

## SECTION XIII

### LIFE: JULY-DECEMBER 1895

For the first three weeks of July, Sharp stayed busy in London, writing and negotiating with Herbert Stone about American editions of *The Gypsy Christ and Other Tales* (by W.S.) and *Pharais* and *The Sin-Eater* (F.M.) which appeared in the fall. The second Fiona Macleod book, *The Mountain Lovers*, was published in London on July 9<sup>th</sup> by John Lane. On the 5<sup>th</sup>, the Sharps spent a night with the Grant Allens in Surrey, and on the 13<sup>th</sup> he went down to Burford Bridge for a dinner meeting of the Omar Khayyam Club, an organization of literary figures dedicated to the pleasures of good wine and food. Many important writers attended (*Memoir*, 246), chief among them George Meredith who was the guest of honor. He was lured to the dinner by his friend Edward Clodd, the club's president, and arrived only for the dessert course. Clodd welcomed him "in a charming and eloquent speech not devoid of pathos," and Meredith, overcoming his famed reticence about speaking in public, responded graciously and wittily. In the fall of 1895, Clodd recommended Sharp for membership in the Omar Khayyam Club, and he was pleased to accept.

The Sharps planned to spend August in Edinburgh to participate in Patrick Geddes' Summer School and then go on to the Kyles of Bute in the West for September. On the 13<sup>th</sup> of July, Sharp told Murray Gilchrist he would like to pay him a visit on his way to Scotland in about ten days. When Geddes learned Sharp was coming north in advance of his wife, he proposed a day or two hiking trip. Sharp declined, saying he could "see no one for the week I shall be 'hanging about.'" Until the end of July, he would be in Edinburgh only intermittently. Thereafter he would be available to talk with Geddes about *The Evergreen* and other publications of the new firm. Sharp soon told Gilchrist he could not leave London until the morning of the 22<sup>nd</sup> and had to be in Edinburgh that evening. He could not stop to visit with Gilchrist.

A clue to his whereabouts during the following week appears in a late July letter Fiona Macleod wrote Grant Allen to thank him for his favorable review of *The Mountain Lovers* in the *Westminster Review*. As he passed through Edinburgh, Sharp had his sister copy this letter into

the Fiona hand with a “temporary” return address of 144 North St. | St. Andrews | Fife. Sharp carried it to St. Andrews and mailed it from there. In the letter Fiona says she is visiting friends in St. Andrews and her cousin Will Sharp is “coming to spend the weekend with me – or I with him, I should say, as I am to be his guest, at almost the only Celtic place we know of on this too ‘dour’ shoreland of Fife.” Subsequent correspondence indicates Edith Rinder was vacationing in or near St. Andrews until late August when she left for Brittany to collect folklore. Sharp’s insistence on being alone that week and his transporting of Fiona to visit him in St. Andrews suggests he was using a rendezvous with Fiona as a cover for one with Edith. As the years went by Sharp claimed Fiona as his cousin and often hinted they were romantically involved though both were married to another. Fiona’s movements as portrayed by Sharp in correspondence and conversations were often modeled on those of Edith. When Edith was in Scotland, Fiona was there; when Edith was abroad, so was Fiona; when Edith was with him, Fiona was with him. This tracking was a convenient way for Sharp to remember Fiona’s supposed whereabouts. It also signaled his predisposition to conflate the two women, one real and the other imagined.

Early in August, Sharp sent a note from Edinburgh to Stanley Little to say he was far from well; his “lectures here have been a marked success – but they have told upon me heavily.” Elizabeth said her husband “was seized with a severe heart attack and all his notes fell to the ground” while delivering the first of ten scheduled lectures on “Life & Art” at Geddes’ Summer School (*Memoir*, 251). The plural in the letter to Little implies more than one lecture was delivered, but apparently that was not the case. As much as he liked to sketch out the topic of lectures, Sharp was filled with anxiety by the thought of having to stand and deliver one. The “heart attack” was probably an attack of angina brought on by nervous apprehension. In any case, he quickly repaired to the Pettycur Inn in Kinghorn on the north side of the Firth of Forth to recuperate where, no doubt, Edith Rinder visited to assist in his recovery. Elizabeth stayed in Edinburgh “to keep open house for the entertainment of the students.” At the end of August, both Sharp’s went west to Tighnabruaich in the Kyles of Brute to the cottage they had rented with Sharp’s mother and sisters for the month of September.

During the next few weeks, in addition to writing, revising, and reading proofs, Sharp corresponded with Stone and Kimball both as himself (regarding the publication of his *Gypsy Christ*) and as Fiona (to arrange simultaneous publication of *The Sin-Eater* in Chicago and Edinburgh). Elizabeth's mother joined them from her home in London in mid-September. On the 18th, Sharp told Stone their party was breaking up the next day, but he and Elizabeth would stay on, perhaps till the end of the month. By the 26th, plans had changed. He had "to take my mother-in-law (at present on a short visit to us) back to London," he wrote to Gilchrist, "as she is prostrated by a telegram from abroad saying that her son has suddenly developed a malignant cancer and is dying – so rapidly that he must give up hope of coming home." This turn of events upset his plans to spend "three days in Edinburgh on important business: my day and night in York: & my two days with you," but he assured Gilchrist he would stop to visit in late October when he would be returning to Edinburgh.

On the 27th, the Sharps, with her mother, left the Kyles of Bute for Edinburgh where Sharp posted a long birthday letter to E. C. Stedman. Stedman should receive from Stone and Kimball "on or about the 8th" – Stedman's birthday – a copy of *The Gypsy Christ*. He had hoped to send Stedman for his birthday a book of "prose imaginings," *Ecce Puella*, but Elkin Mathews had delayed publication until late October. Stedman would also soon receive from Stone and Kimball as a special present a copy of the American edition of *The Sin-Eater* by his cousin Fiona Macleod, who "is now admitted," Sharp said, "to be the head of the Scots-Celtic movement – as W. B. Yeats is of the Irish-Celtic." The British edition of *The Sin-Eater*, which was to be published in Edinburgh, "is novel & beautiful as a piece of book-making – though I say it, who am responsible for its type, paper, binding, & general format! For (apart from *The Evergreen*) it is the first publication of the new Edinburgh firm, 'Patrick Geddes & Colleagues,' of which I am chief literary partner." The books published by the Geddes firm in 1895-96 are, in fact, beautiful examples of bookmaking, and from this statement we learn Sharp played a central role in their design. That he also played a critical role in their content is clear enough for they were all written by him (as Fiona Macleod), by his wife (*Lyra Celtica*, which included a lengthy introduction by William Sharp), and by his close friends Edith Rinder and Ernest Rhys. From Edinburgh on 28 September, Sharp sent Stone an article for *The Chap-Book* on the Belgian

Renaissance, an article designed to increase the sales of Edith Rinder's *The Massacre of the Innocents*. It would not be necessary to send Mrs. Rinder proofs, he told Stone, because she was anxious for the book to appear in the fall.

Back in London, Sharp told Gilchrist he was returning to Edinburgh sooner than expected and would spend a day with him between the 13th and the 19th. He had sent Gilchrist, who knew the Fiona secret, a set of proofs of the "Tragic Landscapes" section of Fiona's *Sin-Eater*, and he now asks what he thought of the three "experiments" in that section, particularly "The Tempest" which was based on an incident at Phenice Croft when Gilchrist and his partner were visiting. Sharp returned to Edinburgh on 12 October, again without stopping to see Gilchrist, and on the 14th he asked Gilchrist how to go from York to Sheffield to see him when he returned to London at the weekend. Two days later, he told Gilchrist he was far from well with a diarrheic weakness and wondered if Gilchrist could meet him on Friday the 18th after 9:00 p.m. at the Station Hotel in York where he would spend that night and where Gilchrist would be his guest if he could make it. That meeting proved impossible, and at the end of the month Sharp wrote to Gilchrist in a state of agony: "I am in the valley of Deep Shadow just now. Great suffering, of a kind that must not be shown, has led me stumbling and blindfold among morasses and quicksands. I see the shining of my star — and so have hope still, and courage. But, while I stumble on, I suffer." He ended the letter by asking Gilchrist again to read and comment on one of the "Tragic Landscapes" in *The Sin-Eater*: "It will help me, and I need help just now."

Sharp had a compelling need for a male friend to whom he could bare his soul and confide his deepest feelings. That need was associated, doubtless, with his emotional distance from his father when he was a boy and by his father's early death which prevented a healing of the breach. Gilchrist served as his confidant in the mid-nineties, just as John Elder and Hall Caine had in the early 80s, as Stanley Little had in the early nineties, and as others would in future years. It is not surprising that Sharp chose Gilchrist as his confidant about the despair brought on by the splitting of self that followed his creation of Fiona Macleod and the extramarital relationship associated with it. As evidenced in his writings and presumably in his conversations with Sharp, Gilchrist was drawn to speculating about the dark mysteries embedded

in the human psyche. He had experienced a splitting of self similar but not identical to Sharp's. He was living with George Garfitt (see note to Sharp letter to Gilchrist, 7 Oct 1893) in a long-lasting homosexual relationship, but the nature of their relationship remained secret, and Gilchrist continued to project a decidedly masculine image to the world. Though the subject of gender identity is not openly mentioned in Sharp's correspondence with Gilchrist, there are many hints. The confidential tone and confessional content of Sharp's letters suggest they must have shared their concerns when together about issues of dual identities and gender reversals. Even as all his promises to visit Gilchrist in the summer/fall of 1895 fell through, Sharp continued telling him how much he needed him, needed to talk with him.

We gain further insight into the state of mind that caused Sharp to reach out in despair to Gilchrist from a passage in Elizabeth's *Memoir* (292):

The production of the Fiona Macleod work was accompanied at a heavy cost to the author as that side of his nature deepened and became dominant. The strain upon his energies was excessive: not only from the necessity of giving expression to the two sides of his nature; but because of his desire, that, while under the cloak of secrecy F. M. should develop and grow, the reputation of William Sharp should at the same time be maintained. Moreover each of the two natures had its own needs and desires, interests and friends. The needs of each were not always harmonious one with the other, but created a complex condition that led to a severe nervous collapse.

Here Elizabeth was writing about his condition in 1898, but the problem emerged as early as 1894 as he tried to come to terms with the effects on his psyche of his creation of a female persona who was assuming a separate identity.

By living with Garfitt, Gilchrist had acknowledged his dual nature, at least privately, but he continued to be haunted by demons. Though Sharp needed a close emotional relationship with another man, his sense of duality had taken the extreme form of a woman emerging to live along side him in his body. He seems not have needed or desired a sexual relationship with another man. Rather he continued to need his first cousin and wife, Elizabeth Sharp, as a companion and female confidant. And the "needs and desires, interests and friends" of the Fiona Macleod side of his "nature," which was "deepening and becoming dominant," required the presence and care of Edith Rinder. It was she who had facilitated the objectification of his female self and with

whom he identified the female within. “Without her,” he said, “there would have been no ‘Fiona Macleod’” (*Memoir*, 222). He had come to love that woman; he needed to be with her; and, given the content of several Sharp sonnets in the manuscript division of the National Library of Scotland, wanted to father a child with her.

To the extent that Sharp identified Edith Rinder with the woman he experienced in himself, one might say one part of his self had fallen in love with another – that he had fallen in love with himself. In the fall of 1880, when he was 25, he wrote a poignant letter to John Elder, the brother of Adelaide Elder, one of Elizabeth’s good friends. A graduate of Cambridge and three years older than Sharp, Elder was suffering from tuberculosis and spending the winters in New Zealand. He died a young man in 1881. Not surprisingly, Sharp had engaged him in discussions of religion and the prospects for immortality and adopted him as a confidant whom he professedly loved. On 20 November 1880, Sharp wrote to him: “Don’t despise me when I say that in some things I am more a woman than a man – and when my heart is touched strongly I lavish more love upon the one who does so than I have perhaps any right to expect returned; and then I have so few friends that when I do find one I am ever jealous of his or her absence.” [Sharp to Elder August 1879 and November 20, 1880] This passage must, of course, be read in the context of Tennyson’s relationship with Arthur Henry Hallam, Matthew Arnold’s with Arthur Hugh Clough, and many similar close relationships between men in 19th century Britain. In 1881, according to Elizabeth, “rarely a day passed in which he did not try to imagine himself living the life of a woman, to see through her eyes, and feel and view life from her standpoint, and so vividly that ‘sometimes I forget I am not the woman I am trying to imagine’” (*Memoir*, 53-3). One of the principal poems in his first volume of poetry (*The Human Inheritance*, 1882) was an elaborate treatment of childbirth in “Motherhood.” Edith Rinder was a woman of great beauty when Sharp fell in love with her in Rome in January 1892. Two years later Sharp had turned her into a living, breathing objectification of the woman within him who, by an act of creative imagination, emerged as Fiona Macleod. The implications of that phenomenon, the inescapable fact that one part of his self was in love with the other, produced the fear and guilt that was haunting him and that he described so movingly to Gilchrist in the fall and early winter of 1895.

November and December were relatively uneventful months. Sharp continued with his writing and negotiations for the publication by Stone and Kimball of his *Gypsy Christ* and Fiona's *Pharais* and *Sin-Eater*. The firm's delays in sending proofs and checks increasingly annoyed him, but he seems not have been aware that its managerial and financial problems would soon lead to the firm's break-up and dissolution. At the end of December, Sharp wrote a respectful and detailed letter to Sir George Douglas, a family friend in Scotland who had guessed the Fiona Macleod writings were the work of William Sharp. Sharp admitted the truth and asked Douglas to refrain from telling anyone. He also spoke of Fiona as though she was a separate person. He included several lines about the role of Edith Rinder in the emergence of Fiona Macleod and then crossed them out as "too personal." Sharp's characterization of Fiona Macleod in this letter as a "puzzling literary entity" is both apt and revealing of the limits to his understanding of the phenomenon with which he was living. In his response to Sharp's letter (*Memoir*, 253-4), Douglas obliged him by speaking of Miss Macleod as a separate person, but said he detected her "mystical tendency" in the poems Sharp wrote in the early 1880s. In Sharp's letter to Douglas, there is no hint of the troubled state of mind that emerged in his letters to Gilchrist.

