The Life and Letters of William Sharp and "Fiona Macleod"

Volume 2: 1895-1899

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ISBN Paperback: 978-1-78374-869-3

ISBN Hardback: 978-1-78374-870-9

ISBN Digital (PDF): 978-1-78374-871-6

ISBN Digital ebook (epub): 978-1-78374-872-3

ISBN Digital ebook (mobi): 978-1-78374-873-0

ISBN Digital (XML): 978-1-78374-874-7

DOI: 10.11647/OBP.0196

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Cover design: Anna Gatti.

Chapter Fifteen

Life: July–December, 1896

Less than three weeks after Sharp returned to London from Edinburgh in early July, he and Elizabeth left for a long summer holiday in the north. Before leaving, Sharp asked his friend Murray Gilchrist to join them for a few days on the Northumberland coast. In mid-letter, he changed course and asked Gilchrist if it would be convenient for him and Elizabeth to spend a few days with Gilchrist's mother at Cartledge, her home in Derbyshire. Neither alternative materialized. They spent the night of July 20 at the Station Hotel in York and went on to Bamborough, a coastal village in Northumberland. After a week of "sea bathing," as Elizabeth described it, they crossed to "the little Holy Isle of the Eastern Shores, Lindisfarne, Iona's sister." During the years he was writing as Fiona Macleod, Elizabeth noted, her husband "was usually in a highly wrought condition of restlessness, so that he could not long remain contentedly anywhere" (*Memoir*, p. 266). After two weeks on Lindisfarne, they went to Edinburgh, and, after a few days there, left for Dunoon, a seaside resort town on the Firth of Clyde west of Glasgow, to be near Sharp's mother and sisters who were there on holiday.

In Bamborough, in late July, Sharp wrote a long letter to John Macleay of *The Highland News* in which he tried to dispel rumors he was Fiona.

> I confess I share to some degree in Miss Macleod's annoyance in this persistent disbelief in her personality to which you allude — as, indeed, to some extent in her resentment against the impertinence of those persons who try to intrude upon her privacy or seek to ascertain what for good reasons of her own she does not wish made public. […] Did you not see the explicit statement I caused to be inserted in the "Glasgow Evening News," & elsewhere (because of one of these perverse misstatements) to the effect that "Miss Fiona Macleod is not Mr. William Sharp; Miss

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> Fiona Macleod is not Mrs. William Sharp; and that Miss Fiona Macleod is — Miss Fiona Macleod." Surely that ought to have settled the matter: for it is scarcely likely, I imagine, that I should put forth so explicit a statement were it not literally true. I trust, therefore, that you will do your best at any time to counteract all other misstatements.

Near the close of this letter, Sharp mentioned that he might be able to go north to Inverness in early October and, if so, he "might perhaps say something on, say, 'The Celtic Spirit.'" Macleay took that possibility seriously and informed Sharp he was working with others to find a venue for Sharp's lecture, which would be welcomed by many in Inverness. In Edinburgh, on his way to Dunoon, Sharp quashed the idea in a letter to Macleay. He said he had received a letter from his doctor forbidding him from lecturing "on any condition whatever, this year at any rate." Sharp thanked Macleay and others who would have given him a friendly welcome, and asked to defer his address till the spring, or even the autumn, when Inverness would host the Mod, a large annual gathering of Celtic enthusiasts which still moves from city to city in Scotland.

When Sharp arrived in Dunoon on August 15, he saw the August 14 issue of *The Highland News*, which contained a lead article by John Macleay titled "Mystery! Mystery! All in a Celtic Haze." Hoping to attract attention and increase readership and disregarding Sharp's assertions, Macleay described an article in *The Glasgow Evening News* that asserted Fiona Macleod was William Sharp. This unexpected development produced a flurry of letters from Sharp to Macleay during the next week — nearly one per day — in which he indignantly denied he was Fiona and tried, with expressions of camaraderie and implied threats of legal action, to dissuade Macleay from pursuing the issue further. Intended as an interlude of rest and relaxation, the visit with his family in Dunoon turned stressful as Sharp worried Macleay was intent on discovering and broadcasting the truth. He summoned all his verbal skills in a hasty effort to preserve the fiction and thus prevent both embarrassment and erosion of his income. He had received a letter from Fiona which expressed "deep resentment" against the writers of *The Glasgow Evening News*. She was especially insulted by the cruel & inexcusable phrase: "I hear again & again that she is a greater fraud than Macpherson of Ossianic fame." She would

"ignore all unwarrantable interference, conjecture, & paragraphic impertinence." Macleay's initial praise of the Fiona writings and support for the cause of Scottish Celticism was a welcome stimulus for the sale of the Fiona books in Scotland. Now Macleay's pursuit of Fiona's identity, unless handled properly, threatened a public debacle. By the end of the week, Sharp had derailed Macleay's probes and decided that even this conflict had the beneficial effect of focusing more attention on Fiona and her writings.

On Saturday, August 22, the Sharps took his mother to Edinburgh, stayed for only two days, and left again on Monday with Sharp's sister Mary for Tigh-Na-Bruaich, a small village west of Glasgow on the Kyles of Bute. From there, in early September, William and Elizabeth paid a brief visit to Inverness, where they met Macleay, and went on to see the Falls of Lora. In mid-September, Elizabeth returned to London and her work as art reviewer for the *Glasgow Herald*. William and his sister took the ferry across Loch Fyne to Tarbert where Edith and Frank Rinder were vacationing. Elizabeth reproduced (*Memoir*, pp. 166–67) a section of a letter Sharp wrote to her from Tigh-Na-Bruaich, and sections of two letters he wrote from Tarbert, one on September 23 and one on September 26. His writing was going well, but he was not well enough to carry out his plan to go off by himself in the Hebrides.

Sharp found it easier to write as Fiona Macleod when Edith Rinder was nearby, and a burst of creativity in Tarbert produced many pseudonymous stories, poems, and letters. On September 23 he told Elizabeth in a letter he had written "the long-awaited 'Rune of the Passion of Women' the companion piece in a sense to the 'Chant of Women' in *Pharais*." On September 26 he said he had finished what had stirred him "so unspeakably, namely the third and concluding 'Rune of the Sorrow of Women.'" That rune, he said, had tired him "in the preliminary excitement and in the strange semi-conscious fever of composition." All three runes appeared in *From the Hills of Dream* where he said he did not use the word "Rune" in "its ancient or exact significance, but rather as a suitable analogue for "Chant." Occasionally, he wrote, they have "something of the significance of the old Ru'n, meaning a mystery, or the more or less occult expression of mystery." The three runes express in detail the travails of women who suffer at the hands of men. Recalling Sharp's early poem called "Motherhood," they focus particularly on the

burden of bearing children and then being cast aside for younger women. The runes deserve attention for the varied nuances of Sharp's critique of the repression of women. Equally interesting is his description of the composition process in his letter to Elizabeth:

> In a vague way not only you, Mona, Edith and others swam into my brain, but I have never so absolutely felt the woman-soul within me: it was as though in some subtle way the soul of Woman breathed into my brain — and I feel vaguely as if I had given partial expression at least to the inarticulate voice of a myriad women who suffer in one or other of the triple ways of sorrow.

Images of breath entering the brain aside, Sharp felt like he was a woman when he wrote as Fiona Macleod, but his propensity to identify with women began long before he began to write and publish as a woman. Like Mona Caird, Sharp was a strong advocate for the rights of women. He projected himself into the minds of three women he knew well (Elizabeth, Mona, and especially Edith), identified qualities he shared with them, and coalesced those qualities into a fourth woman he introduced to the world as Fiona Macleod who was, herself, an advocate of women's rights.

A letter he wrote to W. B. Yeats from Tarbert exemplified his effort to project that woman, and it also opened a lengthy and complicated relationship between the Irish poet and Sharp, as himself and as Fiona. In an August 25 letter to Sharp from Tillyra Castle, Edward Martin's home in western Ireland, Yeats described a recent vision:

> I invoked one night the spirits of the moon & and saw between sleep & waking a beautiful woman firing an arrow among the stars. That night she appeared to [Arthur] Symons who is staying here, & so impressed him that he wrote a poem to her, the only one he ever wrote to a dream, calling her the fountain of all song or some such phrase. She was the symbolic Diana (*Collected Letters II*, pp. 47–49).

A letter Yeats wrote to Fiona the previous day has not surfaced, but it also described his archer vision. At Tarbert in mid-September Sharp composed Fiona's response, which began with an apology for "unforeseen circumstances" that prevented her from writing sooner. She began a letter earlier, before receiving Yeats's August letter, which described her archer vision, but

> Alas, a long pencilled note (partly apropos of your vision of the woman shooting arrows, and of the strange coincidence of something of the same kind on my own part) has long since been devoured by a too voracious or too trustful gull — for a sudden gust of wind blew the quarto-sheet from off the deck of the small yacht wherein I and my dear friend and confrère of whom you know were sailing, off Skye.

Sharp's goal was to convince Yeats of Fiona's visionary compacity, and he made further use of the archer vision by tacking it to the end of a Fiona story he had finished earlier called "The Last Fantasy of James Achanna."

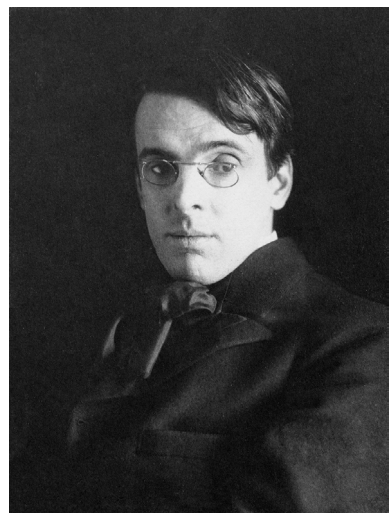

Fig. 8. William Butler Yeats (1865–1939). Photograph by Alice Boughton (1903), Wikimedia, Public Domain, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Yeats_Boughton.jpg#/media/File:Yeats_Boughton.jpg

The story begins in the authorial voice of Fiona, who says she will tell a story she heard from a fisherman named Coll McColl. In the story, a woman who is married falls in love with another man but finally chooses to remain with her husband. It would kill him to choose otherwise, and, not surprisingly, the body of the spurned lover is found several days later. To this depressing story he attached two archer visions, and changed the name of the story to "The Archer." On the night the dead body was found, Coll McColl saw "a tall shadowy woman" draw "a great bow" and shoot an arrow through the air, which pierced the

heart of a fawn. He believes "the fawn was the poor suffering heart of Love" (or the spurned lover) and the "Archer was the great Shadowy Archer that hunts among the stars." The next night, Coll saw a woman "shooting arrow after arrow against the stars." Encouraged by Yeats, Arthur Symons, editor of *The Savoy*, had asked Fiona to submit a story for publication. Sharp told Elizabeth in a letter of September 23 that he had "done the *Savoy* story 'The Archer' (about 4,500 words)," and shortly thereafter he sent it to *The Savoy*. Symons was staying with Yeats at Edward Martin's Tillyra Castle in late August and September, and he too had a dream about an archer shooting arrows at the sun. It was so vivid he composed a poem about it. Sharp assumed correctly Symons would mention Fiona's archer story to Yeats when they returned to London in early October. Yeats decided Fiona could not have heard about his vision before she wrote "The Archer," and that was enough to convince him that Fiona had visionary powers.

In the last paragraph of the Fiona letter to Yeats, Sharp further burnished her visionary powers by recounting yet another vision:

> I had a strange vision the other day, wherein I saw the figure of a gigantic woman sleeping on the green hills of Ireland. As I watched, the sun waned, and the dark came, and the stars began to fall. They fell one by one, and each fell into the woman — and lo, of a sudden, all was wan running water, and the drowned stars and the transmuted woman passed from my seeing. This was a waking dream, an open vision.

Fiona first claims not to know what it means and then suggests a meaning:

> I realise that something of tremendous moment is being matured just now. We are on the verge of vitally important developments. And all the heart, all the brain, of the Celtic races shall be stirred. There is a shadow of mighty changes. Myself I believe that new spirits have been embodied among us. And some of the old have come back. We shall perish, you and I and all who fight under the "Lifting of the Sunbeam" — but we shall pioneer a wonderful marvelous new life for humanity.

Sharp was not only pressing Fiona's supposed visionary powers. He knew this forecast of a new life for humanity arising from the spiritualist heart of the Celtic revival in Ireland and Scotland would bring Fiona perfectly in line with Yeats's aspirations.

Sharp incorporated another stratagem in the Fiona letter. She was sailing off Skye with "my dear friend and confrère of whom you know." That good friend, clearly William Sharp, has been with her during "much sailing about and faring in remote places," and he has participated in the "work we are doing, and putting together the volume of verse." The volume of verse is *From the Hills of Dream: Mountain Songs and Island Runes* which was published in Edinburgh by Patrick Geddes and Colleagues in November 1896. When he composed the Fiona letter, Sharp and his sister Mary were in Tarbert. It is unique in that two manuscripts survive: Sharp's draft is in the National Library of Scotland, and Mary's copy (in the Fiona Macleod handwriting) is in the Beinecke Library at Yale University. In Sharp's draft, he first wrote "our" when referring to the volume of poetry, but crossed this out and replaced it with "my own book of verse." Mary copied "my own book of verse," but in the letter Yeats received, there is a caret after "my," and "(our)" is written above the line in Sharp's hand and then lightly crossed through. He was signaling his ambivalence about how much responsibility to claim for the poems themselves as well as the "putting together."

