

## LIFE: 1891

Elizabeth Sharp described the time they spent in Rome in late 1890 and early 1891 as “one long delight” for her husband which “amply fulfilled even his optimistic anticipation. He reveled in the sunshine and the beauty; he was in perfect health; his imagination was quickened and worked with great activity” (*Memoir* 173). Shortly after they arrived in Rome, they were joined by Edith Wingate Rinder who came from London to spend three weeks with Mona Caird, her husband’s cousin and a close friend of the Sharps. Sharp had known Edith, a beautiful and intelligent young woman of twenty-six, in London, but their friendship under the warm Italian sun deepened into mutual love. She would become the mysterious unnamed friend Sharp frequently alluded to in letters and conversations and the principal catalyst for the Fiona Macleod phase of his literary career. In a letter to his wife written in 1896, Sharp said he owed to Edith his “development as ‘Fiona Macleod’ though, in a sense of course, that began long before I knew her, and indeed while I was still a child.” “Without her,” Sharp continued, “there would have been no ‘Fiona Macleod.’” After quoting from this letter in the *Memoir* (222), Elizabeth continued, with remarkable generosity, “Because of her beauty, her strong sense of life and of the joy of life; because of her keen intuitions and mental alertness, her personality stood for him as a symbol of the heroic women of Greek and Celtic days, a symbol that, as he expressed it, unlocked new doors in his mind and put him ‘in touch with ancestral memories’ of his race.” Sharp and Edith took several long walking tours through the Roman Campagna in late December and early January. The beauty of the countryside and the joy of his new found love enabled Sharp to compose in February a sequence of exuberant poems which were privately printed in Italy in March as *Sospiri di Roma*.

Of that volume and Mrs. Rinder’s role in its genesis, Elizabeth said, “The *Sospiri di Roma* was the turning point. Those unrhymed poems of irregular meter are filled not only with the passionate delight in life, with the sheer joy of existence, but also with the ecstatic worship of beauty that possessed him during those spring months we spent in Rome when he had cut himself adrift for the time from the usual routine of our life, and touched a high point of health and exuberant spirits. There, at last, he found the desired incentive towards a true expression of himself, in the stimulus and sympathetic understanding of the friend to whom he dedicated the first of the books published under his pseudonym. This friendship began in Rome and lasted throughout the remainder of his life” (*Memoir* 222). When *Pharais*, the first Fiona Macleod book, was published in 1894, it was dedicated to E.W.R., Edith Wingate Rinder.

At the start of 1891, Sharp began a diary which details his activities in Rome. Since

Elizabeth reproduced portions of it in the *Memoir*, it is possible to follow in considerable detail his movements and his reading and writing. In January he sampled a remarkable array of authors: Elie Reclus, Pierre Loti, Restif a la Bretonne, George Meredith, Robert Browning, Charles Swinburne, Coventry Patmore, Antonio Fogazzaro, Gabriel D'Annunzio, Henrik Ibsen, Edgar Allen Poe, Henri de Balzac, and Sainte Beuve. And he produced articles for *The Independent* in New York and the *National Review* and a poem for *Belford's Magazine*. In early February, he turned to the poems that would become *Sospiri di Roma* and finished them in a burst of creativity. The Sharps also became more active in the literary and artistic life of the city. They attended lectures and visited art studios. On February 10th and 11<sup>th</sup>, Sharp sat for a drawing by Charles Holroyd, a sitting that resulted in an etched portrait. In mid-February, when the poems were finished, he took them to a Professor Garlanda of the Societa Laziale who in turn took them to a printer in Tivoli where *Sospiri di Roma* would be printed and bound at Sharp's expense in late March. At the end of February, Charles Ross, a Norwegian painter, asked Sharp to sit for him and produced a pastel portrait Elizabeth reproduced in the *Memoir*.

In mid-March Elizabeth went to Florence to spend more time with her aunt, and Sharp went to Tivoli to oversee the printing of *Sospiri*. Julian Corbett, a friend and author of *The Life of Drake*, accompanied him there, and the two men spent the mornings working and the afternoons wandering in the countryside. One excursion took them to the castle of San Poli dei Cavalieri where they met a woman whose old Italian tales were later the basis of Sharp's "The Rape of the Sabines," a story which appeared the following year in the first and only issue of Sharp's *Pagan Review*. At the end of the month Sharp joined Elizabeth in Pisa, and from there they went to Provence where they spent most of March.

In April the Sharps were back in London. From May until mid-August, Sharp spent most of his working hours on the Severn manuscript. A diary entry states the last revision was finished on August 28th. In September Sharp and Elizabeth went to Stuttgart via Holland and Nuremberg so Sharp could work closely with Blanche Willis Howard on their jointly-authored novel. An epistolary form was chosen, and it was decided Sharp would write the letters of the wife and Blanche Willis Howard those of the husband in what became *A Fellowe and His Wife* (1892). This exercise in authorial gender transfer foreshadowed Sharp's decision in 1894 to invent a woman as the supposed author of his "Celtic" writings. His successful adoption of a female persona in the Blanch Willis Howard collaboration surely influenced his decision to turn the female authorial voice of the first Fiona Macleod romance in 1894 into an imagined person and to sustain the fiction of her reality for eleven years. In Stuttgart, which Sharp had described to Catherine Janvier a year earlier as "wonderfully

animated and pleasing for a German town,” he also began a five-act play based on the epistolary novel, a project he never completed; and he worked on several “Dramatic Interludes,” which later appeared as *Vistas* (1894).

After their return to London in mid-October, the dampness and fog seriously affected Sharp’s physical and mental health. While in Stuttgart, he wrote to Stedman about a possible trip to America at the start of 1892. In the fall he planned the details of the trip which would be both a means of escaping the English weather and a chance to renew friendships, meet editors, and increase the marketability of his writings in America. He also continued to worry over the details of the Severn book through the fall as the publication date continued to slip forward.

# LETTERS: 1891

To Richard Garnett,<sup>1</sup> [early January, 1891]

19, Via delle Quattro Fontane (p.z.) | Rome

Amico Mio,

After a glorious walk<sup>2</sup> of over 15 miles across the loveliest part of the Campagna, in a perfect flood of hot sunshine (which, with a bumble-bee, a lizard, some daisies, and campagna-violets, made Spring seem already come) I have been spending a pleasant afternoon at Elihu Vedder's.<sup>3</sup> He is eager to see all that has been written in England about his "Omar Khayam" and I told him I thought you had written something. Is that so? If so, I wish you could send it to me if practicable: and I would take it to him. He is delighted at the idea that *you* have written about it all, but I warned him that I might be mistaken, though I fancy I am not. He has strongly imaginative things in his studio just now.

I am writing a lyrical drama,<sup>4</sup> and other imaginative work: though hitherto circumstances have been somewhat against that leisure & repose to which I had so looked forward. However, after this week things will be better for me in this respect.

Cordially Yours, | William Sharp

P.S. I shall write again, about Pope Alexander's tomb, & about Keats & Shelley's graves.

ACS University of Texas at Austin

To Bliss Carman, January 10, 1891

C/o Messrs. Maquay Hooker and Co., | 20, Piazza di Spagna, Rome | 19, Via delle Quattro /  
Fontane |(p.z.) | Roma | 10 Jan91

Dear old Chap,

A hurried line to thank you for your welcome Christmas-Greeting — welcome as from the Sender, welcome for its own beauty. You will doubtless also have received the brief Greeting I sent.

