

do you know any thing
about Ambrose?
I'd very much like to find
out I hope he may be lucky
if you says that he'd give
a greatly enjoying her to be
I will tell him *any message from you for me?* that
are with you in all you
that if we have hope
some all will be well
you must follow the
example when you are
through with the state
a good rest the

The E. O. Somerville
and Martin Ross
Exhibition

October - December 2006
Queen's University Belfast

1858	1862	1872	1874
Edith Somerville (ES) born in Corfu; the family remains there for ten months after her birth before returning to Cork, Ireland.	Violet Martin (Ross) (VM) born in Galway, Ireland.	VM's father dies; her brother Robert closes Ross House in Galway and lets it, while the family move to Dublin.	ES writes 'Chloral', a rhyming verse pantomimic play, based on the fairy tale, 'Sleeping Beauty'.

Introduction

'It was in October, 1887, that we began what was soon to be known to us as "The Shocker," and "The Shaughraun," to our family generally, as 'that nonsense of the girls,' and subsequently, to the general public, as 'An Irish Cousin.' Seldom have the young and ardent 'commenced author' under less conducive circumstances. We were resented on so many grounds. Waste of time; the arrogance of having conceived such a project; and, chiefly, the abstention of two playmates. They called us "The Shockers," "The Geniuses" (this in bitter irony), "The Hugger-Muggerers" (this flight of fancy was my mother's); when not actually reviled, we were treated with much the same disapproving sufferance that is shown to an outside dog who sneaks into the house on a wet day. We ... hid and fled about the house, with the knowledge that every man's hand was against us.'

(E. OE. Somerville, 1917).

Given that 'every man's hand was against' them in their desire to 'commence author', E. OE. Somerville (1858-1949) and Martin Ross's (1862-1915) manuscript papers at Queen's not only represent the stunning and rarely divulged multiplicity, professionalism, and inexhaustible literary output of the two Irish 'shockers', but also survive as a potent symbol of female determination in the face of nineteenth-century social and familial gender conventions.

Born into land-owning Protestant families in the South West of Ireland in the mid-nineteenth century, Somerville and Ross's

novels and short stories intimately detail the social and political conditions of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century in Ireland. "That nonsense of the girls" eventually produced one of the most popular and best-selling series of comic Irish short stories of its time - *the Irish R.M. tales* (1899-1914) - as well as one of Ireland's most critically acclaimed novels to date - *The Real Charlotte* (1894).

The Somerville and Ross archive at Queen's mostly consists of the duo's literary papers, personal correspondences, diaries, and Somerville's pen and wash book illustrations and pencil sketches. The material was originally bequeathed by Somerville to her nephew, Patrick Coghill, who auctioned the collection in 1968, allowing Queen's to purchase a significant proportion of the material. The remaining parts of the Coghill collection were largely purchased by Trinity College, Dublin, and the New York Public Library. The Somerville family, who still remain in Edith Somerville's 'Drishane' home in Castletownshend, Co. Cork, also have significant archival holdings, some of which have been kindly lent to complement the exhibition here at Queen's.

1875

ES becomes organist in St. Barrahan's, Castletownshend; she attends Alexandra College, Dublin, for two terms.

1878

ES and her brother Cameron are used as mediums by their Uncle Kendal Coghill to communicate with dead spirits in Castletownshend.

1880

ES's cousin and sometime amateur literary collaborator, Ethel, marries Jimmy Penrose, much to ES's disapproval: 'more talks of Ethel being married. I mean to study the art of suicide

practically, I rather incline to chloro-form as being at once clean and picturesque if you only stiffened yourself into a good attitude.' ES determines to 'paint' and 'work' instead of marry.

At the heart of this exhibition, then, is a twofold desire – to showcase the most highly prized materials that the Queen's Special Collections contains, and to explicitly pay testament to the neglected literary and other personal and professional achievements to which Somerville and Ross can lay claim. In so doing, it is hoped that the exhibition will influence and enhance the current popular and academic perception of the two writers, as well as do justice to the variety and value of the archive as a whole.

Anne Jamison
University of Ulster
September 2006



1881

ES follows Egerton Coghill, her future brother-in-law, to Düsseldorf to study painting and train her voice.

1882

ES in Düsseldorf again; she also takes lessons in anatomy and music; she studies under Gabriel Nicolet and Carl Sohn.

1884

ES enters Colarossi's studio in Paris for young ladies; VM spends time in London collaborating on a play with her cousin and professional playwright Willie Wills; ES reads Gilbert and Sullivan's 'The Princess' and attends a performance in Paris of 'La Dame aux Camelias' starring Sara Bernhardt.

1885

ES performs in a local production of Gilbert and Sullivan's 'The Sorcerer' at Bolton Hall, England; she also attends performances in London of 'The Sorcerer' and 'Trial by Jury'; VM in London with Wills, she attends a variety of plays and

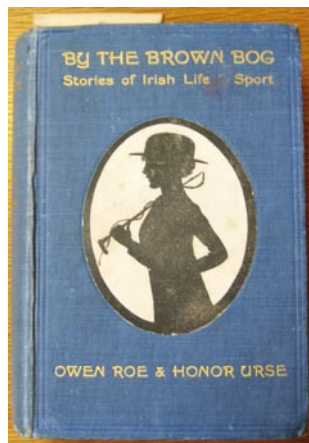
The Novels and Short Stories

Somerville and Ross's first novel, *An Irish Cousin*, was published in 1889 by the London publisher Richard Bentley. With the popular success of this first publication, Somerville and Ross went on to publish another four novels, three travel books, three collections of the *Irish R.M.* tales, four collections of short stories and mini travelogues, and numerous essays and articles for journal publication. Somerville continued to publish under the dual signature of 'E.OE. Somerville and Martin Ross' even after Ross's premature death in 1915.