Yeats had become a friend of Sharp, but he was interested in the writings of Fiona Macleod, not those signed William Sharp. Sharp's desire for acceptance as a colleague in the Celtic Revival was frustrated since he could not claim credit for the poetry and prose fiction he was contributing to the movement. The Fiona letter was brilliantly contrived to convince Yeats he had found in Fiona a fitting companion in the Celtic cause. It also featured Sharp as an enabler of the Fiona writings, and introduced the possibility of some collaboration. Yeats accepted Fiona as a real person in his review of *From the Hills of Dream* in *The Bookman* of December 1896, and his reply in January 1897 to the September Fiona letter. Through 1896, and well into 1897, Yeats accepted the fiction Sharp had constructed. Eventually, he would tell Yeats she was not a separate person, but a secondary personality of William Sharp, who was the author of the Fiona writings.

Sharp left Tarbert on October 2, spent that night at the Caledonian Station Hotel in Glasgow, continued to Edinburgh and then to London. Before leaving Tarbert, he decided his difficulties with Stone and Kimball were such that he should go to New York to try to recover the money promised for works the firm had published or promised to publish.

He asked Murray Gilchrist to accompany him to America, both for the sake of Gilchrist's health, and for "friendship's sake." Gilchrist declined this unexpected invitation, and Sharp wrote from London on October 18 to say he wanted to see Gilchrist soon after he returned from New York in December. Also, before leaving Tarbert, Sharp wrote one of his exuberant birthday letters to E. C. Stedman, in which he announced his intention to come to New York in early November. After three weeks in London, Sharp went to Southampton on October 22 and sailed from there to New York the next day.

He arrived in New York aboard the "Augusta Victoria" of the Hamburg American line on Saturday, October 31, where he saw "the streets thronged with over two million people" in the weekend before the fiercely contested Presidential election in which the Republican Party candidate William McKinley defeated the Democratic Party candidate William Jennings Bryan. Since no business could be done until the following Wednesday, he crossed the Hudson River to spend a few days with his friend Henry Mills Alden, editor of *Harper's Magazine*. On Sunday, he described the pre-election scene to his wife:

> New York itself is at fever heat. I have never seen such a sight as yesterday. The whole enormous city was a mass of flags and innumerable Republican and Democratic insignia. The whole business quarter made a gigantic parade that took 7 hours in its passage — and the businessmen alone amounted to over 100,000. Everyone — as indeed not only America but Great Britain and all Europe — is now looking eagerly for the final word on Tuesday night (*Memoir*, pp. 174–75).

Following McKinley's defeat of Bryan, business resumed, and Sharp returned to the city where E. C. Stedman's son Arthur had arranged for him to stay as a temporary member at the Century Club.

Before leaving London, Sharp threatened lawsuits against Stone and Kimball and armed himself with power of attorney from Fiona Macleod so he could act on her behalf as well as his own. One wonders who drew up a document that authorized one aspect of Sharp's personality to act for the other. During his week in the city, however, Kimball succeeded in charming Sharp into submission. He described Herbert Stone's loss of interest in the firm, the withdrawal of financial support by Stone's father, Kimball's acquisition of the firm's stock of bound volumes, sheets, and plates, and his move of the enterprise to New York, where he

was determined to make a success of it. The firm remained in perilous condition, but Kimball managed a small check for Sharp to take back to Fiona Macleod. On Friday November 13 Sharp thanked Kimball for his hospitality and expressed his hope that Kimball would soon visit London, where his kindnesses would be repaid. His faith in Kimball had been rekindled to the extent that, ever optimistic, he proposed a book for him to publish the following year. When Sharp boarded the Fürst Bismarck on Saturday November 14 for his return to London, he was satisfied with the results of his American trip.

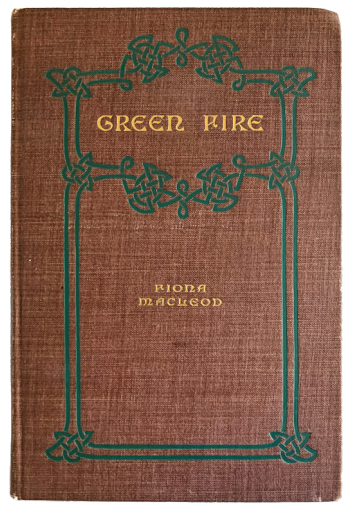

Fig. 9. The first American edition of Fiona MacLeod's *Green Fire. A Romance* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1896). Photograph by William F. Halloran (2019).

During his absence, Archibald Constable and Co. in London, and Harpers and Brothers in New York published Fiona Macleod's *Green Fire: A Romance*. The first half of the novel takes place in Celtic Brittany, and the second on a remote island near Skye in the Hebrides. The two parts are held together by the love of Alan de Kerival for his beautiful cousin Ynys de Kerival. When Ynys' father kills Alan's father in a duel, the two realize they cannot remain together in Brittany and escape to the Hebridean island where they both have family roots and where the second half of the romance, "The Herdsman," takes place. Years later, Sharp rewrote

the Hebridean section and published it separately in Fiona Macleod's *The Dominion of Dreams*. Before he died in 1905, he asked Elizabeth to promise she would never reissue *Green Fire* in its entirety. In fulfilling that promise, she said Sharp thought only the second "Herdsman" section was produced by the Fiona impetus, while the first — "The Birds of Angus Ogue" — was the work of William Sharp.

While it is true that the first half of the romance sounds more like Sharp and the second, set in the Hebrides and focusing on a deeply held folk belief of the native Gaels, sounds more like Fiona, a closer look at the two sections reveals a deeper reason for suppressing the Brittany section of the romance. While studying in Paris, Alan dreamed of Ynys with "ever deepening joy and wonder." She was his "real life; he lived in her, for her, because of her [...] she was his strength, his inspiration." When Alan returned to Brittany, Ynys saw him as "the fairest and comeliest of men," and when Alan turned

> the longing of his eyes upon Ynys he wondered if anywhere upon the green earth moved aught so sweet and winsome, if anywhere in the green world was another woman so beautiful in body, mind, and spirit as Ynys — Ynys the Dark, as the peasants call her, though Ynys of the dusky hair and hazel-green eyes would have been truer of her whom Alan de Kerival loved. [...] there was but one woman in the world, but one Dream, and her name was Ynys.

Alan was a poet, and Ynys "was the living poem who inspired all that was best in life, all that was fervent in his brain." Beyond that, recalling Sharp's fascination with women, it was Ynys who gave Alan his "sense of womanhood, [...] In her, he recognized the symbol as well as the individual." She was "his magic; the light of their love was upon everything: everywhere he found synonyms and analogues of Ynys. Deeply as he loved beauty, he had learned to love it far more keenly and understandingly, because of her." Recalling Sharp's early poem "Motherhood," Alan, through his love for her, "had come to understand the supreme hope of our human life in the mystery of motherhood." Ynys "was at once a child of nature, a beautiful pagan, a daughter of the sun; was at once this and a soul alive with the spiritual life. [...] Indeed, the mysticism which was part of the spiritual inheritance came with her northern strain that was one of the deep bonds which united them."

In Alan, Ynys "had found all that her heart craved," but she had found that "nearly too late." While Alan was in Paris, Ynys was "formally betrothed" to Andrik, a friend of her childhood, and in Brittany a betrothal was "almost as binding as marriage." Ynys asserted that "betrothal or no betrothal" she belonged only to Alan: "How could she help the accident by which she had cared for Andrik before she loved Alan." She still cared for Andrik, but what she felt for him paled in comparison to her love of Alan. She was the flame that lit his torch. Even if forced to marry Andrik, she would still love only Alan. "Affection, the deepest affection, is one thing; the love of man and woman" as they knew it was "a thing apart."

The only way they could escape the betrothal and build a life together was to board a ship and sail to the Hebrides, where their love prevailed, despite further complications arising from the case of mistaken identity that became the story of the Herdsman. Those complications caused Alan to slip in and out of depression, "a melancholy from which not even the love of Ynys would arouse him." To ward off that depression, he dwelt upon the "depth and passion" of his love for Ynys,

> upon the mystery and wonder of that coming life which was theirs and yet was not of them, itself already no more than an unrisen wave or an unbloomed flower, but yet as inevitable as they, but dowered with the light which is beyond where the mortal shadows end. Strange, this passion of love for what is not; strange this deep longing of the woman — the longing of the womb, the longing of the heart, the longing of the brain, the longing of the soul — for perpetuation of the life she shares in common with one whom she loves; strange this longing of the man, a longing deep-based in his nature as the love of life or the fear of death, for the gaining from the woman he loves this personal hostage against oblivion. For indeed something of this so commonplace, and yet so divine and mysterious tide of birth, which is forever at the flow upon this green world, is due to an instinctive fear of cessation. The perpetuation of life is the unconscious protest of humanity against the destiny of mortality.

When this abundance of overwrought prose is disentangled, we identify the belief often expressed by Sharp — that the love between a man and a woman reaches its zenith only in the production of children as "hostages against oblivion". When the complexities of the Herdsman section were cleared away, Alan and Ynys boarded a ship and returned to Brittany,

where Alan assumed his rightful position as Lord of the Manor, and the two lovers would produce a child. Unlike the lovers in earlier Fiona Macleod productions, Alan and Ynys find a way to consummate their love and live happily ever after.

The love story of Alan and Ynys is the central theme of both sections of *Green Fire*. As is likely obvious by now, Sharp, disguised as Fiona, was both describing and attempting to reconcile the affectionate love he felt for his wife, and his intense, passionate love for Edith Rinder. In a letter to John Macleay dated late July 1896, Sharp said the book was written "a year or so ago," which would be the late summer and fall of 1895, a period in which he was in agony over the conundrum. The title page carries the following lines below the author's name: "While still I may, I write for you | The love I lived, the dream I knew." The book is dedicated "To Esclarmoundo" followed by the Latin phrase from Ovid, "Nec since te nec tecum vivere possum," which translates: "Neither without nor with you is it possible to live." The book was written for and about Edith Rinder.

Esclarmonde of Foix was a prominent figure associated with Catharism in thirteenth-century southern France. She figured prominently as a heroine in several medieval epic poems, including one titled "Esclarmonde" by Bertran de Born. Esclarmonde was also the heroine of an opera by that name composed by Jules Massenet and first performed in Paris in 1889. Sharp's more immediate source for the name was a Provençal poem, *La Glorie d'Esclarmonde*, edited in both Italian and French by Marius Andre, and published by J. Roumanille in Avignon in 1893. Characteristic of the Provençal tradition, a beautiful woman inspired the poem. Sharp dedicated his novel, which recounts his own love of a beautiful woman, to Edith Rinder — the object of his love, disguised as the heroine of a Provençal love poem, and further protected from discovery by his female pseudonym (Fiona).

Indeed, this interpretation of "Esclarmoundo" finds further support elsewhere. While Sharp was in America, Fiona Macleod's *From the Hills of Dream: Threnodies, Songs and Other Poems* was published. Sharp dedicated it to Arthur Allhallows Geddes, the newborn son of Patrick and Ann Geddes, and Sharp's godson. Arthur was born on Halloween, the day Sharp arrived in New York, and the anniversary of William and Elizabeth Sharp's marriage. The last section of the volume, a

Fig. 10. Poster advertising the premiere of *Esclarmonde*, libretto by Alfred Blau and Louis de Gramodt, music by Jules Massenet's, Paris, May 1889. August François-Marie Gorguet, *Esclarmonde* (1889), chromolithograph. Wikimedia, Public Domain, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Esclarmonde.jpg#/media/File:Esclarmonde.jpg

series of "prose rhythms" called "The Silence of Amor," is dedicated "To Esclarmoundo." Cast in the usual heightened Fiona prose, the dedication exposes the intensity of Sharp's love for Edith and his manic state of mind:

> There is one word never spoken in these estrays of passion and longing. But you, White Flower of these fugitive blossoms, know it: for the rustle of the wings of Amor awakens you at dawn, and in the last quietudes of the dark your heart is his dear haven of dreams.
>
> For, truly, that wandering voice, that twilight-whisper, that breath so dewy-sweet, that flame-wing'd lute player whom none sees but for a moment, in a rainbow-shimmer of joy, or a sudden lightening-flare of passion, this exquisite mystery we call Amor comes, to some rapt visionaries at least, not with a song upon the lips that all may hear, or with blithe viol of a public music, but as one wrought by ecstasy, dumbly eloquent with desire, ineffable, silent.
>
> For Amor is ofttimes a dreamer, and when he dreams it is through lovely analogies. He speaks not, he whispers not, who in the flight of the wild swan against the frosty stars, or the interlaceries of black branches against the moonlight, or the abrupt song of a bird in the green-gloom of the forest, hears the voice that is all Music for him, sees the face of his

> unattainable Desire. These things [the poems that follow in this section] are his silences, wherein his heart and his passion commune. And being his [Amor's], they are mine: to lay before you, Dear; as a worshipper, wrought to incommunicable pain, lays white flowers before the altar, which is his Sanctuary and the Ivory Gate of his Joy.