He did tell both men that Elizabeth would soon leave for Italy. Her doctor had ordered her to spend the three winter months in a warm climate. Only to Gilchrist did Sharp express his worries about the strain this development placed on their finances. Far more worrying, however, was his state of his mind. At the close of the year, he wrote to Gilchrist: "1896 comes with a gauntleted hand. It will be a hard fight against the squadrons of Destiny (for I hear the trampling of an obscure foe, and menacing vague cries) — but perhaps I may — for a time, and that is the utmost each of us can expect — emerge victor. What a bitter strange mystery fate is!" Sharp then asked Gilchrist to recall his disturbed state of mind when Gilchrist visited him at Phenice Croft in the summer of 1893. The current environment and circumstances are different, he said, but "the same two human souls are once more whelmed in the same disastrous tides, & have once more to struggle blindly against what seems a baffling doom." The two struggling souls are those of Edith Rinder and William Sharp, bound together in a hopeless love, and those of Fiona

Macleod and William Sharp bound together in the same body. That Sharp and Rinder could not live together permanently was cause for continuing depression, and the splitting of self, verging toward schizophrenia, was frightening. One cannot help but wonder if Elizabeth's decision to spend three months in Italy was motivated, at least in part, by her desire to remove herself from what seemed a hopeless situation and to give her husband and Edith Rinder time and space to work matters out for themselves.

1895 had seen the launching of the Geddes publishing firm in Edinburgh with Sharp in control of its literary affairs, the appearance from the Geddes firm of *The Evergreen*, the publication in London of Fiona's *The Mountain Lovers* and Sharp's *Ecce Puella*, the publication in Edinburgh of Fiona's *The Sin-Eater*, and the publication in the United States of Sharp's *Vistas* and *The Gypsy Christ* and Fiona's *Pharais* and *The Sin-Eater*. It is not surprising that this level of productivity under two names, negotiations with publishers, his new responsibilities with the Geddes publishing firm, and the frustrations and fears in his personal life had, by the end of the year, taken a heavy toll on Sharp's physical and mental well-being.

## LETTERS: JULY – DECEMBER 1895

*To J. Stanley Little, July 5, 1895*

Rutland House | Greencroft Gardens | So. Hampstead | 5/7/95

My dear Stanley

Just a hurried line (as I am off to stay overnight with the Grant Allens<sup>1</sup>) to say that if you can do anything — as, I remember, you did so well before — for my cousin & dear friend, Miss Fiona Macleod's new book, I hope you will generously do so. It is called "The Mountain Lovers", & will be published on Tuesday next by John Lane, in the Keynotes series.

"Pharais" — Miss F.M.'s first book, you will recollect — made a great impression, & has made her name well known in America as well as here.

I am wildly busy — literally working from 12 to 14 hours daily. Thankful for a brief respite. I have also all my lectures to prepare yet — over 70,000 words to write in 10 days or so!<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Allens lived in Hind Head, Surrey. Born in Kingston, Ontario, Grant Allen was educated there, in the United States, and in Dieppe before entering Merton College, Oxford, where he obtained a bachelor's degree. A free thinker and a prolific writer, he had many friends in the London literary establishment. He became famous in 1895 with the publication of *The Woman Who Did*, a novel about a woman who refused to marry her lover because of the unfairness of the marriage laws. The novel was widely attacked and satirized and also widely praised by advocates of women's rights. Frank Harris, who knew Allen well, said of him: "He could be described with more 'ists' than anyone else I ever saw. He was an atheist and pacifist and socialist, a botanist and zoologist and optimist, a chemist and physicist, a scientist of scientists, a monist, meliorist and hedonist . . . . A walk with him was an education in botany and zoology, and he had no whimsies or quirks; he was always reasonable, good-tempered, vivacious, bright, and interested in every human interest. . . . He was, also, astonishingly articulate; a super-journalist; he wrote excellent prose, and could turn you out a first-rate article on almost any subject from the growth of the idea of God to the habits of the caterpillar, at a moment's notice, and without perceptible exertion. I used to say his typewriter disturbed no one, for it went in one long even click."

<sup>2</sup> For Geddes' Summer School in Edinburgh in August 1895.

Affectionate greetings to you and la sposa — | Will

P.S. I have directed Lane to send you a copy direct. I hope he'll do so.

ALS Princeton

*To J. Stanley Little, July 9, 1895*<sup>1</sup>

Thanks, old man.

I am indeed distressed to hear of your serious anxieties. I do hope things will get better than at the moment they appear. No man has worked more steadfastly, more courageously, & in every way worthily: & you do deserve to have your shares of the spoils of Egypt. One good big spoil came to you with 'la belle Maud' -- & that *must* bring good fortune with it.<sup>2</sup>

If good wishes could smooth your way, you would simply slide!

Ever yours affectly, | Will

ACS Princeton

*To Herbert Stuart Stone, [July 9?, 1895]*<sup>3</sup>

*Ecce Puella | And Other Prose Imaginings.*<sup>4</sup>

I. *Ecce Puella*. | II. *The Lost Journal of Piero di Cosimo*. | III. *The Birth, Death, & Resurrection of a Tear*. | IV. *The Sister of Compassion* | V. *The Hill Wind* | VI. *Love in a Mist*  
All are fantasies of one kind or another — Nos. 3, 4, & 5 quite short, especially 4 and 5. Of the reprints, No. II was much noted 2 or 3 years ago when it appeared in two nos. of *The Scottish Art Review*.<sup>5</sup> I like it one of my best prose things. No. I is a condensed version of the successful

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<sup>1</sup> Date from postmark.

<sup>2</sup> Little recently married, and he seems to have lost his job as a reporter/columnist on a local newspaper.

<sup>3</sup> The first portion of this letter is missing. Its approximate date is established by Sharp's statement that he hears *The Mountain Lovers* has been published but has not seen a copy. It was published by John Lane (London) on 9 July 1895.

<sup>4</sup> Sharp's *Ecce Puella and Other Prose Imaginings* was published on November 1, 1895 by Elkin Matthews in London and simultaneously by Stone and Kimball in Chicago. See Sharp's 2 November letter to Edward Clodd. At least some copies of the edition carry the date 1896.

<sup>5</sup> "Fragments from the Lost Journal of Piero di Cosimo," *The Scottish Art Review*, (June, 1890).

monograph on “Fair Women” I wrote to commission of P. G. Hamerton for Seeley & Co.<sup>1</sup> It has I think, verve. No. 6, is a narrative-fantasy on “Young Love”: and appeared with illustrations in *Good Words*.<sup>2</sup>

I told E. Mathews (who suggested someone, I forget whom, but I think Copeland and Day)<sup>3</sup> that I had virtually promised that so far as I am concerned I must give you the first offer of all my books for America. He said he wd. write to you. I have signed my E. & A.<sup>4</sup> rights with him — on this condition.

So, I hope you may be able to issue it there.

All the more reason for the G/C<sup>5</sup> to come out, as arranged, at the beginning of October.

I do hope you are having a good time, but not overtiring yourself. When do you leave Paris — & when are you to be here again?

It is an awful rush here just now.

Cordial greetings, amico mio, | Yours sincerely, | William Sharp

P.S. I note by the evening paper that my cousin Miss Macleod’s new book is out — but I have not yet seen it.<sup>6</sup>

It is just possible I may be able to post a few more galleys today. If not, all remaining will go by next mail. Have just done up Mrs. Rinder’s MS for her.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Fair Women in Painting and Poetry* (London: Seeley and Company, July, 1894).

<sup>2</sup> “Love in a Mist,” *Good Words*, 34 (December, 1893), 845-850.

<sup>3</sup> Copeland and Day Publishing Company in Boston.

<sup>4</sup> Sharp signed the English and American rights for *Ecce Puella* with Elkin Matthews on the condition that he give first offer for American publication to Stone and Kimball.

<sup>5</sup> *The Gypsy Christ and other Tales* (Chicago: Stone & Kimball, 1895).

<sup>6</sup> *The Mountain Lovers*.

P.S. By registered Book-Post goes herewith (in one packet):

(1)The Revised Type-Copy of “The Gypsy Christ” itself

(2)First Galleys of Proofs so far received —

namely

last 3 galleys of “Madge o’ the Pool” (7, 8, & 9)

first 3 Galleys of “The Coward” (10, 11, & 12)

& first 2 Galleys of “A Venetian Idyl” (16 & 17)

So that, I have not up to date recd. galleys 1 to 6 inclusive, or 13, 14, or 15

ALS Huntington

*To Mrs. Grant Allen, July 11, 1895*

Rutland House | Greencroft Gardens, | So. Hampstead | 11/7/95

Dear Mrs. Allen,

(Pray excuse a pencilled line — as I have to write away from home & *enroute*) I am going to put a further strain upon your hospitality by asking you to give a small space on your shelves to the accompanying two recent books of mine.<sup>2</sup> Both are (revised & augmented) American new editions — but I have no English copies, in fact I am myself without copies of some of my books.

We did so very much enjoy our visit to Hind Head. It was a pleasure to breathe that fine air, & to stay in your more than pretty house: to meet Mr. Clodd<sup>3</sup> again, and to make the

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<sup>1</sup> *The Massacre of the Innocents and Other Tales* (Chicago: Stone and Kimball, 1895) was a group of Belgian stories collected and translated by Edith Wingate Rinder.

<sup>2</sup> Sharp’s *Vistas* (1894) and *The Gypsy Christ* (1895).

<sup>3</sup> Edward Clodd (1840-1930) worked as a banker for the London Joint Stock Bank from 1870 – 1915. A prolific writer, a friend of Charles Darwin, a folklorist, and chair of the Rationalist Press Association from 1906-1913, he was a close friend of Grant Allen. He published *Grant Allen: A Memoir* in 1900, the year after Allen died. Among his other books are *The Childhood of the World* (1873), *The Childhood Religions* (1875), *Jesus of Nazareth* (1886), *A Primer of*

acquaintance of Dr. Bird<sup>1</sup> (who is as sweet & sunshining as a mellow day in St. Martin's Summer) — to see and hear your Nightjar! — and above all to see something of and get to know better G.A. & yourself.

He is in every sense of the term “a good fellow” — and you (let me speak *moré Scotico*) — “a bonnie winsome lassie”: and it will always be a South Wind for us — as my Island-cousin would say — whenever & wherever we meet you or “Grant”.

Friendship & Comradeship give something of the best that Life has to offer: and I, who already account myself rich, am now the wealthier by two new fortunes!

Chère Amie — think no more of that other matter.<sup>2</sup> It seems to have died a natural death. The man who told it to me admitted that it was the crudest rumour — & that he himself had contradicted it the moment he heard you were both together in Paris. Honestly, it appears to be dead & done for. The lady's name turns out to be — Belloc! So you will at once see how the confusion came about. “Marie Belloc”<sup>3</sup> sounds French: that she was “a literary Parisian” was presumably inferred from the fact that she translated the De Goncourt Journals: — in a word, it is clear, how, with a heedless tongue to wag, the story grew from a shadowy ill-conditioned guess into a foolish rumour.

So set your mind at rest. (Cotton<sup>4</sup> has heard nothing — and he hears ‘everything’: which is another proof.) Frankly, you & G.A. have no cause now to worry. “Let be”, as the Aberdonian motto has it. Let me add that you have too many & loyal friends to make it possible

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*Evolution* (1895), *Tom Tit Tot: An Essay on Savage Philosophies in Folk Tale* (1898), *The Story of the Alphabet* (1900), and *Animism: Seed of Religion* (1905).

<sup>1</sup> Unable to identify.

<sup>2</sup> Sharp must have passed on a rumor about Grant Allen and “a literary Parisian” that upset Mrs. Allen and proved to be untrue.

<sup>3</sup> Marie Adelaide (Belloc) Lowndes (1868-1947) was a translator and prolific author. Besides translating *The de Goncourt Journals* in 1895, she wrote many novels, among them *Another Man's Wife* (1934), *And Call It An Accident* (1936), *After the Storm* (1941).

<sup>4</sup> James Sutherland Cotton.

for any foolish or cruel rumour to survive. As a matter of fact, this unfortunate affair is really moribund, & will soon be dead.

You & G.A. are built to be happy & comradely throughout life: how, indeed, could he fail to be so with one so winsome and so young in all ways always beside him — or you, with so brilliant & interesting & good a fellow.

The gods are with you — so, Prosper!!!

Cordially & let me say affectionately | Your friend, | William Sharp

P.S. Please tell G. A. that I have written to Stone. Also that I have written to Mr. Alden<sup>1</sup> of *Harper's Magazine*.

P.S. Lane<sup>2</sup> sh<sup>d</sup> be more careful how he speaks. Tell G. A. (subrosa) not to give himself away. (I am referring to the MS. book in L's hands.) But this of course is strictly private.

ALS Pierpont Morgan

*To Richard Le Gallienne, July 11, 1895*

Rutland House, | Greencroft Gardens. | So. Hampstead. | 11th July. 1895

My dear Le Gallienne,

Will you be at the Omar Khayyám dinner at Burford Bridge on Saturday night?<sup>3</sup> I suppose it is likely, as you are a member. If so, we can have a few words as to our ability to

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<sup>1</sup> Henry Mills Alden was editor of *Harper's Magazine* in New York and a friend of Sharp's.

<sup>2</sup> John Lane have suggested to Grant Allen, who knew the truth, that Sharp was the author of Fiona Macleod's *The Mountain Lovers*. The book was officially published on 9 July, two days prior to the date of this letter.

<sup>3</sup> Many well-known writers were members of The Omar Khayyam Club which was dedicated, as its name suggests, to good food and wine and convivial companionship. Edward Clodd was the club's president. This dinner on 13 July was memorable because Clodd had enticed his friend George Meredith to attend. Though famously reticent about appearing and speaking in public, Meredith, unbeknownst to him, turned out to be the guest of honor and gave a witty talk to express his appreciation. Sharp was made a member of the club in the fall of 1895 upon Clodd's recommendation (*Memoir*, 246).

arrange a meeting, either here or with you (for my wife is anxious to see the little one, & also your house — as well as you).

