then suggests Fiona also takes part in the Sharp writings. Will they become "one in the same"? Probably not, so Sharp will try to give Fiona more of what she lacks. He hopes she will swell with him so he will not fall short of her need, her ideal. If that sounds confusing, it is. Near the end of his life, Sharp, encouraged by his wife, was trying to resolve the contradictions he had created when he decided to give life and form to a pseudonym. He was struggling to merge the two separate people he had created to produce two separate bodies of work into a single being who could produce a single, unified body of writings, some to be signed William Sharp and others Fiona Macleod. Failure in that struggle was inevitable.

In the eight brief lines of "The Mystics Prayer," which, he asserted, was written by both William and Fiona, they pray "both, who are one" may awake with the ability to see things clearly:

Lay me to sleep in sheltering flame  
O Master of the Hidden Fire!  
Wash pure my heart, and cleanse for me  
My soul's desire.  
In flame of sunrise bathe my mind,  
O Master of the Hidden Fire,  
That, when I wake, clear-eyed may be  
My soul's desire.

Fittingly, Elizabeth placed the poem at the end of the Uniform Edition of the Fiona Macleod poems in 1910. A final testimony to the failure of integration in this world, the speakers hope to reach the object of their souls' desire in the afterlife. The object of William Sharp's desire was a marriage of souls, an integration of the male and female aspects of his being.

In a letter dated September 15, Sharp, writing as Fiona, responded to an unknown correspondent who asked to meet her and who sensed there was a great deal of Fiona's own life in her writings. Sharp's Fiona response to the first issue was, of course, negative, and relatively brief. A meeting is not possible — at least this year — but they may meet on the Isles of "Dream, Forgetfulness, and Hope." The Isles of Peace — the "quiet isles beyond the foam where no memories could follow [...] and where old thoughts, if they came, were like phantoms on the wind, in a moment come, in a moment gone — are beyond reach in this life." Again, Sharp seemed to be contemplating his imminent death.

His response to the second issue is significant because it was his most direct admission that his Fiona's writings were intensely autobiographical:

There is a personal sincerity, the direct autobiographical utterance, in even, as you say, the most remote and phantastic of my legends as in the plainest of my words. But because they cover so much illusion as well as passion, so much love gone on the wind as well as love that not even the winds of life and death can break or uproot, so much more of deep sorrow (apart from the racial sorrow which breathes through all) than of Joy save in the deeper spiritual sense, they were thus raimented in allegory and legend and all the illusion of the past, the remote, the

obscure, or the still simpler if more audacious directness of the actual, the present, and the explicit.

Knowledge of Sharp's relationship with Edith Rinder uncovers the autobiographical dimension of the Fiona Macleod stories and poems.

Given the excesses of much of those writings, the next sentence is also revealing: "There is, perhaps, a greater safety, a greater illusion, in absolute simplicity than in the most subtly wrought art." The sentence demonstrates the lingering effect of the admonition in Yeats' letter to Fiona of November 23, 1901: "when you use elaborate words you invent with less conviction, with less precision, with less delicacy than when you forget everything but the myth. [...] You, as I think, should seek the delights of style in utter simplicity, in a self-effacing rhythm and language, in an expression that is like a tumbler of water rather than a cup of wine" (*Collected Letters III*, p. 124). After receiving this advice, Sharp strove for greater concision and fewer flourishes in what he wrote as Fiona.

In the last of his many birthday letters to E. C. Stedman, Sharp frankly described the failing state of his health: "I all but 'went under' this summer from a severe access of my Diabetes malady — but a month's special treatment at Neuenahr in Germany tided me over — & in July & August I was not only convalescent but (in August) became wonderfully well." In mid-September, however, he experienced the "ebb-tide again," and now he had to leave Britain's "damp climate at once." He and Elizabeth planned to leave "in a few days" and go first to Venice, then to Sicily until late December and then "for 3 months to Algeria (mostly Biskra in the Sahara) for a thorough 'warming' & 'drying', for my chest is menaced." This ambitious itinerary was abruptly interrupted in mid-December.

Before leaving for Italy, Sharp wrote a Fiona letter to the Duchess of Sutherland (1867–1955) which describes in the guise of advice what he has attempted to achieve in the Fiona writings: "Style (that is, the outer emotion that compels and the hidden life of the imagination that impels and the brooding thought that shapes and colours) should, spiritually, reflect a soul's lineaments as faithfully as the lens of the photographer reflects the physiognomy of a man or woman." This letter was a response to a volume of stories, *The Wind of the World: Seven Love Stories*, the Duchess published as Millicent Sutherland in 1902. Despite

her elevated social position and attendant obligations, the Duchess was an aspiring writer, a fellow Scot, and a devotee of Fiona Macleod. Though she did not know Fiona was Sharp, he had come to know her by claiming he was a relative of Fiona. In the summer of 1902, he included her among possible advocates when he sought (unsuccessfully) a Civil List Pension.



Fig. 30. Portrait of Millicent Leveson-Gower, Duchess of Sutherland, by John Singer Sargent (1904). Oil on canvas, 254 x 146 cm, Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum. Wikimedia, Public Domain, [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:John\\_Singer\\_Sargent\\_-\\_Portrait\\_of\\_Millicent\\_Leveson-Gower,\\_Duchess\\_of\\_Sutherland.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:John_Singer_Sargent_-_Portrait_of_Millicent_Leveson-Gower,_Duchess_of_Sutherland.jpg)

Writing here as one female author to another, Sharp encouraged the Duchess to aspire higher than she had in the 1902 volume. He sensed in her work

An instinct for beauty, a deep longing for beautiful expression and because I believe you have it in you to achieve highly in worth and beauty that I write to you thus. [...] There is that Lady of Silence, the Madonna of Enigma, who lives in the heart of many women. Could you

not shape something under *Her* eyes — shape it and colour it with your own inward life, and give it all the nobler help of austere discipline and control which is called art?

Insights, unique to the hearts of women — shaped, disciplined, controlled — may produce beautiful expressions that reach the status of art. It is tempting to believe Elizabeth included part of this letter in the *Memoir* to show her husband's connections with the paragons of British aristocracy, but that was not Elizabeth's nature. Her aim was to show the ideal to which her husband aspired in the poetry and fiction of Fiona Macleod. The revelation that Fiona was, in fact, Sharp and the attendant prejudices obscured, and still obscures, the fine quality, the "worth and beauty," of much of the writing, especially the lyric poetry, Sharp published under the female pseudonym.

In early October, the Sharps, accompanied by Mary Wilson, their painter friend from South Bantaskine, travelled by train to Zurich, then to Innsbruck, and finally to Venice. In transit, Sharp drafted a letter to Helen Hopekirk, the American pianist/composer, and sent it to Edinburgh for Mary to copy. Hopekirk had written to ask if she could rearrange the verses of Macleod's "The Lonely Hunter" in setting the poem to music. Fiona gave her permission to make whatever changes she wished: "I do not think the needs or nuances of one art should ever be imposed upon the free movement of another in alliance." We do not know if the American novelist Carson McCullers adopted the title of her first and most widely read novel, *The Heart is a Lonely Hunter* (1940), directly from the Fiona poem or from Helen Hopekirk's song. The poem, which first appeared in the 1896 *From the Hills of Dream*, is one of Sharp's loveliest. Its final quatrain reveals its flavor:

O never a green leaf whispers, where the green-gold branches swing:  
 O never a song I hear now, where one was wont to sing  
 Here in the heart of Summer, sweet is life to me still.  
 But my heart is a lonely hunter that hunts on a lonely hill.

Fiona told Hopekirk she would soon be going to "Italy, and to friends, and to beautiful places in the sun, there and in Sicily and perhaps in Algeria." This was the itinerary the Sharps followed, though they did not make it as far as Algeria. Usually careful to place Fiona in places

other than those he planned to visit, Sharp must have decided Hopekirk in America was too far away to matter.

Then, writing as Fiona, Sharp conveyed his sense of a foreshortened life:

I think outward change matters less and less as the imagination deepens and as the spirit more and more "turns westward." I love the South; and in much, and for much, am happy there: but as the fatally swift months slip into the dark I realize more and more that it is better to live a briefer while at a high reach of the spirit and the uplifted if overwrought physical part of one than to save the body and soothe the mind by the illusions of physical indolence and mental leisure afforded by long sojourns in the sun lands of the South.

Moving on to describe her love of contemporary French poetry and music, loves that reflected those of William Sharp, Fiona concluded by saying she would send Hopekirk a copy of her new Tauchnitz volume, *The Sunset of Old Tales*, which was about to be published in Germany. She wanted her to have "something direct from a writer whom (to her true pleasure) you so truly care for, and who, as you say, has opened gates to you with others."

From Venice, the Sharps went to Florence where they stayed with the Eugene Lee-Hamiltons. During this last visit to their Villa Palmerino, a few miles outside Florence, the Sharps found their host quite ill and very frail. He would suffer a debilitating stroke and die in 1907. From Florence, the Sharps went to Rome and then to Sicily where they spent the rest of November among friends in the warmth of Taormina. In mid-November, Sharp wrote a note from Rome to Anna Geddes, promising to write more when they reached Sicily and expressing his hope to see Patrick Geddes on the Riviera after Christmas as they had decided to go there instead of Algeria, partly for "health reasons" and partly for "purse reasons." After a week in Taormina, they left on November 27 for the Castello Maniace where they planned to spend December with Alexander Nelson Hood. Sharp described their journey in a letter to Roselle Lathrop Shields on December fourth:

We left Taormina in a glory of mid-summerlike warmth and beauty — and we drove down the three miles of winding road from Taormina to the sea at Giardini; thence past the bay and promontory of Naxos, and at the site of the ancient famous fane of Apollo Archagêtès turned inland.

Then through the myriad lemon-groves of Al Cantara, till we crossed the gorges of the Fiumefreddo, and then began the long ascent, in blazing heat, by the beautiful hill road to the picturesque mountain-town of Piedemonte. There we caught the little circum-Ætnean mountain loop-line, and ascended the wild and beautiful slopes of Etna. Last time we went we travelled mostly above the clouds, but this time there was not a vestige of vapour in the radiant air, save for the outriders' trail of white occasionally flare-coloured, smoke from the vast 4-mile wide mouth of snow-white and gigantically-looming cone of Etna. At the lofty mediaeval and semi-barbaric town of Randazzo we were delayed by an excited crowd at the station, on account of the arrest and bringing in by the carabinieri of three chained and heavily manacled brigands, one of them a murderer, who evidently had the sympathy of the populace. A woman, the wife of one of the captured men, outdid any lamenting Irish woman I ever saw: her frenzy was terrible — and of course the poor soul was life-desolate and probably punished and would likely never see her man again. Finally she became distracted with despair and fury, and between her appeals and furious curses and almost maniacal lamentations, the small station was anything but an agreeable stopping place. The captive brigands were absolutely impassive: not a glance: only, as the small train puffed onward, one of them lifted a manacled arm behind one of the carabinieri and made a singular sign to someone.

Thereafter we passed into the wild and terrible lava-lands of the last frightful eruption, between Randazzo and the frontier of the Duchy of Bronte: a region as wild and fantastic as anything imagined by Doré, and almost terrifying in its somber deathfulness. The great and broad and sweeping mountains, and a mightily strath — and we came under the peaked rocks of Maletto, a little town standing 3000 feet high. Then the carriage, and the armed escort, and we had that wonderful drive thro' wild and beautiful lands of which I have heretofore written you. Then about four we drove up to the gates of the Castle, and passed into the great court just within the gates, and had the cordial and affectionate welcome of our dear host.

A few minutes later we were no longer at an ancient castle in the wilds of Sicily, but in a luxurious English country house at afternoon tea.

A few days later on December 8, according to his diary as printed in the *Memoir*, Sharp wrote a second letter to Roselle which signaled his rapidly fading health. When he tried to sit down to his writing a "mental nausea seized" him and even "a written chat to a friend seemed to me too exhausting." His need to continue writing was terribly pressing, but, he wrote, "I simply can't."

He did manage, in addition to his letter to Shields, a long letter to Robert Hichens on the eighth. It was a response to a letter from Hichens expressing his regret that Sharp's physical condition would prevent him from going to North Africa in January. Elizabeth explained in the *Memoir*: "It had been planned that after the New Year Mr. Hood, Mr. Hichens, my husband and I should go together to Biskra. But as the autumn waned, we realized the unwisdom of making any such plans" (*Memoir*, p. 413). Sharp described the changed plans in a letter to W. B. Yeats on December 7: they expected to remain at Maniace until after Christmas and then go to the French Riviera for three months. In this final letter, his last to Yeats, he was responding to a November 4 letter from Yeats. Hurt by Yeats's "continuous and apparently systematic ignoring of any communication", Sharp had made up his mind "to keep silence henceforth." After writing often to Sharp and Fiona Macleod for many years about rituals for his Celtic Mystical Order, Yeats had become distracted by his involvement in the creation of a theater in Dublin. He seems not to have communicated with Sharp since April 1904, when he said he had found many admirers of Fiona Macleod during his trip to America. Now he wrote to ask what messages Sharp had been receiving from the spirit world and to probe further his relationship with Fiona.

Sharp said he could not write about any visitations or about Fiona but would discuss those matters with Yeats when they met.

I may add, however, that neither I nor any person personally known to me "sent" any one to you on a veiled mission. At the same time—that a certain person sought you and that you did not recognize the person, the occasion, or the significance: [This statement is crossed out in the letter.] As you know, we are in a crucial period of change in many ways, and there are circles within circles, veiled influences and good and evil (and non-good and non-evil) formative and disformative forces everywhere at work. Obscure summons, obscure warnings, meetings & partings, veiled messages, come to us all. All which sounds very absurd, or mysterious, or conveniently vague. However, you'll understand. Also my present silence.

It is quite amazing that, less than a week before he died, Sharp was able to revert so easily to his spiritualist exchanges with Yeats. He concluded by asking about the meaning of a dream he may or may not have had:

I dreamt of you some time ago as going thro' a dark wood and plucking here and there in the darkness seven apples (as you thought) — but they were stars. And you came to the edge or cliff and threw three away, & listened, and then hearing nothing threw three more idly away. But you kept, or forgot, one — & it trickled thro' your body and came out at your feet, and you kicked it before you as you walked, & it gave light, but I do not think you saw the light, or the star. What is your star, here, — do you know? Or can you interpret the dream?

In describing this dream, Sharp may have been prompted by the ending of Yeats's "The Song of Wandering Aengus": "And pluck till time and times are done | The silver apples of the moon, the golden apples of the sun." This poem appeared first in *The Sketch* on August 4, 1897 where it was called "A Mad Song," and then in Yeats' *The Wind among the Reeds* (London: Elkin Mathews, 1899, p. 15).

One paragraph of the letter is particularly moving as it refers to both his physical and his mental illness:

For many months this year I was ill — dying — but there were other than physical reasons for this, & I survived thing after thing and shock after shock like a swimmer rising to successive waves — & then suddenly to every one's amazement swam into havens of relative well-being once more. But the game is not over, of course: and equally of course is a losing game. Nevertheless I'm well content with things as they are, all things considered.

In his diary on December 8, Sharp said he and Elizabeth had that afternoon "a lovely drive," and she described that "fatal" drive in the *Memoir* (p. 418).

We drove far along a mountain pass and at the furthest point stopped to let him look at the superb sunset over against the hillset town of Cesaro. He seemed wrapt in thought and looked long and steadfastly at the wonderful glowing light; it was with difficulty that I persuaded him to let us return. On the way back, a sudden turn of the road brought us in face to the snow-covered cone of Aetna. The wind had changed and blew with cutting cold straight off the snow. It struck him, chilling him through and through. Half-way back he got out of the carriage to walk and get warm. But the harm was done.

When they returned to Maniace, he told Elizabeth he planned to talk a great deal that evening to "amuse" Alec Hood who seemed depressed. And Hood, as he said goodnight to Elizabeth, said "I have never heard

Will more brilliant than he has been tonight." The next morning Sharp had a severe pain — perhaps a diabetic attack, perhaps a heart attack, perhaps both — which Elizabeth believed to be caused by the chill during their drive. A doctor was summoned, but he could only relieve the pain; he died three days later in his wife's arms with his friend Alec Hood by his side in the afternoon of December 12.

Sharp was buried in the English Cemetery on the estate two days later. Ernest Rhys, wrote in his *Letters from Limbo* (p. 80): "A pity he did not live to see his own superb funeral when he was carried by torchlight up the mountain after his death at the Duke of Bronte's Castle Maniace in Sicily. [...] He was a great romancer and died as he had lived, romancing." Rhys himself was not immune to romancing since the cemetery is not on a hill and not far from the Castle. If there was a procession from the residence to the cemetery, it would have made its way along a dusty road in sunlight. According to Elizabeth, Sharp was "laid in a little woodland burial-ground on the hillside within sound of the Simeto," a river that runs through the grounds of the estate. His poem, "Invocation to Peace", from the *Dominion of Dreams* was read over the grave by Alec Hood who commissioned a large Celtic cross carved from the lava of Mount Etna to mark the grave. On the cross, in accord with Sharp's instructions, is the inscription:

IN MEMORY OF WILLIAM SHARP

BORN 12<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 1855

DIED 12<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 1905

FIONA MACLEOD

"FAREWELL TO THE KNOWN AND EXHAUSTED

WELCOME TO THE UNKNOWN AND UNFATHOMED" W. S.

"LOVE IS MORE GREAT THAN WE CONCEIVE

AND DEATH IS THE KEEPER OF UNKNOWN REDEMPTIONS"

F. M.



Fig. 31. Celtic Cross marking William Sharp's Grave. Castello Nelson's Protestant Cemetery, Sicily. Photograph by Warwick Gould (2016), reproduced with his permission.

Letters: 1905

*To Thomas Hardy, January 4, 1905*

Bordighera | Casa Viale 20 | 4th Jany/04<sup>1</sup>

Dear Mr. Hardy,<sup>2</sup>

I have just returned from a visit to W. D. Howells<sup>3</sup> at San Remo — and I feel sure you will like to know how highly he, one of the foremost or as some think the foremost of living American authors, rates your work. He spoke of it with the greatest admiration, & ranked it foremost of all contemporary work in fiction. He was greatly pleased when I told him I had heard you speak highly of the faithful realism of his own books, & your enjoyment of them. He goes in a few weeks now to America which he will not leave again he says, as years & sorrows & the need of

rest for mind & body make him eager to get back for good to his own home in Maine.

My wife & I have only a short time ago returned from a visit to New York & Boston, and are thankful to be "on this side" again, & in Italy in particular, though we had a delightful time in the States in all respects.

We go to Rome about the middle of the month for two or three months. Is there no chance of you & Mrs. Hardy's coming there? It is a lovely Spring climate, & England seems in for a spell of cold & damp. I fear from a letter I've just had from Arthur Tomson that he is in worse health than he has been for long, & that he must leave Dorset.

I hope you are well, & that you are soon to relent and give the thousands who look for it the pleasure of another novel from your pen.

With Mrs. Sharp's & my own best wishes for the New Year to Mrs. Hardy & yourself

Believe me dear Mr. Hardy | Most Sincerely Yours | William Sharp

I saw our common friend Mrs. Moulton,<sup>4</sup> who in common with many others in New York & Boston, spoke of you.

*ALS Dorset County Museum. Thomas Hardy Memorial Collection*

**To William Dean Howells, [mid-January, 1905]**

Albergo Parco | Via Sallustiana | Roma

Dear Mr. Howells

We are settled here (instead of in rooms, or an apartment with a servant — which we found not to be had in accordance with our desires & needs & means) in a pleasant little suite of 3 or 4 rooms at the top of a sunny & charming new small hotel in the sunniest & healthiest part of Rome. Our rooms all face S.E. & S.W. — and so we have unbroken sunshine from sunrise till sunset: & from our windows & balconies of our *Salotto* we have superb views over Rome and to the hills & to the Campagna. Rome, however, has a treacherous climate: and, again, we know too many people here, Italian, English, Russian, American, &

French — Society & Bohemia in a perpetual league against work — so for these two reasons it is doubtful if we'll remain beyond the end of February.<sup>5</sup> I'm afraid Italy is not a good place for work: I think we of the Anglo-Celtic stock need the northern bite of Great Britain or North America to do our best in the best way.

I have tried in vain to get your "Italian poets"<sup>6</sup> book — & my hope to find an old copy at Piale's library has not been fulfilled. So if within the next month or two (or anytime) you perchance hear of any copy to be had, & do not wish to secure it yourself, I wd. be glad if you wd. let me know. I am sure it wd. be most useful to me in the work I have on hand, apart from its own charm.

Hoping that you and yours are well, & that Spring is with you,

Sincerely Yours | William Sharp

*ALS Harvard University, Houghton Library*

**To William Dean Howells, [late-January, 1905]**

Hotel del Parco | Via Sallustiana | Roma

Dear Mr. Howells,

It is most kind of you to say that you will try to get a copy of "Italian Poets" and send to me. I need not say how grateful I shall be. As our movements after we leave here are very uncertain, and as we do not expect (at any rate I do not expect) to be in London (where my address is | The Grosvenor Club | Piccadilly) until early in May, my best address is that of my home in Scotland, whence everything addressed to me reaches me promptly and safely — namely | Murrayfield | Midlothian | Scotland | and there I shall be much obliged if you will kindly direct the most welcome book to be sent.

I wish you had been here today. We had a Russian gentleman visiting us who knows English literature well, &, seeing one of your books on the table, spoke of his great liking for your work, & how he had read all or nearly all you had written. I liked his summing up — "I feel thus because he sees truly, and utters truth, and does so graciously."

I shall be very sorry to leave Rome at the end of February — but, alas, I can't afford to be anywhere I can't work — & in every way Rome is about the last place for that.

With all cordial regards from Mrs. Sharp & myself. Believe me, dear Mr. Howells,

Sincerely Yours, | William Sharp

ALS Harvard University, Houghton Library

**To Lauretta Stedman,<sup>7</sup> February 5, [1905]**

Albergo del Garco | Via Sallustiana | Rome | 5th Feby for (18th)

Dear Lauretta,

I hope this will reach you on your birthday morning — if I am right in remembering that to be the 18th and that it will carry to you all affectionate greetings and good wishes from us both. I hope that in all ways it will be a happy year for you.

We have charming rooms here — & from the windows and balconies of our *Salotta* or sitting room, high-set on the highest & sunniest part of Rome, we overlook the Eternal City, with glimpses of the Sabine Hills & of the dim sea-like Campagna. But I've not been well, nor has Mrs. Sharp: for one thing, each in turn was attacked by severe influenza. For reasons of health (for my perilous diabetic ailment has been seriously touched up again, in consequence I suppose) & also for work-conditions, & other reasons, we have decided to leave Italy at the end of February for "The English Riviera," in other words for Ventnor in the South of the Isle of Wight — where, indeed, we think of some day making a home. I am tired of so many years of continuous wandering, & I'm sure Mrs. Sharp is eager for a home, tho' she loves being in Italy also. For work's sake, too, (& I don't mean the financial side of the question) it is in all ways better for me to be more in touch with my own country. So, early in March, think of us in that beautiful place overlooking the sea to the S. & S. W. (In mid-April I'll be in the Highlands of Scotland for a few weeks). I think I gave you my

best letter-address (at all times) namely, Murrayfield | Midlothian | Scotland (tho' in May & June, The Grosvenor Club, Piccadilly, London w<sup>d</sup> do as well).

We both eagerly hope all goes well with E. C. S. and Mrs. Stedman.  
Our loving greetings to them both, as also to your mother.

Forgive, dear Lauretta, so bald a letter — but I'm not quite well yet, & am under exhausting pressure of accumulated work & correspondence. Only I want to send you even the briefest line in birthday remembrance, and a breath from the beautiful & wonderful Italy you too love so well, tho' as yet only in longing and the heart's dream.

Ever affectionately your friend, | William Sharp

*ALS Huntington Library*

**To Robert Underwood Johnson,<sup>8</sup> February 5, [1905]**

Hotel du Parc | Via Sallustiana, Rome | 5th February

A card to say that after arrival in Rome my wife became seriously ill with influenza, & that subsequently I was also attacked & with the serious result of touching up my old ailment to an extent to paralyze all work. I am now up & about again, and am well into the Sicily article, but it will be a week or 10 days yet before I can despatch it I fear<sup>9</sup>. I forget when you said you w<sup>d</sup> be in Rome: — if March, then we shall not meet, for the doctor says Rome is bad for me now, since the recrudescence of this ailment (of a Diabetes nature) and so at the end of February we leave, as advised, for Ventnor in the Isle of Wight. (After Feby end, my best address Murrayfield | (Midlothian) | Scotland).

William Sharp

*ACS Huntington Library*

**To Richard Watson Gilder, February 5, 1905**

Hotel du Parc | Via Sallustiana, Rome | 5: February :05

Dear Mr. Gilder,

In case Mr. Johnson has already left I send this to say I have just written to him to tell how after coming to Rome my wife became ill with a serious attack of influenza, and how, later, I myself had a bad *repeated* bout of it, with the result that my insidious diabetic ailment has been touched up again, tho' I hope not gravely. I am now up and about again, and feeling right enough, but we have to leave Rome at the end of February the doctor advises, and we go straight back to Ventnor, in the Isle of Wight, where climate and general conditions of life and work are particularly suitable for me. All this made work on "Sicily" or anything else out of the question, alas. I am now, however, well into the "Sicily" double article, but it will be at least a week or 10 days yet before I can despatch it, tho' I will do my utmost to do so by then.

So after the end of February note that I shall not be in Rome or Italy. My best letter-address for the next month or two (i. e., till May, when the Grosvenor Club, Piccadilly, London) will be Murrayfield, Midlothian, Scotland.

Sincerely yours, | William Sharp

ACS Huntington Library

**To Thomas Mosher, February 11, [1905]<sup>10</sup>**

Address: Miss Macleod | 22 Ormidale Terrace |  
Murrayfield | Midlothian | Scotland |  
11th February

Dear Mr. Mosher

Dubious and ever varying health, with much going to and fro in quest of what is perhaps not to be found (for mere change of climate will not give

health unless other conditions combine to bring about the miracle) have, among other causes, prevented my writing to you as I had intended, or, indeed, from doing much writing of any kind. I have written a few articles for *Country Life* — and little else, published or unpublished. The days go by and I say "at night" — and every night I am too tired or listless, and say "tomorrow": and so both nights and the morrows go to become thistles in the Valley of Oblivion. But with the advancing Spring I am regathering somewhat of lost energy, and if only I were back in Scotland I believe I should be hard at work! Well, I shall be there soon, though I may be away again, in the remote isles or in Scandinavia for the late spring and summer.

What pleasure I have had in the books you sent me. In every way I much prefer these charming leather-bound volumes to the parchment ones. They are delightful both to see and to feel. Will you very kindly let me have another copy of the leather-bound 2nd edit. of *From the Hills of Dream*. You are so kind always, that it seems like presumption to ask also for another book, but I want very much to have another copy of the leather-bound *Blake's Songs of Innocence*,<sup>11</sup> for I gave away the "Songs" I had to a friend who has since I believe got many of your publications.

And now as to publication-proposals.

First, there is that condensed, selected, and rearranged edition of the personal and autobiographical part of *Iona* (in *The Divine Adventure* volume), with some added reminiscent material. It might be called "The Isle of Voices," or "On the Grey Wind," or "The Island of Dreams," or the originally proposed title "In a Kingdom by the Sea."<sup>12</sup> It would take me some time to rewrite and rearrange, and to write the new part, and prepare the whole ready for you to reprint. So, if you still care for the idea (and I want to do it) will you let me know what you can afford to [pay] the at present impecunious as well as (alas too often now) indolent author?

Second, there is the volume of verse spoken about to you by my friend when in Boston. This would be a small volume, and would be called *Runes of Women*, and, despite the "Rune of Woman" and the "Rune of the Passion of Women" being already so well-known and in the *Hills of Dream* volume, I think the book would be incomplete without them.

What is your opinion about this? It is all but certain, I may add, that there would be no English edition of this book. It is too personal, and if I publish it at all it could only be through you, and with the relative remoteness of publication in America (and of course any one on this side wanting it could get it from you). Judging from the way *Hills of Dream* has been received, and especially the two poems named, the book would be bought by many. (It might or might not include some of the lyrical poems in my next book of verse — probably would: but I can't say yet.) I understand that you yourself favor this volume. So please let me hear what you can suggest.<sup>13</sup>

Finally, there is the suitable republishable matter in *The Winged Destiny* (notably "The Sunset of Old Tales"). I would suggest a vol. called *The Sunset of Old Tales*, and comprising (1) the titular piece; (2) "The Treud nan Ron"; (3) "The Man on the Moor"; (4) "The Woman at the Cross Ways"; (5) "Orpheus and Oisin".<sup>14</sup> Or, if you would prefer two smaller vols, I would suggest one called "The Sunset of Old Tales," and giving only the titular piece and the "Treud nan Ron" and "Orpheus and Oisin" (or only, with the titular piece, "Orpheus and Oisin").

"The Wayfarer" and "Orpheus and Oisin" are the only two that would go well by themselves, as single publications.<sup>15</sup>

Please let me hear from you at your early convenience, and hoping that all is well with you in all ways,

Believe me, | Dear Mr. Mosher, | Ever sincerely yours, | Fiona Macleod  
TLS New York Public Library, Berg Collection

*To Thomas Mosher, February 20, 1905*

20: Feb.: 1905

Dear Mr. Mosher,

I have just returned from abroad, having to go to the West for some time, and find that your letter of Feb. 3rd has just crossed one I sent you from

Italy on the 11th. As this letter answers yours, I shall now await your reply. Excuse a P. C. written en route.

F. M.

*ACS New York Public Library, Berg Collection*

***To Richard Watson Gilder, February 20, [1905]***

Rome | 20th February

Just a P. C. to say that the Sicily article (in two parts, as wished) is now completed (after having been twice rewritten, on account of the difficulties of condensation with such a mass of material) and is being typed, and should go to you by the ensuing U. S. A. mail from here, Rome, some 3 days hence. Please note as to my letter address now that it is Murrayfield | (Midlothian) | Scotland. Neither my wife nor myself has been at all well here, & we leave on the last day of February: & about a fortnight later, or sooner, shall be in Ventnor in the Isle of Wight.

William Sharp

*ACS Huntington Library*

***To Thomas Mosher, February 21, 1905***

Fischer's Park Hotel | Rome | 21st. February /05

My Dear Mr. Mosher,

I ought to have written to you some time ago to thank you for the beautiful little books you so kindly sent to me. I am delighted to have them, and (as I know our friend the author does) I much prefer them, both to handle and to look at, to the parchment-bound copies. What beautiful reprints yours are. They have been much admired here by the many English, American, and foreign friends who come to see us, &

again & again I have been asked (or have volunteered) your address & other particulars. I am glad, too, to have them as a reminder of our pleasant meeting. I am very glad we had time for that confidential chat, too, and I think you will now better understand certain reserves & puzzling things, & the more readily see, or at any rate *feel*, how they are not all by any means arbitrary or foolish, but more or less inevitable. I have of course seen a good deal of my friend since I came to Italy, and before she left Rome the other day I explained to her about our talk, & how that whatever she wrote to you at any time in privacy would be kept absolutely private by you. I dare say now, too, you understand a good deal more than what was said, by inference. When we meet again, or someday, things may be made still clearer to you.<sup>16</sup>

My friend has written to you, I know, about some of the literary projects you and I spoke of, notably the book that will doubtless reach more people than anything else of a remoter kind, because of its personal note and its "modernity." ... the "Runes of Women," though it is not likely that (for the same personal reason) it will be published in England. It might be disagreeable to have it much discussed, especially in Scotland

I leave Rome next week and go to Paris, and early in March cross to the south of England (Ventnor, in the Isle of Wight) — where it is possible I may see our friend again: if not, then in the West Highlands or Isles about mid-April. I shall be in the W. of Scotland 3 weeks at least then, & then rejoin my wife in London for the summer. (Our friend, (health & the difficult question of means permitting) may probably be away in a yacht and with friends a good deal this late spring and summer, in the far North — primarily for health, tho' now much better I am glad to say: but, as ever, movements very uncertain.)