Despite the critical acclaim of *The Real Charlotte* (1894), Somerville and Ross were best known, both during their lifetime and after it, for their tales of an *Irish R.M.* This popularity, however, also brought with it a host of 'cribbers' and plagiarists. In 1913 Somerville and Ross decided to take a stand against what they perceived to be an outrageously plagiarized version of their *Some Experiences of an Irish R.M.* (1899) and then sought the assistance of the Society of Authors in London to take up legal proceedings on their behalf against the authors of *By the Brown Bog* (1913). The legal papers relating to this case can be seen on display in the exhibition as well as Somerville and Ross's annotated copy of *By*

the Brown Bog, which highlights the book's most direct instances of plagiarism (see ms 17/917).

Somerville and Ross's case was eventually settled out of court and the authors under accusation, Owen Roe and Honor Urse, were forced to make reparations by altering and reprinting their book in line with Somerville and Ross's amendments. But the case remains an interesting example of the complexities and uncertainties that surrounded copyright laws in the period, as well as the prejudices against 'popular' writers and female authors written into early twentieth-century copyright law.



ms 17/917

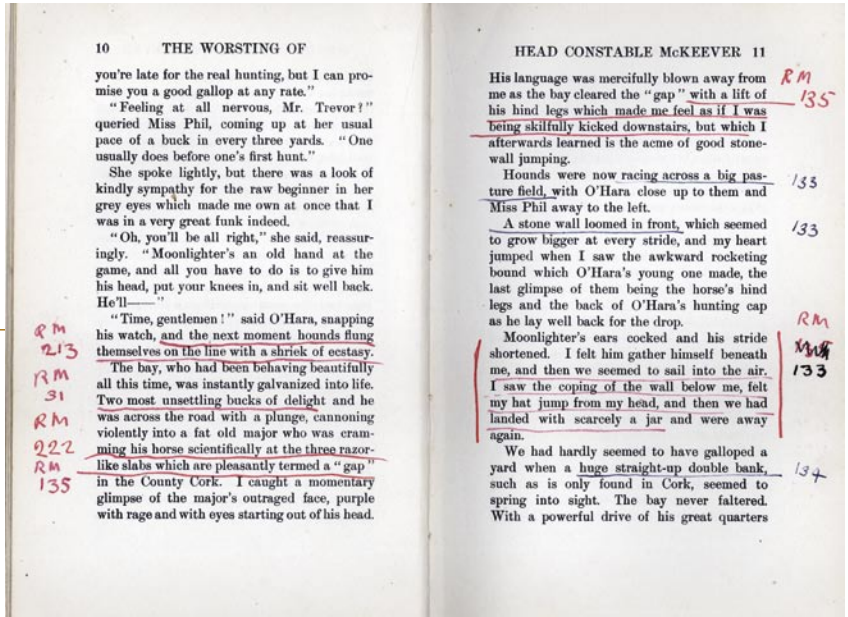
shows including "The Colleen Bawn" at the Adelphi; publication of ES's article on Paris studios in "Cassell's Magazine of Art"; publication of ES's *The Mark Twain Birthday Book*.

ES meets her cousin VM for the first time in January; ES visits Louis Pasteur's clinic in Paris and makes some sketches; VM joins ES in Paris.

ES in Paris where VM again joins her; both finish compiling "The Buddh Dictionary"; their first collaborative project; both begin work on their first novel, *An Irish Cousin*, affectionately labelled 'the shocker'; the Somerville family and their cousins, the Coghills, perform ES's 'Chloral' in

the Village Hall in Castle-townshend.

6



ms 17/917

VM and her mother reopen Ross House; ES performs in a local production of Gilbert and Sullivan's 'H.M.S. Pinafore' in Yorkshire; both receive an offer from Richard Bentley to publish *An Irish Cousin*: 'Got a letter from

Bentley announcing that the birthday of our lives had come & that he was prepared to publish the Shocker ... All comment is inadequate; publication of ES's album of watercolours, 'A Mule Ride in Trinidad', in 'The Graphic'.

Publication of *An Irish Cousin*; in a letter to VM's mother, Sir William and Lady Gregory predict 'great fame and popularity' for ES and VM.

ES and VM are commissioned to undertake a tour of Connemara for "The Lady's Pictorial"; both begin work on 'A Welsh Aunt', later to become *The Real Charlotte*; publication of ES's 'English Students in Paris' in 'International Art Notes'.

The Artwork

All the illustrations and designs that accompany Somerville and Ross's books were drawn or painted by Somerville. She began her professional art training in Düsseldorf in 1881 before progressing to Colarossi's art studio for young ladies in Paris in 1884. Throughout her life, particularly during the 1880s and 1890s, she returned again and again to Paris to study and improve her art. Several of her pen and wash illustrations from her time spent in these art studios are on display in the exhibition. Her family, however, disapproved of all the time she spent in Paris and it was increasingly difficult to raise the necessary funds she needed to remain there for longer periods of time than she was allowed.