The author of this dedication, presumably Fiona, identifies with Amor or Cupid, the male personification of love. Since he cannot express his love openly, the poems that follow are silences, but in them his heart and passion "commune." He lays them before the object of his desire just as a worshipper, hoping for salvation, lays flowers before an altar. He is "dumbly eloquent with desire" and "wrought by ecstasy," but also wrought to "incommunicable pain" by the need to be silent about the love and passion he shares with his beloved.

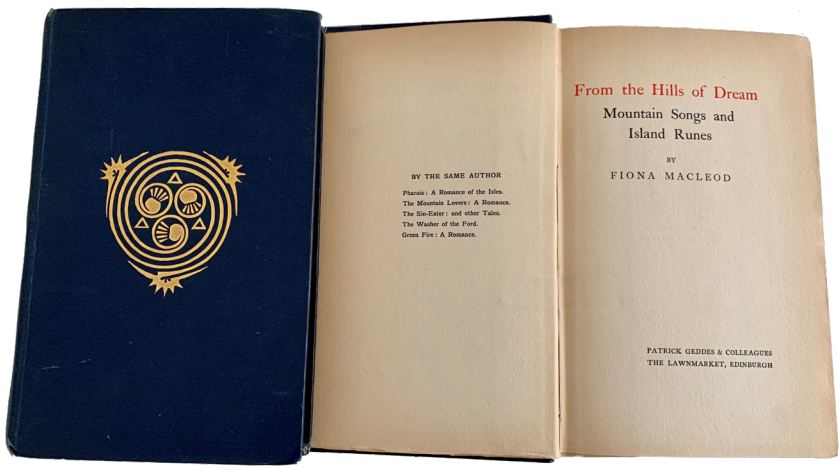

Fig. 11. Cover and title page of the first edition of Fiona Macleod's *From the Hills of Dream* (Edinburgh: Patrick Geddes & Colleagues, 1896). Photograph by William F. Halloran (2019).

Was anyone paying close attention to what Fiona was saying in this dedication? Surely Elizabeth Sharp, a bright and well-educated woman fluent in French, knew what her husband was saying under the cover of Fiona. Edith and Frank Rinder surely knew. One can only conclude that by the fall of 1896, when *Green Fire* and *From the Hills of Dream* were published, the two couples had reached an understanding that Sharp and Edith would continue their intimate relationship discretely, but

neither would leave the spouse they also loved and cared for. Sharp may have assumed Fiona's readers would think she was inventing a male persona, an interesting reversal to be sure. More likely, neither Sharp nor his readers gave the matter much thought. He was able to disguise the identity of Fiona Macleod for a decade because a part of the reading public needed her. Sharp recognized the need and set about fulfilling it. Descent into the Celtic past was an escape from the negative effects of rapid industrialization and the scientific discoveries challenging the tenets of Christianity. Yet more important — considering the content of Fiona's writing — was her sentimentalizing of love and passion, which offered a convenient escape for women, and also for some men, a few of whom fell in love with Fiona.

In his October 18 letter to Murray Gilchrist, who knew its true authorship and would read it as disguised account of Sharp's love of a beautiful woman, Sharp called *Green Fire* "a strange book — some will say a mad book." By 1899, when the flame of his passion had dissipated, Sharp decided to repress the book's astonishing revelations. He dropped the first half of the book and erased from the second half any mention of the love affair between Ynys and Alan. There is no Ynys, and there is no dedication to Esclarmoundo. When Alan Carmichael leaves Brittany and lands on a small island near Skye at the start of the revised "Herdsman," he has "wed and lost" the unnamed daughter of the man who killed his father. His only companion is his "servant and old friend Ian M'Ian," who becomes his interlocutor. Sharp also eliminated "The Silence of Amor" section and its dedication to Esclarmoundo from editions of *From the Hills of Dream* published after 1900. In 1902, Thomas Mosher of Portland Maine printed *The Silence of Amor | Prose Rhythms by Fiona Macleod* in a beautifully designed book on Van Gelder paper limited to 400 copies. For that edition, Sharp wrote a "Foreword" asserting the content of the volume should not be called "prose poems," but "prose rhythms." He also dropped the dedication to Esclarmoundo and revised both the dedicatory statement he had addressed to the dedicatee and many of the prose pieces that follow. He prefaced the revised dedicatory statement with the following quotation from Fiona Macleod's *The Distant Country*: "Love is more great than we conceive, and Death is the keeper of unknown redemptions." In this edition the intense passion of the first is absent. It is still Sharp

disguised as Fiona Macleod laying before his "Dear" the prose rhythms, but he does so calmly "as a wind, that has lifted the blossoms of a secret orchard stoops, and lays milk-white drift and honeyed odors at the open window of one who within sleeps and dreams."

Despite the perceived success of Sharp's New York trip and the publication of two Fiona Macleod books in his absence, matters soon took a turn for the worse. He fell ill again, this time with influenza, and needed money to recuperate in a warmer climate. Herbert Stone, acting for the firm, had promised Sharp £300 (£100 on the submission of the manuscript and £200 upon publication) for a yachting romance called *Wives in Exile*. Claiming ignorance of this commitment, Kimball could not, in any case, afford to honor it. The book was submitted for copyright under the Stone and Kimball imprint in September 1896, but not issued. When they met in New York, Kimball agreed to relinquish all rights to the book, whereupon Sharp arranged for a young Boston publishing firm, Lamson, Wolffe & Company, to buy the loose sheets and the plates, and they published the book in January 1897 with a new title page. The Boston firm gave Sharp a promissory note due in January for £150, which he carried home only to discover it was not negotiable in Britain. He had hoped to borrow against it but was forced to send it to Stedman and ask him to advance the money until the note could be redeemed in January. While in New York, Sharp also met with Melville Stone, Herbert's father, to recover the remaining £150 due for *Wives in Exile.* The elder Stone agreed his son was morally, if not legally, obliged to pay Sharp some of the missing £150. He suggested E. C. Stedman arbitrate the matter, and Sharp accepted his suggestion. In his December 5 letter to Stedman, Sharp presented the history of the affair in a manner that might move Stedman to award him at least some of the compensation he thought due from the Stone family.

After recovering from influenza, Sharp began to exhibit in early December "disquieting symptoms of nervous collapse" which were brought on, Elizabeth said, by "the prolonged strain of the heavy dual work added to by an eager experimentation with certain psychic phenomena with which he had long been familiar but wished further to investigate, efforts in which at times he and Mr. W. B. Yeats collaborated" (*Memoir*, p. 282). Sharp had engaged in various attempts to communicate with the spirit world, augmented by drugs, while living at Phenice

Croft in 1891–1892. That was one reason Elizabeth disliked the place and insisted they give it up and return to the city. He resumed those investigations in late November and early December after returning from America. Suffering both physically and mentally, he needed a respite from damp and depressing London.

Although Stedman's efforts to recover money from the Stone family had not produced results, Stedman loaned Sharp — against Lamson's promissory note — enough money to leave England. In a letter of December 16, Sharp thanked him profusely for his generosity, and said that he was leaving the next day for the South of France. He would spend a few days in Tarascon with the Janviers before going on to Tamaris and St. Maxime on the Riviera. From Tarascon, he told Elizabeth he hoped to recover his "old buoyancy and nervous strength" through prolonged rest in the open air. In her article on "Fiona Macleod and her Creator William Sharp" (*North American Review*, 184/612, April 5, 1907, pp. 718–32), Catherine Janvier described Sharp's visit (p. 722):

> In December of 1896 — preceded by the announcement that he was old and gray-haired — William Sharp superb as a young Viking, burst in on us in quiet Saint-Remy. After the excitement of the first joyous meeting was over, it was plain to see that this magnificent presence gave false promise. He was exhausted by the long strain of double work and had been ordered away from the smoke and fog of London to the sunshine of the Riviera, there to seek the rest he nowhere had found. While with us strange moods possessed him; and, perhaps, because of these strange things happened. At times it was as though he struggled against an evil influence; was forcing back a dark tide ever threatening to overwhelm his soul. Warring presences were about him, he thought; and he believed that these must be conquered, even at the risk of life. The culminating struggle came, and through one winter night my husband watched over him as he battled against unseen but not unfelt influence. The fight was won, the dark tide stemmed, but at great cost of vitality, his victory leaving him faint and exhausted. "Nevermore," he told us, "would he tamper with certain forces, for such tampering might mean destruction."

Having passed through the dark night, according to Mrs. Janvier, Sharp recovered from his severe psychic episode and enjoyed the Christmas celebrations in the village. After Christmas he left for the warmer Riviera where, according to Mrs. Janvier, "he wandered

restlessly from place to place" before returning to the Janviers in St. Remy shortly after the start of 1897. As it turned out, the New Year brought another adventure that, despite his "Nevermore," involved his return to spiritualist experiments.

Letters: July–December, 1896

To Catherine Ann Janvier, July, 1896

... I resent too close identification with the so-called Celtic renaissance. If my work is to depend solely on its Gaelic connection, then let it go, as go it must. My work must be beautiful in itself — Beauty is a Queen and must be served as a Queen.

... You have asked me once or twice about F. M., why I took her name: and how and when she came to write *Pharais*.[1] It is too complex to tell you just now. The name was born naturally: (of course I had associations with the name Macleod.) It, Fiona, is very rare now. Most Highlanders would tell you it was extinct — even as the diminutive of Fionnaghal (Flora). But it is not. It is an old Celtic name (meaning "a fair maid") still occasionally to be found. I know a little girl, the daughter of a Highland clergyman, who is called Fiona. All my work is so intimately wrought with my own experiences that I cannot tell you about Pharais, etc., without telling you my whole life.

William Sharp

Memoir, p. 227

To Louise Chandler Moulton, July 17, 1896[2]

My dear Friend

It is with singular pleasure I introduce to you my friend, Mr. Eugene Lee Hamiltonwhose name will be so familiar to you who love what is best in contemporary English poetry.[3] You will remember, too, how much our dear Philip loved & admired Mr. Lee Hamilton's Sonnets.

You will be glad to meet him for these reasons, for himself, & because he is an old friend of

Your ever affectionate | William Sharp

ALS Library of Congress, Louise Chandler Moulton Collection

To Robert Murray Gilchrist, [*July 19, 1896*]

My dear Friend,

Could you not join us for a few days — I mean my wife & myself — on the Northumberland coast: say at Alnmouth? say on Saty the 25th, i.e. Saty of this week? It would be so pleasant, & I want much to see you.

Again, from 1st August for a fortnight or so we shall be at Sea View | Holy Island off the North Northumberland coast. Perhaps you wd. rather go there!

But could you not manage to get away for a few days on the 25th or 27th?

Your mother once asked me to bring my wife with me, & to stay at Cartledge. Supposing that this were feasible for Mrs. Sharp & myself — & I have said nothing of it to her — & supposing that you cannot get away — would it be convenient & agreeable to your mother that Elizabeth & I came to you on the evening of the 24th (Friday) till Monday? This is a mere idea, though.

If this reach you any time on Monday (tomorrow)[4] or Monday evening — please telegraph to me at Station Hotel | York. I reach there in the evening, & leave it again for the North about 9.30 on Tuesday morning. If you do not get it, then hold over telegram till you receive mine from wherever I may go to on Tuesday — probably Belford.

In great haste | Yrs Ever | W. S.

P.S. I have just spoken of the idea to my wife — of Friday evening till Monday: & she would like it very much. Is it feasible or not? Say frankly, in every way.

I enclose telegraph form for me to save you trouble. (The house in London is closed pro-tem as my [wife] will be at her mother's.)

My cordial regards to your mother.

If we can come, it will be a great pleasure to see her again. Also, *if* so — may we come as simply in all respects as "wayfarers." W.

ALS Sheffield City Archives

To John Macleay [*July 28?, 1896*][5]

4 Victoria Terrace | Bamborough | Northumberland

Dear Mr. Macleay

Thanks for your note. As regards the "Evergreen" winter number, you are mistaken in thinking "the time for such considerations," as Falstaff or someone says, remote. I understand that August 1st is the nominal, & August 15th the latest date for matter to be sent in.

I confess I share to some degree in Miss Macleod's annoyance in this persistent disbelief in her personality to which you allude — as, indeed, to some extent in her resentment against the impertinence of those persons who try to intrude upon her privacy or seek to ascertain what for good reasons of her own she does not wish made public. She has ever been willing to meet the few persons who have any right to expect an interview — and the other day, I hear, met by appointment, in Edinburgh, one of the firm of Messrs. A Constable & Co. Formerly, I used to transact much of her business for her: now, I am glad to say, she attends to her literary negotiations etc. herself — & so has perforce to break her determination so far, i.e. her determination not to be "interviewed" in any sense, or in any way have her privacy pried into.