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<sup>1</sup> Richard Garnett (1835-1906), English librarian and author, entered the British Museum in 1851 as an assistant and rose in 1875 to be superintendent of the reading-room. From 1890 to 1899, when he retired, he was the Keeper of Printed Books (or Chief Librarian), a post his father held for many years. He also wrote and published extensively. Among his publications were biographies of Carlyle (1887), Emerson (1887), Milton (1890), Edward Gibbon Wakefield (1898); a volume of original, fanciful tales, *The Twilight of the Gods* (1888); a tragedy, *Iphigenia in Delphi* (1890); *A Short History of Italian Literature* (1898); *Essays of an Ex-librarian* (1901).

<sup>2</sup> Probably the walk with Edith Rinder on January 3, 1891 which he described in his diary (*Memoir* 173-4).

<sup>3</sup> Elihu Vedder (1836-1923), a painter and illustrator of considerable merit, was born in New York of Dutch ancestry. Having decided to become an artist, he went to Europe to study and fell in love with Italy. He lived most of his life in Rome where he became a central figure in the expatriate life of the city. He is best known for his illustrations for the *Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam*, the first edition of which was published with the poem in 1884 and sold out in six days.

<sup>4</sup> Probably "Lilith," a prose outline of which he read to Elizabeth on January 9 (*Memoir* 176).

Thanks, too, for the N. Y. Independent, with my poem, just to hand.<sup>5</sup>

I send you one of my African poems — the ‘colour’ of which will perhaps please you. I hope it may suit you for the *Independent*.<sup>6</sup>

Would you care for two or three papers on Contemporary Italian Literature — not so much critical, as to give an idea of what intellectual life and stir there is in Italy of today. Do you know any Magazine or Paper which would care for them? Don’t bother about the matter, however. I am rather full of it at present.

With love; dear Carman, | Yours ever | William Sharp

P.S. Don’t forget to go and see my dear friends the Janviers, at 20, Seventh Avenue, if you have not yet done so.

P.S. I think we shall remove ourselves to Venice about the beginning of March.

ALS Smith College Library

*To Bliss Carman, February 3, 1891*

19, via delle Quattro Fontane | (p.z.) | Rome | 3:2:91

My dear old Boy

I have got so utterly out of the way of all unnecessary letter writing that I often fear my distant friends will all agree to “curse me and forget”. You, however, understand, I know.

I am writing much in verse just now, to the serious detriment of my finances! Late in the spring I am going to bring out a little volume — *possibly* I shall have it printed here, and *perhaps* for private circulation only — of poems dealing entirely with certain impressions of Rome, the Sabine and Alban hill-country, and the Campagna: a few at most, and all in irregular and unrhymed measures — a poetic ‘species’ in which I take great delight. The volume will be called “*Sospiri di Roma*”. (Keep all this to yourself, meanwhile). The more important happen also to be the longer, but I send some herewith of the shorter.

I should be particularly pleased if you could use what you like best, and soon, so as not to cause a delay with the issue of my booklet. Can you manage this, amico mio.

As I managed the “Universal Review” affair for you, I am also going to ask you to think over if you can ‘plant’ any of the other MSS herewith which you can’t use — if you can plant them somewhere, I don’t care where so long as they appear without much delay, and bring me some of the needful.

I am doing this, however, in full trust that if the matter should be a burdensome or in

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<sup>5</sup>“Paris Nocturne” was printed in the December 25, 1890, issue.

<sup>6</sup> On January 8, 1891, Sharp wrote in his diary: “After dinner copied out ‘Rebirth’ (Spring’s Advent) to send to Belford’s, and ‘The Sheik’ for *The Independent*” (*Memoir* 175). “The Sheik” seems not to have made its way into *The Independent*.

any way disagreeable business for you, that you will proceed no further in it.

It is glorious weather now, and full Carnival. We leave here about the 25th of February — go to Spezia (probably) for a week — then elsewhere along the coast, St. Raphael or Antibes, and then into Provence for a month or so.<sup>7</sup> Would you like some Provence sketches — in prose, I mean?

Always affectionately yours, | William Sharp

I was delighted to get your charming and characteristic Christmas remembrance.

*Letter-Address henceforth* | 72 Inverness Terrace | Bayswater | London. W

ALS Smith College Library

*To Catherine Janvier, March 30, 1891*

30:3:91.

Gento Catarine,

You see I address you à la Provençale already! We left Italy last week, and came to Provence. Marseilles, I admit, seemed to me an unattractive place after Rome — and indeed all of Provence we have seen as yet is somewhat chill and barren after Italy. No doubt the charm will grow. For one thing, Spring is very late here this year. . . .

Arles we like much. It is a quaint and pleasant little town: and once I can get my mind free of those haunting hill-towns of the Sabines and Albans I love so much — (is there any hill range in the world to equal that swing of the Apennines stretching beyond Rome eastward, southward, and southwestward?) — I shall get to love it too, no doubt. But oh, Italy, Italy! Not Rome: though Rome has an infinite charm, even now when the jerry-builder is fast ruining it: but “greater Rome,” the Agro Romano! When I think of happy days at the Lake of Nemi, high up in the Albans, of Albano, and L’Ariccìa, and Castel Gandolfo — of Tivoli, and the lonely Montecelli, and S. Polo dei Cavalieri, and Castel Madamo and Anticoli Corrado, etc., among the Sabines — of the ever new, mysterious, fascinating Campagna, from the Maremma on the North to the Pontine Marches, my heart is full of longing. I love North Italy too, all Umbria and Tuscany: and to know Venice well is to have a secret of perpetual joy: and yet, the Agro Romano! How I wish you could have been there this winter and spring! You will find something of my passion for it, and of that still deeper longing and passion for the Beautiful, in my “Sospiri di Roma,” which ought to reach you before the end of April, or at any rate early in May. This very day it is being finally printed off to the sound of the Cascades of the Anio at Tivoli, in the Sabines — one of which turns the machinery of the Società Laziale’s printing-works. I do hope the book will appeal to you, as there is so

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<sup>7</sup> Mrs. Sharp stayed in Rome until mid-March and then went to Florence (*Memoir* 181). Sharp stayed in Rome through the end of March to oversee the final proofing of *Sospiri di Roma*.

much of myself in it. No doubt it will be too frankly impressionistic to suit some people, and its unconventionality in form as well as in matter will be a cause of offence here and there. You shall have one of the earliest copies.

Yesterday was a fortunate day for arrival. It was a great festa, and all the women were out in their refined and picturesque costumes. The Amphitheatre was filled, tier upon tier, and full of colour (particularly owing to some three or four hundred Zouaves, grouped in threes or fours every here and there) for the occasion of “a grand Bull-Fight.” It was a brilliant and amusing scene, though (fortunately) the “fight” was of the most tame and harmless kind: much less dangerous even for the most unwary of the not very daring Arlesians than a walk across the remoter parts of the Campagna. . . .

Memoir 182-183

*To Catherine Janvier, May 1, 1891*

1st May, 1891.

. . . Whether coming with praise or with blame and cast me to the perdition of the unrighteous, the critics all seem unable to take the true standpoint — namely, that of the poet.<sup>8</sup> What has he attempted, and how far has he succeeded or failed? That is what should concern them. It is no good to any one or to me to say that I am a Pagan — that I am “an artist beyond doubt, but one without heed to the cravings of the human heart: a worshipper of the Beautiful, but, without religion, without an ethical message, with nothing but a vain cry for the return, or it may be the advent, of an impossible ideal.” Equally absurd to complain that in these “impressions” I give no direct “blood and bones” for the mind to gnaw at and worry over. Cannot they see that all I attempt to do is to fashion anew something of the lovely vision I have seen, and that I would as soon commit forgery (as I told someone recently) as add an unnecessary line, or “play” to this or that taste, this or that critical opinion. The chief paper here in Scotland shakes its head over “the nude sensuousness of ‘The Swimmer of Nemi,’ ‘The Naked Rider,’ ‘The Bather,’ ‘Foir di Memoria,’ ‘The Wild Mare’ (whose “fiery and almost savage realism!” it depreciates — tho’ this is the poem which Meredith says is ‘bound to live’) and evidently thinks artists and poets who see beautiful things and try to fashion them anew beautifully, should be stamped out, or at any rate left severely alone. . . .