My best address henceforth will be The Grosvenor Club | Dover St. | London W.

With all cordial greetings & regards |  
Sincerely yours | William Sharp

**To Richard Watson Gilder, February 22, 1905**

Rome | 22<sup>nd</sup> February /05

Murrayfield | (Midlothian) Scotland

Dear Mr. Gilder,

I suppose Mr. Johnson is now on the seas, if not actually in Italy, so that we cannot hope to see him, as we leave Rome and Italy in a day or two, as my continued ill health here, along with exigencies of work, take me elsewhere. We go for a month or two to Ventnor, in the Isle of Wight, which climatically and otherwise suits us both. I put the above address as my best letter-address from now, or at any time (save from May till end July, when the Grosvenor Club, Piccadilly, London, W. is best).

Herewith I am sending you, by Registered MSS. post, the completed MS. (typed, and corrected for press) of my "In Sicily" article, in two suitably divided parts as wished, the first rather longer, & both perhaps longer than the mentioned length as about the right thing. It was, however, as I found even after a third rewriting it from the mass of available material, and continual deletion, practically infeasible to make the double-article shorter, if anything like "an article of practical use and suggestion, readably put," as Mr. Johnson expressed it to me, were desired. This I have striven to do, bearing in mind that the vast majority of travellers to or intending travellers to Sicily want to know beforehand something of the main routes, & where & how to see what is best worth seeing. As to the title I thought it would be as well to indicate the limited scope of the article by the use of the subtitular "Route-Notes" — and as to the general title, either "In Sicily" if you prefer it, or, as I have put it, from an old writer, "In the Old Garden of the Sun."

I hope the article may prove what you want, an article of routes and ways & means, made readable & I hope interesting for all.

I am not quite sure if it was specified that payment was to be made after receipt of completed MS., but in any case I hope it may be convenient, as illness & delayed work & enforced travel expenses will leave me somewhat embarrassed by the time we reach Ventnor about mid-March.

With cordial regards (in which Mrs. Sharp begs to join, with all friendly remembrances to Mrs. Gilder) — with a similar greeting to Mr. Johnson if perchance after all he has not yet left —

Sincerely yours, | William Sharp

ALS Huntington Library

**To Thomas Mosher, March 21, [1905]**

Dictated<sup>17</sup>

C/o 22 Ormidale Terrace | Murrayfield, Midlothian |  
Scotland | Tuesday evening 21st March.

Dear Mr. Mosher,

There has been delay in getting your letter, for I returned by sea from Italy, and then changed my plans before arrival and went to see friends in France. I am now in Edinburgh en route for the west, and have received all my delayed and reforwarded correspondence. I cannot write to you in detail yet, nor is it likely I shall be able to do so for some days to come at earliest, but meanwhile I must send you this line of acknowledgment.

I can, however, at once express my general agreement with what you write. Neither the reminiscent volume (rearranged and augmented from *Iona*) or *Runes of Woman*, however, can be sent to you for Spring publication — though in good time I hope for the Autumn. I do not think you can depend on my sending these "MSS" for your earlier receipt than the middle of May. The date may be later: if at all practicable, it may even be a little earlier. But if you can count on receipt of both before the summer is not that sufficient to go upon?

The "Iona" MS. I can certainly manage to despatch by the end of April I think I may safely say

In great haste, or I shall miss both this mail and my own train,  
Yours ever sincerely | Fiona Macleod

TLS New York Public Library, Berg Collection

**To William John Robertson,<sup>18</sup> [April 10, 1905]**Edinburgh<sup>19</sup>

Dear Mr. Robertson,

After our most pleasant evening a deux I had a comfortable journey north: and last night luxuriated in getting to bed early (a rare thing for me) with the sure and certain knowledge there would be no glorious resurrection therefrom at any untimely hour. So after sleeping the sleep of the true Gael — who is said to put 85 to the poor Saddenach 40 winks — I woke in peace. I was thereafter having a cigarette over the *Scotsman* when my youngest (and secretary) sister brought me my letters, papers, etc., and with them a long narrow box which I soon discovered to be your generous gift of 100 of these delectable Indian cigars. It is very good of you indeed, and I am grateful, and may the ancient Gaelic God Dia-Cheo, God of Smoke, grant you remission of all your philological sins and derivative "howlers" — and the more so as there is no authority for any such god, and the name would signify hill-mist instead of pipe-smoke! And may I have a hundred "reves de Notre Dame de Nicotine!" I couldn't resist trying one. Wholly excellent. And in the meditative fumes I arrived through intuition at the following derivation which I hope will find a place in your book:

Roab ancient Celtic for a Good Fellow

H'Errt " " " " Smoke-Maker or Smoke-bestower

's contraction for *Agus* "and"

*Onn* ancient Celtic for "May Heaven Bless"

W. J. ancient Celtic Tribal tattoo —

which, assisted in dreams by the spirits of Windisch, D'Arbois de Jubainville, Loth, Whitley Stokes and Kuno Meyer, I take to be W. J. *Roab-H'Errt-Sonn* — i.e. Bill-Jack, or in mod. English "William John" of the Clan of Heaven-Blessed Friendly Smokers — i.e. William John of the Roaberrtsson, or Robertson Clan. This of course disposes of Donnachie once and for all.

Ever sincerely yours, | William Sharp

*Memoir*, pp. 395–96

**To Richard Garnett, [early April, 1905]**

Murrayfield | Midlothian

My Dear Garnett,

Your welcome letter and the book<sup>20</sup> you so kindly sent reached me just as we were leaving Ventnor — and I had not time even to look at the volume in the train on account of pressing proofs etc., & then during my brief stay in London (en route to see my mother here) I was hopelessly preoccupied. But I had a long day's welcome leisure coming to Scotland, and my leisure was made a great pleasure by perusal of your Shakespearian play. It was not first acquaintance, however, for I got a copy in New York — though circumstances prevented any reading of that or anything else either during our visit to Stedman (& other friends) or when in New York & Boston.

What a tour-de-force your book is! Every line from that mysterious Shakespearian mint, into whose secret ways you have penetrated, rings with the unmistakable challenge. Only out of the most intimate knowledge of Shakespeare's life & thought & life-work could such a drama as yours have been produced, and no one not himself a poet of high order could have achieved so fine & memorable a thing. But I want to read it & study it again, & more closely, before I write further on it.

When I return from Scotland early in May I hope to have the pleasure of calling on you — & also someday with Mrs. Sharp — & having a chat on many things.

I was very sorry indeed to hear of your serious indisposition, & of how it lamed you: but now, I hope, you are well again (I met several friends in America who asked for you).

Most Sincerely Yours | William Sharp

*ALS University of Texas, Austin*

**To Elizabeth A. Sharp, [April 19, 1905]<sup>21</sup>**

Wedny Morning

Dearest, it was sweet to fall asleep last night to the sound of the hill-wind & the swift troubled waters. We had a lovely walk in the late afternoon, & again in the somber moonlit night. It came on too strong for me to go round to the cavern later, however. I'll try again. I was there about first dusk, however, with Mary. To my chagrin there was neither sound nor sight of the sea-woman, but she must be there for MacCaskill has twice heard her sobbing and crying out at him when he passed close in the black darkness. There was only a pibhinn (*pee-veen*, a lapwing) wailing near by, but both Mary & I heard a singular furtive sound like something in a trailing silk dress whispering to itself as it slid past in the dusk — but this, I think, was a curious echo of what's called a "sobbing wave" in some narrow columnar hidden hollow opening from the sea. Mary got the creeps, & loathed a story I told her about a midianmara that sang lovely songs but only so as to drown the listener & suck the white warm marrow out of his spine. "Well, you can stay and be sucked" she said, half angrily half frightenedly — "but I'm going back before it gets darker." After she went to bed (fancy Mrs. MacCaskill remembering that I slept in the blankets, & so had them unsheeted & warmed) I joined MacCaskill for a bit over the flickering fire-flaucht. I got him to tell me all over again & more fully about the Maighdeann Mhara. The first time he heard "something" was before his fright last November. "There was *céol* then" (i.e. music — but as he repeated *céol-bheul*, that's more like whistling, for the double word means mouth-music) he said. "An robh òrain 'g an gabhail?" I asked ("were songs sung"?) "Tha air uairibh," he said ("Yes, at times" — i.e. now and again). Mrs. MacC. was angry at him he said, and said he hadn't the common sense of a jenny-cluckett (a clocking hen) — but (and there's a world of difference in that) she hadn't heard what he had heard. So to cheer him up I told him a story, speaking slowly, & in English of course, about a crab that fed on the brains of a drowned man, and grew with such awful & horrible wisdom that it climbed up the stairway of the seaweed and on to a big rock and waved its claws at the moon and cursed God & world, and then died raving mad. Seeing how it worked upon him, I said I would tell him

another, and worse, about a lobster — but he was just as bad as Mary, and said he would wait for the lobster till the morning, and seemed so absurdly eager to get safely to bed that the pleasant chat had to be abruptly broken off.

But this morning I discovered the mystery of the puddock. He had secured it for me under the mistaken idea I wanted one — whereas what I had wanted was the folklore of the frog, if he could get any for me. He had never heard of the word folklore, & thought it my way of saying "forelegs" I suppose! As yet I've got no information about birds etc. that I don't already know (& alas, much better than he does), but I hope for something on the heron. "But she wull no pe a burd," he expostulated — and I had to explain it wasn't sgàdan I meant (i.e. a herring) but the "burd."

You shd. have seen & heard Mary's burst of suffocating laughter when he was telling her about his blessed much-loved "hairy tog" — and how it chased Mrs. MacC's best duck — and then, poor man, meaning to say that it snatched the tail out he said something else much cruder but so wildly ludicrous that Mary collapsed. "She will pe ferry fond o' togs," said MacC., meditatively staring at her.

Yes, dear, I'm glad indeed to be here, for every reason (except the cold, tho' its far better than Edinburgh — those awful E. winds — the E. wind gloom — tho' damper of course) — & I dare say it's true what you say abt "The Tribe of The Plover." That, however, was a special folk-lore paper on the subject, and not one of F's own spontaneous papers. There have to be one or two like that ever & again. But the "Clans of the Grass" and "The Wild Apple," both written about same time, are as wholly F. as anything else, especially the first.<sup>22</sup> All the same you are right of course about my needing (I'm always needing it) fresh native & original wellsprings. And Lismore is a haunted isle, & MacC. a treasure. (He's to tell me some Ross things *soon*).<sup>23</sup> And now here he is, & we're to cross in the ferry at once to post by the steamer.

Hurriedly yours, Dear one, Will

P.S. In one way, however, I'm thankful you aren't here. The cold is very great, & as it is damp cold you'd feel it hard. Even with a warm blanket below me, & six above I was cold — & when I got up and had a partial

bath (for I scooted out of it to dress) my breath swarmed about the room like a clutch of phantom peewits. No wonder I had a dream I was a seal with my feet clammed on to an iceberg. You couldn't stand it. Even Mary said it was like mid-winter. A duck went past a little ago seemingly with one feather & that blown athwart its beak, so strong was the north wind blowing from the snowy mass of Ben Nevis.<sup>24</sup>

After all we're too late, for it's very rough & the wind strong, to catch the steamer-post Mr. MacCaskill says — but he'll take us across an hour hence, & then we'll walk the 6 miles there & back to Duror Station (Upper Appin)<sup>25</sup> to catch the train-post by the new service via Benderloch & Connel Ferry.

But after this we can't depend on morning posts, tho' sometimes feasible. So that a letter posted say on Monday here won't leave Lismore till Tuesday forenoon. Letters come about 4:30, & the postman now doesn't wait, so there is time to answer — and letters (even to go next day) must be ready for him. The only other thing is to walk 13 miles (6  $\frac{1}{2}$  each way) either at night or in the early morning.

A curious thing — about midnight last night I heard some one singing plaintively late out in the darkness outside the house — & not only did Mary hear it but sat up in her bed, wondering, & spoke to me about it in the morning before I said a word about it — but MacC. says "no, no, that could not ferry well pe at all, at all — for there's no one here to pe singing late at night", and if there had been he and the dogs wd. have heard it. "Don't pe saying such things," he added uneasily.

I think it's almost certain that we'll leave here when the week is up next Tuesday — for much as in every way I delight in it, I doubt if I can stand the penetrating cold. However, when one is up & moving about it is better. We have a huge fire all day. But I'm glad indeed to be here once more at this season, for I think it is in the last degree unlikely I'll ever be in Scotland again so early in the year, from choice. Only, it shows how well I am that I can stand it as I do.

We thought we saw a dead man floating off the north rocks, but it turned out to be a sleeping seal.

Ben Nevis is a mass of irradiate snow, worn like a delicate veil. Cruachan has covered herself with a pall of snow mist.

Lovingly, Will

*To Elizabeth A. Sharp, April 20, [1905]*

20 April

... Fiona Macleod has just been made an honorary member of a French League of writers devoted to the rarer and subtler use of Prose and Verse, a charming letter from Paul Fort acting for his colleagues Maeterlinck, Henri de Roquier, Jean Moréas, Emile Verhaeren, Comte Antoine de la Rochefoucault, Duchesse de la Roche-Guyon, Richépin, Sully Prudhomme, Henri Le Sidaner, Jules Claretie, etc., etc.<sup>26</sup>

We're glad, aren't we, you and I? She's our daughter, isn't she?

[William Sharp]

*Memoir*, p. 398

*To Elizabeth A. Sharp, April 23, [1905]*

23d April.

... You will have got my note of yesterday telling you that I have reluctantly had to relinquish Iona. The primary reason is its isolation at present. ...

But from something I heard from old Mr. C. I fancy it's as well for me not to visit there just now, where I'd be the only stranger, and every one would know of it — and where a look out for F. M. or W. S. is kept! And, too, anything heard there and afterwards utilized would be as easily traced to me. ... After Tiree and Iona and Coll, and Arran in the South, I don't care just now for anywhere else — nearer: as for Eigg, which I loved so much of old, Rum or Canna and the Outer Isles, they are too inaccessible just now and Skye is too remote and too wet and cold. However, it is isolation plus "atmosphere" I want most of all — and I doubt if there is any place just now I could get so much good from as Lismore. I love that quiet isolated house on the rocks facing the Firth of Lorne, all Appin to Ben Naomhir, and the great mountains of Morven.

It was on the sandy bindweed-held slope of the little bay near the house, facing Eilean-nan-Coarach, that F. wrote the prelude to *The Winged Destiny* — and also the first piece, the “Treud-nan-Ron”, which describes that region, with Dr. MacC.’s seal legend, and the dear little island in the Sound of Morven (do you remember our row to it one day?) There one could be quiet and given over to dreams and to the endless fascination of outer nature. ... And I have got much of what I want — the in-touch above all, the atmosphere: enough to strike the keynote throughout the coming year and more, for I absorb through the very pores of both mind and body like a veritable sponge. Wild-life and plant-life too [are] extremely interesting here. There does seem some mystery about that cave tho’ I cannot fathom it.

I’ve all but finished the preparation of the new Tauchnitz vol. (The Sunset of Old Tales) and expect to complete it (for May) tonight.

[William Sharp]

*Memoir, pp. 398–99*

***To W. J. Robertson, April [24?], 1905<sup>27</sup>***

Ri Willeam Iain MacRiobheart mhic Donnach aidh —

Awful accident in a lonely Isle of the West.

A distinguished stranger was observing the vasty deep, and had laid a flask-filled cup on a rock beside him when a tamned gull upset it and at same time carried off a valuable Indian cheroot. Deep sympathy is everywhere expressed, for the distinguished stranger, the lost cheroot, and above all for the spilt cup and abruptly emptied flask. A gloom has been cast over the whole island. Verb: Sap:<sup>28</sup>

[William Sharp]

*Memoir, p. 396*

**To Thomas Mosher, April 24, [1905]**

Monday 24th April, | c/o 22. Ormidale Terrace |  
Murrayfield Midlothian | Scotland  
(Tempy.) | Eilean Lios Mhor | Casil Morbhern | Argyll

Dear Mr. Mosher

I have today sent to you by registered book-post the final "copy" for the "*Iona*" book. If immaterial to you I much prefer that the book should be called simply *Iona*: but if you feel convinced that this would be inadvisable for even the small American public for such a book, or relatively for any books of mine, then I would suggest either the title already alluded to in previous letters, *In This Kingdom By The Sea*, or else, and I think better, *The Isle of Dreams*. So far as my own opinion goes, I think that, from every point of view, *Iona* is not only the better of the two, but the best possible. However, if you are convinced otherwise, then use either alternative. [Personally, of the two, I prefer *The Isle of Dreams*, but there's the question if that would not be thought to clash with the volume called *The Dominion of Dreams* (issued in U.S.A. by Fredk. Stokes & Co.) — though I suppose it would not really do so.] Till this moment I had forgotten a possible objection to the use of "*Iona*" as a title, in so far as it is an integral part of the title of *The Divine Adventure* volume — in which case "*The Isle of Dreams*" would serve. On the other hand, "*The D. A.*" has not been reprinted in America intact. The matter sent comprises the personal and legendary part of the original "*Iona*," by many people on this side considered the most interesting thing of mine. There are some revisions and MS. additions as well as rearrangement, and also some sixteen pages from *The Winged Destiny*: so that copyright is assured.

As it stands the matter should make a book of about the same size as *From the Hills of Dream*, say about 150 pp. I am estimating by the printed pages sent as I suppose what is on any one of these largely printed pages can be got into one of the "Old World Series" pages.

If, however, absolutely necessary to curtail the matter I would suggest the cancelling of the legendary episodes of St. Columba and the Blessing of the Fishes and barbaric tale of Olaus the White ... namely, from near top p. 99 to p. 118 inclusive: — i.e. 20 pp. If even that should not suffice,

then all the pages about Second-Sight (though in general drift so very personal) could be sacrificed also: i.e., the MS. pages 73, 73a, 74, 74a, 75, and printed pages 76 to 81 inclusive — in all about 9 pp. more. There's nothing else I could care to dispense with, unless, in actual necessity, from last para. on p. 43 to end of p. 51. (about 8 to 9 pp.)

[Possible Cancellings if absolutely necessary.

- (1) 20 pp.
- (2) 9 pp.
- (3) 8 pp]

Of course if feasible I would like to see proofs, and this especially advisable with the Gaelic words occasionally introduced. Please advise me of the approximate or actual date of their despatch, as I may be in the far west or north, and want to arrange to have no delay in connection with them: and please see that they are not registered, as that may (as it sometimes does) cause considerable delay, especially if my Secy. is from home.

Naturally, too, I must see proof of the private dedication-page, as that is solely in Gaelic. Please tell the printer to set and revise this very carefully before it is sent to me, especially in the proper spacing of such unfamiliar typesetting as, for example, *air sgàth n' h-àighh eadarainn* [where the *n'* stands by itself, and where *h-àigh* is one word, though with a hyphen'd *h*.] or again *Aislingean* 's *Miannain*, where 's is a distinct word. To obviate the chance of misreadings of such unfamiliar MS, I have enclosed with the registered matter two copies of the Dedication page, one written and one pen-printed. [You will hardly perhaps recognise my name in its Gaelic form, *Fionaghal nic Lèoid*?]

And now about the *Runes of Women*. I am very sorry to have to postpone the necessary final work on these, and consequently their despatch: but I fear that altered circumstances make it quite impossible for me to let you have the MS. by the middle of May. I have to leave here early tomorrow morning (unless, unfortunately, heavy weather prevents crossing to the mainland in time to catch the steamer for Oban) for Edinburgh, and the following morning must go south to Wales to be near one dear to me and who is seriously ill there. This may make

any attempt to finish and despatch the *Runes of Women* till the end of May out of the question. All I can say is that *if circumstances permit (but which you must not depend on)* I will try to finish the small book so as to despatch it either from Wales or Scotland by about the middle of May. All will depend on how circumstances go between this coming weekend and that following: (May 5<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup>). If these should be unexpectedly (but quite possibly) wholly favorable, then I shall be able to send off the MS. (typewritten) by or before mid-May: if not, well — you must put your anathema on the adverse circumstances and not on either the indifference or the indolence of,

Dear Mr. Mosher, | Yours very sincerely, | Fiona Macleod

P. S. I need hardly say I shall make every possible effort not to disappoint you (though now at the best the *earliest* for your receipt could not be before May 20th) but more than that obviously I cannot say.

*ALS New York Public Library, Berg Collection*

**To Elizabeth A. Sharp, [April 25, 1905]**

In the Train | (& ferry shaky at that!)

Tarling

It will pe ferry difficult to write in this unusually shaky train, which to use a slight hyperbole will almost pe hitting the horizon on each side in its ferry pad swayings.

You see what an influence Mr. MacCaskill has left on me! Fancy, Mrs. MacC. has only had her bonnet on twice since we saw her — once at her youngest daughter's marriage to Roroniil MacCoreadaile last year, & once at a photographing by the laird — and it is 6 years since she has ventured across the water to Appin! From years end & to years end, life is the same, save for the slow change of the seasons, & the slower invisible movements of the tides of life. It is restful for a time, but wd. be crushing after a spell, & mean stagnation for any not accustomed to daily manual toil or without local engrossing work.

They on the other hand look with mingled awe & amusement at the to them inexplicable longing to get away from such conditions, & for the already strong desire to leave this gloomy & dull climate for abroad, where life is (for us) so far easier as well as happier now. But even when I told MacC. that it was a matter of prolonged life & energy & youth for me, & that I invariably recede on an ebbing tide over here, & go high on a strong flowing tide over yonder, he'd only shake his head & say Ishe miann na lach an loch air nach bi I [i.e., in effect, the duck's desire is to be on some other loch than that on which she happens to find herself!]

But I am most glad to have been there: & learned & heard much, tho' little on the one subject where I can get next to nothing, Gaelic astronomy. By a coincidence the Gentleman opposite me in the train is the Astronomer of the Edinburgh Observatory (on his way to the Shine Observatory in the Isle of Wight, to examine the seismic vibration records of the Indian earthquake) & we have had a long talk, & lunched together, but it ended by his saying he wished he knew what I did about the Gaelic stars etc.!<sup>29</sup> What little I told him interested him greatly, but he says he has met no one in Ed. or Glasgow who has any knowledge on the subject, & that there's no book on the subject. In fact, he says, he didn't know of any G. name except for the North Star (& then proceeded to give the wrong name, for *Reul Nêar* is Star of the East! *Reul Tuath* or *Tuathal* is the N. Star.) When I told him about certain groups & constellations & said I had lists of many Gaelic star-names, gathered at long intervals, & thro' a hundred sources, he hinted he would like to know who I was, for, as he said, he hardly ever met anyone away from astronomical sets interested in these things, & especially in such themes as the migration of star-symbols, Aryan origins of Celtic names, & probable spiritual significance of oldest star-legends & even folklore — but I evaded this, as superfluous.

Yes, I was sorry to leave Lismore. It may be my last time in the Gaelic West. (I don't say this "down-ly" — but because I think it likely: and, in a way I'll explain later, am even glad. There is much I want to do, and now, as much by W. S. as F. M., & that I realize must be done abroad where alone (save for spring time in London) can I keep well — & mentally even more than physically. (How I hope Fontainebleu may someday suit us.)<sup>30</sup>

Dear Seumas MacCaskill was sorry to part too. He shook hands (with both his) and when I said in Gaelic “Goodbye, & farewell upon that, my friend” he said “No-no” — and then suddenly said “Mo beannachd oirbh ogus slàn leibh air an àm” [My blessing on you — and goodbye now! (literally — “and health be to you in the interval”)] and turned away & went down the pier-side & hoisted the brown sail & went away across the water, waving a last farewell.

[William Sharp]

*ALS National Library of Scotland*

***To Thomas Mosher, May 16, [1905]***

C/o 22 Ormidale Terrace | Murrayfield, Midlothian | 16th May

Dear Mr. Mosher

Only a hurried line for the mail, for I am not well: — and that to say I am sorry I must disappoint you as to the “Runes of Women” volume. As I feared when I last wrote to you (after despatch of the “Iona” copy), when I was summoned to Wales, I found my friend too seriously ill to allow of any possible leisure for work of any kind — indeed even reading and correspondence had to be set aside. Since then, I have not been well myself, and I am told that as absolute a mental and nervous rest as practicable is imperative for me. In the circumstances it was quite impossible for me to work at a volume, either creatively or revisionally demanding such concentration and nervous energy as the book in question. It is impracticable for me to say when I can now see to it — possibly after a long yachting-voyage with friends I hope to take in a fortnight or so: possibly in the autumn: so, in these circumstances, I can say no more than that when opportunity and circumstance permit I hope to complete and forward this small book. At the present juncture I could not touch it even if able to do so, for circumstances compel me to look to material advantage for what I write, and the nominal sum you offer is wholly inadequate to the thought and energy and time, with relinquishment pro-tem. of all other work, involved.

I hope the "Iona" copy reached you all right. By the way I do think that royalty-system would suit me here. I should prefer it in the case of the "Runes." For "Iona" I would like the nominal payment of £10. (its preparation for you cost me a good deal more than this!), if you are agreeable thereto.

This is a forbidden length of letter! But I want to catch this mail.

Believe me, dear Mr. Mosher, | Most sincerely yours, | Fiona Macleod  
*ALS New York Public Library, Berg Collection*

***To Robert Underwood Johnson, May 27, 1905***

5 Gordon Place | Campden Hill, London W. |  
Saturday Morning | 27: May: 05

Thanks for letter (and supplementary note). I set about the matter at once, & MS.<sup>31</sup> is now ready: but I have been delayed by the desired photograph. That, however, has now been got for me.

The U. S. A. mail leaves early on Saturdays and I fear I cannot catch it today (as 10:50 a. m. out here is the hour). If not, the next outgoing mail will bring you MS, letter, & photos.

William Sharp

*ACS Huntington Library*

***To Robert Underwood Johnson, May 27, [1905]***

5 Gordon Place | Campden Hill | London W. | 27/May

Dear Mr. Johnson,

A line in great haste, as, after all, I think I can just manage to get off MS. etc. by this mail. Thanks for your letter asking me to do it.

I have given you full measure to your commission! — for apart from length to which it had to go (unless you delete the lines abt Hilton &

Haydon)<sup>32</sup> — it has taken me a full week, at home, at the Brit. Mus Library, & verifying details, & also getting the Photo etc.

With the Nat. Gal. photo of S's [Severn's] Keats I send the fine one of Hilton, by many considered at the time & since the best of K. I do not think it has ever been reproduced. (The photos come to 5s/-) — If proofs are sent, they can be sent here up till near end July tho' for the first part of July I have to go to Germany for special treatment, not being well. (As for this & other reasons I am somewhat severely hard pressed financially I'd be greatly obliged if you cd. let me have the payment at your early convenience.)

Excuse so hurried a scroll, at the Mail-edge.

Ever sincerely yours, | William Sharp

P.S. Of course if wished delete the opening pages of warning or advice to Keats portrait collectors, but I thought it needed. In making forthcoming plans, if you w<sup>d</sup> an article dealing with Corsica (life, literature, people, scenery, etc.) will you think of an application from me? We are thinking of going there again, in late autumn, & spending 6 months.

*ALS Huntington Library*

### ***To Robert Underwood Johnson, [May 28, 1905]***

5 Gordon Place | Campden Hill | London W.

In sending off Severn-Keats MS by a prior mail I think I gave above as address till end of July — but if so cancel it.

My best letter address till the end of July will be

C/o Frank Rinder Esq.,

21 Woronzow Road,

London N.W.

[Thereafter Murrayfield, Midlothian]

William Sharp

*ACS Huntington Library*

**To Yone Noguchi, [Summer, 1905]**

On the Mediterranean

Dear Mr. Noguchi,

Your note and delightful little book reached me, after considerable delay, in southern Europe.<sup>33</sup> I write this at sea, and will send it with other letters, etc., to be stamped and posted in Edinburgh — and the two reasons of delay will show you that it is not from indolence!

I have read your book with singular pleasure. What it lacks in form (an inevitable lack, in the circumstances) it offers in essential poetry. I find atmosphere and charm and colour and naivete, and the true touch of the poet; and congratulate you on your “success of suggestion” in a language so different in all ways from that wherein (I am sure) you have already achieved the “success of finality”.

Believe me, | Yours very truly, | Fiona Macleod

*Memoir*, p. 409

**To Thomas Mosher, June 8, [1905]**

C/o 22 Ormidale Terrace | Murrayfield, Midlothian |  
Scotland | Friday 8th June

Dear Mr. Mosher

I have just arrived in Edinburgh, and have time only for a brief note, as I want to register the proofs for tomorrow's mail.

Herewith I am returning to you, by registered post, all the Galley-Proofs as yet received by me, finally revised for press. You will see that I have approved, and adopted, your suggestion, as to numbering (Roman numbers) each section. At same time I return, as wished, the original book page-proofs.

With this note I am also sending you the finally approved Dedication-page.

In great haste, | Believe me | Dear Mr. Mosher |  
Most sincerely yours | Fiona Macleod

P.S. Thanks as to payment concerning "The Isle of Dreams": and I may add that I agree as to Royalty-payment for the "Runes," when I can send these. (I am hopeful of finishing the little book before end of July though I am still very far from well, and cannot say definitely.)

ALS New York Public Library, Berg Collection

**To Elizabeth A. Sharp, [June 16, 1905]<sup>34</sup>**

[Villa Eisner, Bad Neuernahr] Friday

Darling,

I am told — but all information here is difficult to get, and uncertain at that — that a letter posted today will be delivered in London tomorrow evening.

Whatever else I may gain here I am certainly gaining in nervous repair. It is, here at the Villa Elsner, deliciously quiet and reposeful — and tho' I do not like Germans & their ways, or German "living," I find that by seeing & dwelling upon the good & pleasant side in each that life can be made agreeable here, as it can most wise & in most places in a like spirit. I did not realise to the full how much nervous harm I've had for long, & especially at the Gordon Pl. rooms, where the whole nervous system was frayed by the continual noise and old-exhaustedness of everything, from the air to the rooms themselves & the gas-poisoned atmosphere. To live near trees is alone a joy & a restorative to me. People here speak much of the heat. I don't feel it. On the contrary, it is simply a pleasant warmth, & very reposeful & life-giving — warm enough to sit out at any time under green boughs or arbours or in shady avenues or the pleasant garden here, but not a bit too warm for me at any rate to walk about at any time.

I am convinced that you and I can regulate our life to suit better than any doctor can direct. I am not well, it is true, but I am not as ill or anything like it as might be supposed from the symptoms. Depression,

weariness, spiritual strain, nervous energy on the ebb, a dozen things will affect me so that a stranger may readily be deceived — just as vice-versa at certain times a stranger might refuse to believe anything the matter at all. The sense of rapid healing I have at present is due to no treatment of course yet [as a matter of fact the food is of a kind that I neither like nor suits] — but to rest of mind & body, the sense of reposefulness, the escape from the perturbing & exhausting forces & influences of town life especially at this season, the absence at night and by day when I am in my room or in the garden of all noise, no sounds save the susurrus of leaves and the sweet monotony of the rushing Ahr, & the cries & broken songs of birds. There is no strain in connection with the waters etc. I am called at 6, but there is no need to keep to any special time. So I can either get up, or lie for  $\frac{1}{2}$  an hour or so reading or drowsing, or sleep again, as I like. But generally I shall rise about 6:15, & take the first water about 7, & the second [...]<sup>35</sup> things. The expenses here will be greater than I anticipated. 9s/ a day here, and I do not [...]<sup>36</sup>

I cd. see that Dr. G. (whom I met out this morning) can't understand why I am not more depressed or, rather, more anxious. I explained to him that these physical troubles meant little to me, & that they were largely the bodily effect of other things, & might be healed far more by spiritual wellbeing than by anything else: also that nature & fresh air & serenity & light & sun warmth & nervous rest were worth far more to me than all else. "But don't you know how serious your condition may become at any moment, if you got a bad chill or set back, or don't soon get better?" Certainly, I said: "but what then? Why should I bother about either living or dying? I shan't die before the hour of my unloosening comes — &, for the rest, I am absolutely convinced that these symptoms, tho' there & indisputable, are in a sense misleading. I want to be helped all I may be — but all the waters in the world & all the treatment in the world can only affect the external life, & even that only secondarily very often.