I am forwarding the cutting from tonight's *Star* to my cousin, Miss Fiona Macleod; who, I know, will be gratified by your kind words of praise for "The Mountain Lovers." I must again, though, make a friendly protest against your inference as to her pseudonymity.<sup>1</sup> Please Don't! — for her sake much more than for that of

Yours ever in friendship, | William Sharp

ALS University of Texas at Austin

*To Herbert Stuart Stone, [July 12?, 1895]*

9. Upper Coltbridge Terrace | Murrayfield, Midlothian

Dear Mr. Stone

Herewith I send to you one of the first published copies of *The Mountain Lovers* which Mr. Lane has forwarded to me. I should much like to know what you think of it, when you have time to write.

With hopes that you will have a pleasant sojourn in Paris (for your address in which city I am indebted to Mr. Sharp).

Believe me | Yours Very Truly | Fiona Macleod

P.S. Shall I, when ready about the end of the month or early in August, send the retouched *Pharais* and the "Sin-Eater" volume (my best, I think) direct to you or to America? <sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> La Gallienne was staying with Grant Allen in Surrey in early summer 1894 when copies of *Pharais* arrived for them to read and review. He recognized in the work an image that had appeared in a Sharp poem and said to Allen "I'll bet you anything that 'Fiona Macleod' is no one else but — William Sharp." Allen accepted Fiona at face value and praised the book in the *Westminster Review*. La Gallienne, however, said in his review in *The Star*, "Either Miss Macleod is plagiarizing or William Sharp is masquerading as Fiona Macleod." When he saw the review Sharp sent La Gallienne a telegram saying, "For God's Sake, shut your mouth" and then a letter promising an explanation when they next met (La Gallienne, *The Romantic 90s*, G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1926). When La Gallienne reviewed Fiona's *Mountain Lovers* in *The Star* in early July 1895, he again hinted that Fiona Macleod was a pseudonym and again Sharp asked him not to raise that suspicion. This letter shows Sharp trying to arrange a meeting with Le Gallienne to "explain" about Fiona Macleod. Sharp's 15 July 1895 letter to La Gallienne indicates the meeting would probably have to wait until later in the year when La Gallienne returned from America.

*To Robert Murray Gilchrist, July 13, 1895*

Rutland House | Greencroft Gardens | So. Hampstead | Saty | 13:7:95

My dear Gilchrist,

If I am to have the pleasure of a glimpse of you & your mother & sisters, on my way to Scotland (& I won't be returning till after the beginning of October) it must, alas, be a very brief one: & about the beginning of the week after next. Will you please send me a line by return to say (1) if this date (i.e. abt 23<sup>rd</sup>) will suit you & (2) how Holmesfield is to be reached from Sheffield. If I were to leave by the 10.15 from London on Tuesday morning — that is, on Tuesday the 23<sup>rd</sup> — which is due at Sheffield at 1.42 p.m. how could I get on to you? (I shd. perforce need to leave next morning.)

It is possible I may be able to leave London on Monday night — sleep at Sheffield (arriving at 2.30 am.) — & go on in the morning: but this is not likely: indeed if I can leave on Monday (22<sup>nd</sup>) at all it wd. probably be in the morning at 10.15. Even thus, I must add that my plans are still uncertain. But I would like to get a glimpse of you, if possible. I'll know definitely in a few days.

Our friend Fiona Macleod did not send you a copy of “The Mountain Lovers” as she sent one to your mother. She hopes you will read it, & let me know what you think of it. It seems to me to strike a deeper & stronger note than *Pharais*.

Cordial regards to your Mother & Sisters | Affectionately yours | William Sharp

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<sup>1</sup> A “retouched” version of the first English edition of *Pharais* (Frank Murray, 1894) was published by Stone and Kimball in 1895. By making slight changes in the text, it was possible to obtain a separate U.S. copyright. Simultaneous publication of Fiona Macleod's collection of tales called *The Sin-Eater* in November 1895 by Patrick Geddes and Colleagues in Edinburgh and Stone and Kimball in Chicago assured copyright in both countries. Stone had gone from London to Paris where, presumably, he planned to stay for a time.

Am just off to Surrey, where (Burford Bridge) the Omar Khayyam banquet is to be held, with George Meredith as the Presiding Genius.<sup>1</sup>

ALS Sheffield City Archives.

*To Patrick Geddes, July 15, 1895*

Rutland House, | Greencroft Gardens, | So. Hampstead. | Monday 15<sup>th</sup> July: '95

My dear Geddes,

In my concurrent note to your wife, I have told her how elated I am by a letter I have had (i.e. F. M. has had) from George Meredith. He slips the laurel into Fiona's dark locks right royally, & prophesies big things of her. I know you will be glad to hear this. Also, you will be glad to know that I am in robust health again.

I am to be in Scotland next week, but shall not be in Edinburgh, save intermittently & by swallow-flights of an hour's duration at most, until the 30<sup>th</sup> or 31<sup>st</sup>. On the latter date my wife arrives — so that we shall have 3 or 4 days before the Session begins.

No, my dear fellow, gladly as I would be off with you somewhere for a day or two, it is not practicable. I can see no one for the week I shall be "hanging about." I must be alone for a bit.

As soon as we can, though, we must have a talk about the *Evergreen*, & publishing schemes. I have enlisted the promised support of Wm. Strang,<sup>2</sup> the West-Country etcher & painter (the strongest living etcher, I think) & others for future *Evergreens*: & have also been prowling through several literary preserves, with fierce publisher-eyes. And done well, prospectively.

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<sup>1</sup> Meredith was the guest of honor at this dinner and, perhaps, the leading genius in attendance, but he did not preside.

<sup>2</sup>William Strang (1859-1921), painter and sculptor, was President of the International Society of Sculptors, Painters, and Gravers from 1918 to 1921. He won the Silver Medal for Etching at the Paris International Exhibition in 1889 and the First Class Gold Medal for Painting at the Dresden International Exhibition in 1897. A copy of Strang's fine etching of William Sharp (1896) is the frontispiece for EAS's *Memoir*.

When you are in Edinburgh will you speak to Constable's<sup>1</sup> in connection with the Printing etc, of *The Sin-Eater* etc. It will make a book about the size of *The Mountain Lovers*, & should, I think, be got up in somewhat the same way as to type, paper, & general format. I should like to send it to the printers early in August: as it has to come out simultaneously in America & this country early in October. I'll see to its being well announced, in due time.

*Lyra Celtica* need not, indeed cannot, go to Press till September. Coming after *The Mountain Lovers*, I think *The S/Eater* will go well: & will probably attract much more attention.

My 'Lectures' will be as over.<sup>2</sup>

In great haste, | Ever yours, | William Sharp

ALS NLS

*To Richard Le Gallienne, July 15, 1895*

Rutland House, | Greencroft Gardens, | So. Hampstead, | Monday | 15/7/95

My dear Le Gallienne

Thanks for your note. I am sorry you were unable to get to the Omar dinner: a memorable as well as a pleasant one, because of George Meredith.

I am sorry we cannot meet this week. I wanted to have a long chat with you — for I too have missed the pleasant intimacy of old. And now, I fear, there must be a postponement until you return from America: for I leave town next Sunday or Monday for Scotland, & shall not be back until early in October, by which time you will be in the States, I suppose. (Do you know Hall Caine? He goes out to America also sometime in September.) However, my dear fellow, I am now & always your admiring confrère as well as your affectionate friend — and so a further lapse of time won't be a douche upon our cordiality when we do meet!

I suppose there is no chance of your being Grosvenor Club (Bond St) way any late afternoon this week? If so, & if I knew in advance, I could arrange that.

In one of the lectures (that on "The Return to Nature") I have to give before long in Edinburgh I lay great success on your recent poetic work, and quote the lovely "Ode to Spring"

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<sup>1</sup> *The Sin-Eater* was printed in Edinburgh by W. H. White and Company, The Riverside Press.

<sup>2</sup> For a list of the lectures Sharp planned to deliver in Edinburgh, see *Memoir*, 251.

and “Tree Worship”: as, in another, that on Contemp: Pessimism, I give your delightful “Animalcule on Man”.<sup>1</sup>

I have read this last book of yours 3 or 4 times now, & with increasing appreciation and pleasure.

Yes, my boy, be just to Miss Macleod. Anything you can say for her will be gratefully appreciated, but she as well as her unworthy cousin earnestly hope for no more confusion respecting her actual authorship of “The Mountain Lovers” etc., publicly or privately.

More about her when we meet. (George Meredith has just sent to her present Argyllshire address a letter of splendid praise & encouragement. He knows that she is my cousin: but, I hope, will never be ‘put about’ by hearing any other rumour.)

Affectionately Your Friend, | William Sharp

P.S. I shall have a book of my own to send to you early in October.<sup>2</sup> I’ll send it to Mulberry Cottage — unless you are to be away till late in the year, in wh. case I’ll get your American address from Lane.

ALS University of Texas at Austin

*To George Meredith, [mid-July 1895]*

Upper Coltbridge Terrace, | Murrayfield.

Dear Sir,

Will you gratify one of your most loyal readers by the acceptance of the accompanying book? Nothing helped me so much, or gave me so much enduring pleasure, as your generous message to me about my first book, *Pharais*, which you sent through my cousin, Mr. William Sharp.

Naturally, I was eager it should appeal to you — not only because I have long taken keener delight in your writings than in those of any living author, but also because you are Prince of Celtland. . . .

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<sup>1</sup>These three poems appeared in Le Gallienne’s *Robert Louis Stevenson and Other Poems* (Boston: Copeland and Day, 1895).

I hope you will be able to read, and perhaps care for, *The Mountain Lovers*. It is not a story of the Isles, like *Pharais*, but of the remote hill-country in the far northwest. I know how busy you are: so do not consider it necessary to acknowledge either the book or this letter. Still, if some happy spirit move you, I need not say that even the briefest line from you would be a deep pleasure to

Yours, with gratitude and homage, | Fiona Macleod

*Memoir* 244-5

*To Robert Murray Gilchrist, July 18, [1895]*

Rutland House | Greencroft Gardens | So. Hampstead | 18<sup>th</sup> July

My dear Boy

I am so very sorry, but it is now impossible for me to stop on my way north. I regret this the less, however, as it would have to be a few hours visit at best: while, on my return south early in October, it will be possible for me to stay a day or two.

In a word, I must be in Edinburgh on Monday night — & as I cannot possibly leave London before Monday morning, my stopping en route is out of the question. I did warn you of this, I remember. Please, too, express my regret to your mother & sisters. But I promise, so far as it is possible to foresee, to stop with you on the way back.

I am glad you like “The Mountain Lovers.” But do write to me about how you feel it, & what you think of it. You, & a few like you, constitute the sole public for whose opinion I really care. Your mother, too, has kindly promised to write: & I need hardly say that she, likewise, is one of the few I allude to. Did I tell you of the letter of splendid praise & recognition which George Meredith wrote to Miss Macleod. It is one of several, some wholly unexpected: but a letter like that of GM’s remains a kind of beacon in one’s life. “Be assured,” he adds, “that I am among those whom you kindle.” Yes: to kindle: that is what one wants to do. Elsewhere, alluding to a certain quality in the book, he says: “How rare is this! I do not know it elsewhere.”

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<sup>2</sup> *Ecce Puella and Other Prose Imaginings* which was published on 1 November 1895. See note to Sharp’s July 9?, 1895 letter to Stone.

I know you will be glad.

Your affectionate friend | William Sharp

P.S. On & after Monday my address will be (for July - August) | c/o J. Oliphant Esq. | 14  
Ramsey Garden | Edinburgh

ALS Sheffield City Archives

*To Miss Anne Alden, July 20, [1895]*

Saty July 20<sup>th</sup>

*My dear Miss Alden*

I am very grateful to you for your letter — a letter full of beautiful thought & emotion, as though illumined by the light of the fair mind & spirit so recently taken from you. And indeed I am grateful, too, that you should have told me so fully the story of her last days and hours.<sup>1</sup> She was one of the white souls of the world — and born into new life as she is she must yet have still another resurrection — that resurrection in the minds of all who knew her, which keeps green and fresh a vivid and dear memory.

I suppose all who came in contact with her loved her, or came soon to love her. Certainly I did. And, in, truth, some mental or spiritual link seemed to unite us. It may seem to you very strange — but I have actually suffered when she had to undergo an operation or any severe stress of pain: & sometimes I could hardly bear to think of it. Again & again through the early part of this year I dreamed of her: & once I think I wrote to your father to tell him how I had a kind of vision of her, white and sunlit, walking through a shadowy wood that was all bright where she went.

I am sure that there are some people who go through life as white spirits clothed with the accident of the body — rather than, as most of us, as human beings animated by a spirit — and that she was one of these.

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<sup>1</sup>Mrs. Alden had recently died following a long and debilitating illness.

I am indeed glad that my little tale of “The Foster Mother of Christ”<sup>1</sup> reached her in time to give her pleasure.

To you, dear Miss Alden, (though I think of you as “Annie” always) I would send a copy of my new book *The Mountain Lovers* (I know you are cognizant of & will preserve my secret as to my identity with Fiona Macleod) but that I have already sent one to your father, at Metuchen. If misadventure befall that copy please let me know, & I will send another. I know it will please you to hear that George Meredith has written to Miss Macleod a letter of splendid praise & recognition, and that other letters have already made our friend Fiona very proud & glad — but glad mostly.

I go to Edinburgh in a day or two, where I have to deliver, at University Hall, ten lectures on “Life and Art”. In the first and tenth I shall be reading extracts from (& thus, I hope send many readers to) “God in His World”<sup>2</sup>.

Please give your father my comradely love and deepest sympathy. In the book upon which he is engaged he will find not only some measure of solace, but also know that he builds his House of Dream about a fair and sacred memory.<sup>3</sup>

I hope, dear Miss Alden, we may meet again in a year or so: but in any case you know that I am now and always

Affectionately Your Friend | William Sharp

ALS Delaware

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<sup>1</sup> This story was “Mary of the Gael” which appeared first in *The Evergreen, A Northern Seasonal, The Book of Autumn* (Edinburgh: Geddes, 1895) and then in *The Washer of the Ford* (Edinburgh: Geddes, 1896) where it was called “Muime Chríosd,” or Foster-Mother of Christ. The odd thing is that Sharp had sent the story to Mrs. Alden as his own work, but it appeared both in *The Evergreen* and in *The Washer of the Ford* as the work of Fiona Macleod.

<sup>2</sup> A book by Henry Mills Alden published in 1890.