The other day in London I met one of the Constables, & heard that Miss Macleod had written to them for advice as to certain statements etc. — & I am pleased to say they gave her the same advice as I did & that was to hold herself as absolutely aloof as she liked from all busy bodies & everyone who had no concern in her private affairs.

Did you not see the explicit statement I caused to be inserted in the "Glasgow Evening News," & elsewhere (because of one of these perverse misstatements) to the effect that "Miss Fiona Macleod is <u>not</u> Mr. William Sharp; Miss Fiona Macleod is <u>not</u> Mrs. William Sharp; and that Miss Fiona Macleod is — Miss Fiona Macleod."

Surely <u>that</u> ought to have settled the matter: for it is scarcely likely, I imagine, that I should put forth so explicit a statement were it not literally true.

I trust, therefore, that you will do your best at any time to counteract all other misstatements. These, I fancy, originate chiefly from Dr. Robertson Nieal or his Edinburgh agent, & from Mr. Neil Munro: i.e. so far as I have reason to say so.[6]

By the way, there were some recent misstatements both in the "Evening News" & the "Highland News." (e.g. Prof Geddes has not withdrawn from the firm of P. G. & Co — of which he is the head: nor has he any intention of doing so).

Miss Macleod's poems will not be issued till mid-September at the earliest.

About the same date (I understand) Messrs. A. Constable & Co. are to issue her new one-vol romance "Green Fire," written a year or so ago I believe.[7] From what she wrote to me recently, I understand there will be no other book by her published this year, unless it be a short story (in Messrs Constable's new 2'/6 series) called "The Lily Leven." This will be a new departure for her, as it does not deal with the gloom, but rather with the gaiety or abandon of the Celtic character at certain times and seasons.

Her work is now much sought for by the leading American & English magazines, though she will accept very few commissions & these only conditionally: so this, and the press opinions etc. show that she has really struck a deep note, and that there is a public for a Celtic writer.

The chief obstacle for writers like Miss Macleod is in jealous or parochial criticism among those where it should be least likely to be seen. Surely the spirit is all important — but, to judge from some comments, there is in Inverness & perhaps elsewhere a tendency to thwart a new influence by an ignoring of the "spirit" for the sake of some pedantic or unimaginative insistence on the barren side of the "letter."

With regard to the suggestions in your note: I think they are excellent, and may well be fruitful. Later, if I think of any suggestions I will send them. As to my coming north to Inverness, I fear the only chance this year (& that uncertain) would be about the beginning of October: & that would be too early for you I suppose. If I <u>were</u> in Inverness then I might perhaps say something on, say, "The Celtic Spirit." But this is <u>in nubibus</u> meanwhile.

Hoping you are in better health | Sincerely Yours | William Sharp

Miss Macleod's latest address was the isle of Colonsay — but she may be gone from there now as she is yachting. I'll send on your letter, as soon as I know definitely where to write to. She is due in the Clyde region soon.

P.S. If you think advisable you could reprint in the *H/News* that explicit statement about Miss F. M.

ALS National Library of Scotland

To the Editor of Blackwood's Magazine, August 6, 1896

(Temporary) | Viewpark | Clynder | Garelock | 6th August

Dear Sir,

I trust that the receipt of "The Washer of the Ford" showed you that I appreciated your courteous letter à propos of the rejection of a story, the English serial right of which I had offered you.[8] I meant to write at the time, but I fear I omitted to do so, as I was then on the point of departure for Italy. "The Washer of the Ford" into which I have put the best I have been able to do, as I think, has, I hope, not disappointed you as my unfortunate MS. story did. You were, I am more than ready to believe, so right in that instance that I should be gratified if you found in this book the genuine effort of one who is slowly learning how easy it is to write "something," how supremely difficult it is to write well.

Believe me | Yours very truly | Fiona Macleod

ALS National Library of Scotland

To Coulson Kernahan, August 15, 1896[9]

Myrtle Grove | 4, Auchamor Road | Dunoon | Argyll | 15/Aug/96

Just a line, cher ami, to acknowledge your thrice-forwarded letter — & to say that I shall write to you Tuesday or Wedny next, as soon as I can hear from Scotts'.[10]

Yours ever, | William Sharp

ACS Princeton University

To John Macleay, [*August 10, 1896*][11]

till 21st Aug: after that c/o Messrs. P. G. & Co.

Myrtle Grove | Auchamore Road | Dunoon

Dear Mr. Macleay

Many thanks for your letter — & all the trouble you have taken.

It is with very great regret that I have to tell you I have just received from my doctor an imperative letter forbidding me to lecture in Inverness, Edinburgh, or Dublin this year: even to such a semi-private audience as at the Celtic Union in Edinburgh.

This is a great disappointment to me — & in a double way: for I had believed I was much stronger, & could quite well risk at any rate the Inverness lecture. But the truth is: I have an inherited heart-trouble complicated by harm done to me by a very serious (second) & prolonged attack of rheumatic fever. I have, however, been so much better of late, & felt so sure of my restored vigour, that I thought I could safely undertake the Inverness address at any rate. However, it is not to be: "<u>not on any condition whatever</u>, this year at any rate: whether you may undertake anything of the kind for next year or not" — so writes my doctor.

You will understand my chagrin as well as my disappointment — & I can only thank you & others who would have given me a friendly welcome, & ask you to permit me to defer my address till next Spring (or possibly till the Mod at Inverness!)

Sincerely Yours | William Sharp

P.S. It is quite likely my wife & I may now be in Inverness for a night at any rate on or about the 3rd of September. Will there be any chance of my having a glimpse of you?

ALS National Library of Scotland

To John Macleay, [*August 17, 1896*][12]

Dear Mr. Macleay

In reply to what you tell me in your letter, & to the article in the current H/News headed "Mystery! Mystery!" I can only say that I regret the ill-bred impertinence of the Glasgow busybodies in question, and the personalities & tone of the said article. They seem to me in very bad taste. I think a paper that respects public & private right should not lend itself to unwarrantable personalities — favourable or unfavourable: but perhaps I am too old-fashioned in my views on this matter.

The thing lies in a nutshell. For good reasons of her own, a lady wishes to preserve absolutely her privacy. As a friend & relative I happen to be in her confidence (though of course, both as individual & writer, she is known intimately to a few others as well) — & I have, on her behalf, done what I could, by that explicit statement requoted in the H/N.[13] By common courtesy, this matter should stop there.

If the Glasgow busybodies are ludicrously wrong in their conjectures (& maliciously wrong, as in that absolutely unfounded rumour (to which you allude) about Constable & Co., America, etc. — for, as I happen to know, this contract with her about "Green Fire" was signed several months ago. They have, too, behaved with eager courtesy throughout: as indeed have not only Messrs. Constable & Messrs. P. Geddes & Co., but also the Harpers & Stone & Kimball in America) — if, as I say, they are wrong, so also is "Mac" — for I am not, and I have never said or

implied that I was, Miss Macleod's "uncle." I am a relation & a friend: *c'est tout*. Nor has Miss Macleod any residence in Edinburgh at which to call upon her. When in Ed. she stays sometimes with my relatives in Murrayfield, sometimes with other friends & Prof Geddes or others. Fortunately, all this rather vulgar prying cannot have any result: for, as a matter of fact, Miss Macleod's privacy is now so-well safeguarded by her & her friends that she is as "safe" either in Edinburgh or Glasgow as Prince Charlie in "the heather." It is amusing — when a thing is very simple — how it can be made into a mystery.

For the rest — I am certain Miss Macleod needs no urging from me: — but I am writing saying that I hope she will absolutely ignore all personal remarks of any kind, & indeed any controversy about her writings.

There are other ideals of conduct than those which prevail with the writer or writers in the "Glasgow Evening News" — & from what I know of Miss Macleod I do not think it is likely she will stoop to any undignified "disclaimer" in "explanation," or "reply," of any kind. She writes, as best she can: for the rest she is a woman in private life: that, she holds (and I & those who know her hold also), is her ground, and from that she will not budge an inch.

I would like to be able to tell her that she can count upon you (as one of her unknown friends) to help in this safe-guarding of her privacy, which, rightly or wrongly, she considers essential to her happiness & literary welfare.

Yours very truly | William Sharp

ALS National Library of Scotland

To John Macleay, [*August 18, 1896*]

Myrtle Grove | Auchmore Road | Dunoon | Tuesday night

Dear Mr. Macleay,

The last post has brought me a line from Miss Macleod apropos of the article "Mystery." She writes in deep resentment against what she

considers its altogether unwarrantable personalities, and against "the insulting opening, the note of which is more fully emphasized in the cruel & inexcusable phrase: 'I hear again & again that she is a greater fraud than Macpherson of Ossianic fame.'"

She adds that any temptation she had to forego her rule — & write to the H/News on any controversial point — no longer exists: and that more than ever she is determined to safeguard her privacy — as I wrote to you yesterday — and absolutely to ignore all unwarrantable interference, conjecture, & paragraphic impertinence.

I admit I am glad she writes as she does: for I should deeply regret to see her yield to the vulgar temptation to a public controversy concerning herself — whether "a rather peculiar" one or any other.

I have already written you about the misstatements as to my being her uncle (I am a second cousin) and as to Miss M. having a residence in Edinburgh where "literary detectives" could call. As I said, she stays, when east, sometimes with my people in Murrayfield: sometimes with other friends, generally with her friend Miss Rea.

She, and I, resent the cool impertinence of the words: "No one seems to have seen her." Who is "no one"? The "Evening News" man — or the "British Weekly" man — & the like? If it were not so grotesque, one might well be angry at the blank insolence of such a statement.

Let me add, apropos of a remark in this article: that nothing of Miss Macleod's ever appeared in any American paper or magazine, or in any like form, till the Christmas number of Harper's, last Xmas — when the gist of what is now "The Shadowy Seers" in her last book appeared. I believe that this Spring she has serialized one short story there: but am not sure as to where, or if it has appeared. For the rest, Messrs. Stone & Kimball published, in a most dainty & charming format, her "Pharais": later, in the charming "Carnation" series, her "Sin-Eater": and, recently, her "Washer of the Ford," one of the prettiest books in get-up I have seen. Messrs. Roberts Bros. published her "Mountain Lovers" in the American "Keynotes" series. Messrs. Harpers are to issue her "Green Fire" simultaneously with Messrs. Constables' edn.

In each instance (save with Messrs. Roberts Bros, with whom the English publisher arranged) Miss M. has dealt direct, & with most satisfactory results.

There — you have, in this letter & my last — all necessary data at next to first hand. You will excuse me henceforth, I am sure, from further

details on a subject which concerns another & another who wishes "to steer clear of the personal paragraphist."

Miss M. adds that she has sent a little note to Mr. W. C. Mackenzie. She is in Edinburgh for a day or two, but leaves tomorrow morning for a yachting cruise among the Isles. She was lately in Skye & the adjacent isles — & to be off again has luck indeed.

Yours very truly | William Sharp

ALS National Library of Scotland

To John Macleay, [*August 19, 1896*]

Myrtle Grove | Wednesday forenoon

Dear Mr. Macleay,

In reply to your letter received this morning, I need not again go into a matter explained in extenso in enclosed note which I wrote to you last night.[14]

Even if Miss Macleod — as mentioned there — were not leaving tomorrow for a yachting cruise in the West — there could now be no question of an interview.

I knew this, of course, but as this was a matter in which it was not right for me to decide without consultation I telegraphed to her. I have just had her answer & give it you as I received it. "I absolutely refuse now or at any time. If not all gratuitous impertinence it is quite unwarrantable as explained in my letter yesterday. Am writing. F.

As for myself — I leave here (Dunoon) on Saty.[15] I could see you at No. 9 Upper Coltbridge Terrace, Murrayfield, (Edinburgh) — on either Saturday evening or Sunday evening — or on Monday morning (not later than 11) — but it is probable I leave Edinburgh for the Clyde again on Monday.

As I wrote to you yesterday we expect to be in Inverness for a night on or about the 4th or 5th Sept.

Please send me a wire by return if you wish to see me on Saturday night or Sunday night, as I have other arrangements to consider.

Yrs Trly, | W. S.

ALS National Library of Scotland

To John Macleay, [*August 21, 1896*][16]

Murrayfield, Midlothian | (Dunoon)

My dear Mr. Macleay

I quite understand: & I thank you for your letter. Pray overlook any resentment that seemed of a personal kind against you: that certainly was not meant by me, & equally certainly would never be intended by Miss Macleod. I may perhaps be able to give you a hint as to an apparent mystery when we meet in Inverness.[17]

Meanwhile, immediately on receipt of your letter this morning I sent it on to Miss Macleod. She will doubtless write to you tonight or tomorrow.

My wife & I go to Edinburgh tomorrow — & I shall then see Miss M. & talk over certain points — as she has wired saying she will postpone going west till Monday or Tuesday.

Thanking you for what I assure you is a wholly satisfactory explanation, & for your friendly words.