Somerville's illustrations always accompanied her and Ross's travel publications, although not all were authentic. In 1894 Somerville dressed up her family and friends in Castletownshend to pose for pictures for her and Ross's Danish tour. Much to Somerville and Ross's annoyance, however, many of Somerville's travel sketches were altered for publication by in-house illustrators, who tamed and refined her pictorial depictions of female travellers.



ms 17/914

As well as her more well-known comic illustrations, Somerville also embarked on several serious studies, many of which were exhibited at major art galleries in London, Dublin and across the United States.

1891

Publication of *Naboth's Vineyard*; the Royal Hibernian Academy exhibits Somerville's painting 'Saint Jacut de la Mer'; both tour the wine-making province of Bordeaux; Fanny Curry encourages ES and VM to come to London and join the Women's Liberal Unionist Society.

1893

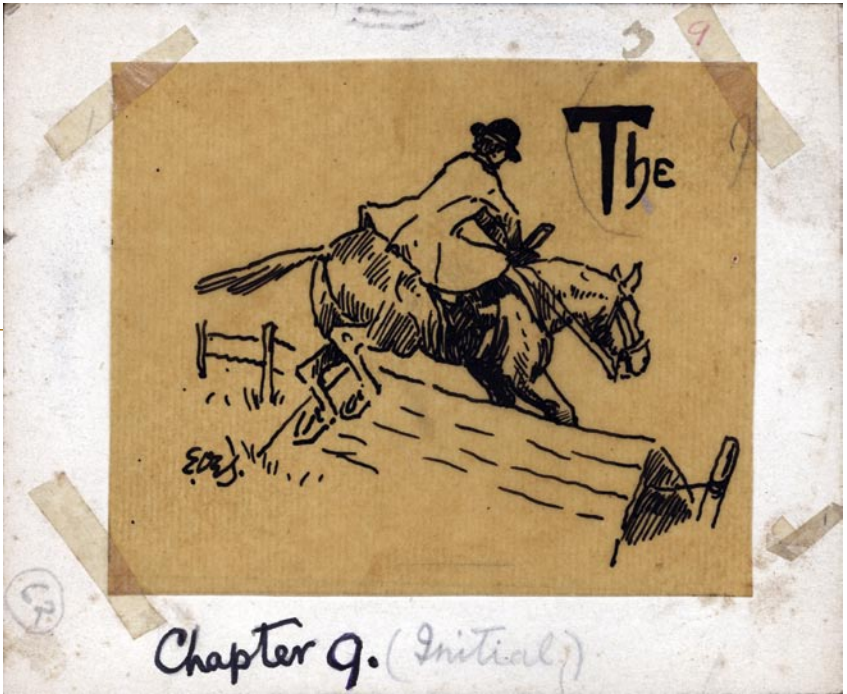
Publication in book-form of their 1890 Connemara tour, *Through Connemara in a Governess Cart*; publication of their Bordeaux tour, *In the Vine Country*; both tour Wales (June) and Denmark (September); VM publishes 'Priest or Patriot?' in 'The World'.

1894

Publication of *The Real Charlotte*; ES spends a term at Décléuse's art studio in Paris.

1895

Publication of their Welsh tour, *Beggars on Horseback*; VM visits Andrew Lang in St. Andrews; ES in Paris; both tour the Aran Islands; both take part in the electioneering campaign for the Conservative and Unionist Women's Franchise Association in East Anglia; both contract James



ms 17/902

1896

B. Pinker as their literary agent; ES begins her friendship and correspondence with the Irish painter, Alice Kinkead, which was to last until 1926; ES's mother dies in November.

VM comes into brief contact with W.B. Yeats at the home of the Morrises, a neighbouring Galway family: 'He is thinner than a lath - wears paltry little clothes wisped round his bones, and the prodigious and affected greenish tie. He is a little affected and knows it - he has a sense of humour and is a gentleman - hardly by birth I fancy - but by genius.'

1897

ES turns down Douglas Hyde's offer to collect and translate local Irish folk tales from South West Cork for him for publication; publication of 'A Grand Filly' and 'A Nineteenth-Century Miracle' in the 'Badminton Magazine'.

1898

VM hurts herself badly in a fall from a horse, her subsequent health problems and early death are thought to have resulted from this fall; ES and VM in Étaples, France, an artist's colony near Boulogne, where they both conceive the idea for the Irish R.M. tales; ES's father dies; publication of

The Travel Writing

In between their novel-writing, Somerville and Ross took several trips around Ireland and abroad and published many accounts of their travels. They saw it as an effective way of making money, and it also honed their literary skills. Having to work to tight deadlines for periodicals and forced by their editors to keep things 'at all times humorous', they flirted with fact and fiction in their accounts, and subsequently developed a recognisable literary style. This humorous style was very influential in their later *Irish R.M. Tales*.

Between 1890 and 1893, Somerville and Ross made at least four significant tours, through Connemara (1890), Bordeaux (1891), Wales (1892), and Denmark (1893). They subsequently published accounts of these journeys in various periodicals and at least three of them eventually ended up in book form. The framed illustrations in the exhibition are examples of Somerville's artwork for the Danish tour. Whilst these accounts are mostly comic in tone, their Connemara tour was a subtle and powerful revision of the late nineteenth-century's commercial tourist version of the West of Ireland. Their tour of the Aran Islands in 1895 was written with a similar emphasis.

ms 17/908



The Silver Fox, serial publication of the Irish R.M. tales begins in the 'Badminton Magazine'.