<sup>3</sup> Alden’s *A Study of Death* (New York: Harper Bros.) was published in December, 1895.

To Grant Allen, [late July, 1895]

Temporary address | 144. North St. | St. Andrews. | Fife.

Dear Mr. Grant Allen

How generous you are! If it were not for fear of what you say about my Gaelic phrases I should quote one to the effect that the wild bees that make the beautiful thoughts in your brain also leave their honey on your lips.

Your *Westminster* review has given me keen pleasure — and for everything in it, and for all the kind interest behind it, I thank you cordially.<sup>1</sup>

What you say about the survival of folklore as a living heritage is absolutely true — how true perhaps few know, except those who have lived among the Gaels, of their blood, and speaking the ancient language. The Celtic paganism lies profound and potent still beneath the fugitive drift of Christianity and Civilization, as the deep sea beneath the coming and going of the tides.

No one can understand the Islander and remote Albion Gael who ignores or is oblivious of the potent pagan and indeed elementally barbaric forces behind all exterior appearances. (This will be more clearly shown in my next published book, a vol. of ten Celtic tales and episodes<sup>2</sup> — with, I suppose, a more wide and varied outlook on life, tho' narrow at that! — than either of its predecessors.)

Your review and that of Miss (or Mrs. ?) Annie MacDonell in the August *Bookman* have pleased and interested me most of all I have seen.<sup>3</sup> But, sure, I have no reason but for gratitude all round. Even the *Athenaeum* says some pleasant things,<sup>4</sup> though its critic betrays his own limited knowledge of Gaelic in his faultfinding with some of mine — for he ought to know that the signs of the genitive and aspirations vary considerably; and that the Gaelic of the Isles, for

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<sup>1</sup> Allen's review of *The Mountain Lovers* appeared in the *Westminster Review* in mid-July.

<sup>2</sup> *The Sin-Eater and other Tales*.

<sup>3</sup> This review appeared in the *Bookman*, Vol. 8, (August, 1895), 146-7.

<sup>4</sup> *Athenaeum*, Vol. CVI, No. 3536 (August 3, 1895), 156.

example, differs much in these and kindred minor matters from that (say) of Inverness, and still more from that of the more Anglo-Celtic districts. He objects to “Oona” and wants ‘Una’ which is non-existent in Gaelic — unless, which may be, English people pronounce the U as Oa.

But excuse this rambling. Your review is all the more welcome to me as it comes to me during a visit to friends at St. Andrews — and to me, alas, the East Coast of Scotland is as foreign and remote in all respects as though it were Jutland or Finland.

It has also been the cause of a letter from my cousin, Will Sharp, who, in sending the *Westminster* review, adds that he is coming to spend the week-end with me — or I with him, I should say, as I am to be his guest, at almost the only Celtic place we know of on this too ‘dour’ shoreland of Fife.

Again with thanks, dear Mr. Allen,

Believe me | Most sincerely yours | Fiona Macleod.

P. S. In his letter Mr. Sharp says (writing to me in his delightful shaky Gaelic) that “[both Grant and Nellie Allen are] clach-chreadhain”. It took me some time to understand the compliment. Clach-Chreadh means ‘stone of clay’ — i.e. Brick!

ALS Pierpont Morgan

*To J. Stanley Little, [early August, 1895]*

14 Ramsey Garden | Edinburgh

My dear Stanley

Just a hurried line (for I am far from well, and am frightfully busy) of affectionate sympathy with you from us both in your great loss, of which we hear for the first time thro’ your note. It was expected, but the loss is nonetheless severe. I hope things may move better for you, later.

My lectures here have been a marked success — but they have told upon me heavily.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>According to EAS (*Memoir*, 251), Sharp collapsed during his first lecture, barely finished it, and was unable to present the others.

Forgive more just now, old chap.

Love from both of us to both of you, | Ever affectly yrs, | Will

ALS Princeton

*To Herbert Stuart Stone, August 12, 1895*

9 Upper Coltbridge Terrace | Murrayfield | Midlothian | 12<sup>th</sup> August. 1895.

Dear Mr. Stone,

Herewith I send, by registered Book-Post, the “copy” for *The Sin-Eater* volume. You said you would have it set up at once, so that I could see proofs (needful, with the numerous Gaelic names and words, and peculiar idioms, and for other reasons). I suppose that about 25 days must elapse in the coming and returning of these proofs?

As the book is to be published simultaneously in this country and America, early in October (if possible by the 5<sup>th</sup>) — this leaves little time. So will you kindly give immediate and urgent instructions. Also, please let me remind you that, if practicable, the proofs be sent in page, and in triplicate. I append my September letter-address at left hand top-margin [see P.S. below]. I expect to write to you by next mail with exact particulars as to publication here. (I estimate the book to be about 53,000 words.)

Also by next mail, I hope to send you the slightly amended *Pharais*, in the Green Tree Library issue. When you acknowledge this, may I ask you kindly to remit the £10 which you agreed to pay for the reprint of *Pharais* in the “Green Tree Library”.

I wonder if you received a copy of *The Mountain Lovers* I sent to you. I forwarded it to you while you were at the Hotel Voltaire in Paris. You will be interested to hear that the book has attracted a great deal of attention, and is going well.

Please acknowledge receipt of *The Sin-Eater* by return, and state if you will be able to publish on (say) Saturday the 5<sup>th</sup> of October.

With kind regards, |Yours Sincerely | Fiona Macleod

P.S. Throughout September my address will be c/o Mrs. William Sharp | Woodside | Tigh-Na-Bruaich | Kyles of Bute | Argyll. | Scotland.<sup>1</sup>

ALS Newberry Library

*To: Herbert S. Stone, [August 12, 1895]<sup>2</sup>*

14 Ramsay Gardens | Edinburgh

My dear Herbert

Miss Macleod is staying with us for a day or two (for my lectures — particularly that on The Celtic Renaissance) — & I add this to her note, to say that the date of publicn. for her book is arranged here to be on Oct. 5<sup>th</sup>. thro' Patrick Geddes & Colleagues.<sup>3</sup>

By the way, let me write a short *Chap-Book* article on the Belgian chaps, to help the book, her, & the publisher.<sup>4</sup>

Yours ever, | Will

I am more chagrined than I can say about the extraordinary delay with *The Gypsy Christ*. Not a sign yet of a proof. I do trust for every reason financially & otherwise, I am not to lose my Autumn pubn. as I have already lost the late Spring.

ALS Huntington

*To Herbert S. Stone, [August ?20, 1895]*

9. Upper Coltbridge Terrace | Murrayfield. | Midlothian.

Dear Mr. Stone.

Thank you for your letter of Aug. 15<sup>th</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Sharp is importing Fiona to stay with him in the Kyles of Bute in order to speed communication with Stone regarding the publication of *Pharais* and *The Sin-Eater*.

<sup>2</sup> Although undated, this letter was sent at the same time as the Fiona letter of 12 August 1895.

<sup>3</sup> See note to late July 1895 letter from F.M. to Grant Allen.

<sup>4</sup> This article appeared as “A Note on the Belgian Renaissance,” *The Chap-Book* (December, 1895), pp. 149-157. It was intended to promote Edith Rinder’s *The Massacre of the Innocents and Other Tales*.

By this time you will have received the complete “copy” of *The Sin-Eater*: of which I am now awaiting proofs. As I told you then, the date fixed for publication here is Saturday 5<sup>th</sup>. October.

By this mail (and even if it should miss the mail I shall post it all the same on chance — and I mention this simply because of some alteration in the mail hour, for registered packets, concerning which I am at present ignorant.) — by this mail I send you the slightly amended “Pharais” for the Green Tree Library. Kindly oblige me by letting me have this amended copy back again: as it is the only large paper copy I have, and none other is now procurable.

If not already despatched, would you kindly remit the sum promised on account of *Pharais*.

I think I told you in my last letter that throughout the month of September I shall be staying with Mr. and Mrs. William Sharp at Woodside Cottage | Tigh-Na-Bruaich | The Kyles of Bute | Argyll | Scotland — | after which date please address to me as usual to my Murrayfield address.

Yes, I have every reason to be deeply gratified by the success of *The Mountain Lovers*. Besides warmly sympathetic notices on all sides, there have been signed articles of a rarely emphatic kind by Mr. Grant Allen, Mr. Traill, Mr. George Cotterell, Mr. Ashcroft Noble, and others. Herewith I send you the last which has appeared by Mr. Ashcroft Noble, in *The New Age*, from which doubtless you may wish to quote: also, perhaps, this from a leader in *The Yorkshire Herald*: — “Wordsworth’s beautiful suggestion of ‘The light that never was on sea or land’ is<sup>1</sup> . . .

ALS Huntington.

*To Herbert S. Stone, August 30, 1895*

14 Ramsay Gardens | Edinburgh | 30<sup>th</sup> August 1895

My dear Herbert,

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<sup>1</sup> The remainder of the manuscript is missing.

At last the long delayed proofs have reached this often blaspheming author — albeit in an incomplete form, like the abortive baby that was born the other day minus a hand and a leg. The galleys containing the first part of “Madge o’ the Pool,” and several other galleys later in the series, are amissing, and have not, at the moment I write, yet come to hand.

To save time, I send you by this post the revised type-copy of “The Gypsy Christ” itself. Proofs of this can, of course, be revised by you, or any capable person whom you may depute: as there will be no time to send proofs oversea. I have had no opportunity to reread this revise since I left London: so if you notice anything to delete or improve, act freely on your discretion.

I’ll return by this post, also, those galleys which I can get through in time: the others will go by the next mail, three days hence.

By the way, when you remit cheque as promised (& its non-receipt happens to be very inconvenient, confound you!) — which I hope will be forthwith — please say if you have made any arrangement for the *Gypsy Christ* volume in this country. I never heard if you had come to an arrangement with Methuen or Lane or Mathews or anyone: as I hope you have.<sup>1</sup>

I think you have the fore-pages of the G.C. vol.,<sup>2</sup> with dedication To my Friend, Lady Colin Campbell, etc.

Glad things promise well in America. I hope the G.C. may prove a Redeemer of lost output!

“Wives in Exile” won’t reach you till near the end of October, I fear. It will be a book of about 60,000 words: and is, as I explained to you, a blithe comedy of “high life,” told, I hope, both with verve and picturesqueness. Of the two heroines, one, Mrs. Leonora Wester, is a beautiful American: the other, her cousin, Mrs. Helen Adair, an equally lovely Irishwoman. If you prefer it, the novel could be sent out in installments for you to set up: other wise, it will be best to dispatch it complete. It will, I believe, be a sure ‘draw’ — so far as it is possible to foretell.

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<sup>1</sup> Three British publishers.

<sup>2</sup> *The Gypsy Christ* (1895).

I have not been at all well, but am now better. I found the strain of lecturing too great. Tomorrow we go to Tigh-Na-Bruaich in the Kyles of Bute, in Argyll.<sup>1</sup> I must have an absolute holiday (save for proofs) for at least a week or 10 days. We shall have my cousin Miss Macleod with us most of the time. I understand that her new book has duly gone to you. Personally I like *The Sin-Eater* better than either of its predecessors, and I have read nearly all its contents: though *The Mountain Lovers* has unquestionably had a remarkable reception.

Last week we had a short visit from Mrs. Wingate Rinder, who has been staying in Fifeshire during August but leaves tomorrow for Brittany, where she hopes to work up Breton legends and folk-lore. I am sure you will be pleased with her Belgian book,<sup>2</sup> which she has taken endless pains to make adequately representative, and has, I think, translated admirably. The difficulties in some cases were almost overpowering, for Flemish French when obscurer than its wont is as obscure and involved as a German treatise on Simplicity!

I hope, my dear chap, you are now much better, & not overworking. Take care of yourself. Have you seen Bliss C. since your return?<sup>3</sup> By the way, I have not yet had the promised 'proofs' from Theodore Watts<sup>4</sup> — but as soon as he transmits them I'll send you the

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<sup>1</sup> Sharp had returned briefly from the Pettycur Inn to the flat the Sharps had taken for the month of August in Edinburgh. They left the next day for the Kyles of Bute.

<sup>2</sup> *The Massacre of the Innocents and other Tales, by Belgium Writers*, Selected and Translated by Edith Wingate Rinder, (With Introductory Note), Stone and Kimball, New York: 1896.

<sup>3</sup> The Canadian poet Bliss Carman was a mutual friend. Stone had been in London and Paris earlier in the summer.

<sup>4</sup> When he was in London, Stone must have met Theodore Watts, as he was then known, and arranged to publish a volume of his poems. Apparently Sharp was to receive a proof copy of the volume so he could promote the book by writing an article in Stone and Kimball's *Chap-Book*. Plans for the volume fell through, and Sharp did not write the article. He did write a note on the Belgian literary renaissance for the December 1895 edition of the *Chap-Book* in which he lavishly praised Edith Rinder's "Belgium book." Watts-Dunton's first volume of poems was *The Coming of Love / Rhona Boswell's Story / And Other Poems* which was published by John Lane at the Bodley Head (London and New York) in 1897. It was a sequel to his prose *Alwin*, which appeared a year later (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1898). Both volumes went through many editions and established Watts-Dunton's reputation as a writer. Watts added Dunton, his mother's maiden name, to Watts in 1897 when he published *The Coming of Love*. That addition caused many of his friends, including William Sharp, to wonder what they should call him.

*Chap-Book* article. Also, if you want it, a short article on the Belgian Renaissance as exemplified by Mrs. E.W.R.'s book. Did I ever tell you that she is Miss Macleod's most intimate woman-friend, and that she is the dedicatee of *Pharais*? They have been staying together recently, and (I believe) writing or planning something to do together—though that, from what I know of Miss F.M., will never come off, as she is far too essentially F.M. to work in harness with anyone.<sup>1</sup>

Don't forget your promise about the photograph of yourself.

Good luck to you, my boy — Be a good man if you can, but whatever happens be a good publisher, & so earn the Blessing of your

Affectionate friend | William Sharp

I'll be at Tigh-Na-Bruaich till the end of September, then at my Hampstead address as usual.

ALS NYPL

*To Herbert S. Stone, [early September, 1895]*

Woodside | Tigh-Na-Bruaich | Kyles of Bute | Argyll | Scotland

My dear Herbert

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James MacNeil Whistler is reported to have written to him as "Theodore" and asked "What's Dunton?"