Believe me | Yours sincerely | William Sharp

ALS National Library of Scotland

To John Macleay, [*August 22, 1896*][18]

c/o Miss Lilian Rea | Crudelius Hall | 457 Lawnmarket | Edinburgh

My dear Sir

Mr. Sharp has forwarded me your letter to him. I quite understand, and thank you cordially not only for all your generous friendliness in the past, and for all you say, but for your courteous and forbearing letter.

It is possible — I cannot say yet — that I may write something in the lines you suggest.

May I ask your acceptance from me of a copy of the American issue of "The Washer of the Ford?" A few copies were kindly sent to me by the publisher. I send it by this post.

I had intended to leave Edinburgh today, but shall now wait till Monday or Tuesday, as Mr. and Mrs. Sharp are coming here for a day or two.

Yours very truly / Fiona Macleod

If perchance you should be writing to me on Sunday or Monday, please address to me at No. 9 Upper Coltbridge Terrace | Murrayfield | Midlothian as though not staying there I expect to be there most of the next day or two.

ALS National Library of Scotland

To Patrick Geddes [*August 23, 1896*][19]

Sunday

I forget if I gave you my address, where we are to go tomorrow morning: — Woodside | Tigh-Na-Bruaich | The Kyles of Bute | Will you

kindly direct that an (editorial) copy of No I of *The Evergreen* be sent to me there.

Advise me, if possible, a day or two beforehand as to when Proofs of the new number are likely to reach me: also if you will be at your present address throughout September, or for how long.

William Sharp

ACS National Library of Scotland

To John Macleay, [*August 24, 1896*]

Dear Mr. Macleay,

Thanks for your letter. I have had a long talk with Miss Macleod, who has delayed her return to the West on account of my wife & myself being here for a day or two: and I think that while she is steadfast in her main contention and position she is alive to the point of view you brought forward.

I have not said anything to her about your hint about someone "thinking he might add zest to the Mod by attacking Miss M's writings." Personally, I think this would be a mistake (apart from the obvious discourtesy of attacking one where there could be no means of immediate reply) — and while it would do little harm to Miss Macleod [it] would certainly hurt the Celtic cause in the Highlands, for if the average Anglo-Saxon reader (& as much in Edinburgh & Glasgow as in England) sees division and scornful raillery in the Camp itself, he will simply say "it's the same all over: there is no Irish union possible, & now there's the same mutual bickering in Gaelic Scotland."

I am very disappointed not to give my address — but look upon it as a postponement rather: for I was going to lay utmost stress on this very point of loyal cooperation &, in treating of the Celtic Spirit, try to keep clear of the Parochial in every form. However, in good time.

Yrs sincerely / William Sharp

P.S. Will you kindly have the H/News of this week sent to me at Post Office, Tighnabruaich, Kyles of Bute, as I shall call there on Friday or Saty.

ALS National Library of Scotland

To Katharine Tynan Hinkson, August 25, 1896

c/o Miss Lilian Rea, | The Outlook Tower, | The Lawn Market, |
Edinburgh, 25.8.96.

My dear Mrs. Hinkson,

My cordial thanks for your most generous and friendly words about my last book — in the "National Observer" and now again in "The Sketch." Your words, indeed, give me singular pleasure. For one thing, I am always much more susceptible to praise or blame, when the critic is one whose own writings I hold in especial regard — and, as I think I have told you, I delight in your beautiful poetry, and find too in your imaginative prose the same corresponding charm and delicacy of emotion and execution. Let me add here a sentence from a letter from my intimate friend, Mrs. Edith Wingate Rinder, whose forthcoming "The Shadow of Arvor" (a vol. of Breton legendary romances) will, I am sure, delight you: — "I am delighted with Katharine Tynan's review of "The Washer of the Ford" in the Sketch. It is so very sympathetic, and intimately appreciative. Her phrase "The warp and woof of the book are gold and shadow" is peculiarly happy: and the whole article is so free from the commonplaceness of the ordinary review that in itself it is a delight."

Though not to be there again till late autumn, Mrs. Wingate Rinder lives in London, and I would like you and her to meet some day. When (in October, I expect) my little first volume of verse is published, I shall so gladly send you — as the comrade, not as the critic! — a copy.[20]

Meanwhile, dear Mrs. Hinkson, | Believe me, | Cordially yours, |
Fiona Macleod

ALS Private and Middle Years, pp. 129–30

To Henry Chandler Bowen, August 26, 1896[21]

c/o Miss Lillian Rea | The Outlook Tower | The Lawnmarket |
Edinburgh | 26: 8: 95

Dear Sir,

I do not know, of course, if you are acquainted with my name — though my first four books have all been republished (simultaneously published, I should say) in the United States: and Messr[s] Harpers are to publish on about Sept 15th my new Celtic romance "*Green Fire*": but in any case you may care to consider for publication in the *Independent* (if before Nov. 15th, when it may appear in book form) the enclosed story, if that may be called a story which is rather "a spiritual episode," as someone describes the "legendary moralities" in my recent book, "*The Washer of the Ford*." I hope it may please you, and be acceptable to your readers.

Believe me | Yours very truly | Fiona Macleod

ALS Princeton University

To Elizabeth Sharp, [*mid-September, 1896*][22]

[Tighnabruaich Hotel | Kyles of Bute]

... I am glad to be here, for though the weather has changed for the worse I am so fond of the place and neighbourhood. But what I care for most is I am in a strong Fiona mood, though more of dream and reverie — creatively — than of actual writing: indeed it is likely all my work here, or nearly all shall be done through dream and mental-cartooning. I have written "The Snow Sleep of Angus Ogue" for the winter *Evergreen*,[23] and am glad to know it is one of F. M.'s deepest and best utterances...

Memoir, pp. 267–68

To Elizabeth A. Sharp, September 23, 1896

September 23rd

... I am now well in writing trim I am glad to say. Two days ago I wrote the long-awaited "Rune of the Passion of Women" the companion piece in a sense to the "Chant of Women" in Pharais — and have also done *The Savoy* story "The Archer" (about 4,500 words) and all but done "Ahez the Pale". Today I hope to get on with the "Lily Leven"... .[24]

I must make the most of this day of storm for writing. I had a splendid long sleep last night, and feel "spiff"... . I am not built for mixed companies, and like them less and less in proportion as the imperative need of F. M. and W. S. for greater isolation grows. I realise more and more the literal truth of what George Meredith told me — that renunciation of ordinary social pleasures (namely of the ordinary kind in the ordinary way) is a necessity to any worker on the high levels: and unless I work that way I shall not work at all.

Memoir, pp. 266–67

To Elizabeth A. Sharp, September 26th, 1896

September 26th

... Yesterday turned out a splendid breezy day, despite its bad opening: one of the most beautiful we have had, altho' too cold for bathing, and too rough for boating. I went off by myself for a long sail — and got back about 4. Later I went alone for an hour or so to revise what had stirred me so unspeakably, namely the third and concluding "Rune of the Sorrow of Women." This last Rune tired me in preliminary excitement and in the strange semi-conscious fever of composition more than anything of the kind since I wrote the first of the three in Pharais one night of storm when I was alone in Phenice Croft.

I have given it to Mary to copy, so that I can send it to you at once. Tell me what you think and feel about it. In a vague way not only

you, Mona, Edith[25] and others swam into my brain, but I have never so absolutely felt the woman-soul within me: it was as though in some subtle way the soul of Woman breathed into my brain — and I feel vaguely as if I had given partial expression at least to the inarticulate voice of a myriad women who suffer in one or other of the triple ways of sorrow. For work, and rebuilding energy, I am thankful I came here. You were right: I was not really fit to go off to the Hebrides alone, at the present juncture, and might well have defeated my own end. Tomorrow morning I shall be writing — probably at From the Hills of Dream.

Memoir, p. 267

To William Butler Yeats, [late September, 1896][26]

Strath-Na-Mara | Tarbert of Loch Fyne | Argyll

Dear Mr. Yeats

Unforeseen circumstances have prevented my writing to you before this, and even now I must perforce be more brief than I would fain be in response to your long and deeply interesting as well as generous letter. Alas, a long pencilled note (partly apropos of your vision of the woman shooting arrows, and of the strange coincidence of something of the same kind on my own part) has long since been devoured by a too voracious or too trustful gull — for a sudden gust of wind blew the quarto-sheet from off the deck of the small yacht wherein I and my dear friend and confrère of whom you know were sailing, off Skye.[27]

Private matters have combined to distract me very much just now — and this, and much sailing about and faring in remote places — and the work we are doing, and putting together the volume of verse[28] — have together frayed the edges of my small fragment of actual leisure for writing.

How good of you to write to me as you did. Believe me, I am grateful. There is no other writer whose good opinion could please me more — for

I love your work, and take an endless delight in your poetry, and look to you as not only one of the rare few on whose lips is the honey of Magh Mell but as one the dark zone of whose mind is lit with the strange stars and constellations of the spiritual life.

Most cordially I thank you for your critical remarks.[29] Even where I do not unreservedly agree, or where I venture to differ (as for example, in the matter of the repetition of the titular words in "The Washer of the Ford" poem) I have carefully pondered all you say.

I am particularly glad you feel about the "Annir Choille" as you do. Some people whom I would like to please do not care for it: yet I am sure you are right in considering it one of the most vital things I have been able to do.

With what delight I have read your lovely poem "O'Sullivan Rua to the Secret Rose."[30] I have read it over and over with ever deepening delight. It is one of your finest poems, I think: though perhaps it can only be truly appreciated by those who are familiar with legendary Celtic history. We read it to each other, my friend and I, on a wonderful sundown "when evening fed the wave with quiet light," off one of the Inner Hebrides (Colonsay, to the south of Oban). The only thing we both note is the use of "heavy" in the 7th as well as in the sixth line. Is not the effect of that in the 7th consequently lost? And would not "slumberous" or some other apt epithet be better? It is but a suggestion — and it is only because you love so truly what is beautiful and so are heedful to any suggestion, right or wrong, that I venture to make it. I cannot quite make up my mind, as you ask, about your two styles. Personally, I incline not exactly to a return to the earlier but to a marriage of the two: that is, a little less of the remoteness, or subtlety, with a little more of the earlier rippling clarity.

After reading your Blake paper[31] (and with vivid interest and delight) I turned to an early work of yours which I value highly, *Dhoya*: and I admit that my heart moved to it.[32] Between them lies, I think, your surest and finest line of work — with the light deft craft of *The Celtic Twilight*.[33]

I hope you are soon going to issue the promised volume of poems.[34] When my (our) own book of verse is ready — it is to be called *From the Hills of Dream* — it will give me such sincere pleasure to send you a copy. By the by, I must not forget to thank you for introducing my work

to Arthur Symons. He wrote to me a pleasant letter, and asked me to contribute to the Savoy, which I have done.[35]

I daresay my friend (who sends you comradely greetings, and says he will write in a day or two) will tell you more from me when he and you meet. I had a strange vision the other day, wherein I saw the figure of a gigantic woman sleeping on the green hills of Ireland. As I watched, the sun waned and the dark came and the stars began to fall. They fell one by one, and each fell into the woman — and lo, of a sudden, all was wan[36] running water, and the drowned stars and the transmuted woman passed from my seeing. This was a waking dream, an open vision: but I do not know what it means, though it was so wonderfully vivid. In a vague way I realise that something of tremendous moment is being matured just now. We are on the verge of vitally important developments. And all the heart, all the brain, of the Celtic races shall be stirred. There is a shadow of mighty changes. Myself I believe that new spirits have been embodied among us. And some of the old have come back. We shall perish, you and I and all who fight under the "Lifting of the Sunbeam" — but we shall pioneer a wonderful marvellous new life for humanity. The other day I asked an old isles woman where her son was buried: he was not buried" she said, "for all they buried his body. For, a week ago, I saw him lying on the heather, and talking swift an' wild with a Shadow." The Shadows are here.

I must not write more just now.

My cordial greetings to you — | Sincerely | Fiona Macleod

My best letter-address (for you) is | 9. Upper Coltbridge Terrace | Murrayfield | Midlothian.

ALS Yale, Sharp's draft in National Library of Scotland, and excerpted in Memoir, pp. 270–72

To Robert Murray Gilchrist, [*September 28?, 1896*]

Strathnamara | Tarbert | Loch Fyne

My dear Boy

I have to go to America on or about the 14th of Oct. — only there & back & about 10 days there: having urgent literary business to see to. Have been rendered next to bankrupt by disaster & fraud — but hope to "work thro."

I write now to ask you if for your own health's sake — the stimulus & general good — for what you might arrange in U.S.A. — & for friendship sake — you will come too? This is sudden — but, well, come!

Your Friend | Wilfion

I shall be here till Thursday inclusive — on Friday night or Saty morning, the Caledonian Station Hotel, Glasgow — on Saty night or Monday morning Murrayfield.[37] If you can come telegraph "yes." Again, for your own sake & mine come!