Book-form publication of *Some Experiences of an Irish R.M.*, which brings them 'more fame and kudos than anything' they have yet written; Pinker discourages their attempts at a more 'serious' piece of work in favour of their 'semi-sporting' R.M. fare; Katharine Tynon Hinkson writes to ES

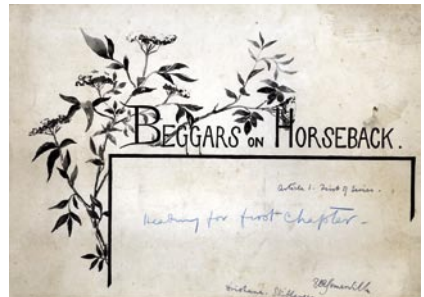
to request her permission to reprint extracts from *The Real Charlotte* and *The Silver Fox* in *Cabinet of Irish Literature*.

ES exhibits at a group exhibition in the Grafton Gallery in London; publication of 'The Tinker's Dog' and 'Fanny Fitz's Gamble' in the 'Badminton Magazine'.



Somerville made three more significant tours after Ross's death in 1915, one to Sicily (1920), one to Spain (1926), and one to the United States (1928). An account of her Spanish trip was published as 'Some Spanish Impressions' in 'Blackwood's Magazine' in 1926. In 1930 she published a tour memoir of her American travels, *The States Through Irish Eyes*, and a description of her Sicilian tour was published in *Happy Days! Essays of Sorts* in 1946.

ms 17/908



VM meets W.B. Yeats at Lady Gregory's home in Coole Park and Yeats carves her initials into 'a tree already decorated by Douglas Hyde, AE and more of the literary crowd'; VM visits Jack Yeats's exhibition in Dublin and attends a performance of Yeats and Moore's 'Diarmuid and

Grania' at the Gaiety Theatre, unimpressed she writes to ES 'if this was the lofty purity of the Irish drama I am indeed mystified'; ES in Aix-les-Bains, France; both commissioned by the Northern Newspaper Syndicate to write six humorous Irish short stories.

Publication of *A Patrick's Day Hunt*; ES is reading Lady Gregory's 'Cuchulain of Muirthemne' which she is fascinated by, objecting though to Yeats' preface.

ES takes over as Master of the West Carbery Foxhounds from her brother Aylmer, making her the first female MFH in Ireland; publication of the revised second edition of *An Irish Cousin*; publication of *All on the Irish Shore* and *Slipper's ABC of Fox Hunting*; publication of 'The Desired of the People' in 'The National Review'.

The Suffragettes

Somerville and Ross strongly believed in the suffragette cause and actively demonstrated and campaigned for women's rights both in Ireland and England. They both took part in the electioneering campaign for the Conservative and Unionist Women's Franchise Association in East Anglia in 1895, and when Somerville took over as Master of the West Carbery Foxhounds in 1903, she became Ireland's first female Master of Foxhounds (MFH).

a practical education: 'shall arouse women's constructive sense, shall make them want to improve things, shall make them critical'. Both writers also began corresponding with Sir Horace Plunkett in 1913 over his agricultural policies and, in particular, his schemes to help popularize the United Irishwomen's Movement.

In 1910 Somerville became the first President of the Munster Women's Franchise League (MWFL) with Ross as one of her Vice-Presidents. In the first year of their presidency, Somerville and Ross organised 16 meetings of the Franchise League in Cork, Waterford, Bandon, and Skibbereen, as well as established a further 2 branches of the League in Waterford and Skibbereen.

Several of the items on display in the exhibition relate to the speeches and pamphlets they wrote for the MWFL. It seems that both Somerville and Ross advocated education for women as the foremost strategy in improving women's public rights. In her speech to the MWFL in December 1912, 'The Educational Aspect of Suffrage', Somerville maintained that only

1904

VM and ES sign a letter to the 'Irish Times', instigated by AE, asking for financial help to keep in Ireland an 'extraordinary collection of pictures by ... chiefly modern French artists'. The letter is also signed by Jane Barlow, Augusta Gregory, S.H. Butcher, Douglas Hyde, and Emily Lawless.

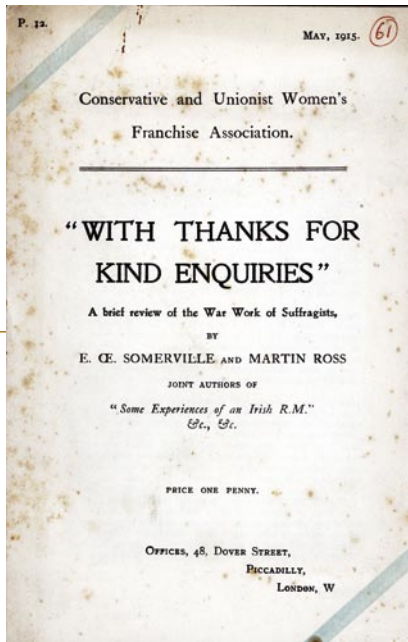
1905

ES argues with the editor of the 'Strand' magazine over their alterations to her illustrations for the Irish R.M. tales; VM attends performances of Yeats' 'The King's Threshold' and Lady Gregory's 'Kincora' at the Abbey Theatre, Dublin; Lady Gregory sends VM a copy of Synge's 'Well of the Saints'