<sup>1</sup> Here, amazingly, Sharp tells Stone, not only that Edith Rinder is Fiona's most intimate woman friend, but that Edith and Fiona have been "staying together recently." Since Sharp claimed to become Fiona Macleod when he and Edith were alone together, the statement lends support to the probability that Sharp and Edith were "staying together," probably in St. Andrews, during the last week of July. This passage is also interesting for its broaching – and then discounting -- the possibility of some collaboration between Sharp and Edith Rinder on both the Fiona Macleod writings and the writing Edith was doing on continental literature. The Rinders, both of whom had deep roots in Scotland, must have been staying somewhere in Fifeshire in August. If so, Edith probably helped Sharp recuperate at the Pettycur Inn following his angina attack in Edinburgh. She also seems to have visited the Sharps at Ramsay Gardens in Edinburgh briefly in late August on her way to Brittany "to work up Breton legends and folklore." Those tales formed the basis of her *The Shadows of Arvor* which Patrick Geddes and Colleagues published in 1896 upon the recommendation of the firm's Literary Editor, William Sharp.

By this post I return all the proofs of The G/Christ vol<sup>1</sup> — except the missing galleys, which have never yet come to hand. These must now just be revised in the office — to my regret, particularly in the instance of the opening galleys of “Madge o’ the Pool”. Please don’t let the printer forget my Dedic. | To my Friend | The Lady Colin Campbell.

By the last mail I sent you the G/C itself & other sets of proof.

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The order of the stories is:

(1) The G/Christ (2) Madge o’ the Pool (3) The Coward (4) A Venetian Idyl (5) The Graven Image (6) The Lady in Hosea (7) Fröken Bergliot.

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I also wrote to you last mail abt. *Wives in Exile*.

What abt. publicn. in England of the G/C vol? Did you arrange with Methuen? And if so, are they simply to bind & fresh title-page your American sheets?

E. Mathews writes that he has communicated with you.

In haste, | Yours Affectly | William Sharp

P.S. My dear Herbert,

These missing proofs, & other ‘vaguenesses’ annoy me somewhat. Believe me, my dear boy, these things tell ill. A close scrutiny at first hand is absolutely necessary. Hope you are better now,

Ever yrs. | Will

ALS Huntington

*To Herbert Stuart Stone, September 6, [1895]*

The lost proofs have at [last] turned up & I have at once revised & now send them back to you herewith. It is just possible they may reach you at the same time as the other proofs sent on Wednesday, as the steamer from the West was late owing to a gale.

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<sup>1</sup> *The Gypsy Christ* was not published in England until 1897 (Archibald Constable and Company, Westminster) when it bore the title *Madge o’ the Pool: The Gypsy Christ and other Tales*.

I hope these & the others will reach you in good time.

By the way, in case I forget, please send the 25 gratis copies you promised me of The G.C. vol. to Rutland House etc. — marked “not to be forwarded”.

William Sharp

ACS Huntington

*To Herbert S. Stone, [mid- September, 1895]*

9 Upper Coltbridge Terrace | Murrayfield | Midlothian

Dear Mr. Stone

Your letter of the 26<sup>th</sup> just to hand, forwarded to me by Mrs. Sharp from Tigh-Na-Bruaich, where I go the day after tomorrow.

I have sent word to Messrs. W. H. White & Co, of the Riverside Press St., Bernard's Row, Edinburgh (who are printing the book)<sup>1</sup> to send you revised Proofs so far as done, and to follow up with revises, which should all be ready by middle of next week. You can then, as you say, revise the American sheets from these. This will save time, of course: as well as possible miscarriage and delay here.

In accordance with your letter I have written to Messrs. Patrick Geddes & Colleagues to postpone the date of publication till Tuesday the 15<sup>th</sup> of October: but as this will be, I know, an inconvenient delay, I must beg of you not to postpone it a day later. Kindly send a line by return (to my Murrayfield address) saying if you can fix on this date, the 15<sup>th</sup>.

In great haste | Yours Sincerely | Fiona Macleod.

ALS NYPL

*To Stone and Kimball, [mid- September 1895]*

All communications meanwhile to be addressed to | Mr. William Sharp

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<sup>1</sup> *The Sin-Eater and other Tales*

c/o Patrick Geddes & Colleagues | Riddles Court Lawnmarket | Edinburgh | (*see below*)<sup>1</sup>

Dear Sirs,

On hearing from Miss Fiona Macleod, we at once instructed Messrs. W. H. White & Co., of the Edinburgh Riverside Press, to forward to you Sigs. A. to F. (pp. 1 to 96 of text) of *The Sin-Eater*, and the remainder as the Revises are passed. There are a good many textual & other alterations from the type-written copy: so your readers will have to collate carefully.

It is now definitely arranged that the book in question is to be published on Tuesday the 15<sup>th</sup> of October — a date later than was quite convenient for us, but which we have accepted as (we understand from Miss Macleod) more suitable for you.

Yours faithfully | Patrick Geddes & Colleagues | per William Sharp  
Messrs. Stone and Kimball, Chicago

*P.S.* Until after the end of October, all communications for Patrick Geddes & Colleagues to be addressed to Mr. William Sharp, Rutland House, Greencroft Gardens, So. Hampstead, London, N.W.

ALS Huntington

*To Herbert Stuart Stone, September 18, 1895*

Tigh-Na-Bruaich | The Kyles of Bute | Argyll | 18/9/95

My dear Herbert

Theodore Watts — or his printers, to him — has proved faithless. At any rate, he has not yet sent the promised advance copy, typed or printed, of his *Poems*.

Unless I hear from you to the contrary, within 2 mails from now, that is by the beginning of next week, — my suggestion about a *Chap Book* paper on the leading men of the Belgian Renaissance, à propos of Mrs. Wingate Rinder's book<sup>2</sup> — about which I wrote to you about a month ago or less — I'll write and send out the paper in question.

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<sup>1</sup>This letter is written on *The Evergreen* letterhead, but "*The Evergreen*" is crossed through and "Mr. William Sharp | C/o" added above the printed return address of Patrick Geddes & Colleagues | Riddles Court Lawnmarket | Edinburgh.

<sup>2</sup> *The Massacre of the Innocents and other Tales*.

I trust that one of the two mails in question will bring me the long expected Gypsy Christ Cheque — whose non-arrival has, as it happens, seriously inconvenienced me.

I heard yesterday from Elkin Mathews that you had by cable declined my *Ecce Puella* volume. Is this because you did not want it, or because you have enough of W.S. on hand as it is? I thought at the time that it was a mistake as you have *The G/Christ* ready and *Wives in Exile* to handle later.<sup>1</sup>

By the way, will you send me the promised copies of *The G/Christ*, when published, to my home address as usual: Rutland House, 15 Greencroft Gardens, South Hampstead, London. When is Mrs. E. Wingate Rinder's book to be published? I see, in the latest *Chap Book*, you announce it as an imminent "Green Tree." Please send me an unbound copy in page, as soon as printed. By the way, the advt. is wrong abt. that book's containing C. Van Lerberghe's 'dramalet.'

Herewith I send you, for the *Chap Book*, if you care for it, & there is time, in lieu of the Watts article, my authorized translation of Charles Van Lerberghe's *Les Flaireurs*.<sup>2</sup> It is to appear in the Second Part of *The Evergreen*, which will be published about Oct. 12th-15th, but copies of which will not reach America till late in the month probably.

C. Van L. is one of the foremost younger men of the Belgian Renaissance — though really only by virtue of *Les Flaireurs*, which was not only anterior to Maeterlinck but was the first thing of its kind, & had a marked influence on Maeterlinck<sup>3</sup> and several of the young men

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<sup>1</sup> Sharp's *Wives in Exile* was published by Stone and Kimball in 1896 after Kimball moved the firm to New York. It was entered into copyright on June 20, 1896, copies were deposited on September 11, and it appeared in the firms List of New Books for November, 1896. Shortly after the book was printed and published, the Stone and Kimball firm dissolved, and the sheets of Sharp's *Wives in Exile* were acquired by Lamson, Wolffe & Company of Boston which issued them with another cover. This confusion delayed publication of the English edition until 1898 (Grant Richards: London).

<sup>2</sup> For the Watt's article, see note to Sharp's 30 August 1895 letter to Herbert Stone. Sharp sends for possible publication in the *Chap-Book* his translation of Charles Van Lerberghe "dramalet" which will appear in *The Evergreen*, Vol. II (Autumn, 1895), 61-71. Van Lerberghe (1861-1907) was a Belgian poet whose works include *Pan; Entervisions; and Chanson d'Eve*.

<sup>3</sup> Maurice Maeterlinck (1862-1949) was a Belgian essayist and dramatist who won the Nobel Prize for literature in 1911. "The Massacre of the Innocents" was his first published prose

who rally to the flag of “La Jeune Belgique” or “Le Coq Rouge”.<sup>1</sup>

Our small party breaks up here tomorrow, though my wife & I do not leave till the 28<sup>th</sup> or 30<sup>th</sup>.<sup>2</sup> After that date, I shall be in London. Miss Macleod leaves us tomorrow also, to our regret. I was to have enclosed a note from her, but I see she has done it up separately.

In haste for our mail-steamer,

Ever yours, my dear boy, | William Sharp

ALS Huntington

*To Robert Murray Gilchrist, [September 26, 1895]*<sup>3</sup>

Tigh-Na-Bruaich | The Kyles of Bute | Argyle

My dear Boy,

Your letter has been forwarded to me here. Of course, my dear fellow, there is no “shadow of a shadow of hill or sea” as they say here, between us. At all times I bear you in affectionate remembrance: and then, we are comrades.<sup>4</sup>

I am sorry you have had so ill a time of it this year, and trust that it is all over now, the mischances and the misadventures. For myself I have gone through a year of such varied experiences of light and shade (both in extremes) and innumerable interblent gleams of life of all kinds, that no wonder my friends note the greying of my hair more & more, though less now than a year ago.

It has been lovely here, in this beautiful fjjord between the hills and Bute, with the open

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essay (1886). He was best known for his symbolist dramas, among them “La Princesse Malienne (1889), “Pelleas et Melisande” (1892),and “Moons Vanna” (1902).

<sup>1</sup> “La Jeune Belgique” was the first name of the literary movement with which Maeterlinck was affiliated. Later on the movement was renamed “Le Coq Rouge.”

<sup>2</sup> Sharp’s mother and sisters and Elizabeth’s mother were staying with them in Tigh-Na-Bruaich.

<sup>3</sup> Sharp said in his 27 September to Stedman that he and Mrs. Sharp, and her mother were leaving the Kyles of Bute for Edinburgh that day. In this letter he tells Gilchrist they will leave “tomorrow.” That establishes the letter’s date as 26 September.

<sup>4</sup> Gilchrist must have worried that Sharp’s failure to visit him on his way north and the lack of correspondence from Sharp in the meantime portended a breach in their friendship.

sea & the mountains of the Isle of Arran to the south. I wish you could have been here. But tomorrow I leave — though we intended to be here for a week or 10 days yet: as I have to take my mother-in-law (at present on a short visit to us) back to London, as she is prostrated by a telegram from abroad saying that her son has suddenly developed a malignant cancer and is dying — so rapidly that he must give up hope of coming home.

This has upset all our plans — including my three days in Edinburgh on important business: my day & night at York: & my two days with you. On the other hand, it is almost certain that I must go back to Edinburgh about the end of October — & on my way north shall stay with you. If, however, I do not require to go I'll still take a run to join you for a day or two, then or early in November, if you can't come south.

Fiona Macleod's new book *The Sin Eater* will soon be out (Oct. 15<sup>th</sup>) — and I think it will afford you some pleasure. Also, Stone & Kimball of Chicago are about to publish (probably in both countries simultaneously) a vol. by W.S., *The Gypsy Christ: and Other Tales*. The titular story is that inspired, so far, by Eyam-surroundings. You shall have a copy of each book. In *The Sin Eater* there is a small section called *Tragic Landscapes*: wherein (or rather preeminently in the first of which, the human element is wholly insignificant and accidental). I find I have a proof of this, which you may have. You will read the third piece, "Summersleep," with mingled feelings, when you know that it is an exact transcript of — Phenice Croft at Rudgwick, and that the three men are — you, Garfitt, and myself. I cannot explain aright: you must read into what you read. The most tragic & momentous epoch of my life followed that visit of yours to Phenice Croft, & is, so far, indissolubly linked with that day I met you, and that time.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The three figures in the sketch entitled "Summersleep" are Sharp, Gilchrist, and his house mate/companion Garfitt. The latter two visited Sharp at Phenice Croft in July 1893. Near the end of "Summersleep" the shadow of Gilchrist says "in his heart": "There is something of awe, of terror, about that house; nay, the whole land here is under a tragic gloom. I should die here, stifled. I am glad I go on the morrow." The shadow of William Sharp then says "in his heart: "It may be that the gate of hell is hidden there among the grass, or beneath the foundations of my house. Would God I were free! Oh my God, madness and death!" At Phenice Croft, Sharp invented the persona of Fiona Macleod, and, according to EAS, "His imagination was in a perpetual ferment" (*Memoir*, 221). He was engaged there with psychic experiments, possibly

Let me have a line from you at Rutland House | Greencroft Gardens | So. Hampstead  
on (or after) Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup>, by which time I shall be there from Mrs. S's house.

My cordial regards to your mother & sisters, and to you, my dear friend & comrade, my  
love, sympathy, & affectionate heed.

Yours | William Sharp

ALS Sheffield City Archives

*To Edmund Clarence Stedman, September 27, 1895*

Tigh-na-Bruaich | in the Kyles of Bute | Argyll  
27<sup>th</sup> Sept, 1895 | For the morning of the 8<sup>th</sup>

My dear Stedman

It is an age since I have written to you, and my conscience smites me — but, alas, never  
has correspondence been so difficult as during this last year, when a hundred adverse influences  
have combined to make me seem forgetful of my dearest friends. However, I am going to make  
amends, in this my new year — for a month ago I entered another ‘shadowy portal.’<sup>1</sup> And now,  
of course, I am writing to greet *you* on the morning of *your* new year and to wish for you the  
beauty of the world, the music of life, fresh joy and energy to the beautiful young heart and  
poet’s brain of which you are the royal possessor; — love, and sympathy, and homage; health  
and prosperity and largesse of good, & everything to make your life fair and sweet.