ALS Sheffield City Archives

To Edmund Clarence Stedman, [*September 30?, 1896*]

Strath-Na-Mara | Tarbert of Loch Fyne, Argyll

Dear Poet, Friend, Comrade | & Edmund-mo-ghraidh | & Stedman-mo-caraid[38] —

Slainte, 's Mile Faillé! which, being interpreted, means "Hail, and a Thousand Greetings!"

I hope this will reach you on your birthday, and that it will carry to you my loving good wishes. May your new year bring you health,

weal, peace, joy, and happiness of all kinds. Only, don't be too good. The gods only bless with the left hand when one is too good. A right hand blessing, even with the occasional severe spank that goes therewith, is much better. Seek it, my dear silver-haired Youth. What a good thing it is to be alive — and to be, like you, a poet. That is, to love. We are the crowned lovers of the world, we, and our lovely embodied Dreams — the gods bless their leaping pulses, their red lips, their white breasts, their brave laughing souls, beautiful Sunbeams of life that they are![39]

Do not think because I have not written but once this year that I am forgetful. For one thing, I've had a decade boiled down into this year! Then, too, I have been away so much in France, Italy, and Scotland. Then, I have suffered — but of this, nothing in a birthday letter. And — well, I've been a "Poet"!

In a day or two now I leave the West Highlands. Then I go to London. Somewhere about mid-October (l4th or 17th) I leave for a brief visit to New York, primarily to recover heavy indebtedness & to safeguard literary property, due to me by Mr. Kimball (Stone & Kimball). Alas, I am rendered bankrupt by their broken pledges. My affairs have all gone to smash. However, I'm taking it philosophically and hope to put things straight within some months. (But this perhaps had best be strictly entre nous. It would not do to get about.) I know you are off somewhere — but if near New York may I pay you a flying visit?

I expect to leave on either the 14th or 17th via Southampton, either by the Hamburg American or the North German Lloyd, but the former if it calls in Southampton, I expect.

I have a great deal to tell you, and to talk about — but meanwhile can only send you my love and loyal homage and greetings. (You have no loyaler friend or advocate here, dear E. C. S., I'm sure I can say.)

Till we meet, then — and with my love and "obeisance" to Mrs. Stedman, and love to Arthur. Ever affectionately yours, |
William Sharp

I shall write later as soon as I know exactly when and by what boat I sail.

ALS Columbia University Library

To John Ross, October 9, 1896

Thursday 9th Oct

Dear Mr. Ross,

I suppose in Miss Rea's absence I had better address to you, tho' neither she nor I wish to add unnecessarily to your business distractions.

I had a wire today from Mrs. Wingate Rinder saying that the promised remittance of £50 had not reached her up to this afternoon. I wired back to her to telegraph to you if on her return (to Kensington Court Gardens) she did not find it there. I told her it was quite right — merely a slip somewhere — as you had promised to send it.

Please see that among the earliest copies of *Arvor*[40] to be sent out for review are those for *The Bookman* and *The Highland News*, and note that the copy for the latter (marked "for review") had better be sent direct to John Macleay Esq | Rosehall | Fairfield Road | Inverness.

Please send 6 copies (Author's Copies) to Mrs. Wingate Rinder at her London address.

If procurable at once please send me the Review-Copies list as used for "The Washer of the Ford", which I shall return revised for "Arvor". Also the advt. List.

In haste | Cordially yours | William Sharp

Also addresses please (see Evergreen contributors list) of a Mrs. Clothilde Balfour,[41] and of J. H. Pearce:[42] & if you have it name etc. of editor of the Birmingham paper that reviews our books so well.

NOTE: Miss Macleod's Two Books

Please consult with Mr. Cuthbertson[43] as to the following proposal, to which I have Miss Macleod's consent and approval.

How would it do, early in the Spring of 1897 — both for Miss F. M.'s sake, and markedly for the firm's, I think — to reissue, in the form proposed by Miss Macleod, her Tales — in 3 vols, and each to be bound simply in paper, with artistic design (like that of "Vamireh" etc. you had done for Prof. Geddes & myself.)

I do not think this wd. hurt the Sale of Stock, if, as Mr. W. C. says, they are too artistically (or remotely) got up to fetch the buying public. There will always be buyers who want these, both for themselves, and as original issues, etc. Moreover, a reissue might give even them a lift.

I believe that these books, issued with paper covers, at say 2/6 nett, would have a good sale, | Vol. I. Spiritual Tales | Vol. II. Barbaric Tales | Vol. III. Tragic Romances | to be sold separately, or in sets for those who prefer. Of course (particularly as they wd. be thoroughly revised by Miss Macleod, & have notes where called for — & also as some new matter (as you will see) is to be added — the vols would have to be reprinted.

But a less expensive paper cd. be used.

I am convinced that, Miss M. working with us, we may yet redeem our fortune successfully.

Herewith the Dft of Rearrangement.

Yours ev. | W. S.

ALS National Library of Scotland

To John Macleay, October 13, 1896

Please acknowledge receipt of MS.

Rutland House | 15, Greencroft Gardens, | South Hampstead | 13/Oct/96

Dear Mr. Macleay,

I like the enclosed the best thing of yours that I have seen. It is full of the Celtic atmosphere — and is told with genuine skill & insight.

But I see two objections: viz, that it is too long for a short story, and too short for book-issue. My advice to you is — shorten it by a scrupulous deletion: bring it to say 3,000 words: & then send it to *Blackwood's*. Or, if you prefer it, work it up into more of a story — make this its central plot — & then try it with one or other of the firms who are bringing out

short romances of say 25,000 or 30,000 words. Otherwise I am afraid you will find it difficult to get quit of this as it stands — for all that it is so admirable in itself.

By the way, I notice the influence of your friend Miss Macleod. In the circumstances, therefore, I think it unwise of you to challenge comment by the use of Eilidh as the name of your heroine — as that is the name most used by Miss M. both in her prose writings & poems. It is not as if it were as relatively common a Gaelic name as Silis or Girasol. However, this is only a suggestion for your consideration.

I directed a copy of Mrs. Wingate Rinder's *Shadow of Arvor* to be sent to you at the H/N. I hope it reached you, & that you may be able to notice it. I like the book exceedingly every way, tho' I differ in certain minor respects from Miss Macleod's article on it in the current *Bookman*.

By the way, Miss Macleod's book of poems is all but printed, & ought to be out by mid-November at latest. It is now definitely entitled "From the Hills of Dreams | Mountain Runes & Island Melodies" I am very glad she discarded "Gold and Shadow," not nearly so indicative or good a title in my opinion.

I am not certain, but fancy that about half the book is new in print: as is, certainly, the final section, a series of rhythmic prose studies, or poems in prose rather, connected by a simple dominant emotion.

Alas, I have had little time for reading Miss M's or any other books — for I am under extreme pressure at present, as I have a great deal to see to before I leave (latter-end next week) for New York, where I go on literary business of my own. I hope, however, to be back by the end of Nov^{r}.

In great haste | Sincerely yours | William Sharp

If you decide to expand the story for book publication, let me hear from you when I return, & I may be able to give you some useful advice.

ALS National Library of Scotland

To Arthur Stedman, October 14, 1896

London | 14 Oct /96

My dear Arthur,

As you will have heard from E. C. S. I have shortly to be in N.Y. on literary business. Of course I hope to see you, cher ami.

If you can do so, and easily, will you again do me the service & pleasure of making me a Pro-tem member of the Century (for say the first half of Nov.)?

I sail from Southampton on the 23rd, by the "Augusta Victoria" of the Hamburg American line, due at New York early on Friday 30th — where my letter-address will be c/o The H. A. Line Agents, 37 Broadway. (I shall probably be with Alden till Monday.) Please tell E. C. S. whose new address I do not know (I wrote to him for his birthday). Excuse a P/C in great pressure.

Ever cordially yours, | William Sharp

ACS Columbia University Library

To Stone and Kimball, October 16, 1896

Rutland House, Greencroft Gardens, | South Hampstead, London. | 16th October, 1896.

Messrs. Stone & Kimball, New York.

Dear Sirs,[44]

I shall not now enter into the question of "Wives in Exile".

I send you this formally to notify to you that I shall arrive in New York at the end of the month, and immediately after the elections, shall

call upon you, preliminary, if necessary, to my taking steps to enforce my legal claims against you.

I may add that I shall have a power of attorney from Miss Fiona Macleod to enable me to act for her. She has placed her letters with me, including that wherein you acknowledge your indebtedness for the advance of £25 on "The Washer of the Ford"; but which you have never yet paid, despite your promises to the contrary.

I make no comment upon your procedure in these matters of Miss Macleod or of my own.

I am, Sirs, | Yours truly, | William Sharp

P.S. I expect to be staying first with Mr. Alden of Harper's, but my letter-address will be: 37 Broadway | (c/o The H. A. Line Agents)

ALS Huntington Library

To William Meredith,[45] October 17, 1896

C/o Miss Lilian Rea. | The Outlook Tower. | Lawnmarket | Edinburgh. | 17th Oct.

Dear Mr. Meredith

I have only today, on my happening to be in Edinburgh (I am at present visiting in Roseburghshire) received the copies of "Green Fire" — the delay in my hearing of their arrival being due to the temporary absence of Miss Rea, but chiefly to the fact that she has now left Crudelius House. Please cancel that address. (Henceforth all communications should be addressed to me as above.) (I expect to be very rarely in Murrayfield now, as, when I am on the East Coast, I shall probably be with a relative who lives near Hawthornden, a more sheltered locality. I never feel well, however, in the east, and wish to live more and more in the west, though private domestic affairs involve my being here frequently for a day or so at a time.)

And now my thanks for the copies of "Green Fire." The book is beautifully bound (and the printing and paper are delightful), and I am very pleased indeed with the design. Strangely, it is very like the island where I lived a long time as a girl — and which appears as Ithona in "Pharais." I thank you, and your firm, for the care and taste shown. And now, I can only hope that the book will go well, notwithstanding that it is not of a nature to appeal to the general public. I doubt if anything of mine ever will really reach the general public till "In the Old Magnific Way," of which I have great hopes. For the rest, I can write only as "Orchel has woven me."

I regret to say that the imperative need of nervous rest involves some delay with "The Lily Leven".[46] I made a fatal mistake when, wishing to save my eyes and nervous headaches, I dictated a great portion of this book. It is not my way of work, and I ought to have known better. The result is complete dissatisfaction. So, I have destroyed what I had done (save for some pages here and there, and a single chapter), and am now rewriting it — to my genuine satisfaction, I am glad to say. But, as things are, I cannot hope to send it to my cousin at Murrayfield or to Miss Rea, or to be copied, for a month or more to come. I am not at present allowing myself to write more than two hours a day — and I have besides had much moving about of late. Then, too, I have had all the putting together, and the revision, of my volume of poems. (It is called "From the Hills of Dream", and I shall have pleasure in sending you one of the earliest copies.) However, as I know you are not in any way inclined to be exigent in the matter, I shall be under no sense of strain, and be content to work to my own satisfaction and thereafter to send MS. to you at the earliest practicable moment. At the very latest, you may depend on receiving it, I feel confident, by mid-December. In any case, now, I suppose you would not issue it till well after the turn of the year?

Let me know if this is agreeable to you. Also, please, when writing, let me know when I may expect to receive the cheque from Messrs. Harpers, and if through you or their London agents.

I am looking forward to a fine St. Martin's Summer among the Isles, for a fine November generally follows a stormy October.

Yours very Sincerely | Fiona Macleod

P.S. You need not send a copy of "Green Fire" to Mr. Sharp, as I am sending him one of the six you sent to me. (By the way, do you know of his sudden departure for America — though only for two or three weeks I understand.) But will you please at once send a review-copy of "Green Fire" to | John Macleay. Esq. | The Highland News. | Inverness.

ALS Private

To Robert Murray Gilchrist, October 18, 1896

London | 18. Oct. 96

My dear Robert

Adieu for the present. But I want to see you soon after I return, sometime in December.

My love to you, & comradely greetings.

I leave London on Thursday morning, & on Friday (sailing from Southampton) shall be on the ocean, on board the "Augusta Victoria" of the Hamburg American line due at New York (where my letter address is 37 Broadway) on Friday 30th.[47] I shall not leave N.Y. till mid-November, whatever else I do, I expect.

"Green Fire" is just published. I have no copies to send, alas, or would send one to you. Constables sent only one or two. It is a strange book — some will say a mad book.

About first November your mother will receive from me a copy of "From the Hills of Dream" (F. M.'s first book of verse) — with my affectionate regard. She and you must look to what I have tried to say, in a new way, in the last section ("The Silence of Amor").

To both of you, Comrades, the greeting of | Your friend |
William Sharp | (& to you, | Will)

I had an unexpected (& unwished for) call the other night from Mr. Platt.[48] He does not in any way appeal to me, & he had underbred familiarities.