I am equally convinced — that, after the nervous rest, & waters (*probably*) & diet (possibly — it only remains to be proved) here, that I'll keep well when with you and away from England for the autumn to spring months. Even here, the difference climatically is very great — & I feel the immediate gain: & the balmy warmth suits me.

But this is hardly keeping to Dr. G.'s advice about writing as little as possible. But what's the good of a darling wife if I can't write to her

when I want — & hear from her often too I hope. Am going to the forest this afternoon with Frau Urecke, a pleasant, handsome Dusseldorferin

Dearest love to my Dear One, | Wilf

*ALS National Library of Scotland*

**To Elizabeth A. Sharp, [June 19, 1905]<sup>37</sup>**

[Villa Elsner, Bad Neuenahr] Monday Evening

... How I enjoyed my breakfast this morning! (in the lovely garden, in a vine-shadowed arbour or pergola, with great tall poplars and other trees billowing against the deep-blue). Then a cigarette, a stroll in the lovely sunlit-dappled green shadowness of an adjoining up-sloping avenue — and a seat for a little on a deserted south-wall bench (because of the blazing heat) for a sun-bath, while I watched a nightingale helping its young to fly among the creaming elders and masses of wild-rose, while her mate swung on a beach-branch and called long sweet exquisite cries of a thrilling poignancy (which, however, might only be "Now then, Jenny, look out, or Tommy will fall into that mass of syringe: — hillo! There's Bobby and Polly gone and got scratched pecking at these confounded white wild-roses!)

Then I got up to come in and write to you (gladly in one way reluctantly in another for I seem to drink in life in the strong sunlight and heat), but first stopped to speak to a gorgeous solitary dandelion. I stroked it gently, and said "Hullo, wee brother, isn't the world beautiful? Hold up your wee head and rejoice!" And it turned up its wee golden nose and said." Keep your hair on, you old skidamalink, I'm rejoicing as hard as ever I can. I'm *always* rejoicing. What else would I do? You *are* a rum old un-shiny animal on two silly legs!" So we laughed, and parted — but he called me back, and said gently in a wee soft goldy-yellow voice, "Don't think me rude, Brother of Joy. It's only my way. I love you because you love *me* and don't despise me. Shake pinkies!" — so I gave him a pinkie and he gave me a wee golden-yellow pinkie-petal." ...

Tell Marjorie the wee Dandelion was asking about her and sends her his love — also a milky daisy that says *Hooray!* Every morning when it

wakes, and then is so pleased and astonished that it remains silently smiling till next morning.

This flower and bird talk doesn't bother you, does it? Don't think I don't realize how ill I have been and in a small way still am: but I don't think about it, and am quite glad and happy in this lovely June-glory....

[William Sharp]

*Memoir, pp. 400–01*

***To Alexander Nelson Hood, June, 1905<sup>38</sup>***

[Villa Elsner, Bad Neuenahr] June, 1905

My Dear Julian,

Just a brief line, for I am still very restricted in permission as to writing, as so much depends on the rest-cure which is no small factor in my redemption here....

It has been "a narrow squeak." Briefly, after a hard tussle at the brink of "Cape Fatal" and a stumble across "Swamp Perilous" I got into the merely "dangerous condition" stage — and now at last that's left behind, and I'll soon be as well in body as I'm happy and serene in mind.

It is at best, however, a *reprieve*, not a lifetime-discharge. *N'importe*. Much can be done with a reprieve, and who is to know how long the furlough may be extended to. At any rate, I am well content.

[William Sharp]

*Memoir, pp. 399–400*

***To Elizabeth A. Sharp, [July 9?, 1905]***

Witte Huis, Doorn | Sunday Forenoon

I cross most probably on Saturday night from Hook  
but shall send exact postal & other date partics later.

Darling

After a beautiful and restful afternoon and evening in this most charming and simpatica home of dear and good friends — and a long sleep from about 9:30 p. m. till about 8 this morning, I feel perfectly well again. I have not seen anyone yet, save Ciccio the Taormina boy, who at 8 brought me my daintily served breakfast of 2 eggs, and cream and tea, (for I have my own Gloton Bread which I like greatly) for I've only just got up (10 a. m.) and had a spongedown in the baf and had a shave and dressed.

Thanks so much for your telegram, dear, though on the way I regretted that you had known anything about it till it was absolutely a thing of the past, so as not to distress your loving heart. It distresses me deeply to think of the distress of *your* dear tender heart. But my telegrams from Neuenahr and yesterday afternoon from Doorn [i.e., station 3 or 4 miles away at Zeist-Driebergen] will have reassured you.

Today there is not a trace of *any* kind of trouble. As I told you, the stone penetrated no intestinal film, so there were no peritonitic or other complications — and I'm now of course ever so much better for having got rid of it and all the allied uric acid poison. Last night there was naturally the diabetic symptom of continuous thirst — but that was natural after the longish journey in great heat and in the vibration of a train. Today, despite that I woke to 75% in my room (with both front and side French-windows wide open all night, & a large shadowy spacious room overlooking on sunlit green forest-glades a stone's throw away) I have had no thirst, no symptoms of any kind. The heat is very great, but to me most welcome and regenerative and strengthening.

It is no exaggeration to say that, so greatly do I value and treasure afterwards certain aspects of beauty, I would quite willingly go through it all again for the sake of the lovely impressions here last night and this morning. The beauty and charm of this house and its forest environment, the world of lovely sunny greenness, the wild-doves and the nightjar at dusk, the young noon, the peace, (and then to soothe and sleepify me still more soft, sweet, lovely old fashioned melodies of Haydn from 9 till 9:30) — two or three lovely peacocks trailing about in front — the swallows at corner of my great verandah at lovely front window — a thousandfold peace and beauty, and the goodness of these dear friends [Mme. Herbrecht, a sister in law of

B's<sup>39</sup> also here — but not her other sister whom we met] have not only been, and are, a living continuous joy, but have been like the Heralds of Spring to the return of gladness and<sup>40</sup> energy into my mind. Today I realise that too, for one thing, "Fiona" has come back from afar off. It is peace and greenness she loves — not the physical and psychical perturbation and demoralisation of towns.

Yes, we'll make "green homes" for ourselves now. No more long needless months in London.... .

*ALS National Library of Scotland, and excerpted in Memoir, p. 402*

***To Elizabeth A. Sharp, [July 10?, 1905]***

Witte Huis | Doorn | Holland | Monday morning

Linky-Blue Dear,

How you'd love to be here!

(an unconscious rhyme!)

I rose at 7:30, and had my baf [glad to be up after a close and oppressive night following the terrific and prolonged thunderstorm of last night — as I slept little, and that brokenly —] and at 8 Ciccio brought me my breakfast, and your dear lett of "Friday-Night and Saty-Aftnoon" and a pleasant line from Frau Elsner saying in effect "Strange to say, I felt as if someone had left me whom I had known long ago and who had helped me to find life and the pension less dreary than usual." As I told you, there is outside the front of my large spacious beautiful bedroom an immense verandah-balcony, with a thatched roof that not only shades but keeps it cool. It has to the left a large wooden work-table and easy chair, and to the right a long comfortable sofa lounge: and it fronts a large angle of grassy and treey lawn, and in a huge semicircle the encroaching forest. Nothing visible but green depths fading into green depths, and fringing the sky-lines the endless surf of boughs and branches. From the forest glades the cooing of doves and the travelling-voice of a flowing cool sweet wind of this delicious morning. I always gain immensely in mind and

body from nearness to woodlands and green growth — hence in no small part my feeling for Fontainebleau. The peace is exquisite, at once soothing and calm in to an extraordinary degree, and mentally stimulating and spiritually quickening. I'd such a lot to tell you about it, and to talk of à propos of it, and of what we should strive to obtain for ourselves in restful, fine, dignified (and no more expensive hotel or dreary, inadequate and du borne and in a sense sordid lodgings) life, and much else, apropos and apart, — as you lay happy and contented on the long luxurious lounge beside me, half listening to me, half to the forest-wind, and with one eye on a large Morella cherry (hoping to bag it from me and eat it when I wasn't looking, and I simply trusting you!) and one on a young rabbit trying to play with its own puzzling frisky shadow in the dappled sunlight — that more than an hour elapsed after I had drunk my tea and cream, read your letter, and two forwarded papers, and then talked to you to the soft continuous susurrus of the pine-fragrant breeze.

How good and dear the Grandmorts are. She is so thoughtful and tender, too: and so good when I was tired after my journey and yesterday in bringing cushions when I was lying in a chair outside — and seeing to everything about food, often at no little trouble here.

I shall be sorry indeed to leave here on Wednesday — but they have to go to Utrecht themselves: for if only you were here I'd contentedly remain till the autumn-end. The house is<sup>41</sup>

[William Sharp]

*ALS National Library of Scotland*

*To [Nigel] Severn, July 16, 1905<sup>42</sup>*

Temporary, | 9 St. Mary's Terrace | Paddington | W.

Dear Mr. Severn,<sup>43</sup>

On my return today from abroad I find your letter of the 14<sup>th</sup> awaiting me among many others. In a day or two (for by a coincidence, one of the reasons of my coming to London just now is to complete an article

on the several portraits of Keats) I may be able to write on the point you raise.<sup>44</sup> If at all possible (& I have been very unwell, & am now terribly busy) I may try to call upon you one day this week & see the mask you have.<sup>45</sup> In case you should be out (but perhaps you cd. let me have a card saying what time is likeliest to find you at home), could you leave word that I be shown the Mask.

In great haste | Yours very truly | William Sharp

PS If you are free I could manage I see to come about 3:30 to 4 on Tuesday. Would this suit?

You have I suppose no other Keats-Severn portraits of any kind?

*ALS Princeton University*

***To Nigel Severn, July 18, [1905]***

18th July | 9 St. Mary's Terrace | Paddington | W.

Dear Mr. Severn,

I saw Mr. Hollyer this afternoon, and he agreed to make the photographs. It is essential that they be made at his place, because of light and the question of time & convenience — but I told him that you had kindly suggested that your frame-maker could see to the safe carriage of the picture, and to bring it back to you when Mr. Hollyer has photographed it (or them). He on his part promised the utmost expedition, and said that if he received by or before Thursday he could photograph that day or at latest on Friday, & that then the picture could be returned at once.

I wish I could feel certain that the small Keats portrait already photographed by Hollyer is identical with the panel portrait you have. There seemed to me differences in the forehead & elsewhere, but most noticeably in detail such as the different necktie. Perhaps you will kindly look at the panel again by morning light, & see if any differences in the photograph are merely accidental or if they really indicate another

replica of the Keats original. If you feel convinced they are the same, it wd. be superfluous to have the panel photographed again. Otherwise of course by all means let it be sent to Hollyers along with the Nightingale picture.

I forgot to tell you that the above address is only till the end of this month, as it is that of temporary rooms — & that thereafter my best letter-address is "The Grosvenor Club," Piccadilly, W.

Yours sincerely | William Sharp

PS. My lost folio envelope & its contents (of importance) were found by someone at or near Victoria & reposted to me, I am relieved to say.

*ALS Private*

***To Robert Underwood Johnson, [July 27, 1905]***

Yorkshire | (En route for Scotland) | Thursday, 27th<sup>46</sup>

Dear Mr. Johnson,

As I mentioned in my registered letter of Tuesday, with revised & rewritten MS. — just before I left London — I had at the last moment to send it without the two photographs which I had commissioned Mr. Fredk Hollyer<sup>47</sup> to make. [Also, to save pressing time, I did not delay to have the article typed — knowing you wished to receive it at the earliest possible moment.] These have now reached me here in Yorkshire, where I am with friends for a couple of days en route to Scotland.<sup>48</sup> So I send them on now. One is the photograph of the Panel Miniature of Keats alluded to as Severn's own copy — and the other is the photograph of the "Keats and the Nightingale" (The Spaniards, Hampstead Heath) picture by Severn. With the utmost care it has not been possible to get a better photo. of this time-darkened and somewhat heavily pigmented picture. Mr. Hollyer does not include his a/c, but I understand that including all expense for the removal of the large picture and the panel from Mr. Nigel Severn's to Mr. Hollyer's, the maximum was not to

exceed 20<sup>s</sup>/ — or a guinea each. So when remitting the extra payment as kindly arranged, will you please include for the Photos as well.

I am glad to be out of London again, and realize that with rest and fresh air and early hours I shall soon be well again.

Yours Sincerely, | William Sharp

*ALS Huntington Library*

**To Dr. John Goodchild, July 30, 1905**

Edinburgh | 30th July.

... August is always a "dark" month for me — and not as a rule, I fancy, a good one: at any rate, an obscure and perhaps perilous one. But this time I fancy it is on other lines. I believe strong motives and influences are to be at work in it perhaps furtively only: but none the less potently and far reachingly. Between now and September-end (perhaps longer) many of the Dark Powers are going to make a great effort. We must all be on guard — for there will be individual as well as racial and general attack. But a Great Unloosening is at hand.

Yours Ever, | W. S.

*Memoir, p. 403*

**To Edmund Clarence Stedman, July 30, 1905**

North British Station Hotel | Edinburgh  
Murrayfield | Midlothian | 30th July/05

My dear and well-loved E. C. S.

While I am here in Edinburgh en route for the North (after a narrow squeak for my life, with two distinct illnesses, and treatment for a month in Germany) I have just received a letter from Janvier, which

tells me of the great sorrow that has come to you and yours. I cannot let the first available mail go without sending you my deep and loving sympathy — to you and Lauretta and your daughter-in-law, but to you most who have lost a tender and loving and life-long companion. Nor is it only deep regret for you, dear friend, but on my own account, for I have ever had the truest affection for dear Mrs. Stedman. I know too, how sorry my wife will be when she hears (I join her Mail Train for the North tonight) — for she drew closely to your dear wife during our recent visit.

As for you, dear friend, you have already known so much sorrow, as well as so much happiness, in life, that (I know) you will bravely accept the inevitable, and do your best to keep as well and mentally alert and active as may be, for the sake of all near and dear to you and also for the sake of all who love you and truly honour and regard you, among whom as you know is none more loyally and affectionately, your loving and admiring friend than

Yours always | William Sharp

P.S. Just this moment had a letter of yesterday from my wife, who has heard from Mrs. Janvier — and who tells me she has written to Lauretta. My love to her.

*ALS Columbia University Library*

***To Mr. John Masefield,<sup>49</sup> [early August, 1905]***

Kessock Cottage, | Nairn

Dear Mr. Masefield,

A brief word to tell you what pleasure I have had in your little book *A Mainsail Haul*. It is not only that it is written with delicate art: but it is rich in atmosphere — a much rarer thing. The simplicity, the charm, the subtle implication of floating, evasive yet fluctuating romance, your own keen sense of the use of words and their veiled life and latent as well as obvious colour, combine to a winning and often compelling

effect. I do not think any who has read Don Alfonson's drinking bout with the little red man and the strange homegoing of the weed and flower-grown brigantine with the Bible name, will forget it: and what dream charm also there is in "Port of Many Ships", "Sea Superstition", "The Spanish Sailor's Yarn." In such a splendid and delightful colour fabric as "From the Spanish" "high words and rare" are of course apt — but is it not a mistake to introduce in "Sea Superstition" words such as "August" and "wrought" in a sailor's mouth? (In the text the effect seems to be enhanced not lessened, by the omission of these words — "were like things in bronze," "the roof of which was of dim branches.")

In "From the Spanish" I would, as a matter of personal taste, prefer that the end came at the close of the penultimate para, the shore-drift of the Italian lute. I think the strange dream-like effect would be much enhanced without (what seems to me) the superfluous "realistic" tag. Otherwise the piece is a gem of its kind.

But you will forgive the critic (and it shows he has read closely) in the admirer, I hope?

Let us have more work of the kind. There is much need of it, and you are of the few who can give it.

Yours sincerely | William Sharp

*Memoir, pp. 403–04*

***To Thomas Mosher, August 15, [1905]***

15<sup>th</sup> August.

Dear Mr. Mosher

Yours of the 2nd inst. reached me here this forenoon (in the Northern Highlands) and I hasten at once to reply.<sup>50</sup>

First let me acknowledge with many thanks your Draft for Ten Pounds (£10) in full discharge for "The Isle of Dreams" as reprinted by you in U.S.A.<sup>51</sup>

Next, as to the copies you are kindly to send me — please let them be all in limp leather, as I very much prefer these, and so I find do my friends. This, as you indicate, may mean my not receiving any till well on in October. (Perhaps you will send me one of the white ones, if published earlier?) However, this matters less, as I have probably to be abroad in any case from mid-September. It is not certain yet, and it is possible I may not leave before October, possibly even mid-Octr. — and so in any case I'll have to depute the sending off of copies. A concurrence of untoward happenings has been responsible for another break-down in health, and though now all menace of immediate danger is over, the doctors say I have to be scrupulously on guard and particularly this coming winter — and it is for that reason, because of prevention being so very much wiser than cure, that I am advised to go abroad (to sunnier and drier climates) as soon as the autumnal damp becomes trying.<sup>52</sup> One great anxiety I am now, however, relieved from — that concerning the recent serious and prolonged illness of the dear friend whom you also know: and concerning whom I am glad too at the prospect of seeing much of, in the coming autumn and winter, in France and Sicily.

Again, tho' it still bothers me ever and again, my writer's-cramp or neuritic trouble in my right arm has been much better of late, and I can now often write several letters at a time without ill consequence. I hope much the improvement will continue, tho' for some months yet at least I must not exceed a very limited allowance.

Well, to resume: let all the copies be in limp leather.

I would, however, be very much obliged if you would kindly send me in advance another unbound set, such as that you have now kindly sent to me, for which I thank you sincerely. Indeed, I would like two sets, but it may not be right to ask for this: if so, let me have one, please, and equal thanks.

So far as I have glanced at it I see nothing misprinted — but I have not time or opportunity to do so systematically just now. Nor is there any need. At most I feel sure there can be only very minor slips — and possibly, even, none of these. And now as to "The Runes of Women." The serious anxieties I have alluded to, combined with my own break-down in health about the end of June, have altogether prevented my doing anything. I have fulfilled no engagements — not even an important and immediate one from Sir James Knowles for the *Nineteenth Century*,

received early in June, and not yet even touched! while the two, or three, nature papers that have appeared, were all written before I became ill. In a word, I have done absolutely nothing with my pen since the last proofs of "Iona" went to you, except to revise the proofs of the new and shortly forthcoming Tauchnitz volume.

It is useless for me now to say when I shall send you "Runes of Women." But, believe me, it will be as soon as I can do so. You must just be patient with me, dear Mr. Mosher. It is safest for me to say no more than what is a hope, an intention, viz. to let you have all complete by November, anyhow before Christmas. If the Fates permit earlier, well and good.

As soon as "The Sunset of Old Tales" (the new Tauchnitz volume) is published I shall give myself the pleasure of sending you a copy — also, in due course, of Herr Winnibald Mey's new German vol (the first having gone well) — "Das Reich dar Traume", or "Das Land der Traume" — and of Monsieur Davray's long-delayed French volume. Also, before November-end I hope to see the publication of my Nature essays, *Nature and Dream*.

You are well, I hope? And projecting many new delightful surprises?

With friendliest regards, | Believe me, dear Mr. Mosher,  
Yours most sincerely | Fiona Macleod

*ALS New York Public Library, Berg Collection*

### **To Frank M. Wells, August 22, 1905**

The Grosvenor Club | Piccadilly | London | August 22, 1905

Dear Sir,

Your note has reached me in Scotland — and I have now pleasure in acceding to your request.

Yours faithfully | William Sharp

To | Frank M. Wells, Esq.<sup>53</sup>

*ALS Private*

**To Thomas Mosher, September 5, [1905]**

C/o 22 Ormidale Terrace | Murrayfield, Midlothian |  
Tuesday night 5th Sept.

Dear Mr. Mosher

Many thanks for the two unbound vols. of "The Isle of Dreams." I knew the book had already been announced for I have had two or three letters (one of them a kind of deputation-letter from Atlanta in Georgia) protesting against the abandonment of the name "Iona", and the more so as there are already *The Dominion of Dreams*, *Ulad of the Dreams* and *From the Hills of Dream*. However, tho' I am sorry not to have it "Iona," I daresay your general reasons may be right for the other title. In any case I hope you will find the book's present and later reception satisfactory, and thus, help the other volumes.

I will send you the new "Tauchnitz" vol when it is published ("The Sunset of Old Tales") — which may be this month; if not, next. Also the new German and the French translations, when published. I think the white glazed wrappers of the 3. vol Geddes edition of the Shorter Tales were merely a Christmastide variant of the dark gray-green wrappers with white labels. I suppose you know that the first edit. of *Pharais* was a white-vellum-parchment long octavo with a frontispiece? Only a limited number was printed. The ordinary edition was the small green-and-gold volume, afterwards reprinted in "Green Tree Library" of Chicago. The only other issue of anything of mine that is not to be had from the booksellers is the white parchment or paper square 8vo or quarto of "The Three Marvels of Iona," done for the St. Columba millenary. I have not a copy now, but I believe one or two are still to be had from Miss Morrison, of the Gaelic Press, Iona: possibly from the Manager, P. Geddes & Co. The Outlook Tower, Castlehill, Edinburgh.

[Is] the "Little Garland of Celtic Verse," in your Fall-Announcements, a new anthology? If so I'd be glad to have a copy.

I have other notes to dictate during my flying visit, so must trust to have answered all questions in your letter.

Yours most sincerely, | Fiona Macleod

ALS New York Public Library, Berg Collection

**To Fiona Macleod, September 12, 1905<sup>54</sup>**

Gu Fionaghal Nic Leoid | Sliabhean N'an Aisling |  
Y-Breasil (Na Tir-fo-Tuinn)<sup>55</sup>  
An Domhain Uaine<sup>56</sup> | 12th Sept., 1905

Dearest Fiona,

A word of loving greeting to you on the morrow of our new year. All that is best in this past year is due to you, mo caraid dileas:<sup>57</sup> and I hope and believe that seeds have been sown which will be reborn in flower and fruit and may be green grass in waste places and may even grow to forests. I have not always your serene faith and austere eyes, dear, but I come to much in and thro' my weakness as you through your strength. But in this past year I realise I have not helped you nearly as much as I could: in this coming year I pray, and hope, it may be otherwise. And this none the less tho' I have much else I want to do apart from our work. But we'll be one and the same au fond even then, shall we not, Fiona dear?

I am intensely interested in the fuller development of the Celtic Trilogy — and shall help in all ways. You say I can give you what you have not: well, I am glad indeed. Together we shall be good Sowers, Fionaghla mo run: and let us work contentedly at that. I wish you Joy and Sorrow, Peace, and Unrest, and Leisure, Sun, and Wind, and Rain, all of Earth and Sea and Sky in this coming year. And inwardly swell with me, so that less and less I may fall short of your need as well as your ideal. And may our "Mystic's Prayer"<sup>58</sup> be true for us both, who are one.

Ever yours, dear, | Will

*Memoir, p. 410*

***To William Sharp, September 12, 1905***

Hills of Dream | Y-Breasil | 12th Sept., 1905

My Dear Will,

Another birthday has come, and I must frankly say that apart from the loss of another year, and from what the year has brought you in love and friendship and all that makes up life, it has not been to your credit. True, you have been in America and Italy and France and Scotland and England and Germany — and so have not been long settled anywhere — and true also that for a month or two you were seriously and for a few months partially ill or “down” — but still, after all allowances, I note not only an extraordinarily indolence in effort as well as unmistakable laziness in achievement. Now, either you are growing old (in which case admit dotage, and be done with it) or else you are permitting yourself to remain weakly in futile havens of ignoble repose or fretful pseudo rest. You have much to do, or that you ought to do, yourself: and as to our collaboration I see no way for its continuance unless you will abrogate much of what is superfluous, curtail much that can quite well be curtailed, and generally serve me loyally as I in my turn allow for and serve you.

Let our New Year be a very different one from the last dear friend: and let us not only beautifully dream but achieve in beauty. Let the ignoble pass, and the noble remain.

Lovingly yours, dear Will, | Fiona

*Memoir*, p. 411

***To ?, September 15, 1905<sup>59</sup>***

Sept. 15, 1905

... I have been away, in the isles, and for a time beyond the reach of letters. I wish there were Isles where one could also go at times, where no winged memories could follow. In a Gaelic folk-tale, told me by an old woman once, the woman of the story had only to burn a rose to ashes

and to hold them in the palms of her hands and then to say seven times *A Eileanain na Sith*, "O Isles of Peace"! and at once she found herself in quiet isles beyond the foam where no memories could follow her and where old thoughts, if they came, were like phantoms on the wind, in a moment come, in a moment gone. I failed to find these Isles, and so have you: but there are three which lie nearer, and may be reached, Dream, Forgetfulness, and Hope.

And there, it may be, we can meet, you and I. ...

Yes, your insight is true. There is a personal sincerity, the direct autobiographical utterance, in even, as you say, the most remote and phantastic of my legends as in the plainest of my words. But because they cover so much illusion as well as passion, so much love gone on the wind as well as love that not even the winds of life and death can break or uproot, so much more of deep sorrow (apart from the racial sorrow which breathes through all) than of Joy save in the deeper spiritual sense, they were thus raimented in allegory and legend and all the illusion of the past, the remote, the obscure, or the still simpler if more audacious directness of the actual, the present, and the explicit. There is, perhaps, a greater safety, a greater illusion, in absolute simplicity than in the most subtly wrought art. ...

But you will understand me when I say that you must not count on our meeting — at any rate not this year. I too stand under obscure wings.

Your friend, | F. M.

*Memoir*, pp. 405–06

**To Helen Hopekirk,<sup>60</sup> September 19, [1905]**

Address: Miss Macleod | c/o 22 Ormidale Terrace |  
Murrayfield, Midlothian | Scotland  
19th Sept.

My dear Miss Hopekirk,

I am indebted to you for your friendly letter, and for the booklet of five of my poems set to music by yourself. It is always a pleasure to hear from

any one to whom writings of mine have strongly appealed, and that pleasure is enhanced when one learns that the unknown friend began the silent acquaintanceship years ago and has since cared to maintain it. I like your music. It has fragrance and charm; much of it passes from the pleased suspense of the outward ear to the subtle inward ear, that which we mean when we say the mind and the soul listen as well as the body. I hope you will compose more. Do you know any of the Breton airs? They have been less exploited than the now more familiar Scottish and Irish gaelic airs. Many are singularly plaintive and sweet. You should set some French poems to music. I am not of those who lightly disparage French poetry. Much modern French-verse has a unique and truly exquisite loveliness, with a delicacy of charm. You should try some of Verlaine's, for example.

With all sincere wishes for the success of your present venture and with hope to hear of you and your work again.

Believe me, | Yours very truly, | Fiona Macleod

*ALS Huntington Library*

***To Robert Underwood Johnson, September 22, [1905]***

Friday Night 22nd Sept.

By an accident the Severn-Keats proofs were reforwarded to me to a recent address abroad — & great delay ensued. They have now reached me — & if impossible to get off by tomorrow's mail shall certainly leave by ensuing mail. Much of the delay proves to be due to the understamping (this has happened by the way every time you've written) —

William Sharp

*ACS Huntington Library*

**To Edmund Clarence Stedman, [late September, 1905]**

The Grosvenor Club | Piccadilly| London W  
For 8th October<sup>61</sup>

Dear Poet and Friend

I hope this will reach you on your birthday morning. The past year has been one of sorrow for you: may this new year bring you peace and health and good weal in all respects.<sup>62</sup> And, too, may the fates permit that the hand of the artist & the impulse & achievement of the poet may find beautiful & welcome expression. It is a happiness to me (to my wife also I should say) to remember that we saw you about a year ago — and that we spent Thanksgiving with you & your dear wife & daughter-in-law & dear Lauretta.

I hope you got my letter to you after I had heard of your great loss. (I have written Lauretta both before & after that great sadness — but I fear she has forgotten her friend overseas.) Don't you write in reply to my last or to this: all I want to feel assured of is that you were not hurt by any apparent silence.

As you may have heard from the Janviers, I all but "went under" this summer from a severe access of my Diabetes malady — but a month's special treatment at Neuenahr in Germany tided me over — & in July & August I was not only convalescent but (in August) became wonderfully well. Since mid- September, however, I have known the ebb-tide again — & now have to leave this damp climate at once. We start in a few days & go first for a month to Venice (where we have already got a friend's rooms engaged for us) — then to Sicily till Xmas or so — & then for 3 months to Algeria (mostly Biskra in the Sahara) for a thorough "warming" & "drying", for my chest is menaced.

We have thought & spoken often of you and your dear circle since we left last Dec<sup>r</sup> — & now if there be indeed power to send loving thoughts oversea you should feel on your birthday the inrush of a deep & true affection, all loving good wishes, and from us both.

Ever yours, | William Sharp

**To Millicent Sutherland, [late September,] 1905<sup>63</sup>**

... I have the memory that recalls everything in proportion and sequence. I have often written that art is memory, is in great part memory, though not necessarily a recalling of mere personal experience: and the more deeply I live the more I see that this is so.... .

When you write, I mean imaginatively, you must write more and more with concentrated vision. Some time ago I re-read your *Four Winds of the World*; much of it is finely done, and in some of it your self lives, your own accent speaks. But you have it in you to do work far more ambitious. The last is not a word I like, or affect; but here it is convenient and will translate to your mind what is in my mind. These stories are yours but they are not you: and though in a sense art is a wind above the small eddies of personality, there is a deeper sense in which it is nothing else than the signature of personality. Style (that is, the outer emotion that compels and the hidden life of the imagination that impels and the brooding thought that shapes and colours) should, spiritually, reflect a soul's lineaments as faithfully as the lens of the photographer reflects the physiognomy of a man or woman. It is because I feel in you a deep instinct for beauty, a deep longing for beautiful expression and because I believe you have it in you to achieve highly in worth and beauty, that I write to you thus. .... There is that Lady of Silence, the Madonna of Enigma, who lives in the heart of many women. Could you not shape something under *Her* eyes — shape it and colour it with your own inward life, and give it all the nobler help of austere discipline and control which is called art? I have not much to tell you of myself just now. At the moment I do not write to you from the beloved west where I spend much of each year and where my thoughts and dreams continually are. Tonight I am tired, and sad, I hardly know why.

O wind, why break in idle foam  
This wave that swept the seas — ...  
Foam is the meed of barren dreams,  
And hearts that cry for peace.

Lift then, O wind, this heart of mine  
And swirl aside in foam —  
No, wander on, unchanging heart,  
The undrowning deeps thy home.

Less than a billow of the sea  
That at the last doth no more roam  
Less than a wave, less than a wave  
This thing that hath no home  
This thing that hath no grave!<sup>64</sup>

But I shall weary you. Well, forgive me. ...

[Fiona Macleod]

*Memoir, pp. 406–07*

**To Helen Hopekirk,<sup>65</sup> October 18, 1905**

C/o 22. Ormidale Terrace. | Murrayfield | Midlothian. | 18th Oct. 1905

My Dear Miss Hopekirk

I was very pleased to hear from you again. Your letter reached me while I was on a visit in Stirlingshire, and now I have come to Edinburgh for three days, and have a brief leisure in which to answer your and other letters, but yours first. I am busy with preparations for Italy, for the doctors say I should be away from our damp Scottish climate from October-end till Spring comes again. How far off it seems ... Spring! Do you long for it, do you love its advent, as I do? Wherever I am, St Bride's Day is always for me the joy-festival of the year — the day when the real new year is born, and the three dark months are gone, and Spring leans across the often grey and wet, but often rainbow-lit and green-tremulous horizons of February. This year it seems a longer way off than hitherto, and yet it should not be so — for I go to Italy, and to friends, and to beautiful places in the sun, there and in Sicily and perhaps in Algeria. But, somehow, I care less for these than I did a few years ago, than two or three years ago, than a year ago. I think outward change matters less and less as the imagination deepens and as the spirit more and more "turns westward."<sup>66</sup> I love the South; and in much, and for much, am happy there: but as the fatally swift months slip into the dark I realise more and more that it is better to live a briefer while at a high reach of the spirit and the uplifted if overwrought physical part of one

than to save the body and soothe the mind by the illusions of physical indolence and mental leisure afforded by long sojourns in the sunlands of the South.