In work, creative work above all, is the sovereign remedy for all that ill which no physician can cure: and there is a joy in it which is unique and invaluable. . . .

Memoir 185-186

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<sup>8</sup>Sharp is commenting on the critical reception of *Sospiri di Roma* (1891).

*To Theodore Watts-Dunton, May 7, [1891]*

72 Inverness Terrace | Bayswater | W. | Friday, May 7th

My dear Watts

Many thanks for your kind and friendly letter. I have time only for the most hurried reply. I had to come over to London on private matters, and was about to return to France, when my wife unexpectedly came over, having been medically ordered to do so. She has been unwell for some time, and lately seriously. She is now gaining ground, but it will be a few weeks before she is herself again. An insidious form of low fever is the nominal cause. I am inclined to think she has never quite recovered from an attack of influenza last year: but besides this the arteries got harm from the bad drainage & bad water in Provence.

We are going to Eastbourne at the beginning of the week for a fortnight — & that will do her much good, I expect.

Of course all our plans have been upset: and I do not know what we are going to do between the end of May and September, when we intend to go to Southern Germany [for] two months. As soon as we return from Eastbourne we are going to pay a short visit to George Meredith. It will be a pleasure to me to tell him how highly you appreciate his new book. Nothing has gratified me so much as the letter he wrote to me about “Sospiri di Roma.” Curiously enough (considering author’s vanity) I can’t quite see why the short poem “The Wild Mare” is so fine as he would have it. He says it is “unrivalled in its kind, a superb bit of living verse”, and that “it lives in him”. I am delighted — but, as the Yankees say, I don’t quite ‘catch on’. By the way, I had such a friendly & kind (though by no means ‘palavery’) note from Gosse. The book, of course, will bring me nothing in cash — tho’ it has paid its expenses: but it seems to have struck many and divers kinds of people.

I know little of the Coulson Kernahan<sup>9</sup> to whom you allude. He made a hit a year or so ago by a book (which first appeared serially in Lippincott’s) called “A Dead Man’s Diary.” He is now settled in London, and doing good journalistic work. He is writing occasional papers on literary men of the day for *The Echo* and *The British Weekly*.

I have not yet overcome my Rome-sickness — and long to be back again. I loved Rome many years ago, and despite all the spoiling of it that goes steadily on I loved it this last winter & spring more than ever.

I hope to see you when we are in town again. If, perchance, you shd. be in Eastbourne, you would find us at 6 Moslyn Terrace.

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<sup>9</sup>Coulson Kernahan (1858-1953) was a writer of fiction, criticism, recollections, and imaginative and religious studies who co-edited, with Frederick Locker-Lampson, *Lyra Elegantiarum* (1891), a standard anthology of light verse. His works include *A Dead Man’s Diary* (1890), *Wise Men and a Fool* (1901), *In Good Company* (1917), *Swinburne as I Knew Him* (1919), and *Six Famous Living Poets* (1926).



Ever yours sincerely | William Sharp

If my wife were 'up', or knew that I was writing, she would send cordial greetings.

ALS British Museum, typescript at Brotherton Library, University of Leeds

*To Bliss Carman, [late-July, 1891]*

Letter Address | 2 Coltbridge Terrace | Murrayfield | Edinburgh

My Dear Old Man

I wonder if this will reach you in New York, or if you are away somewhere on what must be a much needed holiday. If you are in or should be going to Nova Scotia give my love to dear old Roberts,<sup>10</sup> who seems by the way to have quite forgotten me, as he has taken no notice of two letters I wrote to him from Italy, and has never acknowledged "Sospira Di Roma".

I am writing this at Whitby, on the Yorkshire Coast, where I shall remain for the next six weeks, and hope to finish my long-delayed "Severn Memoirs."<sup>11</sup> Then we go to Germany (Stuttgart). From there I hope to send you one or two interesting & novel travel papers, in lieu of those I was supposed to have sent from Italy and Provence.

I hope the enclosed may suit you. It would no doubt interest a great many even among those who have never visited the Italian islands.

Best Greetings, old fellow, | from Yours Affectionately Ever | William Sharp

When are you going to publish your poems in Book Form?

ALS University of Iowa

*To The Editor, Blackwood's Magazine, August 21, 1891*

72 Inverness Terrace | Bayswater | London W. 21 Aug:91

Dear Sir:

On my return to England for a short time I find the enclosed among some MSS. Which had accidentally been sent home, in the Spring from Rome, in a box.

I shall be very pleased if it suit you; and I must ask your indulgence for its being sent

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<sup>10</sup> Charles G. D. Roberts, a poet and Professor of English Literature at Kings College, Windsor, Nova Scotia, was Bliss Carman's cousin. Sharp had met them both and traveled with them during his visit to Canada in August, 1889.

<sup>11</sup> Walter Severn (dates), a painter, was the son of Joseph Severn, also a painter and friend of John Keats. Joseph's other son Arthur was also an acquaintance of Sharp's. Walter Severn in 1889 or 1890 (*Memoir* 168) asked Sharp to write a biography of his father and, when Sharp agreed, loaned him a large trove of papers, including unpublished manuscripts and letters, by and about Joseph Severn. Sharp wrote most of his *Life and Letters of Joseph Severn* in the summer of 1891, finishing it at the end of August, and it was published in March 1892 by Sampson Low and Co. in London and Charles Scribner's Sons in New York. While working on the book he met (on August 24) Joseph Severn's youngest brother, Charles Severn, who was 86 years old. Charles confirmed what he had told Sharp the previous September that Keats' composed his Nightingale ode after spending a night under a tree in Hampstead listening to the bird's song (*Memoir* 186).

in ‘Pencil.’ I am just finishing my long delayed Severn Memoir, and, moreover, go abroad again next week (Friday: from this address): and I have, consequently, too much to do to attempt copying: “The Second Shadow.”<sup>12</sup> However. My MS. Is clear & legible.

Yours very brief | William Sharp

If unsuitable, please return MS. (my only copy) to Miss Mary Sharp, 2 Coltbridge Terrace, Murrayfield, Edinburgh.

If accepted: And if proofs are sent anytime from the 1<sup>st</sup> till the end of September: my address will be *bei* Frau Leisewitz, Johannes Strasse 33, Wurttemberg, Germany.

ALS National Library of Scotland

*To Catherine Janvier, September 3, 1891*

Johannes Strasse 33,<sup>13</sup> | 3:9:91.