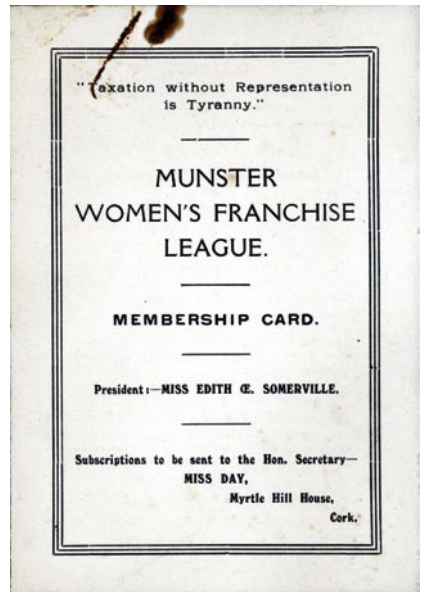
1906

to comment on; ES and VM turn down Lady Gregory's offer to write a play for the Abbey Theatre; G.B. Shaw and his wife Charlotte (ES's relation) visit ES in Castletownshend; VM and ES visit Yeats' Lake Island of Innisfree.

ES attends the closing performance of Synge's 'Riders to the Sea' at the Abbey Theatre, Dublin, and travels to Dundrum to observe the Irish carpet making and bookbinding business started by the Yeats sisters; ES and VM attend a celebratory dinner for the Irish Literary Renaissance in London; both commission Frank Fay to read two of



ms 17/898



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their short stories, 'Poisson D'Avril' from the R.M. tales and 'A Patrick's Day Hunt', at the New Country Club, London; VM's mother dies and VM subsequently moves to Castletownshend; ES and her sister Hildegarde take over 300 acres of farmland, with Hildegarde as manager of the farm; publication of *Some Irish Yesterdays*.

ES starts a dairy farm; she resigns as MFH; publication of *Further Experiences of an Irish R.M.*; ES and VM attend a mass meeting of suffragettes in Hyde Park, London.

ES and VM go together with Charlotte Shaw to Dublin to see performances of Syngé's 'The Playboy of the Western World'; Gregory's 'The Workhouse Ward'; Yeats' 'Cathleen Ni Houlihan' and 'The Rising of the Moon'; as well as Shaw's Blanco Posnet; both go together with Hildegarde

to Portofino, Italy; ES and Hildegarde formally set up the 'Drishane House Dairy'; publication of 'A Regrettable Incident' in 'Nash's Magazine'.

The Amateur Theatricals

Somerville and Ross were both keen amateur dramatists. Somerville was a great fan of the comic operatic duo, Gilbert and Sullivan, and she performed in several amateur productions in England and Ireland during the 1880s and 1890s. In 1874, Somerville wrote her own rhyming verse pantomimic play, 'Chloral', based on the fairy tale, 'Sleeping Beauty'. 'Chloral' was first performed in 1887 by the Somerville and Coghill families in Castletownshend's Village Hall and Somerville later revised the play in September 1916 to be performed at her home, Drishane House. Before meeting Somerville, Ross had also dabbled in writing for the stage – in 1884, she spent time in London collaborating on a play with her cousin and professional playwright, Willie Wills.

Somerville and Ross also appear to have taken a keen interest in the plays staged by the Abbey Theatre in Dublin and Ross, in particular, attended several Abbey and other Revivalist productions between 1901 and 1905 (and then again in 1909 with Somerville) at the behest of Lady Gregory. Ross was not always impressed by the 'Irish Literary Theatre's productions, however, describing W.B. Yeats and George Moore's *Diarmuid and Grania* as a not particularly successful

'mix of saga and modern French situations'. She especially deplored the company's use of English actors, noting after the performance of *Diarmuid and Grania* that: 'a more unattractive hero than Mr. Benson I have seldom seen. In his love making he moaned over Mrs. Benson's face like a cat when a dog comes into the room. I could have thrown up.' In 1905 Gregory approached Ross and asked her if she would be interested in writing a play with Somerville based on the *Irish R.M.* tales for the Abbey Theatre, but the duo turned the offer down, wary of Gregory's perceived motive to 'rope in the upper classes ... and drop politics'.

Somerville and Ross did, however commission the Abbey's production manager and actor, Frank Fay, to read two of their short stories – 'Poisson D'Avril' from the R.M. Tales and 'A Patrick's Day Hunt' – at the new country club in London in 1906.

After Ross's death, Somerville continued her interest in the theatre and wrote a dramatic adaptation of the *Irish R.M.* tales in 1921 which was never staged. More successfully, she adapted two of the *Irish R.M.* tales for a radio broadcast with the BBC in London in 1927 and 1928. The exhibition contains some of the working drafts for these adaptations.

ES and VM attend a celebratory dinner for Irish women writers at Dublin's (usually all male) Corinthian Club, Douglas Hyde and George Moore are also in attendance; they also take in a performance of 'The Shaughraun' at the Gaiety Theatre; publication of the first collected edition of their works in seven volumes.

ES becomes involved with the Munster Women's Franchise League (MWFL); publication of Dan Russell the Fox; VM publishes 'The Dog from Doonee' in 'The Ranger. A Journal for the Connaught Rangers'.