But, forgive me, this is egotistic wandering from the subject, and not a reply to what you primarily write to me about.

Yes, you may arrange the verses of "The Lonely Hunter" as you will, and, also, may delete for your setting the last verse of "The Bird of Christ" — and now or at any time take what you will and in the way you wish, confident that I am content with whatever you think best for your purpose. I do not think the needs or nuances of one art should ever be imposed upon the free movement of another in alliance.

How I wish I knew Loeffler Debussy and others as you do: but then, though I love music, though it is one of the vital things in life for me, I am not a musician, alas. So even if I had all their music beside me it would be like a foreign language that must be read in translation. Do you realise — I suppose you do — how fortunate you are in being your own interpreter. Some day, however, I hope to know intimately all those wonderful settings of Verlaine and Baudelaire and Mallarmé and others. The verbal music of these is a ceaseless pleasure to me. I have a great love of and joy in all later French poetry, and can never understand common attitude to it here — either one of ignorance or patronage, or complete misapprehension. Because of the obvious fact that French is not so poetic a language as English or German, in scale, sonority, or richness of vocabulary — it is, indeed, in the last respect the poorest I believe of all European languages as English is by far the richest — people, and even those who should be better informed, jump to the conclusion that therefore all French poetry is artificial or monotonously alike, or, at best, far inferior to English. So far as I can judge, finer poetry has been produced in France of late years than in England, and very much finer than any I know in German. However, the habitual error of judgment is mainly due to ignorance: that, and the all but universal unfamiliarity with French save in its conventional usage, spoken or written.

You say you have sometimes felt impelled to write to me, but have refrained. I feel you to be a friend, and hope you feel that I too can be so to you — so I hope you will write to me sometimes. Only you must be patient if I don't answer speedily. For one thing I prefer to

wait till time and occasion permit me to write something more than a mere note of acknowledgment. The friendship of yourself and a few others (including your friend Miss Evelyn Benedict) is a real and deep pleasure to me, and more.

As to what is obscure to you in "The Winged Destiny" I may or may not be able to make things clear to you (or to snatch the rare hour in which I could do so), but if you ask me anything at any time I will at least listen as friend to friend, and, as friend to friend, see if I can adequately respond.

When I go abroad I will send you a copy of my new Tauchnitz volume (just published or just about to be published I believe) called "The Sunset of Old Tales" as you may care to have something direct from a writer whom (to her true pleasure) you so truly care for, and who, as you say, has opened gates to you with others.

And so believe me, dear Miss Hopekirk, |  
Most sincerely yours | Fiona Macleod

P.S. My new book, *Nature and Dream* (to which, however, I may possibly give another title) will not now be published till sometime in February. I mention this lest I told you it was to be out this November.<sup>67</sup>

*ALS Pierpont Morgan Library*

***To Catherine Ann Janvier, October 22, 1905***

Sunday | Oct, 22. | Venice | 1905

... Remember that her all surrounding love saved me, I am sure, in faraway Greece, and what it has meant ever since to me.<sup>68</sup>

*ALS Private*

**To: Anna (Mrs. Patrick Geddes), mid-November, 1905**

c/o Il Duc de Bronte | Castello Maniace | Bronte | Sicily

Florence

Dear Friend,

Your letter etc. came just we're about to leave. Many thanks for it and its news & what you send — also letter from Mr. Guthrie which shall have immediate attention.

Shall write later from Sicily. (We shall hope to see P.G. on the Riviera — for, after Xmas or the turn of the year, we now go there to Nice, but possibly breaking first at Mentone or elsewhere — instead of Algeria: partly for health reasons. Partly for purse reasons.)<sup>69</sup>

We shall be at above address (after a week at Taormina) till Xmas.<sup>70</sup>

W. S.

*ACS University of Strathclyde Library*

**To Thomas Mosher, November 17, 1905<sup>71</sup>**

17th Nov. 1905

Dear Mr. Mosher

Just a hurried line before I leave for Italy to say that I have duly received the setting of a song of mine by Mr. Gilbert,<sup>72</sup> sent through you: also your delightful and fascinating Catalogue. The six copies of "The Isle of Dreams" which you sent me duly reached me also. A copy of "The Sunset of Old Tales" (my new Tauchnitz volume) should reach you about the same time as this, or soon after. Whether "Dans les Vents et sur les Vagues" is out yet I do not know, but you shall have a copy soon or late. I think I told you I had postponed my volume of Nature-Essays till February. Its provisional title "Nature and Dream" will then probably be relinquished for "Where the Forest Murmurs" after the first paper in the book — the same that concludes the new Tauchnitz volume.

You are well, I hope, and happy in your work. I am looking forward to some months of leisure for work and reading in the South — and the more so as it is to be a period of convalescence.

Sincerely yours ever | Fiona Macleod

*ALS New York Public Library, Berg Collection*

**To [Roselle Lathrop Shields], December 4, 1905<sup>73</sup>**

[Castello Maniace] | Dec. 4, 1905

... As my card of yesterday will have told you we arrived here all right on Monday afternoon, after a wonderful journey. We left Taormina in a glory of mid-summerlike warmth and beauty — and we drove down the three miles of winding road from Taormina to the sea at Giardini; thence past the bay and promontory of Naxos, and at the site of the ancient famous fane of Apollo Archagêtês turned inland. Then through the myriad lemon-groves of Al Cantara, till we crossed the gorges of the Fiumefreddo, and then began the long ascent, in blazing heat, by the beautiful hill road to the picturesque mountain-town of Piedemonte. There we caught the little circum-Ætnean mountain loop-line, and ascended the wild and beautiful slopes of Etna. Last time we went we travelled mostly above the clouds, but this time there was not a vestige of vapour in the radiant air, save for the outriders' trail of white occasionally flare-coloured, smoke from the vast 4-mile wide mouth of snow-white and gigantically-looming cone of Etna. At the lofty mediaeval and semi-barbaric town of Randazzo we were delayed by an excited crowd at the station, on account of the arrest and bringing in by the carabinieri of three chained and heavily manacled brigands, one of them a murderer, who evidently had the sympathy of the populace. A woman, the wife of one of the captured men, outdid any lamenting Irish woman I ever saw: her frenzy was terrible — and of course the poor soul was life-desolate and probably punished and would likely never see her man again. Finally she became distracted with despair and fury, and between her appeals and furious curses

and almost maniacal lamentations, the small station was anything but an agreeable stopping place. The captive brigands were absolutely impassive: not a glance: only, as the small train puffed onward, one of them lifted a manacled arm behind one of the carabinieri and made a singular sign to someone.

Thereafter we passed into the wild and terrible lava-lands of the last frightful eruption, between Randazzo and the frontier of the Duchy of Bronte: a region as wild and fantastic as anything imagined by Doré,<sup>74</sup> and almost terrifying in its somber deathfulness. The great and broad and sweeping mountains, and a mightily strath — and we came under the peaked rocks of Maletto, a little town standing 3000 feet high. Then the carriage, and the armed escort, and we had that wonderful drive thro' wild and beautiful lands of which I have heretofore written you. Then about four we drove up to the gates of the Castle, and passed into the great court just within the gates, and had the cordial and affectionate welcome of our dear host.

A few minutes later we were no longer at an ancient castle in the wilds of Sicily, but in a luxurious English country house at afternoon tea.... .

[William Sharp]

*Memoir*, pp. 413–15.

**To William Butler Yeats, [December 7, 1905]<sup>75</sup>**

C/o Il Duca di Bronte | Castello di Maniace | Bronte | Sicily

My dear Yeats,

Your letter of the 4th has reached me in Sicily some 9 days later.

Frankly, I have been much hurt by your continuous and apparently systematic ignoring of any communication from me, and had made up my mind to keep silence henceforth. I knew of your dislike of writing letters [common to all of us who have so much pen-work to do, & fully shared in if not exceeded by myself] and ever bore in mind your overstrained eyesight — but naturally I thought that in the course of

more than a year, and after letter-after-letter, you wd. have sent even the briefest word, or even a P.C. — or, what seemed simple, dictated a message through Lady Gregory or some other friend.

I have a very strong feeling as to the Noblesse-oblige of friendship — and as I do not regard you as a mere acquaintance, I feel it the more.

Now, however, that you have at last written, and that I have explained my feeling in the matter, I'll endeavour to put it aside among the discharged things.

I am in a remote and wild part of the Sicilian Highlands, staying with a dear friend: and expect to remain here till Christmas. Thereafter we shall be in the French Riviera (probably at Cimiez near Nice) for three months. So I fear there is little likelihood of our meeting till after Easter.

I am unfortunately not in a position to say anything definite on the matter which you broach. If we meet, we may speak of what cannot well be written about. I may add, however, that neither I nor any person personally known to me "sent" any one to you on a veiled mission. ~~At the same time that a certain person sought you and that you did not recognize the person, the occasion, or the significance.~~<sup>76</sup> As you know, we are in a crucial period of change in many ways, and there are circles within circles, veiled influences and good and evil (and non-good and non-evil) formative and disformative forces everywhere at work. Obscure summons, obscure warnings, meetings & partings, veiled messages, come to us all.

All which sounds very absurd, or mysterious, or conveniently vague. However, you'll understand. Also my present silence.

As you are likely to be in France (Paris?) in April or May, we may possibly meet there. Perhaps you know nothing of any such likelihood, and it may be mere wildfire of supposition. Bien, nous verrons.

I hope the dramatic undertakings will be a success, above all in reaching the psychic nerves, the living thought, of those to whom their appeal is made.

For many months this year I was ill — dying — but there were other than physical reasons for this, & I survived thing after thing and shock after shock like a swimmer rising to successive waves — & then suddenly to every one's amazement swam into havens of relative well-being once more. But the game is not over, of course: and equally of

course is a losing game. Nevertheless I'm well content with things as they are, all things considered.

Have you heard of or from Miss Macleod? If I can get a copy from the Catania bookseller who occasionally sends foreign books by courier to this remote place, I'll send you a copy of her Tauchnitz volume of revised, augmented, and selected matter called "The Sunset of Old Tales" — or I may get some one to do it for me at home, or in Germany — yes, that will be simpler. If in the course of a week or two one does not reach you, write to Miss Macleod who wd. like you to have one.

I wish you'd dictate a line to me of your own literary work. Is any new vol. of prose or verse to come out soon? I hope so.<sup>77</sup>

As for myself, I have much on hand, but for long I have had to do little. Now, if the Gods permit, I hope to recover some lost ground.

I dreamt of you some time ago as going thro' a dark wood and plucking here and there in the darkness seven apples (as you thought) — but they were stars.<sup>78</sup> And you came to the edge or cliff and threw three away, & listened, and then hearing nothing threw three more idly away. But you kept, or forgot, one — & it trickled thro' your body and came out at your feet, and you kicked it before you as you walked, & it gave light, but I do not think you saw the light, or the star. What is your star, here, — do you know? Or can you interpret the dream?

Yours as ever, | W. S.

*ALS Private*

**To [Roselle Lathrop Shields], December 8, 1905<sup>79</sup>**

... A single long letter means no work for me that day, and the need of work terribly presses, and in every way, alas. My hope that I might be able for some writing in the late afternoon, and especially from 5 to 7:30 is at present futile. I simply can't. Yesterday I felt better and more mentally alert than I've done since I came, and immediately after afternoon tea, I came to my study and tried to work, but could not, though I had one of my nature articles begun and beside me: nor had I spirit to take up my reviews: then I thought I could at least get some of that wearisome accumulated correspondence worked off, but a mental nausea seized

me, so that even a written chat to a friend seemed to me too exhausting. C'est cette maladie poignante, ce "degoût de la plume," que Tourgenieff (ou Flaubert?) parlait de son cœur frappé.<sup>80</sup> So I collapsed, and dreamed over a strange and fascinating ancient-world book by Lichtenberger, and then dreamed idly, watching the flaming oak-logs.

[William Sharp]

*Memoir, pp. 415–16*

***To Catherine Ann Janvier, December 9, 1905***

... I hope and expect to be all right before Tuesday.<sup>81</sup>

***To Catherine Ann Janvier, December 11, 1905***

... There is no need for anxiety, the worst is over and I soon shall be up again.<sup>82</sup>

***To ?, [1905]<sup>83</sup>***

... This will reach you after my death. You will think I have wholly deceived you about Fiona Macleod. But, in an intimate sense this is not so: though (and inevitably) in certain details I have misled you. Only, it is a mystery. I cannot explain. Perhaps you will intuitively understand or may come to understand. "The rest is silence." Farewell.

William Sharp

It is only right, however, to add that I, and I only, was the author — in the literal and literary sense — of all written under the name of "Fiona Macleod."

*Memoir, pp. 422–23*

**To George Russell (AE), December 25, 1905<sup>84</sup>**

Mrs. Wingate Rinder | 21. Woronzow Road |  
St. John's Wood | N.W. | 25: Dec

Dear Mr. Russell

It was my dear husband's wish that this letter should reach you immediately on his death. Unfortunately I found it today only. Hence the delay.

Sincerely yours | Elizabeth A. Sharp

*ALS Indiana University, Lilly Library*

Chorleywood

This will reach you after my death. You will think I have deceived you about Fiona Macleod. But, in absolute privacy, I tell you that I have not, howsoever in certain details I have (inevitably) misled you. Only, it is a mystery. Perhaps you will intuitively understand: or may come to understand. "The rest is silence." Farewell.

William Sharp

It is only right, however, to add that I, and I only, am the author (in the *literal* and literary sense) of all written under the name of Fiona Macleod.

*ALS Indiana University, Lilly Library*

**To William Butler Yeats, December 28, 1905**

London and Chorleywood | 28 December

Dear Mr. Yeats

My husband wished that you should receive the enclosed immediately on his death. Unfortunately I found it today only.

As you will see, he and he only was, and wrote as, Fiona Macleod.

Sincerely yours | Elizabeth A. Sharp

*Letters to Yeats I, p. 157*

Chorleywood

This will reach you after my death. You will think I have deceived you about Fiona Macleod. But, in absolute privacy, I tell you that I have not, however in certain details I have (inevitably) misled you. Only, it is a mystery. Perhaps you will intuitively understand, or may come to understand. "The rest is silence."

William Sharp

It is only right, however, to add that I, and I only, am the author — in the *literal* and literary sense — of all written under the name of Fiona Macleod.

*Letters to Yeats I, p. 158*

# Afterword

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News of Sharp's death was wired to Edith Rinder in London, and she passed it to the newspapers with the information that Sharp was the author of the writings of Fiona Macleod. Six years before he died, Sharp wrote on small white cards a message confessing that he, and he alone, was "the author — in the *literal* and literary sense — of all written under the name of Fiona Macleod." He identified individuals who were to receive the cards from Elizabeth after he died. She sent one to W. B. Yeats on December 28, and he replied on January 6 (*Collected Letters IV*, pp. 302–03):

I want to tell you how much I sympathize with you in your great trouble. Your husband was a man of genius who brought something wholly new into letters & thousands will feel his loss with a curious personal regret. To me he was that, & a strange mystery too & also a dear friend. To talk with him was to feel the presence of that mystery, he was very near always to the world where he now is & often seemed to me to deliver its messages. He often spoke to me of things of my personal life that were unknown to him by the common channels of sense. I knew he was ill — but never knew how ill. I had a letter from him only two days before I saw his death in the paper. I had been looking forward to seeing him again very shortly. I feel now that one of the Gates of Wisdom has been closed for much as I admire his writing he was, as a man should be, more than his writing. What must you feel at so great a loss. You must however know that one, who was so often as it seemed out of the body while he lived, cannot have undergone any unrecognizable change or gone very far away. Blake said of death that it was but going into another room. He was certainly the most imaginative man — I use the word in its old & literal sense of image making — I have ever known, not like a man of this age at all.

This letter was written to comfort Elizabeth in her grief. Read in the context of Sharp's last letter to Yeats which admonished him for his long

silence, it may also have been motivated by guilt. Yet admiration for the life and work of a fellow writer comes through clearly and sincerely.

Elizabeth began planning a book about her husband's life and work shortly after he died. She asked many of his correspondents if she could see and use some of his letters in what became her *Memoir*. Yeats was one of those, but Elizabeth had a special request of him. Among Sharp's papers she had come upon what looked like a Masonic rite, and she wondered if Yeats could cast some light on it. She was also curious to know if her husband had written or spoken to Yeats about any visions. She was sceptical about her husband's effort to see visions and interact with disembodied spirits, but in recent years she had come to share his beliefs. After he died, she began searching for a means of contacting him.

Writing from Lady Gregory's Coole Park on July 21, 1906, Yeats told Elizabeth he had intended to call on her when he was in London in the Spring, but other matters intervened (TLS Private). He will see her in the fall, and by then he will have found and sorted out his letters from Sharp and Fiona: "I think there are one or two visions recorded amongst them," he wrote, "but I am not sure."

I think too that I have some notes of a vision of your husband's, but it took place five or six years ago, and I am not certain that I should be able to understand the notes. I made a search through my papers when I was in London, but I have not yet found a bundle of rather interesting letters which your husband wrote me at the outset of the Fiona Macleod books. "The Masonic Rite" you speak of was made in the first instance by me and then after a vision which your husband had working with me, was worked by him. He never sent it to me, and I would be very much obliged if you would let me see it. There are a good many things I can tell you about this rite and others of the same sort, and there are still more matters which I am most anxious to ask you about.

His "absorption in the theatre" had caused many interests he shared with Sharp to fade into the background, and he had drifted farther apart from Sharp than he liked. When his theatre work becomes "instinctive," he will return "to what are still to me the supreme interests." Irish Nationalism and the creation of an Irish National Theatre had intervened, but he had not abandoned his effort to establish a Celtic Mystical Order in the West of Ireland and obtain its rites through dream and vision.

Yeats called on Elizabeth in London not in the fall but in the first week of January 1907, and he described their meeting in a letter to Maud Gonne dated January 14 (*Collected Letters IV*, pp. 591–94). He now knew a great deal more about the Fiona Macleod mystery; it was as he thought:

Fiona Macleod was so far as external perception could say a secondary personality induced in Sharp by the presence of a very beautiful unknown woman whom he fell in love with. She, alas! has disappeared from everyone's sight, no one having set eyes on her except George Meredith who says she was the most beautiful woman he ever saw. Whether there was more than this I do not know but poor Mrs. Sharp, though generous and self-sacrificing as I can see does not want to enlarge that unknown woman's share. A great deal, however, which Sharp used to give in letters as an account of Fiona's doings were she insists a kind of semi-allegorical description of the adventures of his own secondary personality and its relation with the primary self.

Yeats then recalled an instance in which Sharp wrote to say he would leave Yeats' letter for Fiona to read when she woke up. According to Elizabeth this meant the secondary personality would read it and respond when it awoke. That response from Fiona, Yeats said, though written for her by Sharp, was "much more impassioned" than the rest of the letter. Yeats doubted there would be much of this in the biography Elizabeth intended to write because when he suggested she tell the whole story, she said "How can I! Other people are so much involved."

The Sharp letter Yeats remembered was written on May 5, 1898 in St. Margaret's Bay near Dover where Fiona's sudden illness was invented to prevent Sharp from taking her across the channel to meet Yeats and others in Paris (*Letters to Yeats II*, pp. 394–96). After his conversation with Elizabeth Yeats thought the woman who would read his letter when she woke up was not Sharp's secondary personality but the "beautiful unknown woman" he loved, the woman who "awakened" the secondary personality. Elizabeth "never talked quite openly about things," he continued, "except it being a secondary personality, but told things in a series of hints and yet, at the same time quite clearly. I noticed that each time she said this personality was awakened in him by a beautiful person she would add as if to lessen the effect, 'and by beautiful scenery.'" We can now see Elizabeth was trying to be as truthful as she could without revealing that Edith Wingate Rinder was the beautiful woman who induced Fiona Macleod in her husband, the beautiful

woman Sharp introduced to George Meredith as Fiona Macleod, the beautiful woman who refused at the last minute to accompany Sharp to Paris, the beautiful woman who, according to Yeats, has disappeared from everyone's sight.

It is now apparent the beautiful woman had not disappeared. In fact, Yeats and other friends of the Sharps must have met her at the frequent parties and "at homes" given by the Sharps and by their friend Mona Caird who was a cousin of Frank Rinder, Edith's husband. Among their many friends in Rome in the winter of 1890–1891, including Mona Caird, Elizabeth mentioned "Mrs. Wingate Rinder" who joined them for three weeks. "With her," she wrote, "my husband greatly enjoyed long walks over the Campana and expeditions to the little neighboring hill towns" (*Memoir*, p. 173). She did not say many of the poems he wrote and privately published in Italy as *Sospiri di Roma* were written about Mrs. Rinder, their long walks through hills near Rome and his love for her. Elizabeth saw those poems as the "turning point" in his career as a writer.

[They] are filled not only with the passionate delight in life, with the sheer joy of existence, but also with the ecstatic worship of beauty that possessed him during those spring months we spent in Rome, when he had cut himself adrift for the time from the usual routine of our life, and touched a high point of health and exuberant spirits (*Memoir*, p. 222).

He found there, Elizabeth continued, "the desired incentive towards a true expression of himself in the stimulus and sympathetic understanding of the friend to whom he dedicated the first of the books published under the pseudonym." That book was *Pharais*, and it was dedicated to E. W. R., Edith Wingate Rinder.

In the dedication, Sharp, writing as Fiona, said he and the dedicatee met a long while ago in a "resting place" of friendship and "found that we loved the same things, and in the same way." The place they met was paradisal, thus *Pharais*, and there "we both have seen beautiful visions and dreamed dreams. Take, then, out of my heart this book of vision and dream." Edith appeared often in the Fiona writings but always by her initials or as an anagram, a made-up name or a fictional character. In the *Memoir*, Elizabeth said her husband's friendship with the woman to whom he dedicated *Pharais* began in Rome and "lasted throughout the remainder of his life." Although there are hints throughout her *Memoir*

and the Fiona writings, Elizabeth refrained from describing the true nature of that friendship.

Before Sharp went to America in 1896, he left Elizabeth a "letter of instructions concerning his wishes in the event of his death." In it he said he owed his development as Fiona Macleod to Edith Rinder. "Without her," he said, "there would have been no Fiona Macleod." Recalling that letter, Elizabeth said of this woman without identifying her:

Because of her beauty, her strong sense of life and of the joy of life; because of her keen intuitions and mental alertness, her personality stood for him as a symbol of the heroic women of Greece and Celtic days, a symbol that, as he expressed it, unlocked new doors in his mind and put him "in touch with ancestral memories" of his race (*Memoir*, p. 222).

It is revealing of Elizabeth's character that she included in her *Memoir* this description of the woman her husband deeply loved for many years. It is a well-deserved tribute to a remarkable woman, and now that Edith has emerged in the life of William Sharp, she will be recognized as an accomplished writer, translator, and editor. Elizabeth's description of Edith is also a lasting tribute to the remarkable qualities of the woman Sharp married. Elizabeth preserved long after her death the secret of Edith's identity by burning most of her husband's papers before she died. Through all the years between her husband's death in 1905 and hers in 1932, Elizabeth maintained a close friendship with Edith and Frank Rinder.

Elizabeth respected Edith's determination to erase from the historical record her role in the birth of Fiona Macleod, in the Fiona writings, and in the life of William Sharp. The relationship between William and Edith had begun to cool before Edith became pregnant in 1900 and gave birth to a baby girl in July 1901, but the friendship between the Sharps and Rinders remained solid. Edith became Sharp's point of contact in London for the Fiona correspondence and functioned for several years as his secretary. At the turn of the century, Sharp came to regret his embrace in the early 1900s of the New Paganism and his opposition to the restraints which society placed upon marriage. Following the trial of Oscar Wilde in 1895 and events surrounding it, there was a seismic shift in attitudes towards what came to be called the "decadence." The desire to erase the nature of the relationship between Edith Rinder and William Sharp was motivated also by the desire to shield Edith's

daughter from any recriminations that might befall her from what she came to call the “advanced views” of her parents and their close friends. Sharp was seldom mentioned in the presence of Edith’s daughter, and as a child she was warned not to touch any of the Sharp or Fiona books in her parents’ library. When her mother died in 1962, all those books which must have contained authors’ inscriptions had been removed and, presumably, destroyed.

Given the course of events before and after Sharp’s death, it is no wonder Elizabeth responded “How can I! Other people are so much involved” when Yeats suggested in his January 1906 meeting that she tell “the whole story” in her *Memoir*. Yeats concluded his description of that meeting by asking Maud Gonne to keep his letter: “For I am fresh from seeing Mrs. Sharp [...] and this will be a record. Put it in some safe place and I may ask you for it again some day for it is a fragment of history.”



Fig. 32. Photograph of William and Elizabeth Sharp in 1904, unknown photographer. Gift of Noel Farquharson Sharp to William F. Halloran in 1968.

Yeats's meeting with Elizabeth did not unravel the mystery of Fiona Macleod. He remained perplexed. Was she a second personality or a female spirit speaking through Sharp? Yet he came away from his conversation with Elizabeth believing a real woman was intimately involved in the personality Sharp projected as Fiona Macleod and in the writings Sharp published under the female pseudonym. Yeats's description of his meeting with Elizabeth paints an intimate picture of her feelings about her husband's relationship with Edith. In reading Yeats's account of the meeting, which he saw as a fragment of history, it is impossible not to share the sympathy for Elizabeth that breathes through his words. In her own writings and what others have said about her, Elizabeth emerges as an intelligent and accomplished woman who retained her patience and enthusiasm for life and her love for the cousin she met as a girl during summer vacations in Scotland, the cousin who proposed to her in an Edinburgh cemetery, the cousin she eventually married despite the concerns of their families, the cousin she followed all over Britain, continental Europe, and Northern Africa, and the cousin mediums brought to life for her many years after she buried him on the slopes of Etna in the Sicilian wilds.



# Appendix 1

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The letter transcribed below casts light on the final two years of William Sharp's life. It was written by Catherine Ann (Drinker) Janvier — an American painter, writer, and close friend of Sharp — to Roselle Lathrop Shields, a young American working in Greece as an assistant to an archaeologist. Sharp met her during a two-week visit to Greece in the winter of 1903 and came to know her well during the four months the Sharps spent in Greece the following year (December 1903–March 1904).

Born in 1841, Catherine Janvier married, in 1878, Thomas Janvier, a short story writer and journalist originally from New Orleans. They lived a peripatetic life alternating between New York's Greenwich Village, Mexico, England, and the south of France. Sharp was introduced to the Janviers during his first visit to New York in 1889, and a close friendship developed in the 1890s as they and the Sharps visited back and forth in England and France. Fourteen years older than William Sharp, Catherine became particularly fond of him, and he shared with her some of his deepest thoughts and feelings. The Janviers were childless, and the relationship she developed with Sharp resembled that between a mother and son.

Claiming it was the work of a friend, Sharp sent her a copy of the first Fiona Macleod book, *Pharais, A Romance of the Isles* when it was published in 1894. Recalling Sharp mentioning in 1893 he was working on a novel called *Pharais*, she confronted him with the fact that he was Fiona. He prevailed upon her to keep his secret, and the confidence they shared cemented their relationship. Following his death, which affected her greatly, Catherine delivered a paper about Sharp's life and work to the Aberdeen Branch of the Franco-Scottish Society on June 8, 1906. She then refined and expanded that paper into an article titled "Fiona Macleod and Her Creator William Sharp," which appeared in

*The North American Review* of April 5, 1907 (Volume 184, pp. 718–32). For the article, she depended on letters she had received from Sharp, their conversations, and her careful and sympathetic reading of all Sharp wrote and published under the female pseudonym.

Two months after Sharp died, Catherine wrote a letter which has recently surfaced to Roselle Lathrop Shields which shines a light on the last two years of his life. Roselle Shields was born in Bridgeport, Connecticut in 1877. As a young woman she made her way to England where, in 1900, she married James Van Allen Shields. He was born in Washington, D.C. in 1871 and worked in London for the Columbia Record Company. Twenty-two years younger than Sharp, Roselle was much taken by him, and they maintained contact through the year. They met again in December 1903 when the Sharp arrived in Greece. In her *Memoir* (p. 378), Elizabeth said her husband became ill upon their arrival, but his health improved after the turn of the year: "With Spring sunshine and warmth my husband regained a degree of strength, and it was his chief pleasure to take long rambles on the neighboring hills alone, or with the young American archaeologist, Mrs. Roselle L. Shields, a tireless walker." Elizabeth printed in the *Memoir* parts of two letters Sharp wrote to an unnamed friend during the last two weeks of his life (pp. 413–16). It has been speculated these letters were written to Edith Rinder, but they were almost certainly two of the four letters mentioned in the letter below which Sharp wrote to Roselle Shields in the waning days of his life. Having met in Greece, Roselle and Elizabeth Sharp, both Londoners, became friends, and Roselle must have shared these two letters with Elizabeth to use as she wrote the *Memoir*. They also cooperated in preparing *A Little Book of Nature Thoughts*, from the writings of Fiona Macleod, selected by Mrs. William Sharp and Roselle Shields, with a foreword by R. L. S. (Roselle Lathrop Shields), which Thomas Mosher published in 1908 and for which he paid Elizabeth £50.

Catherine Janvier wrote a nicely illustrated book called *London Mews* containing rhymes about cats which was published on January 1, 1904 by Harper & Brother in New York. She sent a copy of that book to Roselle Shields as a Christmas gift in 1905. Her letter to Shields was in that copy when it recently appeared for sale. The cat book was on its way across the ocean to Shields which explains the letter's reference to cats in its second paragraph. Here is a transcription of the letter Roselle saved in the cat book.<sup>1</sup>

*Catherine Ann Janvier to Roselle Lathrop Shields,  
February 8, 1906*

8 February 1906

My dearie

I have been putting off writing to you hoping to be able to get a long hour to give you. It was a mistake, and in future I shall send you short letters when I cannot have time for long ones.

The cats are crossing the ocean and I hope will reach you safely. "The Mews" really is not a book exclusively for children, though generally it seems so to be considered.<sup>2</sup>

Thank you for your letter. My dearie, I am beginning to think that it is you and I who best know and understand our dear boy. Do not be influenced by others or their opinions. How I wish you could have been with him. It always will be a bitter pain to me that he put off writing to me, so that I have nothing of any account after he went to Maniace. On the other hand, I have a treasury of letters dating back to 1889 — what I have is but a small part, too, because many letters were destroyed. Otherwise he would not have written with the freedom he did. I do not know what he did with my letters. Should E. have them, if he kept them, she will be greatly puzzled.

What you say about P. and Mary and E. not knowing coincides with what I thought.<sup>3</sup> In the letter that never was written he promised full details of P. and directions as to some matters. I never can know now. How I wish I were near, there is so much to ask, so much for us — you and I — to talk of.

How I envy you your four last letters — had I had but one! Well, I feel I know how he longed for his wee "Roseen." How weary he was of many things. It breaks my heart to think of him there — alone — I know that the best of care was taken of him, that every comfort was his, but I know that he was "alone," he knew too, I am sure, that it had to be.

Do not forget to tell me the full story of the seal — I mean what he told you to do about it, and how, as far as you know, he came to think of it. He wrote me the meaning of the device. That — at least — I have, but if I could have had my letter!

Tell me what you can about that last week's letters when you can.