How I wish I could see you! What a lot I have to tell you that cannot well be told in  
letter. My life has never been richer and deeper than in this last year. Looking back upon it I

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drug induced. It was at Phenice Croft in 1893-4 that he began to feel the presence of a second  
female personality which led at times to a troublesome psychic splitting that that seemed to  
threaten his mental stability. Of this phenomenon, EAS said, “During those two years at Phenice  
Croft, to which he always looked back with deep thankfulness, he was the dreamer – he was  
testing his new powers, living his new life, and delighting in the opportunity for psychic  
experimentation. And for such experimentation the place seemed to him peculiarly suited. To  
me it seemed ‘uncanny,’ and to have a haunted atmosphere – created unquestionably by him –  
that I found difficult to live in, unless the sun was shining. This uncanny effect was felt by more  
than one friend; by Mr. Murray Gilchrist, for instance, whose impressions were described by his  
host in one of the short ‘Tragic Landscapes’”(Memoir, 223).

<sup>1</sup> Sharp turned forty on 12 September 1895.

can see scores of days going crowned with sunshine and deathless flowers, & can hear the clapping of the hands of innumerable rejoicing proud-eyed hours.

With you, I hope things now go well. Do not write a letter, for I love and admire you too much to wish to lay even the pleasantest tyranny of love upon you: but send me a P/C, or a brief line through your secretary.

The “Anthology” marches, I hope: also I trust the “Poe” goes well. (By the way, I saw Lugné Poë, a French kinsman of E.A.P., acting in one of Maeterlinck’s dramas, when I was last in Paris. He bore a striking resemblance to the best portrait of E.A.P.)

For myself I have been and am very busy. On or about the 8<sup>th</sup> you *ought* to receive from Stone & Kimball a copy of “*The Gypsy Christ*,” a volume of tales they commissioned. All of them have grown out of personal experiences. The same firm is, later, to publish a ‘comedy in romance’ by me, called “Wives in Exile”, which ought to be the most widely successful thing I have written. Also, I had hoped to send you a copy of a book of “Prose Imaginings” on your birthday, but *Ecce Puella* ( as it is called from the longest, & titular, piece) will not be out till late in October.

As a special birthday gift, however, I shall post to you, in 10 days or so, an early copy of my cousin’s, Miss Fiona Macleod’s, new book, *The Sin-Eater*. Doubtless you have heard of her *Pharais* and *The Mountain Lovers*, two books which have given her a leader’s place in the Celtic Renaissance which is like to prove so remarkable a tributary to the stream of literature within the next few years. She is now admitted to be the head of the Scots-Celtic movement — as W. B. Yeats is of the Irish-Celtic. The new book is novel & beautiful as a piece of book-making — though I say it, who am responsible for its type, paper, binding, & general *format*! For (apart from *The Evergreen*) it is the first publication of the new Edinburgh firm, “Patrick Geddes & Colleagues”, of which I am chief literary partner. At the end of *The Sin-Eater* you will see some of our announcements. (By the way, Stone & Kimball are issuing in October Miss Fiona Macleod’s *Pharais* in their “Green Tree Library”: and Messrs. Roberts Bros. have already issued (with John Lane, here) her “Mountain Lovers”— and Harper’s Magazine is to have an illustrated series of Celtic ‘episodes’ by her in the Xmas number.)

Tell Mrs. Stedman (to whom my love, & all affectionate greetings) that the copy of the *Evergreen* I shall send in a fortnight or so is really for her. It is a beautiful production in its

*format*, & she is to keep it in her drawing room for a little & show it to your literary friends as the organ of “Young Scotland”.

Well, the steamer is coming round the distant promontory of this beautiful & romantic place in the West Highlands, where I have been for a month. I have to go to Edinburgh by it, where I shall post this. Two days later I shall be in London again.

Soon I hope to write again, & more fully. Meanwhile, my homagelove, dear Poet, Friend, & Comrade.

Your affectionate | William Sharp

I have a “big” book on hand – but of this more, later.

ALS University of British Columbia

*To Herbert Stuart Stone, September 28, 1895*

Rutland House | Greencroft Gardens | South Hampstead | *London* / 28<sup>th</sup> Sept./95

My dear Herbert

*Belgian Article*

Herewith (from Edinburgh, where I am for a night or two, *en route* from the West Highlands to London) I send you the promised article for the *Chap-Book*, “A Note on the Belgian Renaissance,” àpropos of Mrs. Wingate Rinder’s admirably representative book.<sup>1</sup>

Will you kindly direct that a dozen copies of the *Chap-Book* containing it be sent me?

*Van Lerberghe*

As to the Van Lerberghe drama-let<sup>2</sup> I sent to you recently, there need be no hesitation so far as the date the *Evergreen* is published. Owing to unforeseen trouble with type etc. Messrs. Patrick Geddes & Colleagues cannot issue *The Evergreen* before October 15<sup>th</sup> *at earliest*, & more probably, now, about the 20<sup>th</sup> — but certainly not before the 15<sup>th</sup>.

I have just had a letter from Mrs. Wingate Rinder from a remote place in Brittany. She asks me to decide for her, as she has no time to catch the mail (& indeed only writes a pencilled line on your letter to her of the 5<sup>th</sup>, which she had just received (25<sup>th</sup>) — as to the question of

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<sup>1</sup> *The Massacre of the Innocents and other Tales.*

<sup>2</sup> “Les Flaireurs.”

seeing proofs. As for your sake, and hers, delay would distinctly be disadvantageous, I write to say that in accordance with your suggestion, proofs of "*The Massacre of the Innocents*" need not be sent: so that the book may come out this Autumn.

But please, yourself, or B.C., or some true craftsman, give a glance over the proofs as well as the proof-reader's textual revision. The book had to be typed at lightning speed at the last — and there are probably many instances where a deletion or an alteration of some kind, in a word or words, might be an advantage. However, Mrs. E.W.R. certainly did her best to make it independent of further revision, so far as time & other circumstances permitted.

To save time, & enable you to get the book out earlier, I shall cable you "Essankay, Chicago" today ("Proofs unnecessary, Rinder")

Just saw the covers & end-papers for Miss Macleod's "*Sin Eater*," which is now printed, and ready to be issued on the 15<sup>th</sup> of Oct. as arranged. It will be a beautiful book, & ought to attract notice to the new firm.

What glorious weather we are having — though the heat-wave is becoming trying, especially in London.

Ever yours, | In haste, | William Sharp

ALS Huntington

*To Robert Murray Gilchrist, [October 1?, 1895]<sup>1</sup>*

My dear Gilchrist

I have just returned. Thanks for your note: & I know you will be pleased to hear that I shall have to be north earlier than I anticipated, so that I shall have a day at least with you, somewhere between 13<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> of this month.

But of this later. (You don't say what you thought of my experiment in these *Tragic Landscapes* particularly in "The Tempest").

My cordial greetings to you & yours —

Your affectionate friend | W.S.

ALS Sheffield City Archives

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<sup>1</sup> In his 26 October letter to Gilchrist, Sharp said he would be back in his London residence on Tuesday, 1 October.

To Elkin Matthews, [October] 11, [1895]

Rutland House, | Greencroft Gardens, | So. Hampstead. | Friday 11<sup>th</sup>

Dear Mr. Mathews

I thought I shd. have heard from you, as our meeting failed to come off yesterday.

If you have not already written — or your representative — please do so to me at | 9 Up. Coltbridge Terrace | Murrayfield | Edinburgh | where I shall be for a week to come from tomorrow night.

I wish to know the date of publication of *Ecce Puella*, & if any American arrangement has been made.<sup>1</sup>

In haste | Yours sincerely | William Sharp

ALS private

To J. Stanley Little, [October 11?, 1895]

Rutland House | Greencroft Gardens | So. Hampstead

My dear Stanley

Just got back. Hope to see you soon: but not till next week, as I have to be off again. E. not very well — & sorrowing for sudden death of brother. Nor am I as fit as I shd. be.

Will you do what you can for Frank Rinder's charming first book, "Old World Japan".<sup>2</sup> I have asked that a copy be sent to you. Also, I have asked the publisher (Elkin M.) to send you for yourself a copy of a new little book of mine — "Ecce Puella & other Prose Imaginings." I hope you will like it. No other literary news, save that my cousin Miss Macleod also brings out her new book this week.<sup>3</sup> When I saw her in Scotland recently she told me she was going to send you a copy. If you can help it you will I know.

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<sup>1</sup> *Ecce Puella* was published on November 1, 1895. See November 2, 1895 letter to Edward Clodd. Those dates and the dates of Sharp's trip to Scotland establish the date of this letter as October 11.

<sup>2</sup> *Old World Japan: Legends of the Land of the Gods* (London: Grant Allen, 1895).

<sup>3</sup> Originally scheduled for publication on October 15, delays by Stone and Kimball pushed back the publication date of *The Sin-Eater and Other Tales* to early November.

How are you both, — & prospects, how are they? What a drive life is — For me, I am willing to stop — or to go. But, I'm beginning to feel a little tired of this flame of life.

My love to you both, | Always your affectionate friend, | Will

ALS Princeton

*To Robert Murray Gilchrist, [October 14, 1895]*<sup>1</sup>

9 Up. Coltbridge Terrace | Murrayfield | Midlothian

Please send me by return a line to say

(1) How I am to get to you (from York) from Sheffield tho' I fear it will be impossible for me to stay more than one night —

(2) If, supposing I cannot manage to get to you you could come to York (as my guest there) (at the moment this seems to me likeliest)

In Great Haste | W.S.

ACS Sheffield City Archives

*To Robert Murray Gilchrist, [October 16, 1895]*

9 Up. Coltbridge | Murrayfield

My dear Boy

I too am far from well (at the moment, with a diarrheic weakness) — & it is as difficult, if not more so, for me to get to you, as for you to come to York.

In any case, I could not manage more than the night (with early departure next morning) — & that I do not now feel able to undertake. I am sorry, as you know — but . . . . !

Either I must wait till business or domestic affairs take me north again (& time and opportunity permit a visit) or else I could see you in York on Friday evening. If you *can* come to the Station Hotel (as my guest there) I would suggest the late evening. I could join you from 9 p.m. till as late as the Spirit & Hotel-Hours permit! I leave Edinburgh now on Friday morning, and shall get to my friend in York about 3 p.m. or so. My address there is c/o George Cotterell

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<sup>1</sup> Date from postmark.

Esq., 3 Grosvenor Terrace, but if you think you can come, please send me a line tomorrow (if in time for the Scotch mail for first delivery in Edinburgh) or a wire.

I miss much in not seeing again your mother, and you & yours, but I musn't play with my health just now, I find — & I have been so harassed & driven lately that I dread any avoidable fatigue.

Always your affectionate friend | William Sharp

ALS Sheffield City Archives

*To Richard Garnett, October 25, 1895*

Rutland House, | Greencroft Gardens, | So. Hampstead. | 25:Oct:95

My dear Garnett

You have been so infinitely serviceable a friend to me and innumerable others, that another straw cannot break your back! The straw is my friend, W. E. Garrett Fisher,<sup>1</sup> a brilliant young journalist & man of letters, who has just settled in London. If he should require a word of help, in any difficulty, I trust you will not grudge him that privilege. In any case I would like him to have the pleasure of meeting you — whose own literary work he knows & admires.

Mr. & Mrs. Garrett Fisher are, I think, settling in or near Bloomsbury. It is a change from Edinburgh — but, after all, all roads lead to the B.M. — as all bothering scribes come at last to R.G.!

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<sup>1</sup>William Edward Garrett Fisher wrote *The Transvaal and the Boers* (1896). This letter accompanied the following letter from Garrett Fisher to Richard Garnett:

Savoy Mansions | Strand, W.C. | Oct:26, 1895

Richard Garnett, Esq., LL.D.

Dear Sir,

Mr. William Sharp has done me the honour to give me the enclosed letter of introduction to you. I am very happy to have this opportunity of forwarding it to you and of saying how much pleasure it would give me to make your acquaintance, and realize the personality that as yet I only know from books.

I shall do myself the honour of calling upon you at the British Museum next Wednesday at 3 o'clock, and trust that I may be fortunate enough to find you at home and disengaged. And in the meantime I am, Dear Sir,

Your obedient servant | W. E. Garrett Fisher

I shall soon have a little book of prose imaginings of which to ask your acceptance. It is called *Ecce Puella*: but there is no Marie Corellian or other Satanry in it — nor do I advertise that Harems are supplied with E.P. at a reduction!

Ever Cordially Yours | William Sharp

ALS University of Texas at Austin

*To Robert Murray Gilchrist, November 1, 1895*

Rutland House | Greencroft Gardens | So. Hampstead | 1 Nov 95

My dear Comrade,

I can do no more than send you the briefest line today: & that only to thank you for your little message.

You gladden me, when you tell me that my work sinks *in profundis*. The book is full of myself, of my life — more than any (save one other than myself) can ever know.<sup>1</sup> But I am in the valley of Deep Shadow just now. Great suffering, of a kind that must not be shown, has led me stumbling and blindfold among morasses and quicksands. I see the shining of my star — and so have hope still, and courage. But, while I stumble on, I suffer.

Write to me about what you feel & think of “The Sin Eater” — particularly of the barbaric section, & the more intimate final section, dedicated “Ri mo Aisling” — It will help me, and I need help just now.<sup>2</sup>

Your loving friend | William Sharp

ALS Sheffield City Archives

*To Edward Clodd<sup>3</sup>, November 2, 1895*

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<sup>1</sup> He refers to *The Sin-Eater, and Other Tales* and asks Gilchrist for a more detailed and thoughtful response to the book. The “one other than myself” who can know must be Edith Rinder.

<sup>2</sup> For a discussion of this letter and the need expressed herein, see the introduction of this section of the letters.

<sup>3</sup> See note to Sharp letter to Mrs. Grant Allen of 11 July 1895.

Rutland House | 2<sup>nd</sup> Nov., 1895.

Dear Brother-in-Omar,

On my return from Scotland the other day I found a note informing me that I had been elected an Omarian on the nomination of your distinguished self.