VM visits Lady Gregory in Coole Park on the latter's return from touring with the Irish Players in America; ES revives the West Carbery Foxhounds; J.E.M. Barlow, the medium, visits Castle-townshend; publication of 'The Story of the Discontented Little Elephant' (children's book); VM travels

to Belfast to witness the signing of the Ulster Covenant; she subsequently publishes 'The Reaping of Ulster' in 'The Spectator' which is based on her visit to Northern Ireland.

Village Hall, Castle Townshend.
"Chloral, or the Sleeping Beauty,"
 A FAIRY EXTRAVAGANZA,
 IN 3 ACTS.
 Produced by Miss E. OF SOMERVILLE, M.P.H.
 1916.

Sept. 7. 8 o'clock p.m.
Sept. 9. 4 o'clock p.m.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ:

KING BALLYRAG	...	...	Mr. ALEX. CUTHBERT.
QUEEN QUAVER	...	...	Mr. WALTER TOWNSHEND
PRINCESS CHLORAL	...	...	Miss HELEN BARNARD.
FAIRY SUGAR CANDY	...	...	Miss SYLVIA GORGES.
FAIRY CROSS PATCH	...	...	Miss KATHARINE COGHILL.
PRINCE CELLO	...	...	Mr. AMBROSE COGHILL, R.N.
PRINCE CINEMA	...	...	Mr. KENDAL CHAVASSE.
KODAK (Pago to Prince Cinema)	...	...	Mr PHILIP SOMERVILLE.
AUGUSTUS (Palace Footman)	...	...	Mr NUGENT SOMERVILLE.
NURSE (from the Co. Cork)	...	...	Mr. NEVILL COGHILL.
FAIRIES	...	...	The Misses CUTHBERT.

Scenery by Sir Egerton Coghill, Bart.

Music under the direction of Miss Francis Perkins and Lady Coghill.

Single Limited, Dublin.

ms 17/905

VILLAGE HALL, CASTLE TOWNSHEND.
"Chloral, or the Sleeping Beauty,"
 A FAIRY EXTRAVAGANZA, IN 3 ACTS.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 7th, at 8 o'clock, p.m.,
 -AND-
 SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 9th, at 4 o'clock, p.m.

Tea. 6^o

ENTRANCE:
 Chursdap, 2/-, 1/-, 6d. Saturday, 2/6 only. Children Half-Price

Proceeds to be devoted to our Prisoners of War and other Charities.

ms 17/905



Drishane Archive, Photograph

VM meets Horace Plunkett in Dublin and begins a correspondence with him over his agricultural policies and schemes to help popularize the United Irishwomen's movement; ES and VM both approach the Society of Authors to conduct a legal investigation into their allegations of plagiarism

against the authors of *By the Brown Bog* by Owen Roe and Honor Urse. ES and VM become President and vice-President of the MWFL

ES begins her friendship and correspondence with the English composer and suffragette, Ethel Smyth, which was to last until Smyth's death in 1944.

ES and VM holiday in Co. Kerry; they receive a letter from a British Soldier thanking them for giving 'the people in the trenches the priceless gift of laughter'; publication of *In Mr. Knox's Country*; VM's terminal illness begins in late autumn; VM dies on 21 December in Cork.

The Occult Communications

Throughout Somerville's youth, spiritual beliefs and amateur occult practices were a commonplace pastime for the adults in Castletownshend. In 1878, Somerville engaged in a series of rather frivolous automatic writing experiments with her eldest brother, Cameron, and her uncle, Kendal Coghill. It was only after Ross's death that Somerville began to take her automatic writing skills more seriously. In collaboration with her friend and the professional medium, J.E.M Barlow, Somerville began to 'receive messages' from the deceased Ross via automatic writing. Her first spiritual communication from Ross read: 'You and I have not finished our work. Dear, we shall, be comforted. V.M.'

From 1916 until her death in 1949, Somerville communicated with Ross in this occult way on an almost daily basis. Despite its seeming outlandishness, such communications offered Somerville a means of continuing her literary collaboration. Through a combination of automatic writing with Ross, and use of their collaborative working notebooks, Somerville published at least another eight books under the dual signature of 'E. OE. Somerville and Martin Ross'. The largest of these notebooks is on display in the exhibition, as well as one of the

notebooks Somerville used for her automatic writing. In 1927 Somerville attended a mass meeting of spiritualists at the Royal Albert Hall in London, where her friendship with the medium and spirit writer Geraldine Cummins began. Her friendship with Cummins continued until her death in the late 1940s, and the two women frequently collaborated on literary projects which made use of their automatic writing experiments – including Somerville's biography of her great grandfather Charles Kendal Bushe, Lord Chief Justice of Ireland in the early nineteenth Century, published in 1932.