I told Elizabeth ~~yesterday~~ I think in my last letter to her that I was writing a little article in appreciation of him, but went into no details, so you need know nothing as yet.<sup>4</sup>

I have had to stop short in the middle to do some translating for T. A. J.,<sup>5</sup> but hope to start fresh and keep on by the end of this week.

How I wish you were here to go over the old letters with me. You are the only person in the world to whom I would show them. I know he would be willing. The whole evolution of Fiona Macleod practically is in those that I have kept, although much is lost by the destruction of letters too personal to keep.

You must understand that this collection — that is three or four letters absolutely proving him to be Fiona — was put away to keep with his approbation. The last time we were together here, he entirely approved of what I had arranged as to their disposition in case of my sudden death.

He gave me the ms. of the dedication to me of "The Washer of the Ford" — the long Prologue to Kathia. Also some ms. (all this in his own handwriting) of various other articles of Fiona's and some poems. He hoped against hope — the dear one — that the secret might be kept for years — but if not, and he had small hope of it then, that it was well for me to keep and use, if needful, or if I pleased these incontrovertible proofs. You will see by my little article how interesting his confession in 1894 is, as to being F. M.

I have not mentioned these letters to anyone, as yet, and wish to finish and send off my article before they are known. What a life! could I write it out! What a wonderful life!

As soon as I can, I will hunt up all he said of you. Unfortunately much is destroyed.

Your Kathie

Sunday Oct. 22 Venice—1905 (In reference to our, your and mine, first meeting) "Remember that her all surrounding love saved me, I am sure, in far away Greece, and what it has meant ever since to me."

I cannot get at the earlier ones yet —

*ALS, Private*

# Appendix 2

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## Location of Letters      Recipients of Letters

<i>British Library</i>	Theodore Watts-Dunton, early February, 1901 Algernon Charles Swinburne, [early October], 1901
<i>Brown University Library</i>	Grant Richards, October 20, 1900
<i>Churchill Archive Center, Churchill College, Cambridge</i>	Edith Lyttelton, January 8, 1900 Edith Lyttelton, June 4, 1900 Edith Lyttelton, [mid-June, 1900]
<i>Columbia University Library Rare Book and Manuscript Library Kenneth Lohf Papers</i>	Edmund Clarence Stedman, August 29, 1904 Mrs. Edmund Clarence Stedman, September 22, [1904] Mrs. Frederick Stedman?, [September 22, 1904] Edmund Clarence Stedman, [late September, 1904] Edmund Clarence Stedman, July 30, 1905 Edmund Clarence Stedman, [late September, 1905]
<i>Dorset County Museum Thomas Hardy Memorial Collection</i>	Thomas Hardy, January 4, 1905
<i>Harvard University, Houghton Library</i>	Bliss Perry, November 24, 1904

- Roger Livingston Scaife, [December 6, 1904]  
Houghton Mifflin & Co, December 6, 1904  
Houghton Mifflin & Co., December 9, 1904  
William Dean Howells, [mid-January, 1905]  
William Dean Howells, [late-January, 1905]
- Huntington Library, San Marino, California*  
Benjamin Burgess Moore, November 12, [1901]  
Benjamin Burgess Moore, March 17, 1903  
Benjamin B. Moore, April 25, [1903]  
Bliss Perry, August 4, 1903  
Benjamin Burgess Moore, October 20, 1904  
Lauretta Stedman, February 5, [1905]  
Robert Underwood Johnson, February 5, [1905]  
Richard Watson Gilder, February 5, 1905  
Richard Watson Gilder, February 20, [1905]  
Richard Watson Gilder, February 22, 1905  
Robert Underwood Johnson, May 27, 1905  
Robert Underwood Johnson, May 27, [1905]  
Robert Underwood Johnson, [May 28, 1905]  
Robert Underwood Johnson, [July 27, 1905]  
Helen Hopekirk, September 19, [1905]  
Robert Underwood Johnson, September 22, [1905]
- Indiana University, Lilly Library*  
George Russell (AE), June 15, 1900  
George Russell (AE), December 25, 1905
- Library of Congress,  
Louise Chandler Moulton Collection*      Louise Chandler Moulton, December 26, 1901
- London Daily Chronicle*      Editor of *The Daily Chronicle*, September 14, 1904  
Editor of *The Daily Chronicle*, September 19, 1904

*National Library of Ireland*

William Butler Yeats, November 12, 1901

*National Library of Scotland*

William Blackwood, March 15, [1900]

George Russell (AE), [mid-September, 1900]

T. W. Rolleston, October 19, [1900]

George Russell (AE), October 20, 1900

John Macleay, November 30, 1900

Mrs. Gertrude Page, March 18, 1901

John Macleay, May 23, 1902

John Macleay, June 23, 1902

John Macleay, November 18, 1902

George Halkett, May 9, 1903

Alfred T. Nutt, February 18, [1904]

Ethel M. Goddard, December 27, 1904

Elizabeth A. Sharp, [April 25, 1905]

Elizabeth A. Sharp, [June 16, 1905]

Elizabeth A. Sharp, [July 9?, 1905]

Elizabeth A. Sharp, [July 10?, 1905]

*New York Public Library,  
Berg Collection*

Standish O'Grady, July 22, 1900

Thomas Mosher, May 31, 1901

Thomas Mosher, June 19, 1901

Thomas Mosher, July 5, 1901

Thomas Mosher, 8th July, 1901

Thomas Mosher, July 9, 1901

Thomas Mosher, July 12, 1901

Thomas Mosher, August 5, 1901

Thomas Mosher, August 20, 1901

Thomas Mosher, August 27, 1901

Thomas Mosher, September 2, 1901

Thomas Mosher, September 3, [1901

Thomas Mosher, September 13, 1901

Thomas Mosher, October 1, 1901

Thomas Mosher, October 23, 1901

Thomas Mosher, November 12, 1901

Thomas Mosher, November 26, 1901

Thomas Mosher, December 12, 1901

Thomas Mosher, December 15, 1901

Thomas Mosher, December 16, 1901

Thomas Mosher, January 6, 1902

Thomas Mosher, July [19?], 1902

Thomas Mosher, July 21, 1902  
Thomas Mosher, August 2, 1902  
Thomas Mosher, August 6, 1902  
Thomas Mosher, October 14, 1902  
Thomas Mosher, November 11, 1902  
Thomas Mosher, November 11, 1902  
Thomas Mosher, [November 12, 1902]  
Thomas Mosher, [January 1903]  
Thomas Mosher, April 24, [1903]  
Thomas Mosher, May 14, 1903  
Thomas Mosher, May 26, 1903  
Thomas Mosher, June 3, 1903  
Thomas Mosher, June 6, 1903  
Thomas Mosher, June 23, 1903  
Thomas Mosher, July 15, 1903  
Thomas Mosher, August 3, 1903  
Thomas Mosher, September 10, 1903  
Thomas Mosher, November 6, 1903  
Thomas Mosher, December 6, [1903]  
Thomas Mosher, March 30, [1904]  
Thomas Mosher, September 17, 1904  
Thomas Mosher, November 28, 1904  
Thomas Mosher, December 2, 1904  
Thomas Mosher, December 7, 1904  
Thomas Mosher, December 31, 1904  
Thomas Mosher, February 11, [1905]  
Thomas Mosher, February 20, 1905  
Thomas Mosher, February 21, 1905  
Thomas Mosher, March 21, [1905]  
Thomas Mosher, April 24, [1905]  
Thomas Mosher, May 16, [1905]  
Thomas Mosher, June 8, [1905]  
Thomas Mosher, August 15, [1905]  
Thomas Mosher, September 5, [1905]  
Thomas Mosher, November 17, 1905

New York University, Fales Library David Munro, March 15, 1901

*Pierpont Morgan Library, New York* Mrs. Grant Allen, January 3, 1900  
James Carleton Young, June 23, 1903  
Helen Hopekirk, October 18, 1905

<i>Princeton University, Firestone Library, Rare Books and Special Collections</i>	J. Stanley Little, March 26, 1900 J. Stanley Little, March 28, 1900 E. C. Stedman, October 18, 1900 Mr. & Mrs. Coulson Kernahan, [Dec., 1900] Alfred Austin, July 12, 1902 George Hutchinson, September 15, 1902 Nigel Severn, July 16, 1905
<i>Stanford University</i>	Grant Richards, June 1, 1900 Grant Richards, November 3, 1901 Grant Richards, [mid-December, 1901]
<i>State University of New York at Buffalo Library</i>	William Archer, [August] 22 [1900] E. C. Stedman, September 28, 1900 Grant Richards, August 8, 1902 Grant Richards, October 31, 1902 Grant Richards, July 13, 1903
<i>Theatre Museum, London</i>	[Frederick Whelen?], April 16, 1900 <i>The Topical Times</i> , November 19, [1900]
<i>University of California, Los Angeles</i> <i>William Andrews Clark Memorial Library</i>	John Stuart Verschoyle, January 11, 1900 John Stuart Verschoyle, April 8, 1900 John Stuart Verschoyle, [fall, 1900?]
<i>University of Delaware Library, Newark</i>	Henry Mills Alden, October 22, 1901 Henry Mills Alden, July 21, 1902
<i>Trinity College Dublin Library</i>	Edward Dowden, July 30, 1901
<i>University of Leeds, Brotherton Library</i>	Theodore Watts-Dunton, February 9, 1900 Theodore Watts-Dunton, [November 12, 1900] Theodore Watts-Dunton, May 19, 1901 Theodore Watts-Dunton, [early July, 1901] Theodore Watts-Dunton, [August 1, 1901] Theodore Watts-Dunton, February 10, 1902 Theodore Watts-Dunton, [July 14?, 1903]
<i>University of Strathclyde Library</i>	Anna Geddes, mid-November, 1905

- University of Texas, Austin, Ransom Humanities Research Center*      Richard Garnett, June 23, 1901  
Richard Garnett, [July 5?, 1903]  
Richard Garnett, July 28, 1903  
Richard Garnett, December 29, 1903  
Richard Garnett, [October 24?, 1904]  
Richard Garnett, [early April, 1905]
- University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee, Golda Meir Library*      Hannibal Ingalls Kimball, [?February, 1900]  
Alexander Jessup, June 14, 1904
- Wellesley College Library*      *The North American Review*, June 10, 1901  
Caroline Hazard, November 22, [1904]  
Caroline Hazard, [December 7, 1904]  
Caroline Hazard, [December 8, 1904]  
Katherine Bates, December 15, [1904]
- West Sussex Record Office*      Leo J. Maxse, June 8, 1900
- Yale University, Beinecke Library*      Frederick Charles Charrington, July 6, 1900  
William Butler Yeats, [late August, 1900]  
Marion Crawford, November 13, [1901]  
Alfred Austin, [August 8, 1902]  
Alfred Austin, [late August, 1902]  
Alfred Austin, [early September, 1902]  
[Alexander Jessup], September 20, 1904  
Laura Stedman, [October 15, 1904]

# Endnotes

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## Introduction

- 1 This Introduction is a slightly revised version of the Introductions to Volumes 1 and 2 of *The Life and Letters*.

## Chapter 20

- 1 In a November 1899 letter, Sharp asked Murray Gilchrist to be his guest at a dinner meeting of the Omar Khayyam Club (“the ‘Blue Ribbon’ [...] of Literary Associations”) on Friday, December 1, 1899. Sharp was pleased to have been invited to compose a poem and read it at the dinner. In the poem, Sharp paid tribute to his friend Grant Allen who had recently died and had been a member of the club. In this letter to Allen’s widow, Sharp regrets that she did not receive a copy of the poem and sends another (*Memoir*, p. 313).
- 2 William Simpson (1823–1899) was an artist who worked for the *Illustrated London News* from 1860 to his death. Among his publications are the following works: *The Campaign in the East; A Series of Views Illustrating the Crimean War* (1885); *Meeting the Sun: A Journey Around the World* (1873); and *The Buddhist Prayer Wheel* (1896).
- 3 Edith Lyttelton (1865–1948) was interested in the writings of Fiona Macleod. Sharp had parlayed that interest into several meetings with her and tried with limited success to encourage her interest in what he wrote under his own name. A woman of many talents, Edith Lyttelton moved in the aristocratic circle of friends known as the “Souls”, which included A. J. Balfour, George Curzon, Margot Tennant (later Asquith), and Alfred Lyttelton, whom she married in April 1892 at Bordighera on the Italian Riviera. She served on the Executive Committee of the National Union of Women Workers (founded in 1895) and later as Chairwoman of the Personal Service Association (founded in 1908, to alleviate distress

caused by unemployment in London). At the outbreak of World War I she was a founder of the War Refugees Committee. She was appointed Deputy Director of the Women's Branch of the Ministry of Agriculture in 1917, served on the Central Committee of Women's Employment from 1916–1925, and as Vice-Chairman of the Waste Reclamation Trade Board from 1924–1931. She was also the British substitute delegate in Geneva to the League of Nations in 1923, 1926–1928, and 1931. After the death of her husband she became interested in spiritualism and was a member and President (1933–1934) of the council of the Society for Psychical Research. Her husband, Alfred Lyttelton (1857–1913), was a graduate of Eton and Trinity College, Cambridge and one of the pre-eminent British sportsmen of his generation, the first man to represent England in both football and cricket. He was elected to parliament in 1895 and served as Secretary of State for the Colonies between 1903 and 1905. Following his death in 1913, his wife lived on for thirty-five years, receiving many honors from the crown. Wikipedia contributors, "Edith Balfour Lyttelton", *Wikipedia*, 7 December 2019, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edith\\_Balfour\\_Lyttelton](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edith_Balfour_Lyttelton)

- 4 Best known as a writer of romantic fiction, Maurice Hewlett (1861–1923) also wrote travelogues, essays, poetry, criticism, dramas, and a screenplay. His *Little Novels of Italy* was published by Methuen and Company in London in 1899. The book contains five short stories, set in Italy one of which is titled "Ippolita in the Hills." Hewlett must have mentioned his dramatization of "Ippolita" to Sharp, who was a member of the Managing Committee of the Stage Society, in the hope the Society would produce it.
- 5 The reference must be to *Paolo and Francesca, A Tragedy in Four Acts* by Stephen Phillips (1868–1915) which was published by John Lane in London and New York in 1900.
- 6 *The Letters of Robert Louis Stevenson to his Family and Friends*. Selected and edited with notes and introduction by Sidney Colvin. London: Methuen & Co., 1899.
- 7 The publication mentioned here is unknown, but later Edith Lyttelton published a biography of her husband (1917), a novel called *The Sinclair Family* (1926), and an account of her travels in the Far East and India, *Travelling Days* (1933). She also wrote seven plays and translated Edmond Rostand's *Les deux Pierrots* (1891). After 1918 she lobbied for the foundation of a national theatre in London and was a member of the Executive Committee of the Shakespeare Memorial National Theatre. Spiritualism heavily influenced her later writings: *The Faculty of Communion* (1925), *Our Superconscious Mind* (1931), and *Some Cases of Prediction* (1937), as well her biography of Florence Upton (1926). Wikipedia contributors, "Edith

Balfour Lyttelton", Wikipedia, 7 December 2019, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edith\\_Balfour\\_Lyttelton](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edith_Balfour_Lyttelton)

- 8 *The Divine Adventure: Iona: By Sundown Shores: Studies in Spiritual History* was published by Chapman & Hall in May 1900.
- 9 *The Progress of Art in the XIX Century* was published as Vol. XXII of *The Nineteenth Century Series*, edited by Justin McCarthy et al. (Toronto and Philadelphia: The Linscott Publishing Co., 1902). It was published separately the same year in England by W. & R. Chambers, Ltd. of London and Edinburgh.
- 10 For information about Verschoyle, who was at this time Assistant Editor of *The Fortnightly Review*, see note to Sharp's letter to him dated May 1 or 2, 1889 (Volume 1).
- 11 Date from postmark.
- 12 Mark Tapley is the body-servant to Dickens's Martin Chuzzlewit in the novel of that name who remains consistently optimistic in the face of all adversities.
- 13 Date from postmark.
- 14 Broadstairs is a resort town on the coast in Kent where the Sharps spent three or four weeks in February and early March, having been ordered by their doctor to rest by the sea to recuperate from their illnesses.
- 15 Date from postmark. This card was sent to Verschoyle in Somerset where he was serving as a Rector. That address is crossed out and 51 New Bond Street, London is substituted.
- 16 The "Life" section of this chapter includes a discussion of the Stage Society and the Society's production of Fiona Macleod's "The House of Usna."
- 17 Sir George Alexander (1858–1918) was an English actor and theatre manager. Born in Reading, he began acting in amateur theatricals in 1875 and made his London debut in 1881. In 1890, he produced his first play at the Avenue Theatre, and in 1891 he became the actor manager of the St James's Theatre, where he produced several major plays of the day such as "Lady Windermere's Fan" by Oscar Wilde (1892). He played Aubrey Tanqueray in the performance of Pinero's "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray" (the St. James Theatre, London, on May 27, 1893) which made Mrs. Patrick Campbell into a theatrical star. In 1900, Alexander, who had acquired the acting rights for "The Importance of Being Earnest" and "Lady Windermere's Fan," visited Wilde in Paris and offered the poverty-stricken

former writer some voluntary payments. He also arranged to bequeath the rights to Wilde's plays to his estranged sons. Alexander remained at the St. James's Theatre, producing and acting in plays, to the end of his life. Wikipedia contributors, "George Alexander (actor)", Wikipedia, 14 March 2020, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George\\_Alexander\\_\(actor\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Alexander_(actor))

- 18 This is a fragment of a letter from Fiona Macleod to Ernest Rhys which he reproduced in an article entitled "William Sharp and 'Fiona Macleod'" which appeared after Sharp's death in *The Century Magazine* (May 1907, 111–17). Introducing the fragment, Rhys wrote "Of the many letters from his imaginary friend and collaborator which reached me from time to time, one at least may be quoted as confirming his own history of these neo-Celtic fantasies and romances."
- 19 Lillian Rea, an American girl who assisted Sharp secretarially, had set up a Literary Agency in London which provided a return address for the Fiona letters. This avoided having letters, addressed to Fiona, pass through the hands of Mary Sharp in Edinburgh on their way to Sharp when he was in or near London. It is fitting that letters to Fiona Macleod would now be sent to the London address of Edith Rinder whom Sharp frequently conflated with the phantom Fiona.
- 20 At Sharp's suggestion, Richards, in June 1899, asked Fiona to edit an anthology of poetry. The project never materialized.
- 21 Ernest Rhys's "The New Mysticism" which appeared in *The Fortnightly Review* (June, 1900, 1045–56) and was later reprinted in *The Bibelot*, 8/11 (1902) published by T. B. Mosher in Portland, ME. It was a positive retrospective piece occasioned by the publication of Fiona Macleod's *The Divine Adventure*.
- 22 *The Divine Adventure*.
- 23 I have not found a record of this novel's publication.
- 24 "The House of Usna" was performed by the Stage Society at the Globe Theatre on April 29, 1900 and published in July, 1900, in *The National Review*, which was edited at the time by Leopold James Maxse (1864–1932).
- 25 The two Fiona articles appeared in the issues of *The Fortnightly Review* dated March 1 and April 11, 1900.
- 26 Fiona Macleod's "Sea Magic and Running Water," which appeared in *The Contemporary Review* in October 1902.

- 27 See the “Life” section of this chapter for a description of the public debate with George Russell (AE) occasioned by Fiona Macleod’s “Celtic” which was first published in the May 1900 issue of *The Contemporary Review* (Vol. 77, 669 ff.) and included in the “By Sundown Shores” section of *The Divine Adventure* which was published by Chapman & Hall in the same month. Later Sharp revised and enlarged the essay for separate publication in book form as *Celtic: A Study in Spiritual History* (Portland: T. B. Mosher, 1901). In 1904 Sharp included the revised version in the collection of essays entitled *The Winged Destiny: Studies in the Spiritual History of the Gael* (London: Chapman and Hall, Ltd.) In the 1910 Uniform Edition of Fiona Macleod’s works, it remained with *The Winged Destiny* in volume four. The alterations of “Celtic” in its several reprintings suggest Sharp considered it a significant statement of his ideas.
- 28 This Gaelic phrase is Sharp’s translation of the preceding statement.
- 29 Charles Charrington, a prominent actor/theater manager in London, was the second husband of Janet Achurch, a famous actress on the London stage in the 1890s whose most notable role was the heroine in Ibsen’s *The Doll’s House*. The Charringtons popularized Ibsen not only in London but in Australia and elsewhere in the world. When Frederick Whelen (1867–1955) founded the Stage Society in July 1899 [see introduction to this section of letters], Charles Charrington was made a member of the Managing Committee which included, among others, William Sharp and Whelen as Chairman. Eventually Whelen and Charrington quarreled and parted ways. When Whelen became the Secretarial Manager in accord with Sharp’s proposal, Sharp became Chairman.
- 30 Ernest Williams (1866–1935) was a barrister and writer. Among his publications are *Made in Germany* (1896), *The Tariff Dictionary* (1904), *An Exile in Bohemia* (1902), *The Philosophy of the Licensing Bill* (1908), and *The Temperance Handbook* (1932).
- 31 O’Grady, Editor of the *All Ireland Review*, printed this letter on the front page of the paper’s August 4, 1890 issue.
- 32 William Archer (1856–1924) was an influential drama critic and translator of Ibsen. The date of the letter derives from the fact that August was the only month in 1900 in which the twenty-second fell on a Wednesday. Richards had published Sharp’s *Silence Farm* in June 1899, but the identity of the book at issue is unknown. A prominent member of London’s theater elite, Archer kept his distance from the Stage Society.
- 33 This letter to Yeats is discussed in the “Life” section of this chapter.

- 34 Since Yeats knew Sharp was the author of all that appeared as the writings of Fiona Macleod, we might wonder why Sharp positioned himself here as disagreeing with Fiona and Fiona, in turn, as sailing around the northern seas between Iceland and Norway. Although he told Yeats he was the author of the writings, he claimed that Fiona was a separate and independent female spirit speaking through him and that her presence was stimulated and nurtured by a truly separate woman who functioned as his Fiona muse. I doubt Edith Rinder was off sailing in the northern seas, but she may have been in the west of Scotland on annual holiday where, as in other years, Sharp would see her in September. Sharp and Edith were certainly together in London and its environs during October 1900. By emphasizing the distinction between Fiona and himself in this letter, Sharp also acknowledged the possibility that Yeats would share it with others.
- 35 AE's letter in the August 18 issue of the *All Ireland Review*.
- 36 The manuscript letter is in Sharp's hand for Mary Sharp to copy and send. On the back of the single sheet "Mr. Russell" is written in the Fiona handwriting which indicates Mary copied and sent it.
- 37 The letter to Rolleston has not surfaced, but it was written to thank him for his front-page article in the *All Ireland Review* of August 25 ("A.E. and Fiona Macleod") in which he took Fiona's side in the public debate with AE. A journalist and author, T. W. Rolleston (1857–1920) founded the *Dublin University Review* in 1885, served as First Hon. Secretary of the Irish Literary Society in London in 1892, and worked as Assistant Editor of the *New Irish Library* in 1893. From 1898 to 1900 he was the leader-writer for the *Dublin Daily News*, the *Dublin Correspondent*, and the *Daily Chronicle*. He was the Honorary Secretary of the Irish Arts and Crafts Society from 1898 to 1908. Among his publications are *The Teaching of Epictetus* (1888), *The Life of Lessing* (1889), *A Treasury of Irish Poetry* edited with Stopford Brook (1900), *Imagination and Art in Gaelic Literature* (1900), and *Myths and Legends of the Celtic Race* (1911). Wikipedia contributors, "T. W. Rolleston", Wikipedia, 31 May 2020, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/T.\\_W.\\_Rolleston](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/T._W._Rolleston)
- 38 See the "Life" section of this chapter for a discussion of this attempt to heal the breach with AE; his response; and Fiona's October 20 response to him.
- 39 Sharp scrawled this letter on a blank sheet of paper folded in half. The carelessness of the script implies Sharp was ill. The letter is not dated, but most likely it was written in late 1900 after Verschoyle had been made Editor of the anti-vivisection journal *The Abolitionist* and when the Sharps were living out of London in Chorleywood, Hertfordshire since Sharp said he could not come in again (we presume him to mean London). For

Verschoyle, see note to Sharp's letter to him on May 1 or 2, 1889 (Volume 2).

- 40 Mona Caird wrote extensively in support of the anti-vivisection movement. In 1895, she published an essay titled "The Sanctuary Of Mercy" which reads in part: "Of this madness the present generation is guilty, since it allows learned professors, on the plea of doing good to our bodies, to ruin our souls; since it still permits a law to remain on the Statute Book which gives a license to physiologists to take a living, trembling creature — dog, cat, rabbit, frog — to tie it down on a board or trough, and there to cut it open and dissect its nerves and organs, pierce its brain with red-hot wire, etc [...] And all this is done ostensibly in the interests of mankind! All this is done to make human existence pleasanter and more comfortable! Verily I think that vivisectors are doing their level best to make human life absolutely intolerable!" The section of the Crusade of Mercy (a religious organization) which Caird headed must have been the anti-vivisection section.
- 41 This letter is in Sharp's hand for Mary Sharp to copy. On the reverse of the single page Sharp wrote Rolleston's address (104 Pembroke Road | Dublin), (abt Carmichael | Review), and the date of the draft: 16 | Oct | 00.
- 42 Sharp expressed his praise for Alexander Carmichael's *Carmina Gadelica* in the Fiona essay "The Gael and His Heritage" which appeared in the November 1900 issue of *The Nineteenth Century* (48, 825–41). "The *Carmina Gadelica* is a collection of prayers, hymns, charms, incantations, blessings, runes, and other literary-folkloric poems and songs collected and translated by Alexander Carmichael (1832–1912) in the Gaelic-speaking regions of Scotland between 1855 and 1910. The work was originally published in six volumes, with extensive footnotes which contained further details as well as additional tales and folklore. Carmichael edited the first two volumes, published in 1900; volumes III and IV were edited by James Carmichael Watson (Alexander Carmichael's grandson) and published in 1940 and 1941; two final volumes, edited by Angus Matheson, were published in 1954 and 1971. A one-volume, English-language edition was published in 1992. Initially highly praised as a monumental achievement in Scottish folklore, the *Carmina Gadelica* subsequently received criticism for Carmichael's interpretation and presentation of the material. Criticism has ranged from the opinion that Carmichael was excessive in his editing of the source material to the accusation that some of his sources were fabricated. Some of his translations tend to sacrifice accuracy for a type of Victorian, anachronistic style which was popular at the time of the works' first publication. In other cases it is clear, from comparing his notes to the finished product, that in some cases he may have invented

additional lines and verses and incorporated them into the poems he had recorded, without acknowledging these changes. Despite the deficiencies, the *Carmina* remains an essential source in Scottish folklore. Wikipedia contributors, “Carmina Gadelica”, Wikipedia, 5 May 2020, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carmina\\_Gadelica](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carmina_Gadelica)

- 43 The manuscript is in Sharp’s hand for Mary to copy. It was originally dated the 10th, and the 10 has been changed to a 20, an indication that Sharp wrote the draft on the 10th, and Mary mailed her transcription on the 20<sup>th</sup>.
- 44 “The Immortal Hour” appeared in the November 1890 *Fortnightly*, and the essay in the November 1890 *Nineteenth Century*.
- 45 AE had enclosed a spray of heather as a token of friendship and reconciliation in the letter to which Fiona was responding.
- 46 See Endnote 20 and Endnote 47.
- 47 In response to Fiona’s letter dated October 20, Richards told her to take her time with the anthology. Curiously, the card is dated October 31 from Paris, but its Paris postmark is October 13, 1900. In her October 20 letter, Fiona told Richards she had arrived in London two days before and was leaving the next day “probably for Tangiers.” It was important to get her out of town quickly. When Sharp received Richards’ reply, from Edinburgh in early November, he instructed his sister to date Fiona’s reply October 31, and he subsequently mailed it from Paris on his way to the south of France. He left England on November 12 so the October 13 postmark on the card must be a mistake for November 13.
- 48 Fiona Macleod’s drama “The Immortal Hour” was published complete in the November issue of *The Fortnightly Review*. Richards liked the suggestion in her October 20 letter that he publish a book of her poems which would include as its titular piece “The Immortal Hour” and selected poems from her 1896 volume of poetry, *From the Hills of Dream*. The volume never appeared.
- 49 E. A. S said this letter was written in early October, but early November is more likely. Other evidence indicates the Sharps were in London through October and, according to this letter, left for France on 12 November.
- 50 I am unable to identify this play by Hardy. His *The Three Wayfarers: A Pastoral Play in One Act* (New York: Harper, 1893) was produced by the Stage Society in 1902.
- 51 Stevenson, R. L and W. E. Henley’s *Robert Macaire: A Melodramatic Farce in Three Acts* (Edinburgh: privately printed, 1885).

- 52 Educated at Eton, King's College, Cambridge, and the University of Bonn, George Prothero (1848–1922) held the chair of modern history at Edinburgh University until in 1899 he moved to London to become Editor of the *Quarterly Review*, a position of considerable prominence and power. He was President of the Royal Historical Society from 1901 to 1905, and he was knighted in 1920. As an act of generosity, Watts-Dunton told his friend Prothero that Sharp was going to Provence and suggested he commission him to write an article for the *Quarterly Review* on Provencal writers. Watts-Dunton's motive was to obtain for Sharp an advance that would provide some financial relief. Sharp's article, "Modern Troubadours," was completed in December 1900, but it did not appear in the *Quarterly* until October 1901.
- 53 Sharp must have drafted this letter before he left London and sent it to his sister to copy, date, and send from Edinburgh. Goodchild would not have been aware she was supposed to be in France or points farther south.
- 54 Sharp wrote this letter in his role as Chairman of the Stage Society. See Sharp's July 6, 1900 letter to Frederick Charles Charrington and footnote.
- 55 E. A. S included portions of this letter in the *Memoir*, pp. 325–26.
- 56 Sharp's *Progress of Art in the XIX Century*. See Endnote 9.
- 57 See Endnote 42.
- 58 "The Gael and his Heritage".
- 59 Andrew Carmichael.
- 60 Sharp's "Modern Troubadours" appeared in the *Quarterly Review* in October 1901.
- 61 Neil Munro (1864–1930) was a novelist, poet, and historian. Among his publications are the above-mentioned *Doom Castle* (New York: Doubleday, 1900), *Fancy Farm* (1910), *The Poetry of Neil Munro* (1931), and *Children of Tempest* (1935).

## Chapter 21

- 1 In 1927, the town's name reverted to Enna, its former name, which is derived from the Seculian Henna. Enna is the legendary scene of the rape of Persephone and the center of the cult of her mother, Ceres or Demeter. It is the chief town of Enna Province and the most interesting inland town in Sicily for its historical significance, beautiful location, impressive churches,

and other historical buildings, most of which survived the bombing during World War II.

- 2 This letter was written on the Duke of Bronte's stationery: a crown and "Bronte | Sicily" are printed at the top center of the first sheet. Sharp wrote the letter at the Duke's Castello Maniace shortly before returning to Taormina.
- 3 Based in Leipzig, Baron Tauchnitz published German editions of selected writings of British and American authors, as well as introductory essays. These editions were intended primarily for English-speaking readers living in Germany, non-English-speaking countries and for others whose native language was not English but who wanted to read the works in English rather than in translation. Swinburne did consent to the volume, which was published in early October 1901 as *Selections of Poems by A. C. Swinburne*, selected and arranged and with an introduction by William Sharp (Leipzig: Tauchnitz, 1901). Wikipedia contributors, "Tauchnitz Publishers", Wikipedia, 27 April 2020, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tauchnitz\\_publishers](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tauchnitz_publishers)
- 4 Queen Victoria died on 22 January 1901.
- 5 Born in Dublin, Samuel Henry Butcher (1850–1910) was a classical scholar whose many publications included, a prose translation, in collaboration with Dr Andrew Lang, of Homer's *Odyssey* (1879). Butcher was one of the two Members of Parliament for Cambridge University between 1906 and his death.
- 6 This was the first of several visits by the Sharps to the Castle Maniace, the Viscount Bridport's residence on his large estate on the western slopes of Mount Etna. Sharp died there on December 12, 1905, and he is buried on the grounds under a Celtic cross. See the "Life" section of this chapter for more information about the Duke and the Duchy of Bronte.
- 7 In his early February letter to Watts-Dunton, Sharp implied they visited Syracuse on Sicily's southeast coast on their way from Palermo to Taormina. If E. A. S.'s dating of this letter is correct, the Sharps traveled from Taormina to Syracuse and back to Taormina in early February.
- 8 David Alexander Munro (1844–1910) was born in Scotland, graduated from Edinburgh University in 1872, and settled in New York where he pursued the study of Greek literature and worked for many years as a Literary Editor at Harper's Brothers. He became Manager of *The North American Review* in 1889, Editor in 1896, and Assistant Editor in 1899 when the *Review* was bought and edited by Colonel George Harvey. Munro often

contributed articles to the *New York Times* and was highly respected for his writing and for the warmth of his personality in New York literary circles of the Gilded Age.