My thanks, cher confrère. ‘A drop of my special grape to you,’ as Omar might say, if he were now among us with a Hibernian accent! Herewith I post to you another babe, born into this ungrateful world so recently as yesterday . . . Such as it is, I hope you may like it. “Ecce Puella” itself was written at white heat — and ran in ripples off the drain: and so is probably readable.

“Fragments from The Lost Journals of Piero di Cosimo”<sup>1</sup> when they appeared (some few years ago) won the high praise of Pater — but perhaps their best distinction is that they took in the cocksure and leveled the omniscient. One critical wight complained that I was not literal (probably from the lack of knowledge of medieval Italian), which he clinched by the remark that he had compared my version with the original! I see that Silas Hocking has just published a book called “All men are liars.” I would fain send a copy to that critic, even now. By the way, my cousin Miss Fiona Macleod wrote to me the other day for your address. I understand she wanted to send you a copy of her new book. If you got it, you should, as a folklorist, read the titular story, *The Sin-Eater*.

My wife joins with me in cordial regards, and I am

Sincerely yours, | William Sharp.

*Memoir 247*

*To Hannibal Ingalls Kimball,<sup>2</sup> November 8, 1895*

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<sup>1</sup> “Fragments from the Lost Journal of Piero di Cosimo” appeared first in *The Scottish Art Review* (June 1890).

<sup>2</sup>Hannibal Ingalls Kimball (1874-1933) began his publishing career in 1893, while an undergraduate at Harvard where, with Herbert Stuart Stone, he founded a company and issued among other works, a bibliography of American first editions and the first copies of the *Chap-Book*, a literary and artistic magazine designed to publicize books published by their company. In 1894 Kimball and Stone moved the firm to Chicago. In March of 1896, a New York sales office was opened and Kimball moved to New York to take charge. A month later, in April, the

Rutland House | Greencroft Gardens | So. Hampstead. | London | 8<sup>th</sup> Nov/95

Dear Mr. Kimball

Herewith the signed agreement. It is all clear to me save the wording in lines 10 & 11 on the first page.

If no arrangement has been made to publish the book in England simultaneously as I infer has not been done — and as I lose not only immediate profit but English Copyright by this not having been done, *which I had all along understood Mr. Stone was to see to* — I suppose I am at liberty now to bring out the book in this country, either with the same contents under a fresh title or as *The Gypsy Christ*.<sup>1</sup> Kindly let me have a line about ‘this’ by return.

With kind regards, | yours very truly, | William Sharp

*P.S.* In the circumstances, should not the words “and in England” in 12<sup>th</sup> line, be struck out and the deletion initialed by you?

ALS Huntington

*To [Hannibal Ingalls Kimball], November 23, 1895*

9 Upper Coltbridge Terrace | Murrayfield, Midlothian | 23<sup>rd</sup>. Nov.1895

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firm’s principal financial backer, Melville E. Stone, Sr., Herbert Stone’s father and owner/editor of the *Chicago Daily News*, insisted the firm release capital through liquidation of investments. Kimball did not wish to comply and offered to buy out Stone’s interest. Stone accepted and soon started his own publishing firm, Herbert S. Stone & Company. Kimball continued to operate Stone & Kimball Company in New York, shortly changing its name to reflect his sole ownership, and published thirty-six additional titles between May 8, 1896 and July 3, 1897. By October, 1897, debts were such that the firm had to be liquidated, and Kimball turned to the printing business. He started Cheltenham Press wherein he could apply his experimental typographical designs to printed advertising. In addition to designing and printing advertisements, Cheltenham issued privately several pamphlets by Stone and Kimball authors, among them Bliss Carman and Robert Louis Stevenson. Kimball left the printing business in 1917 to become President of the National Thrift Bond Corporation. While working in the investment field, Kimball invented the “baby bond” as an investment mechanism for low income groups. In 1921, he joined the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company as first Director of Group Annuities. At the time of his death in 1933, he was a recognized authority on industrial pension plans.

<sup>1</sup>*The Gypsy Christ and Other Tales* (Chicago: Stone & Kimball, 1895) appeared in England as *Madge o’ the Pool: The Gipsy Christ and Other Tales* (Westminster: Archibald Constable & Company, 1897).

My dear Sir

Your note of the 25<sup>th</sup>. Oct. duly came to hand about a fortnight ago with Contracts for “The Sin-Eater” and Memd. of agreement about *Pharais* — but I have delayed acknowledgment, as I have expected that each successive post would bring me the draft on honour for £10 (a/c *Pharais*) which you say you enclose, but which was not enclosed. Some six or seven mails have passed, and still no sign of the Draft.

I await, therefore, its receipt, either any day now, or after you write to this communication, before I send you the Note of Agreement (with a slight amendment) which you enclosed in duplicate.

Yours faithfully, | Fiona Macleod

*P.S.* Kindly let me have a dozen copies of *Pharais*, if now published.

The note with enclosed cheque for £10 has just reached me this moment. Will write by next mail. | F.M.

ALS Huntington

*To [Hannibal Ingalls Kimball], November 25, 1895*

9. Upper Coltbridge Terrace. | Murrayfield, Midlothian. | 25<sup>th</sup>. November. /95

Dear Sir,

As stated in *P/S.* to my note per last mail, the delayed draft for £10 on a/c *Pharais* came to hand.

Herewith I return formal receipt, but not one of the forms you sent to me. In the first place, I am not legally describable as “Fiona Macleod of London, England”— but as “Fiona Macleod of Murrayfield, Midlothian” — and in the next you are under some misapprehension as to the conditions of the American issue of *Pharais*. The honorarium of £10 was not to be for “the entire American rights in the book entitled *Pharais* to have and to hold for themselves and for their assigns for ever” — but for the alterations I made in that book, in order to protect you against piracy of the English edition. It is true, I have no further rights in your *Green Tree* issue of said book: but, on the other hand, neither have you the right to issue the book in any other form or price without agreement with me or my representative.

Naturally, I would not dispose of the whole American rights, and in perpetuity, for the sum of £10 — which sum in any case was not of my fixing, but Mr. Stone’s offer in

consideration of my making alterations which would make the reprinted American issue different here and there from the original English edition. *The Sin-Eater* contract you will have already received.

Hoping that both books — and other writings of mine — will in every way justify the confidence of your firm,

Believe me, | Yours very truly, | Fiona Macleod

*P.S.* I send one stamped and signed Receipt-Agreement, for you to keep. The other please endorse with your firm's signature, and kindly return to me.

ALS Huntington

*[November 25, 1895]<sup>1</sup>*

Upper Coltbridge Terrace | Murrayfield | Midlothian

In consideration of 10 (Ten Pounds) Sterling to me in hand paid, the receipt of which is now acknowledged, I, Fiona Macleod, of Murrayfield, Midlothian, Scotland, do hereby assign to Messrs. Stone and Kimball, a corporation organized under the laws of Illinois, doing business principally in Chicago, Cook County, State of Illinois, U.S.A., all rights in the Green Tree Library issue of "Pharais", which book, in consideration of said honorarium, I have amended so as to safeguard the said firm's rights in said issue of "Pharais". But this with the reservation that all other rights of alteration and republication of said book remain with me, and that the said Stone and Kimball bind themselves to publish no other edition of "Pharais" than said Green Tree Library issue unless by special consent of and compact with me or my legal representative.

Fiona Macleod

ALS Huntington

*To the Editor of Blackwood's Magazine, [late Fall, 1895]*

*(Letter address.)* / 9. Upper Coltbridge Terrace | Murrayfield

Dear Sir

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<sup>1</sup>This is the "formal receipt" mentioned in the 25 November letter to Stone and Kimball.

Will the enclosed suit you for *Blackwood's*? I must add at once (1) that I reserve my copyright, with freedom to reprint in volume form after Xmas 1895: and (2) that the American serial newspaper's rights of this story are already bought beforehand by a New York Syndicate.

The circumstances may make your acceptance of "Morag of the Glen" infeasible — but I hope not, as it would be a great pleasure to me to have one of my Celtic stories in *Blackwood's*.

I am at present in Skye, but I give the address (that of a cousin) where all my letters are sent to.

Believe me | Yours very truly | Fiona Macleod

*P.S.* May I beg the favour of a reply at your earliest convenience, as I have both Syndicate and Magazine applications for any work of mine I have to dispose of.

ALS National Library of Scotland

To \_\_\_\_\_, *December 11, 1895*

11<sup>th</sup> Dec/95

Dear Sir

In continuation of my letter per last mail,<sup>1</sup> I may add that *The Strayed Reveller* and other early poems of Matthew Arnold have now lapsed out of copyright. "The Stayed Reveller" has long been worth literally its weight in gold — so rare is it. I knew Matthew Arnold, & know his work well, & wd. gladly write upon him in this connection.

Faithfully Yours | William Sharp

ALS W. Hugh Peal Collection, University of Kentucky

*To Henry Mills Alden, [December, 1895]*

30 Greencroft Gardens | South Hampstead | London

My dear Alden, | and dear Miss Annie, | and dear everyone else at the home in Metuchen,

My cordial greetings for Christmastide & the coming year -- from your ever affectionate & unforgetting friend.

William Sharp

who sends herewith, as a Xmas offering, his recently taken "image".

My wife though unknown, demands a share in a full half of the Love Sent!

To Sir George Douglas,<sup>2</sup> December 21, 1895

Rutland House | Greencroft Gardens | So. Hampstead | 21/Dec/95

My dear Douglas:

I send you my cordial thanks for your friendly and helpful letter — helpful because it comes from one whose trained intelligence I respect, and whose insight and swift response to any genuine keen manifestation of intellectual or spiritual emotion I discovered a long time ago now — and friendly, because at once so generously sympathetic and so honest.

Yes, though Traill and some other critics (& let me say that not one of these ‘big guns’ suspects what *you* have all along felt sure of, and which I can no longer, in fairness, keep from you, trusting you however to be scrupulous in your guarding of my secret — namely, that I *am* Fiona Macleod) — prefer its two predecessors to “The Sin-Eater,” I entirely agree with you in ranking the latter as a worthier achievement — so far as it is an achievement at all: — and this I say in no false modesty, for ‘in finding myself’ in F.M. I have lost all literary arrogance, and work now in what someone once called ‘a passionate humility’.

Certainly, I have *wrought* it as well as been profoundly wrought *by* this development of my childhood & boyhood ‘*tendenz.*’ The movement — to speak largely about small matters — began with “Sospiri di Roma” (with more obvious notes first struck in “The Weird of Michael Scott” & “The Death Child”) and “Vistas.” Then I suddenly harked back — and wrote straight

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<sup>1</sup> The letter to a publisher, of which this note is a continuation, has not surfaced.

<sup>2</sup> Sir George Brisbane Douglas (1856-1935) is identified by EAS (*Memoir*, 253-4) as a “poet, scholar, and keen critic” who “had followed the literary career of William Sharp with careful interest, and gave the same heed to the writings of ‘Fiona Macleod.’” After reading *The Sin-Eater*, Douglas concluded on the basis of internal evidence that Fiona Macleod was William Sharp and wrote to tell him his conclusion. Douglas edited for the Canterbury Poet series, of which Sharp was the general editor, *Poems of the Scottish Minor Poets, from the Age of Ramsay to David Gray* (London: Walter Scott, 1891), *Contemporary Scottish Verse* (London: Walter Scott, 1893), and *Scottish Fairy and Folk Tales* (London: Walter Scott, 1901). A series of lectures he gave at Glasgow University was published as *Scottish Poetry; Drummond of Hawthornden to Fergusson* (Glasgow: J. Maclehose and Sons, 1911).

out of my own life, knowledge, experience, and inner self. *Pharais* was in this sense inspirational.

Please forgive these deleted lines.<sup>1</sup> They contained something as to the strange complexities which underlie the puzzling literary entity, “Fiona Macleod”: but, after all, were too private — though, some day, I may allude to their drift.

À propos; when a rumour got about last season that F.M. was “a man, and a well-known man of letters, it was denied by an eminent critic on the ground of “impossibility.” “There is no more pronounced individuality among our living writers,” he declared: “and even if F.M. were not a woman, as she almost certainly is — even her very ‘wildness’ and strange atavistic barbarism confirming rather than dissuading me in this — she could not be any one of the possible names mentioned. If she were, it would be one of the strangest episodes in Victorian literature — and a puzzling nut to crack for the critics & psychologists of the next century.”

As a matter of fact, this is the view now held apparently — and even the one or two who suspected W.S. (Grant Allen, W. B. Yeats, Garrett Fisher<sup>2</sup> the critic) have at last admitted they were wrong. Yeats, I believe, went so far as to say that, after careful examination, he had come to the conclusion that “it was impossible.”

Well: F.M. hopes to do something that will last — better, something that will deserve to last.

I do not think “The Washer of the Ford” will please “the general reader.” It is much more austere, for one thing, than anything F.M. has done — but, I think, as great an advance upon “The Sin-Eater”, as that upon the others. The two books, however, that are most near her heart, will not (probably) be done (or at any rate published) for a year or two.

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<sup>1</sup> The eight preceding lines in the manuscript have been heavily crossed through. The fourth line contains the name Edith Rinder, but the other words are impossible to make out. Presumably Sharp decided to tell Douglas the role Edith Rinder played in the genesis of Fiona Macleod and then thought better of it. Sharp’s characterization here of Fiona Macleod as a “puzzling literary entity” is an apt description of what she was for Sharp during his lifetime and for Elizabeth as long as she lived. There were many efforts to explain that puzzle while Sharp was alive and there have been many more in the century following his death in 1905.

<sup>2</sup> See Sharp’s 25 October 1895 letter to Richard Garnett.

By the way, she has a 'legendary romance' in the current *Evergreen*<sup>1</sup> (of course: I forgot, you must have seen this comrade to "Cobweb Hall") — and a series of illustrated Hebridean & Highland episodes, runes, etc., in the Xmas number of *Harper's*.<sup>2</sup>

Herewith I send you a copy of the first note from George Meredith<sup>3</sup>: also a digest of the press opinions to hand. Please let me have both again at your convenience.

I am extremely interested in what you say by way of critical remonstrance.<sup>4</sup> Very likely you are wholly right. For myself, some instinct seems to tell me you *are* right in what you say about the four 'damning' words on the last page of "The Dan non Ron"— "a red irrecognisable mass", of course. Yes, I do admit it. You are right. Possibly, too, you are right about the bloodthirstiness in "Green Branches". I *think* you are wrong about the beginning of "The Ninth Wave", and I am *certain* I am right about the fittingness of the close of "The Sin-Eater".