ALS Sheffield City Archives

To Stone and Kimball, October 21, 1896

9. Upper Coltbribge Terrace | Murrayfield, Midlothian | Oct. 21st. 1896.

Dear Sir,

I was more than astonished in reply to my cablegram to receive your extraordinary statement of accounts of a dollar or two as all due to me. This has the unpleasant appearance of adding insult to injury. I will not go into a matter which will have to be legally seen to, beyond stating that I have your firm's written agreement (1), about the royalties on *The Sin-Eater*, and the number of copies sold from the 1st. (2) Your firm's agreement as to the royalty of £25. to be advanced on the day of publication of *The Washer of the Ford*; and (3) Your own personal letter admitting this responsibility with a definite promise that it would be sent immediately.

I demand immediate fulfillment of these just claims. Meanwhile I have granted a Power of Attorney and full letter of authorisation to my friend, Mr. William Sharp, to act for me, as he is going out himself to take action against you, if necessary, on account of your extraordinary procedure in the matter of your business negotiations with him.

I am, etc., | Yours truly, | Fiona Macleod

To, Messrs. Stone and Kimball.

ALS Huntington Library

To Edmund Clarence Stedman, [*October 21, 1896*]

London

I cannot remember if I gave you my address in U.S.A. for my flying visit. I arrive (by the "Augusta Victoria" of the Hamburg American line) on Friday October 3rd[49] — and go to Alden's[50] at Metuchen till Monday. My letter address (before that and after) is | c/o The H. A. Line Agents | 37 Broadway | It will be a great happiness to see you and yours again — tho' alas the glimpse must be literally a glimpse, I fear.

W. S.

ACS Columbia University Library

To Elizabeth A. Sharp, October [*21?*]*, 1896*

… to her [E. W. R.][51] I owe my development as "Fiona Macleod" though, in a sense of course, that began long before I knew her, and indeed while I was still a child… . without her there would have been no "Fiona Macleod."

Memoir, p. 222

To Coulson Kernahan, [*October 22, 1896*][52]

London

Many thanks for the card. I hoped I might sail with L.C.M.[53] — but now impossible. I leave tomorrow (on a flying visit on lity business of my own) for New York by the "Augusta Victoria" of the Hamburg American line, due New York on Friday 30th. (Address, c/o The H. A. Line Agents,

37 Broadway, New York). I hope to be in Boston for 2 days somewhere about 12th, I expect, and shall see L.C.M.

W. S.

As this now too late to catch L.C.M. at Paris, please forward to her. Au revoir cher ami, and heartiest congratulations on your vivid story. W. S.

ACS Princeton University

To Elizabeth A. Sharp, November 1, 1896

Metuchen, N.J. | 1st Nov., 1896

... Of course nothing can be done till Wednesday. All America is aflame with excitement — and New York itself is at fever-heat. I have never seen such a sight as yesterday. The whole enormous city was a mass of flags and innumerable Republican and Democratic insignia — with the streets thronged with over two million people. The whole business quarter made a gigantic parade that took 7 hours in its passage — and the business men alone amounted to over 100,000. Everyone — as indeed not only America, but Great Britain and all Europe — is now looking eagerly for the final word on Tuesday night.[54] The larger issues are now clearer: not merely that the Bryanite 50-cent dollar (instead of the standard 100 cent) would have far reaching disastrous effects, but that the whole struggle is one of the anarchic and destructive against the organic and constructive forces. However, this tremendous crisis will come to an end — pro tem. at any rate — on Tuesday night...

Memoir, pp. 274–75

To Elizabeth A. Sharp, [*early November, 1896*]

... I am indeed glad you like *Green Fire* so well.[55] And you are right in your insight: Annaik is the real human magnet. Ynys is an idealised

type, what I mean by Ideala or Esclarmoundo, but she did not take hold of me like Annaik. Allan, too, is a variation of the Ian type. But Annaik has for me a strange and deep attraction and I am sure the abiding personal interest must be in her. You are the only one who seems to have understood and perceived this — certainly the only one who has noticed it. Some day I want to tell Annaik's story in full... .

Memoir, p. 275

To George Cotterell, [*November 6, 1896*][56]

9. Upper Coltbridge Terrace | Murrayfield | Midlothian

Dear Mr. Cotterell

Please accept from me the accompanying volume of "From the Hills of Dream," in which I hope you my find, here or there, something arresting.

It is but a small acknowledgement of the keen pleasure your own beautiful work in verse has given me.

Believe me | Yours most faithfully | Fiona Macleod

ALS Private

To Bliss Carman, [*November 9, 1896*]

The Century Association | 7 West Forty-Third Street

My dear Bliss,

If possible — or if you have not already written — please let me hear from you tomorrow (i.e. for my receipt on Wednesday) — about "From the Hills of Dream."[57]

Will you kindly do something for me?

Please call at the book store in Washington St. (or at H-M. & Co if they sell at discount) & get another copy of | Clement & [others?] "Artists of the 19th Century" | the 1896 One-Vol edition. | I forget the amount, but when you write on Tuesday let me know, & I will remit. | Please direct it to be done up and posted to | Mrs. William Sharp| Rutland House | 15 Greencroft Gardens | South Hampstead | London | England

Again, when you are at Copeland & Day's, will you ask them to send me, if they care to do so, review copies of any recent vols of verse — i.e. from say midsummer 1895.

(I have to write a "Fortnightly" article on recent American poetry)

If so, let them post to me at my London address as above.

In haste, Ever Yours, Dear Old Chap, | Will

ALS Pierpont Morgan Library

To [*E. C. Stedman*], [*November 12, 1896*]

The Century Association | 7 West Forty-Third Street

Dear Poet-Comrade

As the copy[58] I sent you has apparently gone astray for good (perhaps thro' being put in an open envelope, as the custom in England) I send you herewith my own, & the only one I have.

With love | Yours ever | Will

Steamer now goes Friday night or Saty morning.

ALS University of Washington Libraries, Walter Beals Autograph Collection

To Hannibal Ingalls Kimball, [*November 13, 1896*][59]

Century Club

My dear Mr. Kimball

Herewith receipt as from Miss Macleod. I will send her a cheque immediately on my return for exact English equivalent.

So very sorry I fear I can't see you again — but hope we may meet before very long in London, where you will be welcome, & where I hope to repay your friendly courtesies.

I am indebted to Mr. Barrie[60] — & indirectly to you of course — for the generously friendly & appreciative notice of W. S. in *The Tatler*. May its shadow grow longer & broader! — and by "it" I mean the daily one!

If this reach you in time to send me a line — either, if posted today, to the Century Club, where I'll call tomorrow forenoon — or, if sent tomorrow, to 37 Broadway, before 12 (my steamer, the Fürst Bismarck, goes from Hoboken at 1:30 or 2 p.m.) — you might let me know how you take to the idea of a small book next year to be called "A Northern Night and other Tragic Romances."[61] Nothing that I have done has made as much impression here as "A Northern Night" in *Vistas*. It is the only one of the "Vistas" I shd. reprint in the proposed book: which would consist of four or five other short pieces, including the strongest thing I have ever done, unpublished in any form, called "The Father's Tragedy."[62]

Let me know what you think.

In great haste, | [William Sharp][63]

P.S. I was delighted to make the acquaintance of your wife. I hope we may see her too in England.

ALS Huntington Library

To Ernest Rhys, November 23, 1896

23:11:96.

Dear Mr Rhys

On my coming from the West to Edinburgh, for a few days, I found your very welcome and charming letter, among others forwarded to me from the Outlook Tower.

It gratifies me very much that you, whose work I so much admire and with whose aims and spirit I am in so keen sympathy, care so well for the "Hills of Dream." These are hills where few inhabit, but comrade always knows comrade there — and so we are sure to meet one another, whether one carry a "London Rose" or a sheaf of half-barbaric Hill-Runes. I may say, however, that my life is mainly spent in the Western Highlands, and Isles, and that save for a week or so now and again in Edinburgh, I am never in towns, which depress me beyond words, and which I care (aside from friends) only for the music that I can hear there.[64] It may interest you to know that the name which seems to puzzle so many people is (though it does exist as the name "Fiona," not only in Ossian but at the present day, though rarely) the Gaelic diminutive of "Fionaghal" (i.e. Flora). "Fiona," however, and not "Fionaghal," is my name. For the rest — I was born more than a thousand years ago, in the remote region of Gaeldom known as the Hills of Dream. There I have lived the better part of my life, my father's name was Romance, and that of my mother was Dream. I have no photograph of their abode, which is just under the quicken-arch immediately west of the sunset-rainbow. You will easily find it. Nor can I send you a photograph of myself. My last fell among the dew-wet heather, and is now doubtless lining the cells of the wild bees.

All this authentic information I gladly send you!

Sincerely yours, | Fiona Macleod

Memoir, pp. 279–80

To Edmund Clarence Stedman, November 25, 1896

Rutland House | 15 Greencroft Gardens | South Hampstead |
London | 25/Nov/96

My dear Stedman,

You told me I was to come to you in any difficulty — and I take you at your word: always with the proviso that if you are too busy or are unwell you will be equally frank.

Well, what I write about now is the enclosed IOU from Lamson Wolffe & Co.[65] It is in the form, as you will see, of a Promissory Note, due on 6th (i.e. 9th) Jany/97. I did not realise in accepting it that the document would be useless here.

If at all possible, & if not at a heavier discount than say, in all, £5 (Five Pounds), I would thankfully have this money at once, <u>of which I am imperatively in need</u>. Can you manage this for me? I mean — if impracticable for yourself to advance the amount, less discount — then as a broker, on the spot?

If you think this cannot be done, & that it is best to await due date, will you like a good fellow put the document in your safe — have it presented when due, and then remit me the amount in a draft payable in London?

In this latter case I must just manage meanwhile as best I can, heavily handicapped as I am.

It will be a very great relief to my wife & myself if the first suggestion can be fulfilled: but you, I know, will do what is practicable, & know what is best. And so I leave it.

(My next year or two really hinge on this single joint.)

There is no need to waste words: I know you will do what you can to help me, and <u>you</u> know how grateful I am for "all and every" of your loving service & friendship.

Ever yours affectly, | William Sharp

ALS Columbia University Library

To Edmund Clarence Stedman, November 28, 1896

London | 28th Nov./96

My dear Stedman,

You will think me an infernal nuisance to trouble you again (after that last letter of mine with the Bill for $719, and my stupid oversight or rather ignorance about the $10 cheque) — but it will be a great obligation if at your convenience you will instruct your Clerk (or anyone else, at my expense) to go to Customs, & claim the enclosed.[66] (They should not be dutiable, as they are not for sale: but were sent to me, from Miss Macleod, as Presentation copies. However, if necessary, please pay the 60 cents, & let me know total amount expended, including postage of them. Miss M. wanted one to go to

1. E. C. Stedman, Lawrence Park, Bronxville, N. Y.
2. H. M. Alden, Metuchen, New Jersey
3. Bliss Carman, c/o Copeland and Day, 69 Cornhill
4. William Sharp, Rutland House, Greencroft Gardens, South Hampstead, London.

In the first 3 instances a written line was to go | To so and so, from Fiona Macleod | (C/o Miss Rea | The Outlook Tower | Castle Hill | Edinburgh).

Just in time for the mail, & no more. You and Mrs. Stedman and Miss McKinney will have had my other letters.

With love to you & yours, | Ever affectionately, | William Sharp

ALS Columbia University Library

To Robert Murray Gilchrist, [*Early December, 1896*]

15 Greencroft Gardens | So. Hampstead

My dear Robert,

As you will see, I am back again.

Health and divers circumstances rather frown upon me for the moment. It is possible I may have to knock off all work for two or three weeks or so: only, alas, if so, I am not to go north but south. That being so, Paris draws me more than anywhere else. But I might go afoot. How are you? Are you to be seduced?

Ever affectionately | Your friend | Will

I hope Mrs. Gilchrist duly received the copy of "From the Hills of Dream" I directed to be sent to her — and that both you and she have found in it something arresting.

ALS Sheffield City Archives

To Edmund Clarence Stedman, December 5, 1896

London | 5th Decr 1896

My dear Stedman,

Your welcome and unexpected letter has come just in time for me to catch the mail, having gone astray for 2 or 3 days chasing me!

I have time then only to say that I thought I had told you all about the Stone & Kimball matter, & left Stone's letter etc. —

To recapitulate, however, as briefly as possible:

(1) Stone persuaded me to promise to give him for S&K. "Wives in Exile," and not (as was my intention, after "A Fellowe and His Wife") to send it to Houghton Mifflin & Co.

(2) He gave me his own, & firm's undertaking to pay me £300 advance against royalties — £100 on receipt of MS. and £200 on publication.

No stipulation as to time when sent in, tho' we both hoped for late autumn issue, 1895. Illness delayed this. MS. was not sent complete till early in 1896. It was to come out in Spring.

(3) No option was given me, when S. & K. separated — and I knew nothing of it till a cool renunciatory note from S. & later a formal communication from K.

(4) S. wrote saying all would certainly be well, & contract honourably fulfilled.

(4)[67] After cabling as well as writing again & again, still failed to obtain the £100 due on the receipt of MS.

(5) Delays after delays, involving loss of Spring, Summer, & Autumn sales.

(6) Letter from K. saying S. had never told him how much he was in for: that he simply couldn't pay: etc., etc., etc.