- 9 "The Irish Muse" was an article occasioned by the publication of *A Treasury of Irish Poetry in the English Tongue* edited by Stopford Brooke and T. W. Rolleston with a lengthy introduction by Brooke (Macmillan: London and New York, 1900). Fiona Macleod's article did not appear in *The North American Review* until the issues of November and December 1904. In October 1902, however, the latter periodical published Fiona Macleod's "The Later Work of W. B. Yeats."
- 10 This letter is transcribed from the draft written by Sharp and dated March 16th in Florence. The 16th is crossed through and "18th March" is substituted in the Fiona Macleod handwriting of Mary Sharp. E. A. S. printed portions of the letter in her *Memoir* (pp. 331–32). Gertrude Eliza Page (1872–1922) became a popular writer of light dramatic novels. She married in 1902, and two years later the couple moved to Rhodesia where they eventually bought land and developed a prosperous ranch. After writing five novels that found no publisher, her sixth, *Love in the Wilderness*, was published in 1907. Seventeen more novels, some written before 1907 others set in Rhodesia, appeared in the next fifteen years. Her most successful novel was written shortly after her marriage and set in her husband's native Armagh, Northern Ireland. Titled *Paddy the Next Best Thing*, it was published in 1908 and sold over 300,000 copies. It was transformed first into a long running play at London's Savoy Theater and then into a successful movie starring Janet Gaynor as Paddy. In her teens, Gertrude Page filled her stories with long words and longer sentences, but later she developed an easy narrative style. Sharp's overblown response to her fan letter suggests that her style and sensibility had not been pared by that date. Although the letter is addressed to an "unknown friend," Gertrude Page included in her letter to Fiona her name and return address, which Sharp reproduced as mailing instructions to Mary Sharp at the top of his draft. He had no idea who Gertrude Page was in 1900, but Elizabeth must have known who she was when she wrote the *Memoir*. Her keeping the "unknown friend" salutation may have been to avoid invasion of privacy.
- 11 Chatto & Windus Ltd. was Swinburne's publisher in England. See Endnote 3 regarding the editing of the Tauchnitz edition of Swinburne's poems.
- 12 Sharp is referring to an article on Watts-Dunton's poetry and prose he proposed to the Editor of *Literature*. See Endnote 13.

- 13 In late April or early May, Sharp proposed an article on the poetry and prose of Watts-Dunton to the Editor of the weekly magazine *Literature*. Here he recounts how the periodical's Editor had responded positively but restricted its size. Sharp completed and submitted the article, but it never appeared. See Endnote 19.
- 14 "June 1, 1901" is written at the top right of the first typed page in a script that does not belong to Fiona but may be that of Edith Rinder. June 1 was a Saturday so the letter was typed on Friday, May 31 and mailed on the first.
- 15 In September 1901, Thomas Mosher published Fiona Macleod's *From the Hills of Dream: Threnodies, Songs, and Other Poems* (Portland, ME) in his *Old World Series*. It differed from the first edition published by Patrick Geddes in Edinburgh in 1896. During a visit to Edinburgh, Mosher gained Patrick Geddes' approval to publish an edition of the poems in America. The differences made a U. S. copyright possible.
- 16 Someone, perhaps Mosher, wrote at the bottom of the last sheet "1/2 on re'd MS. | 1/2 on book being pld."
- 17 This note acknowledged payment for "The Later Work of W. B. Yeats" which appeared in *The North American Review* in October 1902 (pp. 473–85). It was included later as "The Shadowy Waters" in Fiona's *The Winged Destiny, Studies in the Spiritual History of the Gael* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1904). See Endnote 8.
- 18 *The Queen and Other Poems* (London and New York: John Lane, 1901).
- 19 See Endnote 13. Sharp's "Traill I see is back" is ironic in that H. D. Traill, formerly the Editor of *Literature*, had died on February 20, 1900. The current Editor of *Literature* must have replied to Sharp's complaint about the restrictions with a note on Traill's left-over stationery or a form letter from the dead Traill. This exchange signals the confusion that descended on *Literature* following Traill's death and prior to its imminent marriage with the *Academy*. The article which Sharp wrote and submitted to *Literature* on Watts-Dunton's poetry and prose was never published. In the fall of 1901, Sharp wrote another article titled "A Literary Friendship: Mr. Swinburne and Mr. Watts-Dunton at the Pines" which was published in the December 1901 issue of the *Pall Mall Magazine*.
- 20 See the "Life" section of this chapter which tells the story behind the return address and the physical form of this and succeeding letters.
- 21 This letter transmits the copy of *From the Hills of Dream: Threnodies, Songs, and Other Poems* which Thomas Mosher published in his *Old World Series* in September 1901.

- 22 This letter was produced on the same typewriter used for other typed Fiona letters of this period. Unlike the others, it is single-spaced and somewhat sloppy in punctuation and other details, indicating another typist other than the meticulous Mary.
- 23 Mosher published an edition of John Ruskin's *Sesame and Lilies* in 1900.
- 24 The friend was Sharp who, as both himself and Fiona, was helping Yeats in the composition of rites for his Celtic Mystical Order. See the "Life" section of this chapter which provides some context for the exchange of letters between Yeats and Sharp/Macleod about the Celtic Order during the summer and fall of 1901. A much fuller discussion may be found in *Collected Letters IV*, pp. 967–69, 974–80, and 982–84. Coincidentally, the date of this Fiona Macleod letter, July 26, was the day Edith Rinder gave birth to a baby girl, her only child, Esther Mona Rinder (later Harvey).
- 25 According to Sharp's July 30 letter to Dowden, he and Elizabeth spent July on a Moor-Farm in Derbyshire. Chesterfield is near Sheffield, which is near Cartledge Hall, the home of Sharp's friend Murray Gilchrist who knew Sharp was Fiona Macleod. So Sharp was on hand to take care of any Fiona correspondence that came to Cartledge Hall. Fiona letters in late July and August have return addresses first in the West of Scotland where Mary vacationed with her mother and then their Edinburgh home.
- 26 Sharp's article entitled "Modern Troubadours" appeared in the October 1901 issue of the *Quarterly Review* (Number 387).
- 27 A residential suburb on the coast south of Dublin.
- 28 The Sharps were in Derbyshire and planned to leave for Scotland on Sunday or Monday, August 4 or 5. Sharp had been working there on the article on Swinburne and Watts-Dunton which appeared in the *Pall Mall Magazine* in December 1901. See Endnote 19. He had sent the manuscript to Watts-Dunton for him to review, and here he urged him to conclude his review so the article could go to George L. Halkett, the Editor of the *Pall Mall Magazine*. Born the same year, Halkett (1855–1918) and Sharp were boyhood friends in Glasgow. He studied art and became a well-known cartoonist. He joined the *Pall Mall Gazette* in 1892 as political cartoonist and writer on art. In 1897, he became art editor and then, in 1900, Editor. Over the next few years, the Halkett published several articles written by Sharp about the home locations of famous writers. A welcome source of income, they were collected and published by the Pall Mall Press in 1904 in a volume called *Literary Geography* which Sharp dedicated to Halkett.

- 29 Watts-Dunton was Literary Editor of the *Athenaeum* between 1876 and 1898. I have not been able to identify the Editor in 1901 or the volume of poems referred to here. It may have been a book by Watts-Dunton called *A Christmas Dream* which was published in December 1901, but I have not been able to obtain either a copy of that book or a description of its contents. When he published *The Coming of Love*, a volume of poems, in 1897, Thomas Watts added his mother's maiden name, Dunton, to Watts and was thereafter known as Thomas Watts-Dunton. Those poems dealt with the lives of the Gypsies he had known in his youth in the west of England and Wales, as did his successful novel, *Alwyn*, first published in 1898.
- 30 This letter is entirely in Mary's Fiona Macleod handwriting, which suggests she preceded the Sharps to Kilcreggan, received Sharp's draft there, transcribed it, and mailed it before the Sharps' arrival on August 10 or 11.
- 31 Sharp expected Edith Rinder to return to her secretarial role when Sharp returned to London in October. That would have been convenient for him, but it did not occur at once.
- 32 Dante Gabrielle Rossetti's *The Blessed Damzel* and Marcel Schwob's *Mimes* were published in separate small volumes by Thomas Mosher in Portland, ME, in 1901. *Mimes* was translated from the French by A. Lenalie.
- 33 Fiona's "Celtic" appeared in *The Bibelot*, 7 (November, 1901), 351–84.
- 34 Here the letter shifts from the Fiona Macleod script to typescript. The five paragraphs following are typed, and the rest is in the Macleod script.
- 35 Matthew Arnold's *Empedocles on Etna and Other Poems* (Portland, ME: Mosher, 1900).
- 36 The December issue of Mosher's *Bibelot* in 1900 contained "Lyrics from the Hills of Dream," a selection of poems from Fiona's *From the Hills of Dream* published in Edinburgh by Patrick Geddes and Colleagues in 1896.
- 37 A group of poems entitled "Through the Ivory Gate" appeared in *The Fortnightly Review*, 70 (October 1, 1901), 720–24.
- 38 "For the Beauty of an Idea" became not a narrative, but the title of a group of essays on the Celtic Movement in Fiona Macleod's *The Winged Destiny: Studies in the Spiritual History of the Gael* (London: Chapman & Hall, Ltd.) 1904.
- 39 Fiona's "Celtic" appeared in *The Bibelot*, 7 (November, 1901), 351–84.

- 40 Walter Pater's *Essays from "The Guardian,"* (Portland, ME: Mosher, 1897).
- 41 *Selections of Poems by A. C. Swinburne*, arranged by William Sharp (Leipzig: Tauchnitz, 1901). Swinburne's response to this letter (*Memoir*, pp. 336–37), dated October 6, 1901, takes issue with some of Sharp's selections.
- 42 Born in 1836, Henry Alden was appointed Editor of *Harper's Weekly*, later *Harper's Magazine*, in 1869 and held that influential position for more than forty years. Sharp met Alden, his wife, the former Susan Foster, and their three daughters during his visits to New York in 1889 and 1891. The first Mrs. Alden died after a long and debilitating illness in the early summer of 1895. During his visit to New York in the fall of 1896, Sharp stayed with Alden at his home across the Hudson in Metuchen, New Jersey. While there, he told Alden, who was twenty years his senior and who knew he was the author of the Fiona writings, about his ongoing relationship with Edith Rinder. The "fantastically strange" and "deeply moving development" of "that old romance of boyhood" was the birth of Edith's baby girl on July 26.
- 43 Mosher published Robert Louis Stevenson's *Francois Villon: Student, Poet, and Housebreaker* in 1901.
- 44 "Leonardo da Vinci" and "The School of Giorgione" first appeared in *Studies in the History of the Renaissance* (London: Macmillan and Company, 1873). *Greek Studies* (London and New York: Macmillan and Company) was first published in 1895. The book Mosher sent to Fiona Macleod is Pater's *Essays from the Guardian* (1897); Mosher had also published Pater's *Marius the Epicurean* in 1900.
- 45 The series of poems entitled "Through the Ivory Gate" appeared in the October 1, 1901 edition of *The Fortnightly Review*.
- 46 The "present 10th" poem was entitled "Requiem" in the Mosher editions of *From the Hills of Dream* (1901 and 1904). In the next English edition of *From the Hills of Dream* (London: Heinemann, 1907) which was prepared by E. A. S. after Sharp's death according to his instructions, the poem is entitled "Murias." It is the fifth and last poem in the series called "The Dirge of the Four Cities." Sharp prefaced that series with the following quotation from *The Little Book of Great Enchantment*, though no such book has been found: "There are four cities that no mortal eye has seen but that the soul knows; these are Gorias, that is in the east; and Finias, that is in the south; and Murias, that is in the west; and Falias, that is in the north. And the symbol of Falias is the stone of death, which is crowned with pale fire. And the symbol of Gorias is the dividing sword. And the symbol of Finias is a spear. And the symbol of Murias is a hollow that is filled with

water and fading light." Yeats identified these as the four cities from which the divine race, the Tuath De Danaan, came to Ireland. The Fiona poem portrays Murias as a "sunken city" where a golden image dwells beneath the waves. The four cities and their four symbols were key features of the Rites constructed by Yeats for his Celtic Mystical Order, and they have their roots in ancient Gaelic mythology.

- 47 The Mosher edition of from the *From the Hills of Dream* did not include Fiona's poetic drama, "The Immortal Hour," but Sharp planned to include it in the new English edition of the book which did not materialize.
- 48 The reference is to a lengthy dedicatory note, "To W. B. Yeats," which precedes the section of the volume entitled "Foam of the Past."
- 49 On the verso of this single-page letter, Yeats made notes dealing with the Celtic Mysteries. There is a list of six numbered items as follows: 1. spear — [illegible] | 2. sword. [illegible] | I become sword. | 3. [illegible] | 4. fasin[?] — [illegible] | 5. flight over [moon?] — [illegible] & long life | a long [illegible] | 6. flight under water — net
- 50 *Celtic: A Study in Spiritual History* (Portland, ME: Mosher, 1901).
- 51 Sections of this letter were published by Mrs. Sharp in the *Memoir*, p. 333. She used Sharp's original draft, and she dates the letter November 12, 1901. The present transcription has been made from the undated manuscript in the Fiona Macleod handwriting which was sent to Mosher.
- 52 *The Silence of Amor* (Portland, ME: Mosher, 1902).
- 53 *The House of Usna: A Drama* (Portland, ME: Mosher, 1903). The brackets are in the manuscript letter.
- 54 Francis Marion Crawford (1854–1909), a popular American writer, was the only son of the American sculptor Thomas Crawford and Louisa Cutler Ward and the nephew of the American poet Julia Ward Howe. He was the author of forty-six romantic novels, over half set in Italy, and seven books of non-fiction. Following their marriage in 1884, he and his wife (the former Elizabeth Berdan) settled in Italy where they purchased a substantial house in Sant' Agnello, near Sorrento, which they named the Villa Crawford and where they entertained many well-known and well-connected American and British guests. That house was their principal place of residence until his death twenty-five years and many novels later. It has recently been beautifully restored and renamed the Hotel Crawford. Wikipedia contributors, "Francis Marion Crawford," *Wikipedia*, 10 July 2020, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francis\\_Marion\\_Crawford](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francis_Marion_Crawford)

- 55 Alexander Nelson Hood (1854–1937) was the son of Alexander Hood, 1st Viscount Bridport and Lady Mary Penelope, daughter of Arthur Hill, 3rd Marquess of Downshire. While Hood's eldest brother Arthur Hood succeeded their father as 2nd Viscount Bridport, the Duchy of Bronté was left to Alexander who became the 5th Duke of Bronté. This was possible because of a special and unusual clause in the letters patent granting the duchy, which allowed the present holder of the title to choose his successor. He served as Controller of the Household and Equerry to Princess Mary Adelaide of Cambridge between 1892 and 1897 and was an Extra Gentleman Usher of the Privy Chambers to Queen Victoria from 1892 to 1901. He was Private Secretary to Mary of Teck as Princess of Wales from 1901 to 1910, and was then her Treasurer as Queen between 1910 and 1919. He was invested as a Knight Commander of the Royal Victorian Order. He died at Taormina, Sicily. Information from Wikipedia contributors, "Alexander Hood, 5<sup>th</sup> Duke of Bronte," *Wikipedia*, 17 August 2020, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sir\\_Alexander\\_Nelson\\_Hood](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sir_Alexander_Nelson_Hood) and from Michael Pratt's *Nelson's Duchy, A Sicilian Anomaly* (Staplehurst: Spellmount Limited, 2005).
- 56 The Mosher edition of *From the Hills of Dream* which contained the dedication to Yeats.
- 57 According to Elizabeth Sharp, this letter was "ostensibly" written in Argyll (*Memoir*, p. 337).
- 58 Buchanan's *The Book of Orm* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1882). Mosher did not publish this book.
- 59 Swinburne's *Tristram of Lyonesse and Other Poems* was published in London by Chatto and Windus in 1882 and then by Mosher, without the "Prelude," in 1904.
- 60 Gerard de Nerval (1808–1855), known also as Gerard Labrunie, was a leader of the French Romantic Movement of 1830. Among his works are *Sylvie* (1853); *Le Reve et la Vie* (1855); and *Les Illumines* (1852).
- 61 Sharp must have received the photograph of Fiona Macleod, which he had sent on loan, from Mosher during the two or three days prior. The photograph which he had shown to others claiming she was Fiona was probably that of Edith Rinder.
- 62 Mrs. J. H. Philpot was the author of *The Sacred Tree or the Tree in Religion and Myth* (London and New York: Macmillan, 1897).

## Chapter 22

- 1 This poem was reproduced by E. A. S. in her *Memoir*, but she did not include it in *Poems by William Sharp*, Selected and Arranged by Mrs. William Sharp (London: William Heinemann, 1912).
- 2 In a postcard dated 11 November 1901, Fiona thanked Mosher for 12 copies of the issue of his *Biblot* that contained her Celtic essay and expressed her hope of soon receiving the “special copies” which he had promised. These were the copies on “Japan Vellum” for which she thanked him here.
- 3 Sharp probably sent this letter for Mary to copy and send before he left England on December 3, 1901 to be near his friend Doctor John Goodchild on the French Riviera. Goodchild was spending the winter caring for his English patients, in a resort town a few miles west of Bordighera.
- 4 In a letter dated 12 December 1901, Fiona thanked Mosher for sending her his photograph and continued: “I hope that which I sent you (as I explained — reluctantly — necessarily only a loan, and even thus on certain conditions) duly reached you.” Sharp, writing as Fiona, sent Mosher a photograph of Edith Rinder, claiming it to be a picture of herself, and said she expected him to return it. In a letter dated 15 December 1901, Fiona had already thanked Mosher for returning it and refused, reluctantly, his request to publish it.
- 5 The Sharps had been staying with Alexander Nelson Hood at Maniace since early February.
- 6 San Pancrazio, Saint Pancras in English, was a Roman citizen who converted to Christianity and was beheaded for his faith at the age of fourteen in about 304 A. D. He is popularly venerated as the patron saint of children, jobs and health. Pope Gregory the Great (540–604 A. D.) sent Augustine to London with relics of the saint, and many English churches are dedicated to him. including St Pancras Old Church in London, one of the oldest sites of Christian worship in England. Some members of the cult of San Pancrazio believed he had seen Christ in the flesh. Wikipedia contributors, “Pancras of Rome,” Wikipedia, 13 May 2020, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pancras\\_of\\_Rome](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pancras_of_Rome)
- 7 Gelon came to power in Eastern Sicily in 491 B. C. and ruled Syracuse from 485 to 478 B. C. He was succeeded by his brother Hieron who ruled from 478 to 467 B. C. Dionysius the Elder ruled Syracuse from 405–367 B. C.
- 8 Sharp’s “Italian Poets of Today” appeared in the *Quarterly Review* in July 1902, 239–68.

- 9 The Kôrê of Enna was not completed.
- 10 Catherine Janvier's *Captain Dionysius* was finally published in 1935 (Philadelphia: Dorrance and Co. Inc.).
- 11 Mrs. J. H. Philpot was the author of *The Sacred Tree or The Tree in Religion and Myth* (London and New York: Macmillan, 1897).
- 12 Easter Sunday was on 30 March 1902.
- 13 The letter is typed to this point. What follows is written in the Fiona Macleod hand.
- 14 According to E. A. S., this letter was written to the nephew of William Black (1841–1898), a popular novelist who was born in Glasgow in 1841 and died in Brighton in 1898. In his early twenties, he obtained a post in London working on the *Morning Star* and soon began writing novels. Following several failures, he achieved great popular success with *A Daughter of Heth* in 1871. This led to a long string of popular novels, including *The Strange Adventures of a Phaeton* (1872); *A Princess of Thule* (1874); *Madcap Violet* (1876); *Macleod of Dare* (1878); *White Wings* (1880); *Sunrise* (1880); *Shandon Bells* (1883); *Judith Shakespeare* (1884); *White Heather* (1885); *Donald Ross of Heimra* (1891); *Highland Cousins* (1894); and *Wild Eelin* (1898). A thoroughgoing sportsman, Black's best works are set amid the mountains of his native land or on the deck of a yacht off its wild coast. His descriptions of scenery are simple and picturesque. Though Black was fourteen years Sharp's senior, the two men must have known each other. Fiona's advice to Black's nephew (whom Sharp felt was imitating her style too closely) to strive for simplicity was motivated by his desire to be helpful to a relative of a recently deceased friend. However, the caution against mannerisms and affectation resembles the advice Sharp's Fiona received from W. B. Yeats in reviewing her *Dominion of Dreams* in 1899.
- 15 The only clue as to the date of this undated fragment to an unknown friend is E. A. S. placing it immediately after the Fiona Macleod letter to William Black's nephew.
- 16 The letter is typed to this point. The remainder is written in the Fiona hand which implies that it was typed, signed and mailed by Mary Sharp in Edinburgh. Given the return address, Sharp was most likely in London at the time.
- 17 Alfred Austin (1835–1913) was appointed Poet Laureate in 1896 and served in that post until his death. Born in Leeds and educated at the University of London, he was called to the bar in 1857 and served briefly as a barrister before turning full time to poetry. His poetic output was considerable in

- quantity but lacking in quality. The context of the request for assistance in this letter is described in the "Life" section of this chapter.
- 18 Marcel Schwob, *Mimes with a Prologue and Epilogue*, translated into English by A. Lenalie (Portland, ME: Thomas Mosher's Miscellaneous Series, 1901).
- 19 The earlier sections are typed; the remainder is in Mary Sharp's Fiona Macleod handwriting.
- 20 This letter was written one day prior to the coronation of King Edward VII on August 9, 1902.
- 21 Grant Richards published Richard Whiteing's popular novel *No. 5 John Street* in 1899.
- 22 See the "Life" section of this chapter for a description, based largely on these letters to Austin and Hood, of the failed effort to have Sharp placed on the Civil Pension List.
- 23 Ernest Renan's "Priere sur l'Acropole" first appeared in *Revue de Deux Mondes* (December 1, 1876), 483–507. The French translates "There is nothing in the world but symbol and dream. The two pass as man does and it would not be good if they were everlasting."
- 24 At this point Mrs. Sharp inserted the following in brackets: "'Julian' is the name of the hero of a book, *Adria*, on which Mr. Hood was then at work." Hood's *Adria: A Tale of Venice* was published by John Murray (London) in 1904. As printed in the *Memoir*, the paragraph makes no sense. There are three Julians: Sharp, Hood, and the character in Hood's novel. Elizabeth must have omitted some words in her transcription of the letter, or perhaps the typesetter was at fault.
- 25 Sharp completed the first section of the proposed book which appeared in *The Monthly Review* as "The Magic Kingdoms," in January 1903 (100–12). Tauchnitz in Leipzig published a Fiona Macleod book entitled *Wind and Wave* in 1902.
- 26 Mrs. Sharp states in the *Memoir* (p. 348) that in early September 1902, Mr. Hood informed Sharp that the Prime Minister had decided "on the strength of the assurance that Mr. Sharp is Fiona Macleod" to present him with a grant that would meet his needs and allow him to go abroad for the winter.
- 27 George Hutchinson (1852–1942) was an English book publisher who founded Hutchinson & Co. in 1887.

- 28 The body of the letter is typed over the scripted signature and postscript which are in Mary's Fiona hand.
- 29 Santa Caterina, formally a convent, was the winter home of Sir Edward Hill who offered its small chapel for Anglican services. He later purchased land and contributed substantially to the construction of Taormina's Anglican church, St. George's, which was designed by Sir Henry Triggs — a British architect and Sir Edward's son-in-law — and completed in 1922. Mabel Hill, Sir Edward's daughter, welcomed the Sharps to the villa where they would stay until the New Year. Mabel Hill became a major benefactress of Taormina where a street is named after her.
- 30 "The Magic Kingdoms" appeared in the January 1903 issue of *The Monthly Review*; "The Lynn of Dreams" in the December 1902 issue of *The Contemporary Review*; and "The Four Winds of Eirinn" in the February 1903 issue of *The Fortnightly Review*.
- 31 The rather confusing publishing history of the works mentioned in this paragraph may be untangled in the Bibliographical Notes in *The Winged Destiny | Studies in the Spiritual History of "The Gael,"* Volume V of *The Works of Fiona Macleod*, arranged by Mrs. William Sharp (London and New York: Heinemann, 1910).
- 32 Thomas Janvier's story appeared in *Harper's Magazine* in 1902 and in his *Stories from the South of France* (London: Harper Brother, 1912).
- 33 *By Sundown Shores: Studies in Spiritual History* (Portland, ME: Thomas Mosher's Brocade Series, September 1902).
- 34 Richard Jefferies, *Nature and Eternity with other Uncollected Papers* (Portland, ME: Thomas Mosher's Brocade Series, August, 1902); and Irma Ann Heath, *Immense*, translated from German by Theodore Storm (Portland, ME: Thomas Mosher's Brocade Series, October 1902).
- 35 "The Later Work of W. B. Yeats" appeared in *The North American Review*, 175 (October 1902), 473–85.
- 36 Elizabeth had recently returned to Taormina from Maniace.
- 37 In June, Macleay told Sharp he wanted to write an article about him and asked Sharp to tell him about any events or accomplishments he would like mentioned. In a letter to MacLeay dated June 23, Sharp refrained from writing anything about himself other than he had spent much of his life "wandering." Perhaps when they met he could say more. They subsequently meet in Inverness in early August, and Sharp must have spoken enough about himself for MacLeay to produce the article. He sent

Sharp a copy to review. With this letter, apologizing for his delay, Sharp returned the manuscript with only a few comments and expressed his pleasure with it. In the bibliography of the second and final volume of the *Memoir*, Elizabeth stated that an article entitled "A Literary Wanderer: The Career of William Sharp" was published in April 1903 in *The Young Man*. Unable to find that publication, I have not seen the article, but its title suggests it was written by John Macleay.

- 38 Hood was in Venice to collect information for a romance he was writing which was to be set at the time of the Austrian occupation of the city in the early nineteenth century. When the romance was published as *Adria: A Tale of Venice* in 1904, it was dedicated to William Sharp. See the "Life" section of this chapter.

## Chapter 23

- 1 Walter Pater, *Renaissance Studies in Art and Poetry* (Portland, ME: Thomas Mosher, 1902).
- 2 Mrs. Sharp states in the *Memoir* (p. 362): "William Sharp started for a fortnight's trip to Greece by way of Calabria-Reggio, Crotona, Taranto, Brindisi to Corfu and Athens, with a view of gathering impressions for the working out of his projected book (by W. S.) to be called *Greek Backgrounds*." Reggio de Calabria (or simply Reggio) is the largest city and the most populated commune of Calabria. It lies at the western point of the toe of Italy's boot, across the strait from Messina in Sicily. From there, Sharp traveled by land to Crotone, the largest city on the east side of the toe, where he boarded a ferry to the port city of Taranto on the west side of the heel of Italy's boot. He then took a train called the *Agamemnon* to Brindisi, a port city on the east of the heel and, from there, a ship (the *Poseidon*) which crossed the Ionian Sea to the shore of Albania where the couple docked at Eavri Kagavri, a Greco-Albanian township of Turkey.
- 3 Henry David Davray (1873–1944) wrote and translated for the *Mercury de France* and was the author of *Chez les Anglia's Pendant la Grande Guerre* (1916); *Through French Eyes* (1916); and *Lord Kitchener: His Work and His Prestige* (1917). There is no record of his having published a translation of Fiona Macleod writings.
- 4 Unable to identify.
- 5 Arnold Cervesato (1872–1944) was the author of *The Roman Campagna* (1913) and *Allegretto Ma Non Troppo* (1939).

- 6    *Wind and Wave: Selected Tales* (Leipzig: Bernhard Tauchnitz, 1902).
- 7    "The Sunset of Old Tales" appeared in *The Fortnightly Review* in June 1893 (73, 1087–1110) and both as an essay and as the title of a section, in *The Winged Destiny: Studies in the Spiritual History of the Gael* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1904).
- 8    The following discussion regarding the various Fiona books which Mosher should publish and in which of his series he should place them is confusing. The Fiona books published in his *Old World Series* are *From the Hills of Dream: Threnodies, Songs, and Other Poems* (1901, 1904, 1907, 1910, and 1917); *Deirdrē and the Sons of Usna* (1903); *The Divine Adventure* (1903); *The Isle of Dreams* (1905); and *The Hour of Beauty: Songs and Poems* (1907). Three Fiona books were published in Mosher's *Miscellaneous Series*: *The Silence of Amor: Prose Rhythms* (1902); *The House of Usna: A Drama* (1903); and *The Immortal Hour: A Drama in Two Acts* (1907). The Fiona books he published in his *Brocade Series* are *By Sundown Shores: Studies in Spiritual History* (1902); *The Tale of the Four White Swans* (1904); and *Ulad of the Dreams* (1904). Each Mosher series differed from the others in design and format, but why he chose some works for one series and other works for another is unclear. For detailed bibliographic information about these and other Fiona Macleod books published by Thomas Mosher, consult Philip R. Bishop's wonderful *Thomas Bird Mosher: Pirate Prince of Publishers: A Comprehensive Bibliography and Source Guide to The Mosher Books Reflecting England's National Literature and Design* (1998).
- 9    Eleanora Duse (1861–1924) was an Italian actress. Gabrielle D'Annunzio wrote plays for her, among them "La Bioconda" and "Francesca da Rimini." She was one of the first prominent actresses to perform in Henrik Ibsen's "Hedda Gabler" and "The Lady from the Sea."
- 10    George Halkett (1855–1918) and Sharp had known each other since their schooldays in Glasgow. Both an artist and a writer, Halkett became the art critic for the *Edinburgh Evening News* in 1876 when he was only twenty-one. In 1892 he moved to London where he joined the *Pall Mall Magazine* as a political cartoonist and art critic. He contributed many items to *Punch*, and in 1897 he was appointed Editor of the *Pall Mall Magazine*. This letter is in Sharp's hand to be copied by Mary. In reproducing the letter in the *Memoir* (p. 356), Mrs. Sharp omitted portions and mistakenly dated it "9<sup>th</sup> Jan" rather than "9<sup>th</sup> May." According to Sharp's diary he finished "The King's Ring", described in this letter, on Saturday, January 3, 1903.
- 11    According to E. A. S., "the story was accepted and the first installment was printed in the *Pall Mall Magazine* in May, 1904; but after its appearance the author did not care sufficiently for it to republish it in book form" (*Memoir*,

p. 357). Flora Macdonald (1722–1790) aided Prince Charles of the House of Stuart in escaping the English forces after his army was defeated at Culloden in 1746. Flora dressed the Prince in women's clothes and passed him off as her maid during the escape. She spent a year in the Tower of London for her part in the escape. Released from the Tower, she married and emigrated to North Carolina.