. . . I know that you would revel in this glowing golden heat, and in the beautiful vinelands of the South. Southern Germany in the vintage season is something to remember with joy all one’s life. Yesterday it seemed as if the world were one vast sea of deep blue wherever a great glowing wave of light straight from the heart of the sun was flowing joyously. I revel in this summer gorgeousness, and drink in the hot breath of the earth as though it were the breath of life. Words are useless to depict the splendour of colour everywhere — the glimmer of the golden-green of the vines, the immeasurable sunfilled flowers, the masses of ripening fruit of all kinds, the hues on the hill-slopes and in the valleys, on the houses and the quaint little vineyard-cots with their slanting red roofs. In the early afternoon I went up through the orchards and vineyards on the shoulder of the Hasenberg. It was a glory of colour. Nor have I ever seen such a lovely purple bloom among the green branches — like the sky of faerieland — as in the dark-plum orchards. There was one heavily laden tree which was superb in its massy richness of fruit: it was like a lovely vision of those thunderclouds which come and go in July dawns. The bloom on the fruit was as though the west wind had been unable to go further and had let its velvety breath and wings fade away in a soft visible death or sleep. The only sounds were from the myriad bees and wasps and butterflies: some peasants singing in the valley as they trimmed the vines: and the just audible susurrus of the wind among the highest pines on the Hasenberg. There was the fragrance of a myriad odours from fruit and flower and blossom and plant and tree and fructifying soil — with below all that strange smell as of the very body of the living breathing world. The festival of colour was everywhere. As I passed a cottar’s sloping bit of ground within his vineyards, I saw some cabbages high up among some trailing beans, which were of

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<sup>12</sup> “The Second Shadow: Being the Narrative of Jose Maria Santos y Bazan, Spanish Physician in Rome” was published, having been accepted by Bliss Carman, in *The Independent* on August 25<sup>th</sup>, 1892.

<sup>13</sup>The Sharps went to Stuttgart so he could collaborate with Blanche Willis Howard on *A Fellowe and His Wife*.

the purest and most delicate blue, lying there like azure wafts from the morning sky. Altogether I felt electrified in mind and body. The sunflood intoxicated me. But the beauty of the world is always bracing — all beauty is. I seemed to inhale it — to drink it in — to absorb it at every pore — to become *it* — to become the heart and soul within it. And then in the midst of it all came my old savage longing for a vagrant life: for freedom from the bondage we have involved ourselves in. I suppose I was a gipsy once — and before that “a wild man o’ the woods.”

A terrific thunderstorm has broken since I wrote the above. I have rarely if ever seen such continuous lightening. As it cleared, I saw a remarkably beautiful sight. In front of my window rose a low rainbow, and suddenly from right there was a bright steel-blue bolt, seemingly hurled with intent right through the arch. The next moment the rainbow collapsed in a ruin of fading splendours. . . .

I have had a very varied, and, to use a much abused word, a very romantic life in its external as well as in its internal aspects. Life is so unutterably precious that I cannot but rejoice daily that I am alive: and yet I have no fear of, or even regret at the thought of death. There are many things far worse than death. When it comes, it comes. But meanwhile we are alive. The Death of the power to live is the only death to be dreaded. . . .

Memoir 186-8

*To [Bliss Carman<sup>14</sup>], September 3, 1891*

Johannes Strasse 33 III | Stuttgart | Wurtemberg | 3:Sept:91

My dear old man

Thanks for your letter and enclosure, which reached me just before I left London for Holland. I am hoping that you are away in Villegiatura this divine month of September. If anywhere near dear old Roberts,<sup>15</sup> give him my love: and say that I hope he duly received “Sospiri di Roma” with my letter. And by the way, if you come across C. F. Hall,<sup>16</sup> tell him that I sent him a copy also. He wrote to me some time ago to say that he was sending or was going to send a copy of some magazine containing something about myself by him — but either it was not sent or it missed me. By the way, in your last note you said something about never having recd. back the photo of myself from the “Magazine of Poetry”. My memory is confused about this: but you shall have another some day. Has any article about me ever appeared in the Mag. of Poetry? If so, I have not seen it.

How strangely one drifts about in this world. Not many days ago I was on the Yorkshire moors or along the sea-coast by Whitby: a few days ago I was in Holland, and

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<sup>14</sup>The salutation and content of this letter indicate clearly it was addressed to Bliss Carman.

<sup>15</sup>Charles G. D. Roberts. See note to Sharp’s late-July 1891 letter to Carman.

<sup>16</sup>[Identify: Possibly Charles F. Hall who went to the Arctic on *Polaris* in 1871.]

rejoicing in the animated life of that pleasant ‘water-land’: last Sunday I was strolling by the Rhine or listening to the music in Cologne Cathedral. And now we are temporarily settled down in this beautiful Vine-land — in Stuttgart, the loveliest of all German capitals. It is glorious here just now. The heat is very great, but I delight in it. These deep blue skies, these vine clad hills all aglitter with green-gold, this hot joyous life of the South enthral me — while this glorious flooding sunshine seems to get into the heart and the brain. Even as a town Stuttgart is charming, with its old and new parts, and its magnificent Anlagen leading to Cannstadt. There is ample entertainment of all kinds--open- air concerts, the opera, & so forth. But if you were here, we would leave the town, charming as it is, and go away on the tramp through the golden vinelands and up through the blue Alps of Suabia and Franconia. South Germany in the blithe season of the Vintage is one of the loveliest places in this beautiful world.

But no more South for us this year, once this golden month of September is over. Early in October we shall be in Nuremberg and thence rapidly north not only to Holland but to the far north of Holland — Helder and Hoorn on the Zuyder Zee. About the 20th of October we shall be in England again, as I have art-work that must be attended to. I shall then go off by myself for one of my vagrant gipsy-tramps — either in the west of Scotland (probably round the Island of Arran) or else through the Fen-lands, or perhaps loaf on the upper Thames Reaches. Thereafter I shall be in or close to London, and working very hard.

And now for some good news: in all probability I shall see you and other friends in New York at the end of January or beginning of February. But please meanwhile keep this to yourself: for, until my plans are more decided I do not wish my intended visit known even to friends. I intend to go a-lecturing for about two months in the States. It will be a great happiness to see you again, old fellow, and I look forward to seeing you among the first friends — you, and the Stedmans, and the Janviers, and H. W. Alden.<sup>17</sup>

Thank heaven, I have at last finished my long-delayed *Severn Memoirs*.<sup>18</sup> The book will be out in November probably.

I don’t know if you ever print humorous verse. If so you may care to print the following parody of Hamlet’s famous speech, by “Joseph Severn the friend of Keats” à propos of Etching, at the time when that art first began to be practiced in England by the modern school. I asked my copyist to make a double version of it: so I can send you one herewith. If printed, it would of course, have to appear before the issue of the book — which, however, cannot be till the beginning of November at the earliest.

You say you send me your latest experiment — “an overgrown lyric”: but

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<sup>17</sup>Edmund and Laura Stedman; Catharine and Thomas A. Janvier.

<sup>18</sup>*The Life and Letters of Joseph Severn* appeared in March, 1892.

unfortunately you only say so, for there was no enclosure save the cheque. I look forward to your poem on Shelley.<sup>19</sup>

I doubt if New York or neighbourhood will be particularly pleasant at the beginning of February — but still we must manage a day out of the city somewhere. For myself I love, too, the solitude of nature in the days of deepest winter.

But whether in the north or south I often bear you in loving remembrance: as I hope that you too do,

Your affectionate friend, | William Sharp

ALS Huntington

*To Horace Scudder, September 18, 1891*

Letter address = 72 Inverness Terrace, Bayswater, London, W.<sup>20</sup>

Johannes Strasse 33 III | Stuttgart | Würtemberg | 18th Sept|91

Dear Mr. Scudder,

As you will have surmised — imperative reasons have interfered with the appearance of the *Severn Memoirs*<sup>21</sup>: but at last the book is in the printer's hands. My wife's serious illness, and our frequent journeyings this year, together combined against my getting on with "Severn" or sending you one of the promised articles.

But today I have sent you one that I think you will be pleased to have. You can call it what you like: I name it simply "A Batch of Letters".<sup>22</sup> I have, you will see, adopted your suggestion, and kept the explanatory text succinct as practicable. The mere fact that it contains the first letters written in Venice by the sculptor Westmacott,<sup>23</sup> the painter Geo. Richmond R. A.,<sup>24</sup> and by Mr. Ruskin<sup>25</sup> — a long and important epistle — would make it interesting: but there is other readable matter. The letters of that remarkable man Seymour Kirkup<sup>26</sup> will be read eagerly by many Americans as well as English — for he knew literally hundreds of your

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<sup>19</sup> "The White Gull" (1892). An elegy subtitled "For the Centenary of the Birth of Shelley."