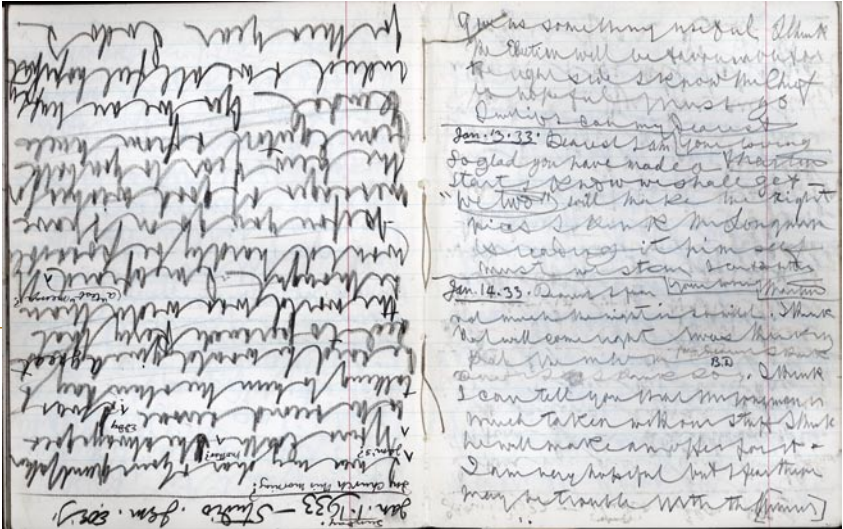
In 1933 Somerville attended an Irish Academy dinner after receiving her honorary doctorate from Trinity College Dublin and had 'a great talk about spiritualism' with a 'rather splendid-looking' Mr. Yeats. Her book *Notions in Garrison* published in 1941, is further evidence of her life-long commitment to the occult and is a selection of largely autobiographical stories detailing an array of 'miscellaneous marvels' ranging from serious séances to ghost stories and sightings of Irish fairies. She also published several reviews and letters in the pages of 'Light Magazine', an American journal dedicated to the investigative research of psychical phenomena.

ES writes 'Castletownshend. A Threnody'; ES revises 'Chloral' for a performance in Drishane House to raise funds for the 'Our Prisoners of War' charity; ES signs a petition demanding clemency for the leaders of the Irish Rebellion and writes to 'The Times' appealing the same; engages in automatic

writing with J.E.M. Barlow and later receives messages herself from VM.

Horace Plunkett invites ES to act as the suffragette representative in his Irish Convention, ES declines and suggests Susan R. Day instead, editor of 'The Englishwoman'. Day is eventually refused a seat by Lloyd George; publication of *Irish Memories*.

ES donates money raised from the sale of the manuscript of *Some Experiences of an Irish R.M.* to a British Red Cross fund for the war's sick and wounded.



ms 17/604/16

When Somerville passed away in 1949, she was buried alongside Martin Ross in the churchyard of St. Barrahane's in her hometown of Castletownshend, Co. Cork.



E.O.E. Somerville's and Martin Ross' graves, Castletownshend, Co. Cork

ES reviews the three volume *Every Irishman's Library* for the "Times Literary Supplement" and attacks 'the storm of laboured facetiousness and extravagance and vulgarity that is offered by William Carleton as the speech of the typical Irish peasant'; ES meets AE during a stay at Plunkett's house

in Kilteragh near Dublin: 'a most amazing being. He looks like a big, bucky, fat Frenchman, with a dash of pantomime ogre. He has quite a common brogue, was horribly dressed & is withal, one of the most delightful beings'; Plunkett asks ES to act as a signatory for his plans for the Irish Dominion

League; publication of ES's 'Extra-Mundane Communications' in "The Englishwoman"; ES meets Smyth at Lady Kenmare's House in Killarney; publication of *Mount Music*.

Smyth and Kinkead assist ES with the arrangements for an exhibition at the Goupil Gallery, London, which is ES's first solo exhibition; ES tours Italy with Smyth; publication of *Stray-Aways*.

The E. C. Somerville Archive, Drishane House

Despite having sold many of her literary manuscripts during the 1930s and 1940s to relieve financial hardship, the E. C. Somerville Archive in Drishane House, County Cork, still comprises over three thousand eight hundred items which were formally catalogued by Professor Otto Rauchbauer in 1993. The archive represents all facets of Somerville's life and pays testament to the diversity of activities that she took part in throughout her lifetime, from writing and painting, to farming and hunting.

The archive contains significant correspondences with quite a number of important literary, artistic and political figures of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, such as G. B. Shaw, Sir Horace Plunkett, Katherine Tynan, Rudyard Kipling, Lady Augusta Gregory, Douglas Hyde, Ethel Smyth, Harry Clarke, and George W. Russell. The archive also houses a significant proportion of Somerville's artwork. Her original art studio at Drishane House has been restored as a memorial room which currently has on display many of Somerville's personal items from the archive.

Several of the smaller items in the memorial room have been temporarily transferred to Queen's and are now on display in the exhibition. These items have been kindly lent by Christopher Somerville and add a rare personal touch to the Queen's manuscripts.



Drishane House, Co.Cork

Publication of *An Enthusiast*; ES writes the comic play, 'Flurry's Wedding', based on a selection of the Irish R.M. tales; ES privately condemns the actions of the Crown's 'Black and Tan' forces, as well as of extremist militant Republicans; ES's letters to Smyth are opened and censored by the I.R.A.,

ES resorts to writing her letters in French; Castletownshend is reduced to a virtual state of anarchy and isolation after the Post Office is raided by Sinn Fein troops and the bridges leading into Skibbereen bombed; ES uses the British Destroyer posted in the bay to send her post to England.