But you are right in your attitude, & I thank you for writing to me. I will remember your warning. I wonder why the strangeness & horror of madness, and the lust of blood, are so potent factors in my imagination — when I know also the wells of tenderness and love for men, women & children, for beasts & all living things, out of which 'Fiona' draws her draught of tears and pain and tragic joy.

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<sup>1</sup> The reference is to Fiona Macleod's "Mary of the Gael" which appeared in *The Evergreen, A Northern Seasonal, The Book of Autumn* in the fall of 1895. See note to Sharp's letter of 20 July 1895 to Miss Anne Alden. Douglas would have seen it in the autumn *Evergreen* because his tale called "Cobweb Hall" also appeared in that volume.

<sup>2</sup> Fiona Macleod, "From the Hebrid Isles," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, December, 1895, XCII, 45-60.

<sup>3</sup> See *Memoir*, 245-6.

<sup>4</sup> EAS (*Memoir*, 253-4) printed Douglas's response to this letter from Sharp in which he maintained the fiction of Fiona Macleod's separate identity. It reads, in part, "I am very glad to find that you think I have understood Miss Macleod's work, and I think it very good of her to have taken my out-spoken criticisms in such good part. Certainly if she thinks I can be of any use to her in reading over the proofs of "The Washer of the Ford," it will be a great pleasure to me."

Do you think you would care to help me by overlooking for me (next February probably) the type-duplicate, or proofs, of the “Washer of the Ford” volume? Or is this asking too much? Say frankly.

A matter that amused me at first has assumed a more tragic hue. A man (a Scottish clergyman — and a Highlander) has read & reread F. M.’s books till ——— he has fallen passionately in love with her!! He created an ideal ‘Fiona,’ poor chap, and has “pinned all to his passionate hope.” I thought I had definitely prevented all further idea of anything of the kind, or even any correspondence — but I have had a letter from his mother, saying that her son is desperate because of my rebuff, and is dying for love of me; and she begs me to be merciful, & even if I cannot become his wife, at least to see him. She warns me, too, that she fears he will take his life, “as he has become almost distraught by his mad love for you”. Then she makes a personal appeal, about her age, & her belief in & pride in him, & so forth. It may seem only amusing to you — as it did to me at first — but upon my soul I am very uncomfortable about it. After the first definite proposal of marriage (by the way, this is the second Fiona has had!) I made enquiries, & found that, wild as it all sounds, everything is “on the square”. Strangely enough, a friend of mine has an estate near where my ‘lover’ resides with his mother.

I am damnably put out about the whole affair.

Did I tell you of my wife’s serious ill-health? She has to leave England for 3 months or so — & starts on the 5<sup>th</sup> Jany for central Italy. It is impossible for me to go with her, alas: but she will be with friends. We are hopeful that this complete change to a fine climate will prove wholly remedial.

Ever yours, my dear Douglas, | William Sharp

ALS Yale

*To Messrs. Stone and Kimball, December 21, 1895*

Rutland House | Greencroft Gardens | South Hampstead | 21 Dec ’95

Messrs. Stone & Kimball | Chicago

Dear Sirs,

If, partly by lateness in placing the book on the market and because of the great pressure of long-arranged-for books this winter season here, & for other reasons also (because of the

nature of the “Gypsy Christ” story, I hear from one source — tho’ that seems to me rather absurd) there is no likelihood of *The Gypsy Christ* volume being on the English market soon — I suggest that it would surely be much the best plan for you to publish it (if you have not already done so — as I infer from your advts., though I have not yet received any copy) in the States, and simply send over a certain number of copies here for sale through an agent. If you have not already issued the book, simultaneous issue would give copyright here. I have no doubt whatever that, if you do not make arrangements with your regular agents here, copies on sale would be taken by Messrs. Patrick Geddes & Colleagues of Edinburgh. Only, in that case how about advertising & other incidental expenses. For several reasons I would prefer another arrangement. Has the book been submitted to Mr. Lane?<sup>1</sup>

Please note

- (1) That I wrote, to commission, an article on the Belgian Renaissance, for the Chap-Book — and posted it in *September* last. Its receipt was never acknowledged, nor has it appeared, nor have I heard anything about it.
- (2) I also sent to you about same date tho’ a little earlier, with a letter, my translation of a short play by Charles Van Lerberghe.<sup>2</sup> *This has never been acknowledged or taken notice of in any way.*
- (3) At Mr. Stone’s request, the recently published vol. (which I am glad to say is going very well) *Ecce Puella* was submitted to your firm, for publication in America. To this day I have never heard why it was declined, or had any word about it (save a line from Mr. Stone acknowledging a copy I sent him).
- (4) Three letters of mine about these matters seem to have been ignored.  
As we are, I hope, to have many dealings with each other in future, I trust such lapses of memory will no longer be a source of annoyance & loss of time.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>John Lane, the publisher.

<sup>2</sup> See note to Sharp letter to Stone dated 18 September 1895.

Yours faithfully | William Sharp

Will you kindly let me have the promised number of copies of "*The Gypsy Christ*" (if not already dispatched). I liked the *format* of Miss Macleod's *Sin-Eater* very much (By the way, will you please furnish me with a copy of her *Pharais* and of Mrs. Wingate Rinder's "Green Tree")

ALS NYPL

*To Robert Murray Gilchrist, [December 22?, 1895]*

Rutland House | Greencroft Gardens | So. Hampstead

My dear Gilchrist

I hope Christmastide comes with happiness to you & yours.

To me, 1896 comes with a gauntleted hand. It will be a hard fight against the squadrons of Destiny (for I hear the trampling of an obscure foe, and menacing vague cries) — but perhaps I may — for a time, and that is the utmost each of us can expect — emerge victor. What a bitter strange mystery fate is! You know, dimly and in part, out of what tragic pain and amid what tragic issues I wrote "*Summersleep*", the third of the "*Tragic Landscapes*"? Well, every environment is changed, and circumstances are different, and yet the same two human souls are once more whelmed in the same disastrous tides, & have once more to struggle blindly against what seems a baffling doom.<sup>2</sup>

At least, thank God, there is grip.

I wish very much I could have a long talk with you. I wonder when it is to be. (In case you shd. be coming to town, note that I shall be away from London from the 4<sup>th</sup> to the 10<sup>th</sup> inclusive).

Meanwhile, I am wrought by overwork, anxiety, and the endless flame of life.

I am in financial and other trouble, too, partly because of the serious indisposition of my wife. The doctor says she must leave England for three months — so in less than a fortnight now she goes to Central Italy. It is impossible for me to get away — but she goes to a relative, &

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<sup>1</sup> The firm was having managerial and financial problems. See note to Sharp's letter to Kimball dated 8 November 1895.

afterwards with a dear friend and among friends. Perhaps you would come here for a few days, say in February?<sup>1</sup>

I wish you would write to me — a long letter, not one of your usual notelets! I *need* something just now.

Does *The Sin Eater* volume wear with you? It seems to have made a profound impression on George Meredith and the few whom I particularly wanted to reach — and indeed upon many, known and unknown. It has received praise, too, in the best quarters, that makes me almost shy — for a great word has been used more than once by scrupulous critics.

I hope your mother cared for at least something in the book (you told me she was ‘deep’ in it, & would write to me: and as I have never heard from her I fear that she has been disappointed.)

Herewith as a small Xmas offering I send you a specially bound proof-revise copy of my last book: “*Ecce Puella: And Other Prose Imaginings.*” It is rather larger, & is differently bound, in the published edition.

If I could leap from now over this black gulf of January, & be safe on the shores of February, how thankful I should be! And yet — there are gulfs beyond, I know. What are you doing? What have you done?

Write to me as comrade, and intimate friend. I have a weary feeling as tho’ I had done *nothing*, & could never write a line worth reading.

My love to *you*, & Cordial feelings to all of you. | Your friend | William Sharp

ALS Sheffield City Archives

*To J. Stuart Glennie, December 26, 1895*

Rutland House, | Greencroft Gardens, | So. Hampstead. | Dec. 26, 1895.

Dear Sir,

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<sup>2</sup> As in his letter of 1 November 1895, Sharp confided in Gilchrist regarding his depression and asked for help. The two struggling souls are Sharp’s and Edith Rinder’s, or Sharp’s and Fiona Macleod’s, or both in the sense that Sharp identified Fiona with Edith.

<sup>1</sup> This sentence is written in the margin to be inserted here. The “relative” was Elizabeth’s aunt, her mother’s sister, a Mrs. Smiley, who lived in Florence, and the “dear friend” was Mona Caird who would join Elizabeth in Rome.

It has been very difficult to arrive at a conclusion as to how best to meet your wishes, and also to consider our own interests, on account of the several plans of publication specified by you.

In the first place we do not see our way to purchasing the whole or half the edition for a cash sale, as you suggest in your letter of the 15<sup>th</sup>.<sup>1</sup>

It seems to me that the simplest plan is for us to undertake the publication at our own expense, and to grant you what you consider an adequate royalty on all copies sold, with a stipulation that we guarantee you the sum of fifty pounds (£50.) irrespective of possible failure of the book's sales to reach that sum in royalties. Further, I suggest that the book be published at 5/ nett (so as to aid it toward a larger sale) and that you be paid a royalty at the rate of a shilling a copy on all copies sold. In this way you are freed from all responsibility of production, guaranteed (to the extent of £50.) against non-receipt of any income from your book, and we, on our part, are not so heavily handicapped with a volume whose sales at the best cannot be large, and in the present state of the book market are highly problematical.

On hearing from you, I shall at once reply to you decisively: when, too, I shall return, with many thanks, Mr. Carmichael's ballad.<sup>2</sup> Let me add that the "Arthurian Localities" seem to me a work in every way worthy of republication and that I shall very gladly see it introduced to a wider public, and to a younger generation of writers,

Yours faithfully | W.S.

MS Copy NLS, Geddes Collection

*[To Patrick Geddes, December 27, 1895]*<sup>3</sup>

Herewith copy of letter sent yesterday to Stuart Glennie. You advised me to be as liberal as practicable — but I don't think we can do more than suggested here, do you? (He is mistaken in saying he has not heard from me since he wrote on Nov. 28<sup>th</sup> — he has heard from me twice.)

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<sup>2</sup> To my knowledge, P. G. Geddes and Colleagues did not publish a book by J. Stuart Glennie.

<sup>2</sup> Alexander Carmichael's "The Land of Lorne and the Satirists of Taynuilt" appeared in *The Evergreen*, Vol. I (Spring, 1895), 110-115.

<sup>3</sup> This brief note accompanied a copy of the letter to Stuart Glennie dated 26 December 1895.

To Richard Le Gallienne, [December] 28, [1895]

Rutland House | Greencroft Gardens | So. Hampstead | *Saty* 28<sup>th</sup>

My dear Le Gallienne,

It is long since we met, & I miss our friendly intimacy. Can we not meet soon?

Is there likelihood of your being at home & disengaged tomorrow week (i.e. on Sunday the 5<sup>th</sup>) — and, if so, would it suit you if I came that evening?

If agreeable to you, this would suit me particularly — for on that forenoon I have a bad separation to go through, & would rather be with one who is at once a friend & not a relative. To be explicit: my wife's health has given way, and the doctor says her chance lies in leaving the country for some months to come. So, on Sunday, she starts for Central Italy.<sup>1</sup> It is, alas, impossible for me to get away also: tho', fortunately, she goes to friends — first to a relative who has a villa outside Florence, and then to a dear friend, at Frascati, in the Alban Hills above Rome.

Please let me have a line from you by return if practicable.

Meanwhile — as always —

Your friend, | William Sharp

ALS Princeton

To Herbert S. Stone December 30, 1895

9 Upper Coltbridge Terrace. | Murrayfield, Midlothian.

Dear Mr. Stone,

Let me begin by wishing you health, prosperity, and happiness in 1896.

Herewith I send you the *précis* of the press-opinions here about "*The Sin-Eater*." The latest — a long and important article in *The Daily Chronicle* — has attracted many more readers. I believe there is to be an article on the book in next week's *Academy*, or the week after.

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<sup>1</sup> As it turned out, Sharp accompanied his wife as far as Paris on 4 January and could not have visited Le Gallienne on Sunday, 5 January. See his letter to Le Gallienne dated 6 January 1896.

I hope to be able to send you the completed M.S. of *The Washer of the Ford* by the end of January.<sup>1</sup> Messrs. Patrick Geddes & Colleagues wish to issue the book early in March. Will this suit you? Please specify a date, if you can: and kindly let me have a reply by return. May I ask you to give me £50 on date of publication, in advance of royalties?

Of late, and particularly since the issue of *The Sin-Eater*, I have had many offers as to publication: and I can easily get £50 (or more), only that I bear in mind my promise to you. If I remember rightly, our original understanding was a 15% royalty, with £25 advance on publication.

Have you forgotten your promise about sending me the 25 copies of the “Green Tree Library” edition of *Pharais*? I am eager to see the book in that form. (Mr. Lane, I understand, is about to issue a second edition of “*The Mountain Lovers*”.)<sup>2</sup>

Bliadhua mhath ùr duit!<sup>3</sup> and believe me,

Sincerely yours, | Fiona Macleod

30<sup>th</sup> December/95

The contents, as at present arranged, are

*The Washer of the Ford and Other Legendary Moralities*

- I. The Washer of the Ford | Muime Chriosd | The Kind of the World | Joseph Macrae | Black Dougal | The Hidden Years | The Fisher of Men
- II. Marlin the Wild | The Annir-Coilyä | The Swineherd | The Love of Hydullan | The Helot
- III The Colloquy of the Ancients |

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<sup>1</sup> *The Washer of the Ford: Legendary Moralities and Barbaric Tales* (Chicago: Stone and Kimball, 1896) and (Edinburgh: P. G. Geddes and Colleagues, 1896). The month of the Edinburgh publication was May, and its arrangement of tales differed from the one here.

<sup>2</sup> A second edition of *The Mountain Lovers* was not published by Lane until February, 1906.

<sup>3</sup> *Bliadhue mhath ur duit!* translates “Happy New Year!”