<sup>20</sup> This was the address of Elizabeth Sharp's family home which the Sharp's used when they were between houses and as a stable address when they were traveling for long periods of time.

<sup>21</sup> *The Life and Letters of Joseph Severn* (1892)

<sup>22</sup> William Sharp, "Joseph Severn and His Correspondents," *The Atlantic Monthly*, LXVIII (Dec. 1891), pp. 736-748.

<sup>23</sup> Richard Westmacott (1799-1872), the son of Sir Richard Westmacott, also a sculptor, was Professor of Sculpture at the Royal Academy from 1857 to 1867 and was a well-known writer and lecturer on art.

<sup>24</sup> George Richmond (1809-1896), an English painter and a member of Blake's circle, was a fashionable portrait painter.

<sup>25</sup> Ruskin's letter included his first impressions of Venice and his criticism of English artists (particularly those of the Royal Academy) and English art: "It isn't of any use to try and do anything for such an age as this. We are a different race altogether from the men of old time: we live in drawing-rooms instead of deserts, and work by the light of chandeliers instead of volcanoes" (p. 740, see note #2).

<sup>26</sup> Seymour S. Kirkup (1788-1880) was a painter and one of a group of young men who were friends and disciples of William Blake. Later he settled in Italy and became a leader of Anglo-American literary society, principally in Florence where he spent most of his life.

countrymen in the course of his long life in Italy.

I *think* the article is not beyond the limits you gave me. If too long, you can strike out Severn's letter etc. to Unwins<sup>27</sup> at pp 17 to 17c.

Messrs. Sampson Low Marston & Co. are to publish the book, and they have suddenly put a swift step forward and wish to get the book out in November if practicable, probably about the middle of that month or about the 25th.<sup>28</sup> Hence my telegram to you today, which I would have made more explicit, but for the heavy charge: however, I daresay it will be plain to you, giving you notice, as it occurred to me that the MS. might arrive so late as to cause you inconvenience.

I thought the book would be out early in 1892. Owing to this sudden change, and pressure, I can send off only one Severn article — so the two other magazines which wanted a "Correspondence" article must perforce go without.

I am writing this from Germany, but I hope this letter and the MSS. will reach you with not more than a day or so's delay than if sent from England.

You shall hear from me further either by the same or the next post: but meanwhile I hurriedly close, so as to be sure of this one.

Faithfully Yours, | William Sharp

ALS Harvard Houghton

*To Horace Scudder, September 19, 1891*

Letter address: 72 Inverness Terrace, Bayswater, London, W.

Johannes Strasse 33 III | Stuttgart | Wurtemberg | 19th September|91

Dear Mr. Scudder,

Yesterday I wrote to you, and sent my MS. *Batch of Letters*,<sup>29</sup> to be used, if practicable, in your November issue.

I had not time to add that (chiefly owing to technical matters connected with illustrations, and questions of outlay etc.) it was decided that the Severn Memoirs would be issued in one instead of its two bulky volumes. This involved a complete reconstruction of the book, and, as I have found to my cost, a complete reconstruction of *that* reconstruction. In accomplishing this I not only removed over 500 MS. pages of unnecessary though often most entertaining matter, but have practically done away with the record of Severn's life during close on 20 years, the period which he himself thought, and in his experience undoubtedly was, the most interesting of all. This is his Consular period. It was

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<sup>27</sup>Thomas Fisher Unwin (1848-1935) founded the publishing house T. Fisher Unwin in 1882 and was a joint founder of the First Council of Publishing Association.

<sup>28</sup>*The Life and Letters of Joseph Severn* was published in March, 1892.

<sup>29</sup>"Joseph Severn and His Correspondents" was published in the December, 1891, issue of *Atlantic Monthly*.

impracticable to steer a middle course with so eventful a period and with so much interesting material to draw upon: and as it was impossible to give the record adequately I have preferred to reduce it to a few sentences, leaving it to be understood that I shall make up for this omission elsewhere. When Severn went to Rome in 1861 as Consul (for the “King of Sardinia” as well as for Great Britain), the Temporal Power was daily falling away: there was constant friction between the French and the Roman troops and citizens; in the North there were the advancing shadows of Victor Emmanuel and Cavour and “United Italy”, in the South the more ominous shadows, Garibaldi and Republicanism. In Rome itself the Pope was plotting against Italy, the Catholic Ambassadors against the Pope, Cardinal Antonelli against everybody: and in the city were daily broils, murders, and violent perturbation. Severn was an indefatigable diarist, and his daily record is unbroken all through the eventful years (a social and artistic and general as well as a political record) till that eventful year when Italy became one the Great Powers, and the Sovereign of “The United Kingdom,” though excommunicated, walked safely to and fro through the streets of Rome: when France declared war against Prussia, and the Pope decreed his own infallibility; and when, as Severn relates with half unconscious anticlimax, a lady was elected to the chair of Literature at Bologna! Nor was he a whit less scrupulous as a diarist from 1870 onward till a few weeks before his death in 1879.

It is my intention now, therefore, to take the honey out of these diaries, and publish the matter irrespectively of my Severn Memoirs. But as I think of, in the first instance, going further back so as to include some of the striking episodes which I have been unable to interpolate in the Memoirs, it may be necessary for me to throw these “Incidents in the Life of Joseph Severn” into two sequent articles.<sup>30</sup> However, I shall be better able to judge a week hence. You certainly shall have it or them, if you wish — though I would need to know before very long, as it would be as well to print them on the wave of new interest about Severn which will be excited by the Memoirs. I should add that the Diaries contain many gossiping amusing anecdotes.

I have also kept out the great bulk of Chas. Armitage Brown’s letters, for separate use: and other correspondence. These I shall probably print elsewhere, unless you have any special reason for wishing to see them.

I have not forgotten my promise to send you a copy of Severn’s portrait of Keats, and you shall have it yet.

I am at present in Stuttgart collaborating with Blanche Willis Howard in a novel of a

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<sup>30</sup> A second Sharp article on Severn, “Severn’s Roman Journals,” appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly* in May 1892, 631-644.

new and peculiar kind — but please keep this piece of personal news strictly to yourself.<sup>31</sup> We hope to score both a literary and a monetary success with our venture, which is nearly *un fait accompli*.

It is possible (and here again I have to obtrude my claim for privacy) that I may be in Boston early in 1892, and I look forward with great pleasure to the prospect of making your acquaintanceship in person.

With kind regards, | Yours faithfully, | William Sharp

P.S. I enclose a poem which I wrote a short time ago. Perhaps you may give it a haven in the *Atlantic M.*<sup>32</sup> If you do not care for it may I ask you to return it to me at your earliest convenience.

ALS Harvard Houghton

*To Edmund Clarence Stedman, [late September, 1891<sup>33</sup>]*

72 Inverness Terrace | Bayswater | London W<sup>34</sup>

Johannes Strasse 33 III / Stuttgart / Wurtemberg

My dear Stedman,

When I wrote to you for your birthday last year I was in Scotland somewhere — at a place called St. Margaret's, if I remember rightly — and this time it is from South Germany, from pleasant Stuttgart. But not less cordially and affectionately than then do I send you, my dear fellow, my heartiest greetings and good wishes. If loving remembrance could keep you and your dear wife and Arthur from any avoidable ills of life you would be safe from harm. It would be unflattering as well as commonplace to say that I often think of you — for *of course* I do: but I would have you understand that I would of times snatch an hour for the purpose of writing to you were it not that I know your time to be so terribly exploited by correspondence — so that even letters not requiring an answer are extra burdens, however pleasant. Some time ago I nearly launched upon you a long letter, with pages of a new dramatic poem, but remembering how it would help to tire your eyes and perhaps reach you when you were busy with original work, I tore it up, or so much of it as was done.