- 12    *The Divine Adventure.*
- 13    Edith Wingate Rinder.
- 14    The three reprints are *The Divine Adventure* (an essay), *Deirdrê and the Sons of Usna* (a story), and *The House of Usna* (a drama).
- 15    The “dedicatory introduction” to “Deirdrê,” which Fiona hoped to send the following Wednesday, is entitled “To Esther Mona,” Edith Rinder’s baby daughter, who was born on July 26, 1901.
- 16    Unable to identify Miss Moore. Since this letter is written on the stationery of a MacBrayne Royal Mail Steamer and Iona is handwritten following the printed masthead, Sharp may have taken the boat that sails out of Oban on Scotland’s west coast around the large Isle of Mull to Iona. In any case, he somehow acquired copies of the vessel’s stationery and had Mary copy this Fiona letter to Mosher, dated June 3 on the stationery to convey the impression she was visiting Iona. The series of correspondence implies that Fiona Macleod had traveled from the Lake District (Bowness on Lake Windermere) north to the Isle of Bute and then on to Iona. Sharp may have been taking this route at the time. If so, he was back in London by June 23 when he went down to Box Hill to visit George Meredith.
- 17    Esther Mona Rinder Harvey, to whom the volume is dedicated, would be two years old on July 26, 1903, and Sharp wanted to be able to give her mother, Edith Rinder, a set of page proofs of the dedication.
- 18    This letter is written in the Fiona handwriting on the stationery of David MacBrayne’s Royal Mail Steamer.
- 19    This statement suggests that Sharp, like the imaginary Fiona, was traveling in the west of Scotland and the Lake District from mid-May until mid-June.
- 20    *Deirdrê and the Sons of Usna*, 1903 (reprinted from the *Laughter of Peterkin: a retelling of Old Tales from the Celtic Wonderland*, London: Archibald, Constable and Co., 1897, with additional notes and a dedicatory Preface), and *The House of Usna: A Drama*, 1903 (reprinted from *The Fortnightly Review*, 1900, with a Foreword).

- 21 *Ideas of Good and Evil* (London: A. H. Bullen, 1903).
- 22 In reproducing this letter in the *Memoir*, E. A. S. mentioned that it was written to a friend.
- 23 Mrs. Sharp said of this letter: "Goodbye it was in truth; but it was the older poet who recovered hold on life and outlived the younger by four years" (*Memoir*, p. 368). Sharp died on December 12, 1905; Meredith on May 18, 1909.
- 24 An American from Minneapolis, James Carleton Young (1856–1918) was president of the Western Mortgage Company, the James C. Young Land Company, the Imperial Investment Company, and the Central Trackage Company. In his spare time, he devoted himself to acquiring the "world's best library" which would have all the important books that had been written. When possible, each book was to be inscribed by the author.
- 25 Sharp seems to have made this flying visit to Edinburgh the day after he visited Meredith since his letter to *To James Carleton Young, June 23, 1903* written in his own hand and signed by him carries the Murrayfield, Midlothian return address.
- 26 *The Divine Adventure, Deirdrê and the Sons of Usna*, and *The House of Usna*.
- 27 The main body of this letter was typed, probably by Mary Sharp in Edinburgh. The signature and the postscript are in Mary's Fiona Macleod hand.
- 28 The letter was written on Sunday July 5, and Sharp's "At Home:" took place at the Grosvenor Club on July 6.
- 29 The book Sharp received from Garnett was a new and augmented edition of his *Twilight of the Gods* which Grant Richards published in the Spring of 1903. See letter *To Richard Garnett, July 28, 1903*.
- 30 Arthur Tomson (1859–1905) was an English land- and seascape painter and a sympathetic and discriminating writer on art. His *Jean-François Millet and the Barbizon School* was published by G. Bell in 1903 and reissued in 1905. His *Many Waters* was published in 1904 by Walter Scott and Company. He contributed to the *Art Journal* descriptions of places in the southern counties, illustrated by his own drawings. He is buried in Steeple churchyard near his home in Wareham, Dorset.
- 31 Elizabeth's mother and William's aunt — Agnes Farquharson Sharp — died sometime between July 6 and July 13 since this letter and Sharp's July 13 letter to Grant Richards are written on black-bordered mourning paper.

Tuesday, July 14 is the probable date of this letter to Watts-Dunton which means Sharp invited him to have tea at the Grosvenor Club on the 16<sup>th</sup> or 18<sup>th</sup>.

- 32 The last sentence is inserted with an asterisk.
- 33 Ernest Rhys was a long-time friend of both Sharp and Watts-Dunton.
- 34 A reminiscence by Watts-Dunton of his first encounter with Gypsies as a young boy was published in *Great Thoughts* in 1903. Sharp's mention of this "recent" publication dates the letter as 1903, and it must have been written in late June or early July when he was in London and staying temporarily at 9 St. Mary's Terrace, Paddington. Elizabeth's brother Robert Farquharson Sharp lived nearby at 56 St. Mary's Mansions, Paddington. Gypsies figure prominently W-D's *Alwyn* and his other works of fiction. See James Douglas, *Theodore Watts-Dunton: Poet, Novelist, Critic* (New York: John Lane, 1904), 61 ff.
- 35 This letter was probably typed by Edith Rinder from Sharp's dictation. They put Fiona on a train to Edinburgh from London where she had been on an urgent visit involving an illness. This stratagem was to explain the fact that the letter does not have the Fiona signature. They did not want to delay the letter by sending it to Edinburgh for Mary to sign. The dedicatory page for the Swan story ("The Tale of the Four White Swans") is missing from the typed letter which is among the Mosher papers at the New York Public Library (Berg Collection). The person who was ill and then, presumably, died may have been a London relative of Elizabeth Sharp.
- 36 Mosher published *The House of Usna: A Drama by Fiona Macleod* in his *Miscellaneous Series* in the fall of 1903. An endnote reads: "Four hundred and fifty copies of this book have been printed on Van Gelder hand-made paper and the type distributed." Fifty numbered copies were printed on Japanese vellum. "Both the Van Gelder and the Japan vellum copies are bound in green printed Japan vellum wraps over boards. Renaissance border on the cover is signed "CW" for Charlotte Whittingham, designer for the Chiswick Press of London," *Thomas Bird Mosher: Pirate Prince of Publishers* (New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll Press, 1998), p. 169. *The House of Usna* is dedicated to Mona Caird. A long "Foreword" by Fiona Macleod advocates a turn away from the realism of Ibsen to a spiritual drama. Mosher took a great deal of care over the printing of this volume, but it had a limited distribution, and the play, unlike Fiona Macleod's other drama, *The Immortal Hour*, passed into oblivion.

- 37 A break occurs here in the typescript, and the dedication is absent. Fiona Macleod's "The Tale of the Four White Swans" was first published in her *The Laughter of Peterkin: A Retelling of Old Tales of the Celtic Wonderworld*, a book intended for children which was published by Archibald Constable & Company in a beautiful edition with drawings by Sunderland Rollinson (London, 1897). Mosher published *The Tale of the Four White Swans* as a separate volume in his *Brocade Series* in April 1904 and issued new editions in 1907 and 1911.
- 38 Falkirk is located about half-way between Edinburgh and Glasgow on the northern route. The Sharps were staying with a family there while traveling in late July from London to Kilcreggan in the Inner Hebrides where they would spend August with his mother and sisters.
- 39 The new and augmented edition of Garnett's *Twilight of the Gods* was published by Grant Edwards in the spring of 1903. Sharp thanked Garnett for the copy in late June before he had finished reading it and thanked him again here after reading several selections.
- 40 W. B. Yeats's "Land of Heart's Desire" appeared in volume nine of *The Bibelot* (June, 1903), 183–214.
- 41 Most likely *Byways of Scottish Story*, which appeared first in 1900. George Eyre-Todd (1862–1939) was a prolific writer and editor whose main interests were Scottish history and literature. The quotation about F. M. is not included with the letter in the New York Public Library collection.
- 42 Although unstated, the person to whom this letter is addressed was Bliss Perry (1860–1954). Sharp knew the previous editors (Scudder and Page), but he had not met Perry who was educated at Williams College and abroad. A pioneering scholar in the developing field of American Literature, Perry joined the Williams College faculty in 1886 and moved to Princeton University in 1893 where he taught until 1900. He was named Editor of the *Atlantic* in 1899 and held that position for ten years. He began teaching at Harvard University in 1907 and remained on that faculty until 1930.
- 43 Sharp's "The Sicilian Highlands" appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly* in April 1904 (93, 471–78).
- 44 This volume reprinted the title essay from Fiona's *The Divine Adventure: Iona: By Sundown Shores: Studies in Spiritual History* which was published in England by Chapman & Hall in 1900. In a letter To Thomas Mosher, April 24, [1903], Fiona said the essay could appear in Mosher's *Old World Series*: "There is not much to revise, except a little deletion and dovetailing

near the end. But I'll go over it again carefully, and hope to see my way to add somewhat. And I shall write some prefatory matter." The volume was dedicated "To Millicent," but I do not know who she was.

- 45 Sharp must have written this letter for Mary to copy when he was recuperating with Elizabeth in Llandrindod Wells. The announced volume was probably "The House of Beauty" an anthology of poems Sharp hoped to publish as Fiona Macleod in the fall of 1903. This volume did not materialize, and "The Hour of Beauty" became a section of posthumous editions of Fiona Macleod's poetry which were entitled *From the Hills of Dream* and arranged by Elizabeth Sharp in accordance with her husband's wishes.
- 46 Isabella (Murray) Gilchrist was the mother of Sharp's friend R. Murray Gilchrist whom the Sharps had visited their home in Derbyshire: Cartledge Hall, Holmesfield.
- 47 See Endnote 44.
- 48 Supposedly written while Fiona was in Algeciras, on the Spanish gulf, this letter is in the Fiona handwriting. Sharp must have received the copy of *The House of Usna*, forwarded from Edinburgh, when he reached Hood's Castle Maniace in the first week of November. He then drafted this letter and sent it for Mary to copy and mail to Mosher from Edinburgh.
- 49 Sharp wrote this letter while staying at Alexander Nelson Hood's Castle Maniace on the northern slopes of Mt. Etna before going down to Taormina for a few days and then on to Greece.
- 50 Sharp assumed Mrs. J. H. Philpot would be especially appreciative of this description of trees. She was the author of *The Sacred Tree in Religion and Myth* (London: Macmillan, 1897) and other popular books and pamphlets about spiritualist associations with trees. Little is known about Sharp's relationship with her though he may have met her through Dr. John Goodchild since the three shared the conviction that spirits inhabited the natural world and communicated frequently with those attuned to their messages.
- 51 The sentence in brackets was written in the left margin of the letter to imply it was an afterthought. It was not; its purpose was to explain to Mosher why the letter was being mailed from Edinburgh, where Sharp's sister Mary transposed a draft into the Fiona Macleod handwriting, rather than from Greece.
- 52 E. A. S. said this letter was written "at the New Year."

- 53 "Maison Merlin | Seker Road | Athens."
- 54 Sir John Lubbock (1834–1913) was a banker, statesman, and naturalist. As a member of Parliament from 1870, he introduced many reform bills, especially in banking, including legislation establishing bank holidays. His scientific contributions were in entomology and anthropology and include his *Prehistoric Times* (1865), long used as a textbook in several languages. Popular works include *Ants, Bees, and Wasps* (1882) and *The Pleasures of Life* (two volumes, pp. 1887–89). He was given the title Baron Avebury in 1900. Sir Lewis Morris (1833–1907) was a popular poet of the Anglo-Welsh school who was born in Carmarthen in southwest Wales. He studied Classics at Oxford, graduating in 1856, where he was the first student in thirty years to obtain first-class honors in both his preliminary and final examinations. He became a lawyer and published multiple volumes of popular verse. He was knighted by Queen Victoria in 1895 and narrowly missed being appointed Poet Laureate, possibly because of his association with Oscar Wilde. One of his most famous poems is "Love's Suicide". Sharp had a low opinion of the writings of both men.
- 55 Excerpted from lines 53–54 of Pindar's 7th *Nemean Ode*, which has been translated as "Respite is sweet in every deed. Even honey may cloy, and the delightful flowers of Aphrodite" ([www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0162%3Abook%3DN.%3Apoem%3D7](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0162%3Abook%3DN.%3Apoem%3D7)).

## Chapter 24

- 1 Ernest Rhys printed and transcribed in his *Letters from Limbo* this page of the letter he received from Sharp. Watts-Dunton edited *The Athenaeum* from 1876 to 1898. In 1904, he remained in a position to commission an article from Sharp. See the "Life" section of this chapter for the context in which Rhys set this fragment.
- 2 Theodore Watts-Dunton.
- 3 Following this ellipsis, Rhys wrote: "Then he runs on to speak of plans for further wanderings in Greece:"
- 4 Alfred Turner Nutt (1856–1916) took over his father's publishing business in 1878 and continued heading the firm until his death. He founded the Goethe Society in 1886 and jointly founded the Irish Texts Society in 1898. He was the author of *The Legend of the Holy Grail* (1888) and *The Voyage of Bran, Son of Febal to the Land of the Living* (1895). This letter is in Sharp's hand for Mary to copy.

- 5      Supposedly Fiona had been staying with the Sharps in Athens. Here Sharp describes her as “having left,” but does not describe her location. The Sharps stayed on in Greece through March. It would not have been wise to have her so long in one place in case the news got out and someone tried to visit her.
- 6      *Poets and Dreamers: Studies and Translations from the Irish* (1903) for which Yeats wrote the introduction.
- 7      Nutt must have suggested Fiona undertake a compendium of Gaelic tales in English to compete with and improve upon Lady Gregory’s recently published book.
- 8      This comment reflects Yeats’ estrangement from Sharp which was partially due to Sharp’s increasing absence from London and partially due to the contempt for Sharp among some of Yeats’ Irish compatriots. It also reflects Sharp/Macleod’s belief that Yeats’ involvement in the cause of Irish nationalism and his relationship with Maud Gonne, an active Nationalist, interfered with his imaginative work and his devotion to spiritualism and the occult. After Sharp died in 1905, Yeats came to regret the estrangement and to believe he had not sufficiently valued Sharp’s friendship. Later he lost interest in the Celtic movement, as represented by Fiona Macleod, and in Sharp, and joined others in ridiculing him for inventing a female mouthpiece.
- 9      *The Winged Destiny: Studies in the Spiritual History of the Gael* which was published by Chapman and Hall in October 1904.
- 10     Neither of these books was completed.
- 11     Pentelicos is a mountain in Attica, northeast of Athens overlooking Kephisia, a deme (suburb) of ancient Athens which was the home of the dramatist Menander (342–291 BC) who wrote more than a hundred Greek comedies. This and other descriptions of Sharp’s walks in the hills around Athens moved Ernest Rhys to comment in *Letters from Limbo*: “Not a bad way-bill for a sick wanderer, but whatever else he might be he always took his ailments and his threatened fate with courage and at times with a histrionic relish of his own predicament” (p. 80).
- 12     The Sharps spent four months in Greece — December through March — and this letter states they will leave Greece “this day week.” Thus, the date of March 24.
- 13     Since the typed letter is not signed in Mary’s Fiona Macleod hand, it must have been typed in London and sent by Edith Rinder to Mosher. Sharp wanted to get its message to Mosher quickly, and this procedure was faster

than sending the penciled letter to Edinburgh for Mary to copy into the Fiona Macleod hand. For a discussion of the content of the letter and the genesis and content of Fiona Macleod's *The Winged Destiny*, see the "Life" section of this chapter.

- 14 This volume was published posthumously as *Where the Forest Murmurs: Nature Essays* (London: George Newnes, Ltd., and New York: Charles Scribner and Son, 1906). It did not include "The Magic Kingdoms."
- 15 This new proposed edition did not materialize in 1904. Rather, Mosher reissued in 1904 his 1901 edition of *From the Hills of Dream: Threnodies, Songs and Other Poems* (Old World Series). A new edition of *From the Hills of Dream* did not appear until 1907 when it was published in England by William Heinemann.
- 16 Although Sharp began this letter complaining about Mosher's including an essay intended for *The Winged Destiny* in *The Bibelot*, here he suggests Mosher publish an entire section of the volume as a book. Since it would take time for a book to appear, it would not interfere with the sale of the Chapman and Hall volume in the United States. More important, Mosher would pay Fiona for a book, but not for an essay in *The Bibelot*, a publication designed to advertise Mosher's books.
- 17 Henri David Davray (1873–1944) translated several Fiona Macleod tales into French for the *Mercury de France*, but the collection of tales did not materialize. He was the author of *Chez les Anglia's Pendant la Grande Guerre* (1916); *Through French Eyes* (1916); and *Lord Kitchener: His Work and His Prestige* (1917).
- 18 This reviewer was probably Helen Bartlett Bridgeman. Mosher must have sent a copy of her review of earlier Fiona Macleod works to Fiona which occasioned the long letter of appreciation to Mrs. Bridgeman in September.
- 19 Edith Rinder wanted to assure Mosher that the six additional copies he sent had arrived.
- 20 Alexander Jessup, born in 1871, was the General Editor of a series called *French Men of Letters* for the J. P. Lippincott Company in Philadelphia. He was also the General Editor of a series called *Little French Masterpieces* for G. P. Putnam's Sons in New York. He is best known for his editions of American short stories, the most popular being *The Best American Humorous Short Stories* which was first published in 1920.
- 21 The south of France.

- 22 The nature of the “concurrent work” is unknown. See letter *To [Alexander Jessup], September 20, 1904* (Volume 3), in which Sharp tells Jessup he is too ill to continue with the Leconte de L’Isle book they agreed he would write. He also told Jessup that the terms he originally accepted — a volume of 75,000 words for an advance of twenty pounds — were insufficient. He said he had recently received a much better offer for a shorter Leconte de L’Isle volume from another American publisher of a similar series, but there is no supporting evidence for such an offer.
- 23 E. A. S. gave no date for this letter, but she placed it in the *Memoir* following a long quotation from the “Dedicatory Introduction” of *The Winged Destiny* and preceding two letters regarding that volume. It is reasonable to date the letter in July. The essay that gave its title to the book deals extensively with fate and destiny as do several other pieces in the book. The topic was much on his mind as he contemplated the likelihood that he did not have much longer to achieve the highest ideals of “beauty” in the Fiona writings.
- 24 “The Lynn of Dreams,” *The Contemporary Review*, 82 (December, 1902), 863–65.
- 25 This letter describes a day spent with Dr. John Goodchild at Glastonbury and identifies that day as August 1. Since he said in the letter that this day was yesterday, it was written on August 2. Its recipient was not in England on that lovely day which increases the likelihood Roselle Lathrop Shields was its recipient. See the “Life” section of this chapter.
- 26 A heavily edited version of this letter appears in the *Memoir*, pp. 386–87.
- 27 The phrases “in more ways than one” and “a garden of Eden” are covert references to his new-found love for Roselle Lathrop Shields who had a salutary effect on his health and spirits. For a further discussion of Sharp’s relationship with Mrs. Shields, see the “Life” section of this chapter.
- 28 Sharp’s *Literary Geography* (London: Pall Mall Publications, 1904).
- 29 *Elizabeth Sharp’s Rembrandt: with Forty Illustrations* (London: Methuen and Company, 1903).
- 30 Printed in the September 14, 1904 *London Daily Chronicle*, this letter was preceded by the following editorial comment: “We have received the following very interesting letter, which we regret we cannot acknowledge in a personal way, because it bears no address”.
- 31 Mosher published *The Tale of the Four White Swans* in his *Brocade Series* in April 1904. It was one of the tales in Fiona Macleod’s *The Laughter of*

*Peterkin*, a book of stories for children published by Archibald Constable in 1897 where it was titled “*The Four White Swans*”. *Ulad of the Dreams*, which Mosher published in his Brocade Series in September 1904, appeared first in Fiona’s *The Dominion of Dreams* published by Archibald Constable in 1899.

- 32 Sharp enclosed with this letter both Fiona’s September 14 letter in the Chronicle and her letter to Helen Bridgman, a close friend of Mosher.
- 33 Helen Bartlett Bridgman (1855–1935) was an American writer and world traveler. Born in Milwaukee in 1855, she spent most of her childhood in New England. Among her books are *An American Woman’s Plea for Germany* (1915); *Looking Toward Peace* (1915); *Play Fair!* (1915); *Gems* (1916); *Within My Horizon* (1920); *Conquering the World* (1925); and *The Last Passion* (1925). In 1887, she married Herbert Lawrence Bridgman (1844–1924), an explorer and journalist who has been described as the “Ulysses of journalists” for his work in organizing the Robert Perry expedition to the North Pole. Perry sent Bridgman the code cable “Sun” (meaning “We have reached the world’s end”). Bridgman led the relief expedition in 1894 after Perry was lost in the Arctic. With no surviving children, Bridgman specified that his estate, upon the death of his widow, would go to the State University of New York to establish scholarships for New York students. Mrs. Bridgman died at her home in Brooklyn in 1935. This letter responds to a letter to Fiona from Mrs. Bridgman which Mosher forwarded with some favorable reviews of the Fiona writings by Mrs. Bridgman.
- 34 Robert Donald (1860–1933) was Editor of *The Daily Chronicle* from 1904 until 1918. He was thoughtful and principled, with a firm belief in objective reporting and editorial independence. Under his direction, the paper was broadly supportive of the radical wing of the Liberal Party under David Lloyd George. The subject of the letter is a prefatory note Donald added to the Fiona Macleod letter he published in the September 14, 1904 issue of *The Daily Chronicle*.
- 35 In June, Alexander Jessup asked Sharp to do a volume in the *French Men of Letters* series he was editing for Lippincott. Sharp replied that because of “concurrent work” he would like to do a volume on Mistral, Leconte de L’Isle, or Villiers de L’Isle Adam. He could do the work during the coming winter and let Jessup have it in the spring, but he could make no commitment until he heard Jessup’s terms. Aside from the health problems that would prevent his going forward with a book on Le Conte de L’Isle, Sharp found Jessup’s monetary terms insufficient.

- 36 Alfred de Vigny (1797–1863) was a poet and dramatist. Among his works are *Cinq-Mars* (1847); *Servitude et grandeur militaires* (1857) and, posthumously published, *Daphne* (1873); *Journal d'un poète* (1882); *Laurette* (1890). Joseph Albert Glatigny (1839–1873) was a poet. Among his works are *Les Vignes folles* (1860); *Les Flèches d'or* (1864); *L'illustre Brizacier* (1873). José María Heredia (1803–1839) was a Spanish poet who wrote *Poesías de Don José María Heredia* (1853); *Sonnets of José María de Heredia* (1897); *Los Trofeos, Romancero y los Conquistadores de Oro Poesías* (1908).
- 37 The intended recipient of this letter must have been the widow of E. C. Stedman's son, Frederick, who also seems to have written to Sharp expressing regret that the Stedmans could not have the Sharps as house guests and offering the service of her daughter Laura in helping the Sharps find lodging in New York. Laura served as E. C. Stedman's literary secretary from 1898 until his death in 1908.
- 38 The Sharps left England on the SS. Menominee on Thursday, November 3, and arrived in New York on Sunday November 13. This was Elizabeth's first visit to the United States.
- 39 Sharp wrote a letter to Stedman each year and mailed it so it would arrive on or near his October 8 birthday.
- 40 William McLennan (1856–1904) was a Canadian writer who often contributed to H. M. Alden's *Harper's Magazine*. He died in late August while visiting Italy with his wife.
- 41 The “dedicatory prelude” was the “Prefatory Epistle to Esther Mona” in Fiona Macleod’s *Deirdrê and the Sons of Usna* (Portland, ME: Mosher, 1903). The little girl, to whom the epistle was dedicated, was the daughter of Edith and Frank Rinder. Mosher’s *Ulad of the Dreams* (September 1904 and reprinted in 1907) appeared first as an essay in Fiona’s *Dominion of Dreams* (London: Archibald Constable, 1899). The Mosher volume was also dedicated “To Esther Mona,” but without the prelude. *The Four Swans of Lir* was published by Mosher in April 1904 (reprinted in 1907 and 1911). It appeared first as “The Four White Swans” in Fiona’s *The Laughter of Peterkin, A Retelling of Old Tales of the Celtic Wonderworld* (London: Archibald Constable, 1897). See Endnote 31.
- 42 This letter was written early in the week before the Sharps left England on November 3.
- 43 See Endnotes 20 and 35.
- 44 Garnett’s play, entitled *William Shakespeare, Pedagogue and Poacher*, was published in 1905.

- 45 Robert Farquharson Sharp was married to Hildur Wildebrand in October 1904. Richard Garnett (1835–1906) was Keeper of Printed Books at the British Museum from 1890–1899 when he retired from the Museum. Robert Farquharson Sharp (1865–1945) served as Keeper of Printed Books at the Museum from 1924–1929. His son, Noel Farquharson Sharp, was a mainstay of that Department from the 1930s well into the 1970s.
- 46 Caroline Hazard (1856–1945) was born in Rhode Island and educated by private tutors at Mary A. Shaw's School in Providence. After further study in Europe, she helped her father in business and created a welfare center in Rhode Island where she taught sewing and other domestic skills. In 1899, she was appointed the third President of Wellesley College, a position she held with distinction until 1910. She introduced household economics into the curriculum, created a department of hygiene and physical education, and founded the college choir. Following her years at Wellesley, she traveled widely and championed the education of women. She was also active in many philanthropic organizations in Rhode Island, New York, and California where she had a home in Santa Barbara and where she died in 1945. She was a good friend of Catherine Janvier whose brother was President of Lehigh College (Henry S. Drinker) and of Edith Bucklin Hartshorn Mason who entertained the Sharps for a weekend in Rhode Island on their way to Boston. Well-established among the elite of Rhode Island society, Hazard and Mason were members of the Colonial Dames of Rhode Island and the Daughters of the American Revolution. Catherine Janvier, Caroline Hazard, and Edith Mason were, like Elizabeth Sharp, intelligent and accomplished advocates of the advancement of women.
- 47 Here is the following description of Halidon Hall in Newport and the Masons' residence by Avis Gunther-Rosenberg (*The Providence Journal*, February 14, 2004): "'Teahouse Steeped in Newport History' Aerie Cottage is the former teahouse of Halidon Hill, a 19th-century estate that once consisted of three large houses and three barns on 14 acres. Built in 1853 by a Scottish stone mason, the Gothic 20-something-room Halidon Hall was named after a battle in 1333 at which the English defeated the Scottish, with a loss of 14,000 lives. In 1894, Arthur Livingston Mason and wife Edith Bucklin Hartshorn Mason took up residence at Halidon Hall, according to the youngest of the eight children, Lion Gardiner Mason. Mason published his memoirs — *A Lion's Share* — on his 87th birthday, Oct. 5, 1983. The Mason family had several claims to fame. Arthur Livingston Mason owned the Newport Engineering Works, an automobile and marine business, and was narrowly defeated in the Newport mayoral race of 1898 by Patrick Boyle, losing by only 198 votes. His wife Edith organized the R.I. Sanitary and Relief Association during the Spanish-American War and was responsible for two inventions designed to help

wounded soldiers — a lamp shade that shielded patients' eyes from light while leaving the bulb exposed on one side to aid the surgeons, and a flannel abdominal bandage called the 'Mason band.'"

- 48 According to E. A. S., Sharp, while in New York, wrote to Alden on Fiona Macleod's behalf proposing that he take some of her nature essays for *Harper's Magazine*. Sharp and Alden had been good friends for many years, and Sharp had told Alden the truth about Fiona. They saw each other when Sharp was in New York, and this letter was intended to formalize proposals Sharp made orally. The W. S. essay proposing a new Doctor of Criticism degree was, according to E. A. S., a project amongst many others which was "never worked out" (*Memoir*, p. 392).
- 49 Bliss Perry edited the Atlantic Monthly from 1899 until 1909. See Endnote 42, Chapter 23 (Volume 3). The letterhead on this stationery is Lawrence Park, Bronxville, N. Y. where the Stedmans lived. In his letter *To Edmund Clarence Stedman, [late September, 1905]* (Volume 3) in late September 1905, Sharp recalled his spending Thanksgiving with the Stedmans in 1904. That year Thanksgiving was on November 24. Hence the date of this letter.
- 50 This letter was written on the stationery of The Century Association | 7 West 43rd Street | New York with the letterhead crossed out. Established in 1847, the Century Association was, at that time, a New York City club of "authors, artists, and amateurs of letters and the fine arts," whose early members included editor/poet William Cullen Bryant and painters Asher Durand, Winslow Homer, and John Frederick Kensett, and architect Stanford White. The Century evolved from an earlier organization, the Sketch Club, founded by Bryant and his friends in 1829. The Century has a notable art collection, including important works by Durand, Thomas Cole, Thomas Doughty, and other Hudson River School painters. It is also an important venue for the exhibition of contemporary art created by its members. In 1899, after a strenuous legal battle, the club began admitting women. Located on West 43rd Street since 1891, the Century occupies a club house designed by Stanford White. Stedman, among other New York luminaries in the arts and letters, was a member of the Century and arranged a temporary membership for Sharp when he was in New York.
- 51 Helen Bartlett Bridgman. See Endnote 33.
- 52 Julia Ward Howe (1819–1910) was an American author and lecturer who wrote "The Battle Hymn of the Republic." She was married to Samuel Gridley Howe, a reformer and teacher of the blind, and they lived in Boston. The author of numerous travel books, biographies, dramas, and verse books for children, Mrs Howe was a strong advocate of equal education

for all children as well as professional and business opportunities for women.

- 53 Roger Livingston Scaife (1875–1951) graduated from Harvard in 1897 and two years later joined the staff of the *Atlantic Monthly*, which was published by the Houghton, Mifflin Company. Shortly thereafter he transferred to Houghton Mifflin and soon became a Director. He retained that position until 1934 when he left to become Vice President and a Director at Little, Brown. In 1943, he was appointed Director of the Harvard University Press, a position he held until his retirement in 1948. Through the years he interacted with many well-known writers and exercised considerable influence within the publishing business. When Sharp called on Bliss Perry, the *Atlantic's* Editor, with an introduction from Stedman, he mentioned not only articles Perry might like for the magazine, but also a book for which he had been taking notes on monuments of ancient Greek civilization. Perry introduced Sharp to Scaife who asked for a written proposal which Sharp hastily wrote on the afternoon of Tuesday, December 6. The lengthy proposal, in the form of a letter to Houghton Mifflin, succeeds this letter to Scaife.
- 54 The St. Botolph Club was a club for men founded in 1880 for artists and prominent members of Boston society. Like the Century Club in New York, it held annual exhibitions. Among its founders were Thomas Jefferson Coolidge, Frederic Porter Vinton, William Dean Howells, architect Henry Hobson Richardson, and sculptor Daniel Chester French. Someone arranged for Sharp to use the club during his few days in Boston.
- 55 In 1927, the town of Girgenti took the name of its province, Agrigento. The Greeks called the town Akragas, later known as Agrigentum by the Romans, and the Saracens corrupted this name to Kerkent from which later residents derived Girgenti. An important Greek port city on the southwest coast of Sicily, Akragas was the home of Empedocles (490–430) and has the best-preserved series of Doric temples outside Greece.
- 56 For Julia Ward Howe, see Endnote 52.
- 57 Isabella Stewart Gardner (1840–1924) was a wealthy art collector, philanthropist, and patron of the arts whose collection is housed in the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston. Shortly after her marriage to the wealthy John Lowell “Jack” Gardner in 1860, the couple settled in Boston and began collecting works of art. Before he died in 1898, Jack Gardner decided their Boston House was not large enough for their growing collection and began planning a museum to house it. After his death, Isabella acquired a piece of land in the newly developing fens area and hired Willard T. Sears, a Boston architect, to design a museum

modeled on the Renaissance palaces of Venice. In the early years, an apartment on the fourth floor was Mrs. Garner's home. She entertained guests frequently, often for musicals, but also opened the museum to the public two days each year. For the museum's opening night — January 1, 1903 — four hundred guests were entertained by members of the Boston Symphony. Aware that the Sharps had served as London art critics for the *Glasgow Herald* and written extensively about art, Caroline Hazard arranged for the Sharps to visit Mrs. Gardner for a private tour of Fenway Court.