(7) Letter from me to S. holding him to his personal pledge — & explaining how nothing but this debt of his, or his & K.'s, to me stood between me and bankruptcy.

(8) Clear evasion on part of S. & K.

(9) Decide to go to New York.

(10) In place of the first stipulation, K. ultimately relinquishes to me his rights in the book, & agrees to give over to any publisher I name, the printed sheets & plates.[68]

This gives me no money, of course, but only makes a fresh arrangement possible at once.

(11) Find that state of literary market makes any good bargain at moment impossible.

(12) Lamson said £300 utterly beyond him. When at last I suggested £150, he said that too was more than he could afford to give. Ultimately, when I explained that K. relinquished the sheets etc., he agreed to give me £150, on a bill at 2 months.

(13) I wrote to Stone, telling him of my loss of £150 (besides over £60 in coming to America etc. & returning & incidental expenses, apart from loss involved in leaving England and work) — due entirely to his broken pledges.

(14) Saw Mr. Melville Stone. He admitted H. S.'s moral obligation.

(15) I agreed to let the matter go to you for arbitration.

(16) My talk with you.

(17) Stone's letter to you.

(18) Final issue unknown.

In haste at the very last moment | Yours ever affectly |
William Sharp

ALS Columbia University Library

To John Ross, December 6, 1896[69]

Rutland House | 15 Greencroft Gardens | N.W. | 6/12/6

Dear Ross

Herewith I am sending my certificate for 100 shares in Town & Gown Association to Messrs. Whitson & Methuen to be transferred at their earliest convenience, the amount to be paid to you on behalf of Patrick Geddes & Colleagues, to whom you will advise the same.

Yours faithfully, | William Sharp

John Ross Esq.

ALS National Library of Scotland

To John Ross, December 9, 1896

Rutland House | Greencroft G'dns | So. Hampstead | 9/Dec/96

This note had better be filed with the other Papers & Receipts on this matter.

Dear Mr. Ross

Today I recd. back the Certificate, from Messrs. Whitsun & Methuen — who say "We regret we cannot undertake at present to find a purchaser of your shares — but should you do so, and let us have the particulars of transfer, we shall be glad to lay them before our Directors. We return Certificate herewith."

I have sent their letter to Prof. Geddes, as it is in direct contradiction of his assurances to me: and added, "I have sent the Certificate today to Mr. Ross, requesting him to hold it over for you, till he receives your instructions."

Please send me formal notification of Receipt of Certificate.

In gt. haste, | Yrs sincerely, | William Sharp

ALS National Library of Scotland

To [*John Ross*]*, December 16, 1896*

London: 16th Dec '96

Dear Sir

I have no papers I can send you relative to Messr. White or to Mr. Wilson.[70] All the latter's business arrangements were with Mr. Geddes, and all Mr. White's with me were oral, save for a memorandum or two which I cannot now get till my return about middle or end of January; when also I will return any contracts etc. with authors now in

safekeeping. These cannot be got without my personal application at my bank — and as I say I must now wait with this till after my return. I have, however, nothing of any kind that could bear upon the business footing of transactions with Mr. White.

Yours truly | William Sharp

ALS National Library of Scotland

To [*John Ross*], *December 16, 1896*

London: 16th. Decr.

Dear Sir,

Herewith a letter from an Armenian gentleman, Mons. A. Tchobanian[71], recommended by Prof. Geddes. Prof. G. also expresses his hope that P.G. & Co. may be able to bring out this book if it can be arranged.

All I can say is that I approve the idea in the abstract — but as for a success here all wd. depend (1) on the interest of the subject-matter and (2) on the translation. If gone on with, the translation could safely be left in the hands of Miss Lilian Rea, who has had ample experience. It is difficult to judge without seeing something to go by, or at least without knowing the kind of material.

Yours faithfully, | William Sharp

ALS National Library of Scotland

To John Ross, December 16, 1896

To The Manager "Patrick Geddes &Colleagues"

London | 16th Decr./96

Dear Sir

Reissue of Miss Macleod's Tales

As I have to see Miss Macleod shortly — where she is visiting friends in the South of France — I can discuss this matter further.

Meanwhile, as she has deputed to me the management pro.tem. of all her literary affairs I may say that

(1) if you mean P.G. & Co. should reissue *The Sin Eater* and *The Washer of the Ford* intact, save for paper covers, the idea must be given up at once as quite untenable.

(2) if, on the other hand, you mean that P.G. & Co. could reissue the tales in the new order suggested by Miss Macleod avoiding resetting up of type, but simply altering the moulds in so far as pagination is concerned (& correcting a few misprints) — then she might consent.

I am strongly of opinion that it would be worthwhile to reissue these tales, in the manner and sequence suggested by Miss Macleod, — keeping to the moulds save for the pagination & a few corrections: equally of opinion that her own division into 3 vols. is best ("*Spiritual Tales*," "*Barbaric Tales*," and "*Tragic Romances*"): and, from every point of view, would urge the advisability (save indeed for Miss M's own sake, for she proposes to give up to this end what she could easily print in book form elsewhere) that the one long important new tale, "Morag of the Glen" should be printed for the 3rd vol.

The amended list would be

Vol. I. *Spiritual Tales*

1. The Washer of the Ford

2. St. Bride of the Isles
3. The Three Marvels of Iona
4. The Fisher of Men
5. The Last Supper
6. The Anointed Man
7. The Dark Nameless One

(All from *The Washer of the Ford* except no. 6)

Vol. II. *Barbaric Tales*

The Harping of Cravetheen from "The Sin-Eater"

The Song of the Sword from "Washer of the Ford"

The Flight of the Culdees from "Washer of the Ford"

Mircath from "Washer of the Ford"

The Laughter of Scathach the Queen from "Washer of the Ford"

Silk o' the Kine from "Sin-Eater"

Ula and Urla from "Washer"

The Annis Choille from "Washer of Ford"

(N.B. Miss Macleod offers her unpublished barbaric tale "Ahez the Pale" to add to this vol.)

Vol. III. *Tragic Romances*

Morag of the Glen Proposed to be added to this vol., by Miss Macleod

The Dan-nan-Ron

The Sin-Eater

The Ninth Wave from *The Sin-Eater*

The Judgment o' God from *The Sin-Eater*

Green Branches from *The Sin-Eater*

The Archer Proposed to be added

These additions would of course materially help the sale.

If, however, all this is considered inadvisable, it is possible Miss Macleod might agree to *The Sin-Eater* and *The Washer of the Ford* being reissued in paper-covers thus, in 2 Vols,

I. *Spiritual Tales*

The Washer of the Ford

St. Bride of the Isles all below from "The Washer of the Ford" & in order as they are in that book

The Fisher of Men

The Last Supper &

The Dark Nameless One in order as they are in that book

The Three Marvels of Iona

The Annir Choille

The Anointed Man ..... from "The Sin-Eater"

II. *Barbaric Tales and Tragic Romances*

I.

The Harping of Cravetheen from "Sin-Eater"

The Song of the Sword from "Washer of Ford"

The Flight of the Culdees from "Washer of the Ford"

Mircath from "Washer of the Ford"

The Laughter of Scathach the Queen from "Washer of the Ford"

II.

The Dan-nan-Ron from "Sin-Eater"

The Sin-Eater from "Sin-Eater"

The Ninth Wave " from "Sin-Eater"

The Judgment o' God from "Sin-Eater"

Green Branches from "Sin-Eater"

Isla and Eilidh from both books

This would, also, leave the present vols with some unreissued matter (Prologue and Sections III & V in "The Sin-Eater", and Prologue and "The Shadow Seers" in The W. of the Ford).

I agree with her in thinking the 3-vol, with additions, much the best and most advantageous plan.[72]

The second, however, is worth consideration also.

Please let me hear by return about this, as I shall then be able to discuss the matter with Miss Macleod, addressing me at | Poste Restante | Tarascon | Bouches du Rhone | France | (I understand that Miss M. is willing to accept an arrangement whereby she is paid by royalty on sales.)

Yours faithfully, | William Sharp

P.S. I cannot return the dummy copies of the paper-covered specimens sent by Miss Rea, who, however, can surely get others at once from Miss Hay, as I do not think the designs were done by hand. Prof. Geddes may have taken them, along with the other papers he took away.

P.S. II As I find I cannot leave London tomorrow in the morning after all, & do not now leave my house till 4 p. m. — please telegraph to me about above proposals of Miss M. — so that if possible I may decide for her before I leave.

ALS National Library of Scotland

To Edmund Clarence Stedman, December 16, [*1896*]

Wedny Night 16th Decr

(Latter part private)

My dear Stedman,

Just 3 hours after the American mail has gone your two letters have come to hand. No mail goes out again till Friday night (for Saty, 19th).

Let me first thank you from my heart for all the worrying trouble you have so generously taken — & to ask you to believe me when I tell you that I am deeply distressed that in my hurry and influenzic perturbation I sent off the bill without endorsement, and so added greatly to your trouble & just annoyance. What a good & generous fellow you are: I can think of few men who would have taken so much trouble over this matter, as you have done. Again, dear friend, I thank you.

Tomorrow I will telegraph "Sincerest thanks, Returning note tomorrow," both to let you see I have duly recd. your regd. letter & enclosure and that I am at once returning it. (I daresay "Stedman, Bronxville, N.Y." will be enough to find you).

As things are, I am just as glad Lamson didn't discount the Bill, for I have had a loan & am for the moment out of the wood, & can't afford to realise at a heavy discount.

Herewith I return this note, duly endorsed: & again accept frankly your generous aid, & will leave it with you to realise for me at due date (January 6th-9th). I am sorry Lamson added to your worry by his prolonged silences. (He seems to be quite "square" from all I hear.)

As to the Stone & Kimball matter, you will before this have received my letter on this matter. (No, Mr. Stone & I settled nothing on the way home. He seemed to think his son would at once pay up whatever you adjudged, if at all, & there each of us left it.)

A few days ago I sent to you & Mrs. Stedman, as a Xmas Greeting, the new "Evergreen": & today I posted a copy of my edn. of M. Arnold to Miss McKinney. I also asked Lamson to send you for Xmas one early copy of "Wives in Exile."

If you have not done anything with the spare 4th vol. of "The Hills of Dream," kindly direct it to be sent to C. G. D. Roberts (Kingcroft, Fredericton, New Brunswick).

By the way, please do not omit to instruct Miss McKinney kindly to inform me of all outlays on my behalf, over & above what I remitted to her — including those "Hills of Dream" copies, the telegram & other Lamson matters, etc.

I beg you will not refuse this. I do not think anyone has a right to inflict these small expenses on friends — and it will really make me

uncomfortable. As it is, I presume greatly on your loyal & affectionate good will.

Private

Alas, I found F. M. far from well. However, things go better. But as for myself worry & God knows what all have thrown me back a good deal — with the result that I am to knock off all work for 4 or 6 weeks, & go away at once from these killing fogs & damps.

So, tomorrow night or Friday morning, I leave London. I go first straight to Tarascon in Provence, to spend a few days with the Janviers — & then on to Tamaris & St. Maxime on the Riviera. I'll be back in London (to new & happier circumstances in every respect) before the end of January, thoroughly set-up again,

Love to you and Mrs. Stedman, in which my wife (who says you must be an angel) joins.

Ever gratefully yours | William Sharp

F., who has a weakness for poets & disreputable sinners generally, has taken an unnecessarily strong fancy to your photograph & to yourself as realized thro' me.

ALS Columbia University Library

To Patrick Geddes, [*late December, 1896*]

Please note (canceling any earlier direction) that, till further notice, my address will be | c/o Mons. Thos. A. Janvier | St. Remy-de-Provence | (Bouches du Rhone) | France | telegraphic | Sharp c/o Janvier | St. Remy-de-Provence (one word)

If I telegraph any arrival, change of plans, or change of address, please at once advise Elizabeth and Mary.

ALS National Library of Scotland

To Elizabeth A. Sharp, [*late December, 1896*]

St. Remy, France

... I am not going to lament that even the desire to think-out anything has left me — much less the wish to write — for I am sure that is all in the order of the day towards betterness. But I do now fully realise that I must give up everything to getting back my old buoyancy and nervous strength — and that prolonged rest and open air are the paramount needs... .

However, enough of this, henceforth I hope to have to think of and report on the up-wave only.

I am seated in a little room close to the window — and as I look out I first see the boughs of a gigantic sycamore through which the mistral is roaring with a noise like a gale at sea. Beyond this is a line of cypresses, and apparently within a stone's throw are the extraordinary wildly fantastic mountain-peaks of St. Remy. I have never seen anything like them. No wonder they are called the Dolomites of France. They are, too, in aspect unspeakably ancient and remote.

We are practically in the country, and in every way, with its hill-air and beauty, the change from Tarascon is most welcome... . There is a strange but singularly fascinating blend of north and south here just now. The roar of the mistral has a wild wintry sound, and the hissing of the wood fire is also suggestive of the north: and then outside there are the unmistakable signs of the south and those fantastic unreal like hills. I never so fully recognise how intensely northern I am than when I am in the south... .

Memoir, pp. 282–83