But I cannot let your birthday go past without a brief word. You and yours occupy a suite of rooms in the mansion of my heart —and strangers have at any time only to mention the word 'Stedman' and they are open to them too.

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<sup>31</sup>*A Fellowe and His Wife* (1892),

<sup>32</sup>*The Atlantic Monthly* did not publish any poems by Sharp in 1891-1892.

<sup>33</sup>“Wm. Sharp, Oct 8-'91” is written in another hand at the top left of the letter's first page. This is the date of Stedman's birthday and indicates approximately when the letter was received. Sharp regularly wrote birthday letters to Stedman after they met in New York in the summer of 1889, and many have survived. Also written in pencil on the top left of the first page: “J. B. Pond - show him” and “For Dr. Lambert from L.S.Y. [?]”

<sup>34</sup>Again, Sharp puts his letter address in London at the top of the page.



Someday my wife and I hope to have you and your wife as welcome guests — though we are still vagrants on the face of the earth. I think I told you that after Italy we went to Provence, and thence meant to go to the Forest of Fontainebleau for the summer — but my wife became unwell, from a kind of low fever as we thought, but possibly an unpleasant kind of influenza — and so we crossed to England. A few weeks at Eastbourne set her up again. Then I went to Scotland, and we met later at York. Then we went for nearly two months to Whitby on the Yorkshire Coast: and thence at the end of August to Holland. We came to Stuttgart about three weeks ago: and shall be here till mid-October, when we go to Amsterdam for a few days and then back to England.

I am here for a literary purpose — though please keep this news to yourself meanwhile — i.e. collaborating with our charming friend Blanch Willis Howard (von Teuffel) in a novel. It is on perfectly fresh and striking lines, and will I think attract attention. We are more than half through with it already. She is a most interesting woman, and is of that vigorous blond race of women whom Titian and the Palmas loved to paint, and whom we can see now in perfection not in Venico but at Chioggia, further down the Adriatic. But if I fall too deeply in love, it will be your fault — for it was you who introduced me to her! I told her about your birthday, and I think she is going to send you a line of greeting. We see each other for several hours daily, or nightly, and — well, literary life has its compensations! But our affectionate camaraderie is as Platonic as — say, as yours would be in a like instance: so don't drag from its mouldy tomb that cynic smile which lies awaiting the possible resurrection of the Old Adam! Your ears must sometimes tingle as your inner sense overhears our praises of you as man and writer.

You know of course your cognate Old-English surnames, 'Stedman' 'Steadfast' and 'Standfast'. I have made an "epigrammicle" thereon as a birthday-greeting for you. Have you ever heard the phrase "he's *stead*" or "he's a *stead*-man"? I fancy it lingers only in Yorkshire and perhaps the northern counties. A 'stead-man' is a man not to be daunted — and is distinct from '*steady*', which in the north means rather 'prosperous' or 'financially sound', 'sure'.

And now for my other piece of news — which also, by the way, I presume had better not get about for the present.

You may see me in the latter half of January! In other words, I think of giving some lectures (so as 'to raise the wind' — a process urgently needful!) in America during February & perhaps the first half of March. I have heard that New York is not so "lectory" a place as other cities, so I had best leave it out of my calculations, I suppose. But I think of throwing this unparalleled and magnificent chance of intellectual development to the citizens of Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Cincinnati, Chicago, Buffalo, Albany, & perhaps elsewhere.

It is my present intention to leave England somewhere about the 10th of January; and it depends on lecturing-circumstances whether I go first to Boston -- or, as my heart prompts, to New York. If I go first to New York, may I find shelter with you for the night of my arrival & perhaps the following day?

And now, amico mio, will you help me in this scheme if you can? A good deal depends upon my being able to carry it out — but this you will understand, as otherwise I would not go in for it.

If you can possibly spare me time to answer the following — or if your eyes are troubling you, perhaps Arthur in the goodness of his heart may do so for you.

- 1) Do you know any good lecturing-agents in whose hands I could put myself.
- 2) How should I apply.
- 3) I think of lecturing thrice a week, evenings. I might also lecture occasionally at some Ladies College or Institute in afternoons.  
or Institute in afternoons
- 4) Approximately, what terms should I expect.
- 5) I suppose Lectures in America, as here, extend to about an hour?

If in any way you can further my aims in this respect you will do me a material service. Could you, for instance, put me “on the lines” at Baltimore?

Perhaps you will be able to send me a line soon — as I have many necessary arrangements to make. Here is my tentative List of Subjects: —

- I. The Preraphaelite Movement in English Arts and Literature: What it was, and its influence.
- II. Dante Gabriel Rossetti: The Man and the Artist,
- III. Dante Gabriel Rossetti: The Poet, and His Circle: Theodore Watts: Wm. Bell Scott: Philip Marston: O’Shaughnessy: Oliver Madox Browne: John Payne: etc.
- IV. Swinburne
- V. George Meredith.
- VI. The Aesthetic School: What it really means and is.
- VII. Critics and Criticism.
- VIII. Poets and Poetry of Today
- IX. On Catholicity of Taste in Literature
- X. Literary Education: What it means.
- XI. Current Tendencies in Art and Literature
- XII. Our Women Poets
- XIII. Women as Novelists
- XIV. Episodes of the Literary Life (*Possibly*)

Which of these do you think likeliest to “take’ in America. In a word, suggest to me what you can.

What a shame to land all this upon you. But your big heart will forgive & understand.

Love to you all. | Your affectionate friend | William Sharp

ALS Private

*To Bliss Carman, October 15, 1891*

Oct. 15, 1891

Amico Mio,

This is only a flying p|c as I am leaving Germany to return to England.

Do you remember that story “The Second Shadow”?<sup>35</sup> If it has not perchance found a haven, please oblige me by sending it for me to Maclure (“Syndicate Maclure” — N. Y. Tribune Offices) and ask if he will buy it for his syndicate. He knows me. I think £5 wd. be a fair price — tho’ he may give more. It would come in well at the Xmas or New Year ‘bogy-story’ season.

In great haste | Yours ever | William Sharp

ACS Smith College Library

*To Richard LeGallienne, [late October, 1891]*

72 Inverness Terrace | Bayswater | London | W

My dear Mr. LeGallienne

I have returned, for a time, from abroad<sup>36</sup> — to find that many interesting things have happened during my absence other than those I chance to have heard of: and among them the publication of your “Bookbills of Narcissus.”<sup>37</sup> And I might not have seen it at all, but that I have been staying with George Meredith. This morning I found your book on Miss Meredith’s table, and dipped into it with great interest. Since I came to town today I have tried to obtain a copy but in vain. If the book is not sold out, will you be so good as to send me a copy, and at the same time let me know the amount of my indebtedness. Miss Meredith also informed me that you were about to be married: perhaps by this time you already are.<sup>38</sup> If so pray accept my cordial good wishes for you both, and for that other welfare which I know is so dear to you.

Sincerely Yours | William Sharp

ALS University of Texas at Austin

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<sup>35</sup>“The Second Shadow, Being the Narrative of Jose Maria Santos y Bazan, Spanish Physician in Rome” was published in *The New York Independent*, 44 (August 25, 1892), 1205ff.

<sup>36</sup>The Sharps were in Germany (Stuttgart) from early September to mid-October.

<sup>37</sup>(Derby: Frank Murray, 1891)

<sup>38</sup>Le Gallienne married Eliza Mildred Lee on October 22, 1891.