- 58 Katharine Lee Bates (1859–1929) was an American poet, literary critic, and dramatist. Among her works are *The College Beautiful and Other Poems* (1887); *American Literature* (1898); *Spanish Highways and Byways* (1900); *English Drama* (1902); *Once Upon a Time* (1921). The Sharps met her when they visited Wellesley on 5 December. This letter was written shortly before they sailed from Boston on the *Romantic* on Saturday, December 10.
- 59 After meeting the Sharps at Wellesley, Katherine Bates sent the Sharps Margaret Pollock Sherwood's *Daphne* which Houghton Mifflin published in 1903.
- 60 *Spanish Highways and Byways* (New York: Macmillan and Co., 1900).
- 61 Houghton Mifflin accepted Sharp's proposal to produce a book called Greek Background that would focus on Sicily and Calabria. They would wait to see how that volume sold before committing to a proposed second volume on Greece.
- 62 The Sharp's sailed from Boston aboard the *S. S. Romantic* on Saturday, December 10. After the snow in Boston and the rough sea voyage, they landed in Naples, grateful for the warmth of Italy. They went north to spend Christmas with Doctor John Goodchild and other friends in Bordighera, a resort town on the Italian Riviera where Sharp wrote this letter to Gilchrist. In the next week, the couple travelled south to Rome and took rooms in a fashionable hotel where they planned to stay several months.
- 63 Ethel Goddard was an intensely patriotic and religious Irish writer. Her *Dreams of Ireland* was first published in 1903 (Dublin: Hodges, Figgis, & Co.) and went through many editions. It is a collection of sentimental reflections on rural Ireland, past and present. This letter is transcribed from a document among the Sharp papers in the National Library of Scotland. It is in Sharp's hand and was sent from Italy to Edinburgh for Mary Sharp to copy into the Fiona Macleod hand and mail. A note from Sharp to Mary on the manuscript reads as follows: "if you do not have her address in

Ireland, then post to her | c/o The Editor 'The Fortnightly Review' | 11 Henrietta St. | Covent Garden | London." Sharp then crossed through that note and wrote "Donard Demesne | Donard | Co. Wicklow | Ireland." Sharp wrote "Return" in the upper left corner of the first page. Writing as Fiona Macleod, Sharp said of Goddard's book in "Anima Celtica": "Surcharged with the intensest spirit of Ireland in the less mystical and poetic sense, is the slim volume of a handful of prose papers by Miss Ethel Goddard, entitled Dreams for Ireland. This book is uplifted with a radiant hope and with an ecstasy of spiritual conviction that make the heart young to contemplate: and would God that its glad faith and untroubled prophecies could be fulfilled in our time, or that in our time even the shadows of the great things to come could lighten the twilight road."

- 64 "The Winged Destiny and Fiona Macleod," *The Fortnightly Review*, 76 (December, 1904), 1037–44.
- 65 *Wind und Woge, Keltische Sagen, Authoristert Ausgabe aus dem Englishen übersetzt und einegeleiten von Winnibald Mey* (Jena und Leipzig: Eugen Diederichs, 1905).
- 66 This entire paragraph is crossed out, and someone wrote "type this" in the left margin next to the paragraph. Mary must not have included it in the letter she sent to Miss Goddard.
- 67 Lawrence Gilman (1878–1939) was a critic who wrote extensively about the music of Charles Loeffler (1861–1935) and Edward MacDowell (1861–1908), major figures in American music in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Among his publications are *Phases of Modern Music* (1904); *The Music of Tomorrow* (1907); *Stories of Symphonic Music* (1907); *Edward MacDowell* (1906); *Music and the Cultivated Man* (1929); and *Wagner's Operas* (1937). From 1896 to 1898, Gilman worked for the *New York Herald*, then from 1901 to 1913 as a music critic for *Harper's Weekly*, where he advanced to the position of Managing Editor. From 1915 to 1923, he was a critic in multiple arts for *The North American Review*, and for the *Herald Tribune* from 1925 until his death. Sharp would have met Gilman at the office of *Harper's Weekly* in Boston in early December, and this letter is an effort to establish a bond between Fiona and Gilman in the hope of encouraging favorable notices for the Fiona writings.

## Chapter 25

- 1 Sharp's "04" date was a mistake not uncommon in early January.
- 2 Sharp made a "flying visit" to Dorset to see Thomas Hardy in March 1892. In a note of appreciation to Sharp, Hardy said he was particularly struck by his "power of grasping the characteristics of this district and people in a few hours visit, during which, as far as I could see, you were not observing anything" (*Memoir*, p. 199).
- 3 William Dean Howells (1837–1920) was a prolific and highly-regarded American man of letters who is best known for his realist novels *The Rise of Silas Lapham* (1885) and *A Hazard of New Fortunes* (1890). Poems he wrote between 1873 and 1886 were published in a volume called *Stops of Various Quills* in 1895. Sharp first met Howells in Venice in 1883.
- 4 Louis Chandler Moulton (1835–1908) occupied a prominent place in American literary society. She published several volumes of poetry and short fiction and wrote regular columns on literature in the *New York Tribune* (1870–1876) and a weekly literary letter in the *Sunday Boston Herald* (1886–1892). Starting in the mid-1870s she spent summers in London and the rest of the year in Boston. She developed close friendships with leading literary figures in the United States, in Great Britain, and on the continent.
- 5 The Sharps left Rome at the end of February. According to Elizabeth, the main reason for shortening their stay was not social distractions, but her husband's health: "There we saw a few friends — in particular Robert Hichens who was also wintering there; but my husband did not feel strong enough for any social effort (*Memoir*, pp. 393–94).
- 6 *Modern Italian Poets: Essays and Versions* (1887).
- 7 Lauretta Stedman was the granddaughter of E. C. Stedman.
- 8 Robert Underwood Johnson (1853–1937) was Associate Editor of *The Century Illustrated Magazine* from 1881–1909 and Editor from 1909–1913. Sharp had proposed several articles to him and the magazine's Editor, Richard Watson Gilder, when they met in New York in December. Johnson was also a poet (his works include *The Winter Hoar and Other Poems* (1892); *Songs of Liberty and Other Poems* (1902); *Poems of War and Peace* (1916); *Poems of the Lighter Touch* (1930)), and he served as American Ambassador to Rome in 1920–1921.
- 9 Sharp's Sicily articles appeared posthumously in the *Century* as follows: "The Garden of the Sun," Part I in March, 1906, Part II in April, 1906, and "Route-Notes in Sicily" (illustrated) in May, 1906. These two articles and a

- third ("The Portraits of Keats: With Special Reference to Those by Severn," February, 1906) resulted from Sharp's meeting with Gilder and Johnson.
- 10 Elizabeth Sharp reprinted the first paragraph of this letter in the *Memoir* (p. 394).
- 11 William Blake's *Songs of Innocence* (Portland, ME: Thomas Mosher, 1903).
- 12 Mosher chose *The Isle of Dreams* as the title of this book which he published later in 1905.
- 13 The next volume of Fiona Macleod poems Mosher published was *The Hour of Beauty* in 1907. Its contents are the same as the section entitled "The Hour of Beauty" in the 1907 edition of *From the Hills of Dream* published by William Heinemann in London.
- 14 Although Mosher did not publish a volume entitled *The Sunset of Old Tales* or *Orpheus and Oisin*, the volume of Fiona Macleod tales published by Tauchnitz in Leipzig in 1905 was titled *The Sunset of Old Tales*.
- 15 Mosher published *The Wayfarer* as a separate volume in 1906. It was part of a three-volume set (along with *The Distant Country & Other Prose Poems*, 1907, and *Three Legends of the Christ Child*, 1908) that Mosher called the "Ideal Series of Little Masterpieces" which were designed to be brought together in a cabinet-style box.
- 16 When he met Mosher in Boston, Sharp must have told him he and Fiona were lovers since that would explain their frequent, furtive meetings and her allusiveness. What might someday be made "still clearer" to Mosher was simply that Sharp was the woman he claimed to love.
- 17 Sharp composed this letter in Ventnor and sent it to Edinburgh where Mary typed it. The text from "In great haste" through to the signature are in Mary's Fiona script.
- 18 Born in 1846, William John Robertson was best known for his *A Century of French Verse: Brief Biographical and Critical Notices of Thirty-Three French Poets of the Nineteenth Century with Experimental Translations from their Poems* (London: A. D. Innes, 1895). He also published several books on French grammar and, in 1896, a *High School History of Greece and Rome*. During their dinner before Sharp left London, they must have shared their fondness for expensive cigars since Robertson had a box of 100 "valuable Indian cheroots" sent to Sharp in Edinburgh. Given Sharp's humorous efforts to Gallicize Robertson's name, they must have also shared an interest in the Gaelic west of Scotland. Since Sharp knew and admired French poetry,

especially Provençal poetry, they had a good deal in common though this is the first mention of Robertson I have found among Sharp's acquaintances.

- 19 After spending the last two weeks of March on the Isle of Wight, Sharp went first to London and then on to Edinburgh to visit his mother before leaving with his sister Mary for Oban and the small Isle of Lismore in Loch Linnhe.
- 20 The book was Garnett's *William Shakespeare, Pedagogue and Poacher, A Drama* (London: John Lane, The Bodley Head Press, 1904).
- 21 Elizabeth reprinted a slightly altered version of this letter in the *Memoir* (pp. 397–98). She wrote in pencil at the top of the manuscript: Lismore | April 19, 1905. Sharp and his sister Mary had traveled by train to Glasgow and then northwest to Oban. From the Port of Appin north of Oban they crossed to the island of Lismore where they stayed about a week with Mr. and Mrs. MacCaskill who occupied one of the island's few houses on its northern tip. A native Gaelic speaker, MacCaskill was the source of many mysterious tales and superstitions that found their way into the Fiona Macleod writings.
- 22 Macleod's "The Tribe of Plover," "The Clans of Grass," and "The Wild Apple" appeared in *Where the Forest Murmurs: Nature Essays* (London: George Newnes, Ltd., 1906) which was published after Sharp's death.
- 23 County Ross and Cromarty extends from the east to the west coast of North Scotland and includes the Outer Hebrides.
- 24 Ben Nevis, the highest peak in Great Britain, overlooks the loch which contains Lismore.
- 25 Duror is a fishing village seventeen miles northeast of Oban.
- 26 Paul Fort (1872–1960) was a French poet who, in 1905, founded and edited *Vers et Prose*, a literary review associated with Valéry. Jean Moréas (1856–1910) was a French poet who founded the periodical *La Symboliste* in 1886 and played a leading role in the French Symbolist Movement. Emile Verhaeren (1855–1916) was a Belgian poet who wrote in French. René François Armand (1839–1907), a Parnassian poet, won the Nobel Prize for literature in 1901. Jules Claretie (1840–1913) was a journalist, critic, and chronicler.
- 27 Elizabeth said this postcard was sent from Oban. Since it describes an event on Lismore, Sharp wrote it on the island and mailed it when he and Mary spent the night in Oban after leaving the island

- 28 Short for: verbum sat sapienti est ("a word to the wise is sufficient").
- 29 The man Sharp met on the train was Ralph Copeland, the Astronomer Royal of Scotland. Appointed to this position in 1889, he worked first as the Director of the Calton Hill Observatory in Edinburgh and then of the new observatory on Blackford Hill, Edinburgh when it opened in 1896. Copeland traveled widely to observe astronomical events, and his discoveries earned him a world-wide reputation. Seven of the galaxies in the constellation Leo form the "Copeland Septet." Mount Copeland in northwest Canada was named for him as was Copeland Ridge and nearby Copeland Creek. Born in 1837, he was sixty-eight years old when he and Sharp lunched together on the train. Both men would be dead by year's end, Copeland in October and Sharp in December.
- 30 In the *Memoir*, Elizabeth printed this paragraph and the next as a separate letter dated April 24. They are, in fact, the concluding paragraphs of this manuscript letter which E. A. S. dated in pencil as April 25. She did not include the preceding paragraphs in the *Memoir*. The sequence suggests Sharp and Mary left Lismore on the 24th, spent the night in Oban, and took the Oban/Glasgow train on the 25th.
- 31 Sharp's "The Portraits of Keats with Special Reference to Those by Severn," *Century Illustrated Magazine*, 71 (February, 1906), 535–51. See Sharp's letters *To Robert Underwood Johnson, February 5, [1905]* (Volume 3) and *To Richard Watson Gilder, February 5, 1905* (Volume 3).
- 32 William Hilton (1786–1839) was an English portrait and history painter who trained at the Royal Academy School and eventually became Keeper of the Royal Academy. Successful in his lifetime with huge history paintings in the "Grand Manner", he is best known today for his portraits of the poets John Keats and John Clare. He, Joseph Severn, and Benjamin Haydon (1786–1846) were close friends of Keats. Haydon also specialized in grand historical pictures and painted some portraits, most notably of William Wordsworth.
- 33 After studying briefly at Keio University in Tokyo, Yone Noguchi (1875–1947) went to San Francisco in 1893 and met Joaquin Miller who encouraged him to become a poet and introduced him to other San Francisco Bay writers. He published two books of poetry in 1897: *Seen & Unseen, or, Monologues of a Homeless Snail* and *The Voice of the Valley*. He moved to New York in 1900 and, in 1902, to London where he self-published and promoted a third book of poetry, *From the Eastern Sea* (1903), and interacted with many leading literary figures: William Michael Rossetti, Laurence Binyon, William Butler Yeats, Thomas Hardy, Laurence Housman, and Arthur Symons. An admirer of the Fiona Macleod poetry,

Noguchi sent her a copy of *From the Eastern Sea* which she acknowledged in this letter. Noguchi's presence in England explains Sharp's putting her "at sea" when she wrote the letter. Elizabeth says Noguchi sent Fiona a copy of "his subsequent book *The Summer Cloud*, a collection of short prose poems, which he explained in his note of presentation: 'In fact I had been reading your prose poems, *The Silence of Amor*, and wished I could write such pieces myself. And here is the result.'" Noguchi's return to New York before *The Summer Cloud* was published in 1906 may explain why he had not heard Fiona was Sharp and no longer living. Years later Noguchi returned to Japan and avidly supported in the thirties Japan's expansionist and militaristic regimes.

- 34 Elizabeth wrote in pencil at the top of the manuscript the date and "Neuernahr" and bracketed sections to include in the *Memoir* (pp. 400–02) where she also said the cold weather on Lismore "proved so disastrous" that her "husband was ordered to Neuernahr for special treatment". Sharp spent five weeks in London after his return from Lismore working on the article on Keats' portraits before leaving on June 10 or 11 for Bad Neuernahr where he stayed four weeks.
- 35 A section of the manuscript is missing here.
- 36 Another section of the manuscript is missing here.
- 37 Elizabeth printed part of this letter in the *Memoir* following a portion of the previous letter identifying it only as "Monday evening." I have not located the manuscript. It could have been written on either Monday the 19th or the 26th, but its fresh impressions of the Villa and its surroundings suggest the former. The letter shows a surprisingly child-friendly aspect of Sharp's personality as it was clearly intended to be read to Marjorie who Elizabeth identified as "the little daughter of our friends, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Tomson." Elizabeth sent the letter on to the Tomsons after using it for the *Memoir*.
- 38 According to Elizabeth, this letter was written in Neuenahr (*Memoir*, pp. 399–400).
- 39 Abrahamina Arnolda Louise 'Bramine' Hubrecht (Donders) (Grandmont) (1855–1913).
- 40 The manuscript ends here, and the lines that follow are included in the *Memoir* (p. 402).
- 41 The last section of the manuscript is missing.

- 42 Someone, perhaps Severn, wrote "Sunday 16: Jany" at the top of the manuscript letter. This is clearly a mistake for "July".
- 43 Nigel Severn was the son of Walter Severn (1830–1904), a well-known and accomplished artist, and the grandson of Joseph Severn (1793–1879), a portraitist and friend of Keats who accompanied him to Rome and stayed with him until he died. In the *Memoir* (p. 168), Elizabeth said Walter Severn gave Sharp access to his father's papers in 1889 or 1890 and asked him to write a biography which became *The Life and Letters of Joseph Severn* (London: Sampson Lowe, Marston & Co., 1892). In "Writing Keats's Last Days: Severn, Sharp, and Romantic biography" (*Studies in Romanticism*, March 22, 2003), Grant F. Scott corrected Elizabeth's dates: "The project was initiated as many as five years before, in the summer of 1884. In a letter of 23 July 1884, Walter Severn responded to several Sharp's queries and mentioned Ruskin's agreement to contribute to the biography. In a later letter to Sharp, dated 19 November 1887, he also mentioned the 'coming Life of my Father.'"
- 44 Having received Sharp's manuscript of the Keats article and photocopies of two portraits of Keats, Robert Underwood Johnson had asked for revisions in the manuscript and wondered if Sharp could obtain photographs of other portraits of Keats. It turned out that Nigel Severn did have two other portraits and was willing to have them photographed.
- 45 Severn told Sharp he had a death mask that he would like Sharp to identify.
- 46 "July" and "1905" have been inserted in the manuscript letter.
- 47 Frederick Hollyer (1838–1933) was an English photographer and engraver known for his photographic reproductions of paintings and drawings, particularly those of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, and for portraits of literary and artistic figures of late Victorian and Edwardian London. Under the patronage of painter and sculptor Frederic Leighton, he began photographing paintings and drawings in the 1870s.
- 48 The friends may have been R. Murray Gilchrist and his partner, George Garfitt, who lived in Derbyshire and sometimes met Sharp in York.
- 49 The popular poet and novelist John Masefield (1878–1967) succeeded Robert Bridges as Poet Laureate in 1930. Among his works are *Salt Water Ballads* (1904); *The Everlasting Mercy* (1911); *The Widow in the Bye Street* (1912); and the autobiography *In the Mill* (1941). A *Mainsail Haul*, a collection of stories, was published in 1905.

- 50 Sharp wrote this letter in Nairn and sent it to Mary in Edinburgh to be transcribed. He placed Fiona in “the northern highlands” though not specifically in Nairn.
- 51 In 2013, currency of this amount would be at least £1500.
- 52 Here, Sharp conflated Fiona’s plans with his own. In the next sentence he had Fiona express relief that he has recovered from his “recent and prolonged illness.” Then she expresses her pleasure in the expectation that she will see much of Sharp in the fall and winter in France and Italy. This merging of William and Fiona geographically lends support to the assumption that Sharp told Mosher when they met in Boston the previous December that he and Fiona were, if not lovers, “dear friends.” It also indicates Sharp was not worried that Mosher would show up in France or Sicily with the expectation of meeting Fiona.
- 53 I have been unable to identify this individual.
- 54 According to E. A. S., her husband wrote and posted each year for his birthday a letter from W. S. to F. M. and a letter from F. M. to W. S. Aside from these two, I have seen only one other — a letter to W. S. from F. M. on September 12, 1897.
- 55 “To Fiona Macleod | Hills of Dreams | (by the Land under the Wave).”
- 56 “The Green World.”
- 57 “My dear twin.”
- 58 This poem was written between 1900 and 1905, and appeared in *The Hour of Beauty, Songs and Poems* (London: Thomas Mosher, 1907). See the “Life” section of this chapter for the poem and its implications.
- 59 In printing this letter, Elizabeth said it was addressed to an unknown friend. It responds to a letter from an unidentified sender, who praised and expressed an affinity with Fiona Macleod.
- 60 Helen Hopekirk (1856–1945) was an American pianist and composer who, in 1905, published *Seventy Scottish Songs* (Boston: Oliver Ditson and Company).
- 61 For many years Sharp had written a letter to Stedman in late September for him to receive on his birthday, October 8. This was the last of those birthday letters.
- 62 This is the last of many letters Sharp wrote for Stedman to receive on his birthday, October 8. Sharp had written to Stedman on July 30 to say he

had just received a letter from Thomas Janvier, a mutual friend in New York, conveying the sad news that Stedman's wife had died. The Stedmans entertained the Sharps in their home north of New York the previous November. Stedman died in January 1908.

- 63 Millicent Sutherland-Leveson-Gower, The Duchess of Sutherland (1867–1955) was a society hostess, social reformer, author, editor, journalist, and playwright. In 1884, on her seventeenth birthday, she was married to Lord Cromartie Sutherland-Leveson-Gower, Marquess of Stafford, eldest son and heir of the 3rd Duke of Sutherland, who inherited the Duchy of Sutherland on his father's death in 1892. An enthusiastic reader of the Fiona Macleod's writings, she had sent Fiona a copy of her collection of short stories, *The Winds of the World: Seven Love Stories* (London: William Heineman, 1902).
- 64 This poem, entitled "In the Night," first appeared in *From the Hills of Dream: Threnodies, Songs and Other Poems* (Portland, ME: Thomas Mosher, 1901).
- 65 This letter survives in three places: Sharp's draft written on pages torn from a notebook that contain several notes Mary made to herself while copying it into the Fiona Macleod handwriting (Sharp Collection, National Library of Scotland), Mary's faithful and beautifully written copy that was sent to Hopekirk (Pierpont Morgan Library), and excerpts from the letter Elizabeth included in the *Memoir* (pp. 407–09) which were copied from Sharp's draft.
- 66 Fiona's plans for the fall and winter reflect those of the Sharps, though they were able to go only as far as Sicily. They also demonstrate Sharp, as Fiona, gradually becoming reconciled ("turning westward") to his waning health and the likelihood of an early death. After the turn of the century, as Elizabeth observed in the *Memoir* (pp. 423–24), the Fiona Macleod "literary expression" became increasingly intermingled with that of William Sharp.
- 67 This book was published as *Where the Forest Murmurs: Nature Essays* (London: George Newnes, Ltd., 1906).
- 68 This sentence is from a letter to Catherine Janvier from Sharp which Catherine in turn quoted in a letter to Roselle Lathrop Shields on February 8, 1905. The woman whose love saved Sharp was Mrs. Shields. In her *Memoir*, Elizabeth describes the time they spent together in Greece in the winter of 1904: "With Spring sunshine and warmth my husband regained a degree of strength, and it was his chief pleasure to take long rambles on the neighboring hills alone, or with the young American archaeologist, Mrs. Roselle Lathrop Shields, a tireless walker" (p. 378). In her letter to

Shields, Janvier promised to look through her surviving letters from Sharp for references to Shields and send them to her. She had found this single sentence and added "I cannot get at the earlier ones yet." Janvier's letter implies that Sharp had confided to her details of his relationship with and feelings for Shields he had not shared with Elizabeth. Janvier wrote that Sharp's sentence about Shields occurred "In reference to our, your and mine, first meeting." Where and when Janvier and Shields first met is unknown, but their first meeting probably occurred in London. For a detailed discussion of Janvier's letter to Shields, see Appendix 2.

- 69 The Sharps had decided before leaving Florence for Sicily to give up their plans for North Africa (partly because of his ill health and partly for lack of finances) and spend a few months on the French Riviera where they hoped to meet Patrick Geddes.
- 70 Since the Sharps left Taormina for Maniace on November 27, they must have arrived in Taormina on or about November 20. This card was written from Florence just as they were about to leave the Lee-Hamiltons for Sicily.
- 71 Since the Sharps were in Italy in November, Mary Sharp may have forwarded the catalogue and books to Sharp to draft a letter of acknowledgement, or, more likely, Mary herself acknowledged them in the Fiona handwriting before forwarding them to Sharp.
- 72 Henry Gilbert (1868–1928) was the first American composition pupil of Edward MacDowell and the first composer of significance to recognize the possibility of an American school of composition springing out of the use of African-American musical compositions. In 1905, he composed the "Comedy Overture on Negro Themes." In the same year, he also published, through the Wa-Wan Press in Newton Center, MA, musical settings of four poems, including one by Fiona Macleod.
- 73 Mrs. Sharp said this letter, like that dated December 8, was written to "a friend." Both letters were written to Roselle Lathrop Shields. Since December 4 was a Monday and since Sharp's diary shows he had been in Maniace since at least December 1, the trip from Taormina to Maniace took place on Monday, November 27. In her February 8, 1906 letter to Mrs. Shields, Catherine Janvier expressed her envy of Mrs. Shields having received several letters from Sharp after he went to Maniace. She says she received none written during the last month of his life though that was clearly not the case. It is the case that Sharp wrote more personally and at greater length to Roselle Shields.
- 74 An Alsatian painter, engraver, and sculptor, Paul Gustave Doré (1833–1883) is best known for his imaginative, dramatic, and often horrific

illustrations. Among his most famous are those of the *Divine Comedy*, *Don Quixote*, Honoré de Balzac's *Contes drolatiques*, the works of François Rabelais, and the *Fables* of Jean de la Fontaine. His best-known painting is *Retreat from Moscow* (1865).

- 75 From the *Memoir* and other correspondence, we know the Sharps spent most of October in Italy (Venice and Florence). In mid-November, they went on to Sicily where they stayed first in Taormina and then, beginning November 27, with Alexander Nelson Hood at Castle Maniace where Sharp died on December 12 and was buried two days later. This letter was written in early December, shortly after the Sharps had taken several modes of transportation up to Maniace, a journey Sharp described in detail in his December 4 letter to Roselle Lathrop Shields. The letter from Yeats to which Sharp was responding was written on November 4 and reached Sharp in Taormina on November 13. Sharp's letter to Yeats was printed in *Letters to Yeats I*, pp. 155–57. It is transcribed here from a copy of the manuscript which was in the possession of Michael B. Yeats and is now in the National Library of Ireland.
- 76 This statement is crossed out in the letter.
- 77 In less than a week, on December 12, Sharp would be dead.
- 78 Sharp's dream of Yeats may have been prompted by the ending of Yeats's poem, "The Song of Wandering Aengus" ("And pluck till time and times are done | The silver apples of the moon, the golden apples of the sun") which appeared first in *The Sketch* on August 4, 1897 where it was called "A Mad Song," and then with the new title in *The Wind among the Reeds* (London: Elkin Mathews, 1899).
- 79 Sharp's diary entry for December 8, 1905 included: "Wrote a long letter to Robert Hichens, also to R.L.S" (*Memoir*, pp. 417–18). Elizabeth said this letter was written to the "same friend" as that of the December 4 letter. The friend to whom both letters are addressed was R. L. S (Roselle Lathrop Shields).
- 80 "It is this sad illness, this 'gout of the pen' that Tourgenev (or Flaubert?) said broke his heart."
- 81 Catherine Janvier said this letter, dated 9 December, a Saturday, was the last she had in Sharp's handwriting. The sentence was preceded, she said, by a brief description of his illness (*The North American Review*, 5 April 1907, p. 731). Sharp died the following Tuesday.
- 82 Catherine Janvier said this letter, written the day before he died, was dictated (*The North American Review*, 5 April 1907, p. 731). Since this letter

and that of December 9 were written in the days immediately preceding Sharp's death, it is odd that she wrote to Roselle Lathrop Shields on February 9, 1906: "It always will be a bitter pain to me that he put off writing to me, so that I have nothing of any account after he went to Maniace. ... How I envy you your four last letters — had I had but one! Well, I feel I know how he longed for his wee "Roseen." How weary he was of many things. It breaks my heart to think of him there — alone — I know the best of care was taken of him, that every comfort was his, but I know that he was "alone," he knew that too, I am sure, that it had to be" (private letter). Perhaps Mrs. Janvier considered her two December letters too short and not "of any account." Alternatively, this letter and that of December 9 may not have been posted in Maniace and not delivered to her until after February 9, 1906. Sharp's letters to Mrs. Shields, unlike those to Mrs Janvier, were more personal and expressive of his feelings. Since Elizabeth included portions of only two of Sharp's four letters to Mrs. Shields from Maniace without identifying the recipient, the other two may have been withheld from her as too personal, perhaps too frank on expressing his love for his "wee Roseen." In writing Sharp was alone when he died, Mrs. Janvier may have been trying to help Mrs. Shields deal with her loss. We know Elizabeth held him in her arms as he died, and Alex Hood was in the room.

- 83 In printing this letter, Elizabeth Sharp stated: "At the last realizing with deep regret that one or two of the friends he cared greatly for would probably feel hurt when they should know of the deception, he left the following note to be sent to each immediately on the disclosure of the secret" (*Memoir*, p. 422). The news of Sharp's death was wired to Edith Rinder in London who sent it to several newspapers which published obituaries. Elizabeth sent Sharp's confessionary note to at least two of his friends (George Russell and W. B. Yeats) in late December after she returned to London where she was staying with Edith and Frank Rinder.
- 84 This note is in Mrs. Sharp's hand on mourning paper. The enclosed note is in Sharp's hand on two sides of a small white card. The cards were written at Chorleywood when the Sharps rented rooms there in the fall of 1899. He was preparing for his death six years before it occurred and trying to help Elizabeth deal with the revelation that her husband was Fiona Macleod.

## Appendix 2

- 1 This letter is now in my possession.
- 2 The title of the book — *The Mews* — has a double meaning: both cats and the alley ways, or mews, behind houses in Victorian London where horses

were housed in stables. Most of those stables have been remodeled into residences. Catherine must have observed the many cats that inhabited the mews. The illustrations in her book dress the cats in many British uniforms and costumes.

- 3 "E" here and in the previous sentence is William Sharp's wife, Elizabeth Amelia Sharp. "M" is probably Mary Sharp, William's youngest sister, who provided the Fiona Macleod handwriting. "P" remains a mystery though it could be Mrs. J. H. Philpot, author of *The Sacred Tree, or the Tree in Religion and Myth* (London: Macmillan, 1897), with whom Sharp had been corresponding.
- 4 The "little article" Catherine Janvier was writing first came to light as a paper she read before the Aberdeen Branch of the Franco-Scottish Society on June 8, 1906. Revised and expanded, it was published as "Fiona Macleod and Her Creator William Sharp" in *The North American Review*, 184/612 (April 5, 1907), 718–32.
- 5 Thomas A. Janvier.



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# About the publishing team

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Alessandra Tosi was the managing editor for this book.

Adèle Kreager performed the copy-editing and proofreading.

Anna Gatti designed the cover using InDesign. The cover was produced in InDesign using Fontin (titles) and Calibri (text body) fonts.

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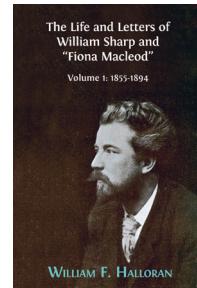
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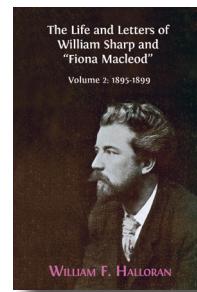


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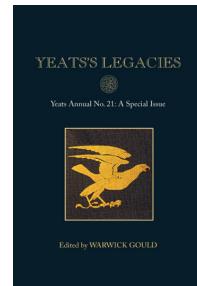


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# The Life and Letters of William Sharp and “Fiona Macleod”

## Volume 3: 1900-1905

WILLIAM F. HALLORAN

*What an achievement! It is a major work. The letters taken together with the excellent introductory sections – so balanced and judicious and informative – what emerges is an amazing picture of William Sharp the man and the writer which explores just how fascinating a figure he is. Clearly a major reassessment is due and this book could make it happen.*

—Andrew Hook, Emeritus Bradley Professor of English and American Literature, Glasgow University

William Sharp (1855-1905) conducted one of the most audacious literary deceptions of his or any time. Sharp was a Scottish poet, novelist, biographer and editor who in 1893 began to write critically and commercially successful books under the name Fiona Macleod. This was far more than just a pseudonym: he corresponded as Macleod, enlisting his sister to provide the handwriting and address, and for more than a decade “Fiona Macleod” duped not only the general public but such literary luminaries as William Butler Yeats and, in America, E. C. Stedman.

Sharp wrote “I feel another self within me now more than ever; it is as if I were possessed by a spirit who must speak out”. This three-volume collection brings together Sharp’s own correspondence – a fascinating trove in its own right, by a Victorian man of letters who was on intimate terms with writers including Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Walter Pater, and George Meredith – and the Fiona Macleod letters, which bring to life Sharp’s intriguing “second self”.

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