*To H. Buxton Forman, November 6, [1891]*

16 Winchester Road | Swiss Cottage N. W. | Friday Evening | Nov. 6

My dear Sir

I find on looking at my notes that there are no Trelawny letters belonging to or in the care of Mr. Rayner Storr.<sup>39</sup> I may be wrong in thinking that you said his names were rightly Edward John and that the letters you have are signed E.J. I have letters signed both E.J. and J.E. and “Edward Trelawny” — and one simply “Trelawny.”<sup>40</sup> I enclose one signed J.E. for your inspection. Pray let me have it again at your early convenience.

If you have any notes concerning persons directly “inspired” by Keats’s writings, possibly you may be able to tell me something of the author of a romance called “Titian;” written circa 1840 (presumably).<sup>41</sup> It is an interesting “Keatsian” letter — but only the first four pages have been preserved. It is dated Oxford 1844 and bears an extraordinary resemblance to Mr. Gladstone’s<sup>42</sup> handwriting of that period: but though W. E. Gladstone did become intimate with Severn in the early ’forties there is no record of his having published any work of this kind. The Severns cannot tell me anything of the writer: the letter I found among a batch of some 20 to 30 notes by Mr. Gladstone — presumably placed there by Walter<sup>43</sup> or someone on account of the already alluded to resemblance in handwriting. I have vainly sought for the author’s name or the book at the Brit. Museum, and with the friendly help of R. Garnett and W. A. Fortiscue.<sup>44</sup>

Yours faithfully, | William Sharp

ALS Brown University

*To Elizabeth A. Sharp, November 9, 1891*

Grosvenor Club, | Nov.9th, 1891.

. . . I have been here all day and have enjoyed the bodily rest, the inner quietude, and, latterly, a certain mental uplifting. But at first I was deep down in the blues.<sup>45</sup> Anything like

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<sup>39</sup>Rayner Storr. (1835-1917) was the author of a concordance to the Latin original of the four books known as “De Imitatione Christi: Given to the World A. D. 1441, by Thomas a Kempis: With full contextual quotations by Rayner Storr (1910).”

<sup>40</sup>Edward John Trelawny (1792-1881) was a friend of Shelley and Byron and author of *Recollections of the Last Days of Shelley and Byron* (1858).

<sup>41</sup>Unable to locate.

<sup>42</sup>William Ewart Gladstone (1809-1898), a graduate of Eton and Oxford, dominated British politics throughout the century. As head of the Liberal Party, he first served as Prime Minister in 1868-74.

<sup>43</sup>Walter Severn, Joseph Severn’s son.

<sup>44</sup>Staff members in the British Museum’s Department of Printed Books. See note to Sharp’s early January 1891 letter to Garnett.

<sup>45</sup>In the *Memoir*, EAS prefaced this letter as follows: “The brilliant summer was followed by a damp and foggy autumn. My husband’s depression increased with the varying of the year. While I was on a visit to my mother he wrote to me, after seeing me in the morning.” Following the letter, she wrote: “His health was so seriously affected by the fogs that it became imperative that he should get into purer air so he decided to fulfill his

the appalling gloom between two and three-thirty! I could scarcely read, or do anything but watch it with a kind of fascinated horror. It is going down to the grave indeed to be submerged in that hideous pall. . . . As soon as I can make enough by fiction or the drama to depend thereon we'll leave this atmosphere of fog and this environment of deadening, crushing, paralysing death-in-life respectability. Circumstances make London thus for us: for me at least — for of course we carry our true atmosphere in ourselves — and places and towns are, in a general sense, mere accidents. . . .

I have read to-day Edmond Schérer's *Essais* on Eng. Literature:<sup>46</sup> very able though not brilliant — reread the best portions of Jules Breton's delightful autobiography,<sup>47</sup> which I liked so much last year. . . all George Moore's New Novel, *Vain Fortune*.

I had also a pleasant hour or so dipping into Ben Jonson, Beaumont and Fletcher, and other old dramatists: refreshed my forgotten acquaintanceship with that silly drama "Firmilian"<sup>48</sup>: and, generally, enjoyed an irresponsible ramble thro' whatever came to hand. I am now all right again and send you this little breath, this little 'Sospiro di Guglielmo' to give you, if perchance you need it, a tonic stimulus. No, you don't need it!

*Memoir 192-3*

*To Bliss Carman, December 8, 1891*

16 Winchester Road | Swiss Cottage | London N.W. | 8 | December | 91

My Dear Old Man

It is with a thrill of keen pleasurable anticipation that I let you know of my speedy visit to New York: for I have taken my passage by the "Teutonic," due to sail from Liverpool on Wedny, Jany 6th — and so may expect to be in New York City somewhere about the 12th or 13th, for I suppose the midwinter passages are about a day longer than those of the summer season.

It will be a delight to see you again. What a lot we shall have to talk about.

I have postponed all lecturing for this year. I am going out partly to attend to some private literary business, best seen to on the spot; partly to arrange for the bringing out in America of a play of mine which is to be produced here; and partly to get a glimpse of the many valued friends and acquaintances I have in N.Y. and Boston. I shall be in N.Y. for three weeks at any rate. Perhaps later on, say in your issue for the first week in January, you

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intention of going to New York even though he had been forced to relinquish all ideas of lecturing." He began planning this trip to the United States when he was in Germany in September. See Sharp's late September 1891 letter to E. C. Stedman. .

<sup>46</sup>Edmond Schérer, *Essays on English Literature*, trans. George Saintsbury (1891).

<sup>47</sup>Jules Breton, *Life of an Artist: Art and Nature*, trans. Mary J. Serrano (1891).

<sup>48</sup>William Edmonstone Aytoun's *Firmilian: or, the Student of Badajoz: A Spasmodic Tragedy* (1854) was published under the pseudonym, T. Percy Jones.

will be able to oblige me by inserting in the *Independent* a para to the above effect: as this would save me letting a lot of people know, and enable me to economise my limited time. My first movements when I do get to N.Y.C. are as yet uncertain: perhaps the safest address wd. be c/o Thos. A. Janvier, 20, Seventh Avenue, (although I may go direct to the Stedman's at first).

Is there any chance of old Roberts<sup>49</sup> being in N.Y. in the middle of Jany? If you see Mr. Clarence Bowen,<sup>50</sup> pray tell him that I look forward to seeing him again. You might add that Mrs. Coleridge<sup>51</sup> was with us yesterday, and was asking after him.

George Cotterell was much gratified by your friendly and appreciative letter, and I too thank you for it.

Herewith I enclose two short poems which I hope you may be able to use.

Au revoir, dear Carman,

Yours Ever | William Sharp

P.S. My long delayed "Severn" is at last practically off my hands, and will be pubd. in the latter part of Jany.

ALS, Pierpont Morgan Library

*To Catherine Janvier, [December ?, 1891]*

. . . You will be the first to hear my new imaginative work. Although in a new method, it is inherently more akin to "Romantic Ballads" than to "Sospiri," but it is intense dramatic prose.<sup>52</sup> There is one in particular I wish to read you — three weeks from now. . . . Do you not long for the warm days — for the beautiful living pulsing South? This fierce cold and gloom is mentally benumbing. . . . Yes you are right: there are few women and perhaps fewer men who have the passion of Beauty — of the thrilling ecstasy of life.

Memoir 193

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<sup>49</sup> Charles G. D. Roberts. See note to late-July 1891 letter to Carman.

<sup>50</sup> Clarence Winthrop Bowen (1852-1935) wrote, with Bliss Carman, for *The Independent*, and he served as publisher of that paper from 1896-1912. He was also an historian, his most famous work being *The History of the Centennial Celebration of the Inauguration of George Washington as First President of the United States* (D. Appleton, and the Committee on the Centennial Celebration of the Inauguration of Washington as President, New York: 1892), a beautiful book designed in part by the architect Stanford White and a monument of New York's gilded age. Bowen was one of the principal founders of the American Historical Association in 1884.

<sup>51</sup>[Identify]

<sup>52</sup>*Romantic Ballads and Poems of Phantasy* (1881) and *Sospiri di Roma* (1891). This "new imaginative work" is probably a reference to the pieces that were published in Sharp's *Vistas* (Derbyshire, Moray Press) in 1894. In his diary for October, 1891 (*Memoir* 190-1), Sharp mentions that he has completed two "Dramatic Interludes" ("Northern Night" and "The Birth of a Soul") and has begun "The Passion of Manuel van Hoëk." All three works appeared in *Vistas*, the latter under the title "The Passion of Pere Hilarion."

To Horace Scudder, [? early December, 1891]

72 Inverness Terrace | London W.

I enclose as a “Xmas Card” the long promised photo of Keats, after the drawing by Severn which he regarded as the truest likeness of the poet.

Dear Mr. Scudder,

Your foresight proved correct — for the December number of the *Atlantic Monthly* has been out some time, and the Severn Memoirs are as yet unborn.<sup>53</sup> The trouble over the illustrations, and the need to include some important early-period matter, necessitated unexpected delay: and a week or so ago it was decided that the book should be held over till sometime in January. I hope the article has interested your American public: that in this country seems very appreciative. Let me acknowledge again with many thanks the cheque duly remitted to me a short time ago.

The publishers seem to expect a large demand for the book — and in America two leading firms have, I understand, applied for ‘an edition’. I am as sorry as the Severns, and other friends and interested persons, at the necessity I have been under of giving the purest bird’s-eye-view of Severn’s consular years in Rome — but it was imperative that I should avoid entering upon so large and complex a part of his life. There was no course between extreme constriction and adequate detail — and the latter was impossible owing to the scheme of the Memoir as finally arranged. However, I may write a supplementary volume.

If *practicable*, within the next fortnight or 3 weeks I shall send you the promised “Unpublished Incidents in the Life of Joseph Severn” (or such title as you prefer.)<sup>54</sup> I am glad there is a chance of these reminiscences appearing in a conspicuous place — for it appears that many people both in America and here are mainly anticipating the record of Severn’s *consular life* (partly, no doubt, after Ruskin’s splendid eulogium of him in *Praeterita*<sup>55</sup>) — which is, so far as the book is concerned, regrettable.

I hope to leave for America (this time without my wife, I regret to say) on the 6th of January, by the *Teutonic*; due at New York somewhere about the 13th. I have postponed lecturing till another year: and am coming out only to visit some friends, and to attend to some private matters of my own. I expect to be about three weeks in New York in all, and, if practicable, a week in Boston. Indeed, I should go there if only to have the pleasure of making your acquaintanceship in person, if you are certain to be there. If business or pleasure should take you to New York in January (after 14th), and you could afford me the

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<sup>53</sup> The December 1891 number of the *Atlantic Monthly* contained Sharp’s “Joseph Severn and His Correspondents.”

<sup>54</sup> This article became “Severn’s Roman Journals” which appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly* in May, 1892.

<sup>55</sup> John Ruskin, *Praeterita: Outlines of Scenes and Thoughts Perhaps Worthy of Memory in My Past Life*, 3 vol. (1885-1900).

pleasure of an interview, I could always be heard of (if not found at!) E. C. Stedman's or at Thos. Janvier's, 20, Seventh Avenue.

With cordial Greetings for Xmas and the Coming Year —

Sincerely Yours, | William Sharp

ALS Harvard Houghton

*To Horace Scudder, December 29, 1891*

72 Inverness Terrace | Bayswater | 29th Dec|91

Dear Mr. Scudder,

Fortunately I have been able before my departure for America to complete the double-article comprising excerpts from the Roman diaries of Joseph Severn.<sup>56</sup>

I found it wd. be impracticable to cover the whole period (1861-1879), so chose the most eventful, that of the decade (1860-1870) wherein the Papal Temporal Dominion collapsed. All the matter I send you is untouched in my book (for which already, I am glad to say, there is a great demand in advance) and otherwise unpublished — with the exception of Baron Bunsen's letter given at page 1a. This, it seems to me, shd. be retained: but as you will.

I have done my utmost to restrict the length to your article-limit. The complete MS. represents, so far as I can calculate, from 15,000 to 16,000 words. Probably one article of 7,500 words and one of 8,000 wd. represent it. (I think the inset marginalia shd. be retained?)

But I leave you a free hand to curtail when you think advisable. I have endeavoured to compile a generally interesting *Olla Podrida*<sup>57</sup> — as a purely political-excerpt article wd. be heavy perhaps. The personalia about Cardinal Antonelli,<sup>58</sup> John Gibson,<sup>59</sup> Oberbeck,<sup>60</sup> the Americans Miss Cushman<sup>61</sup> and Miss Hosmer<sup>62</sup> etc. etc. come in well, I daresay you will agree with me.

I leave here next Wednesday (6th) per "Teutonic" and expect to be in New York by the 12th or 13th at latest. My letter-address there is c/o Mr. Tho. A. Janvier, 20, Seventh Avenue, N. Y. City.

In haste, and with all good wishes for 1892,

Cordially Yours, | William Sharp

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<sup>56</sup> The proposed double article became one article: "Severn's Roman Journals," *Atlantic Monthly*, May, 1892.  
<sup>57</sup> "potpourri"

<sup>58</sup> Giacomo Antonelli (1806-1876) was premier of the first constitutional ministry of Pius XI.

<sup>59</sup> John Gibson (1790-1866) was an English neo-classicist sculptor who spent most of his life in Rome.

<sup>60</sup> Friedrich Oberbeck (1789-1869) was a German painter who made extensive use of religious symbolism and initiated a Pre-Raphaelite movement in Germany.

<sup>61</sup> Charlotte Saunders Cushman (1816-1876) was a well known and popular American actress who lived and traveled in London and Rome in the 1850s and 1860s.

<sup>62</sup> Harriet Hosmer (1830-1908), an American sculptor and poet, studied under John Gibson in Rome.



P.S. I have not divided the article, leaving this to you to decide. The title, by the way, can be whatever you like.

The Severn book is ready — and will probably be issued circa Jany 20th.

M.S. by Registered Book-Post Herewith.

William Sharp

ALS Harvard Houghton

The Writings of "FIONA MACLEOD"(William Sharp) Uniform Edition Arranged by Mrs. William Sharp. Poems and Dramas by "Fiona Macleod"(William Sharp). New York Duffield & Company 1911. Digitized by The Internet Archive 2008 © by owner. provided at no charge for educational purposes. Read more †. Like (4). 2 Great Clever work Great share Like (4). Likes: Jaffa truex, Whitetigereye, Mark Moir, Tjashworth999. head of his chapter a quotation from Fiona Macleod which reads in part: Through ages of slow westering, till now we face the sundown seas, we have learned in continual vicissitude that there are secret ways whereon armies cannot march. It may be found in vol. 5 of the Uniform Edition of The Works of "Fiona Macleod" (London: William Heinemann, 1910), 167-79 (Hereafter cited UE in the text). "Celtic: an Essay" was first published in the Contemporary Review in May 1900 and again, a few weeks later, in Fiona Macleod's The Divine Adventure: Iona: By Sundown Shores (London: Chapman and Hall, 1900), 291-308. The Letters of George Meredith (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1970), III, p. 1268. Google Scholar. 9.