G.B. Shaw writes to ES with a scathing review of 'Flurry's Wedding'; Sara Allgood also writes to ES with a review of 'Flurry's Wedding', arguing that although the play has potential, the political climate in Ireland will not allow it to succeed; 'I'm afraid the Irish question is doing us

an awful lot of harm ... and unless I could get back to London it would be suicidal to attempt to put on another Irish play'; ES travels with Cameron to Skibbereen and persuades him to approach Michael Collins and ask for a Free State guard to be sent to Castletownshend; ES begins collecting reports of

The E. C. Somerville-Ethel Smyth Correspondence, 1918-1943

Ethel Smyth (1858-1944) was a celebrated composer and the most prominent female figure in early twentieth-century English musical life. Prompted by her friend Virginia Woolf, she also wrote several autobiographies. Both Somerville and Smyth were active supporters of the women's suffrage movement during the 1890s, and their friendship blossomed after Smyth contacted Somerville in 1918 to commend her on the publication of *Irish Memories* (1917) – an autobiographical tribute to the literary life Somerville shared with Ross.

progress' version of the Somerville-Smyth website is on display in the exhibition and it is possible for visitors to browse parts of this correspondence on a designated computer.

The correspondence comprises 297 letters written by Somerville to Smyth (1921-1930), and 470 letters, plus 13 postcards, written by Smyth to Somerville (1918-1943). The letters detail the personal and working relationship of the two women, the difficulties of pursuing their literary and musical ambitions in a patriarchal environment, Somerville's occult communications with Ross, and the history of strife in the 1920s in south Cork.

Supported by the Library at Queen's and funded by a research fellowship in the Institute of Irish Studies during 2004-05, parts of this correspondence have now been digitized and are soon due to be made available for online consultation. An 'in

	1923	1924	1925
the burning of gentry houses in her local neighbourhood; ES's horse-coping business begins to fail due to sinking farming prices.	Publication of <i>Wheel-Tracks</i> ; ES also exhibits the original 'sketches and drawings in oil and water-colours' for the volume at the Walker's Galleries in London.	ES spends time in Dax, France, to alleviate health problems.	Publication of <i>The Big House of Inver</i> (including an American edition); ES spends the summer in Bagnères de Luchon with Smyth.

Item List

A. Glass Cabinets

1. Items from the Library Special Collections, Queen's University, Belfast

Ms 17/874/ES	Edith Somerville's diary, 1916
Ms 17/874/MR	Martin Ross's diary, 1888
Ms 17/880	Unfinished novel, draft manuscript of 'A Man of the People' by Edith Somerville and Martin Ross, 1879-1899
Ms 17/881	Notebook belonging to Edith Somerville and Martin Ross which contains collected local anecdotes and stories, continually updated throughout their lifetimes, c. 1880-1940
Ms 17/889	Draft manuscript of <i>Further Experiences of an Irish R.M.</i> , c. 1905
Ms 17/890	Notebook belonging to Edith Somerville which contains financial accounts of suffragette meetings in Cork, c. 1911-13
Ms 17/890/28	Typescript for 'A Horse! A Horse! A Comedy' by Edith Somerville, 1929
Ms 17/891	Adaptation of 'Phillipa's Fox Hunt' for BBC radio by Edith Somerville, 1928
Ms 17/898	Handwritten speech for the MWFL by Edith Somerville, 'The Educational Aspect of Women's Suffrage', 1911
Ms 17/903	A copy of 'The Irish Homestead' Christmas Number, 1899
Ms 17/905	Scenario for a film adaptation of <i>An Irish Cousin</i> by Edith Somerville and Geraldine Cummins, 1935
Ms 17/908	Four pen and wash illustrations for <i>Beggars on Horseback</i> by Edith Somerville, 1893
Ms 17/911	Illustration from 'In the State of Denmark', c. 1893
Ms 17/912/4	Initial illustration for <i>The States Through Irish Eyes</i> by Edith Somerville, 1929

1926	1927	1928
Publication of ES's 'Some Spanish Impressions' in 'Blackwood's Magazine' after a trip to Spain; meets George Moore in London whilst staying with Smyth's sister.	ES attends a mass meeting of spiritualists at the Royal Albert Hall, London; her friendship with Geraldine Cummins begins; exhibition in the Walker's Galleries, London, of her sketches for <i>Irish Yesterdays</i> ; publication of the Hitchcock edition of ES and VM's collected works in seven volumes; ES	records her adapted reading of 'The House of Fahy' for BBC radio in London.
		Publication of <i>French Leave</i> (including an American edition); ES records her adapted reading of 'Phillipa's Fox Hunt' for BBC radio in London; ES's brother, Aylmer, dies.

Ms 17/912/7	Initial illustration for <i>The States Through Irish Eyes</i> by Edith Somerville, 1929
Ms 17/912/16	Initial illustration for <i>The States Through Irish Eyes</i> by Edith Somerville, 1929
Ms 17/913	An album of eleven drawings for 'The Reverend Percy Drabble's Adventures', c. 1886
Ms 17/914	Four illustrations of Paris's art studios for women by Edith Somerville, c. 1890
Ms 17/917	Legal documentation relating to Somerville and Ross's case of plagiarism against the authors of <i>By the Brown Bog</i> , 1913
Ms 17/920	Three letters from Augusta Gregory to Martin Ross, 1906-1908
Ms 17/MISC	Printing blocks, c. 1894
Ms 17/MISC	Letter from Lennox Robinson to 'Dorothy', c. 1929
Ms 17/MISC	Photo Album, n.d.
hPR8899.S6/ BEGG	E. OE. Somerville and Martin Ross <i>Beggars on Horseback</i> (London: Blackwood, 1895)
hpPR8899.S6/ ZZCO	Katherine Tynan, notice on the death of Martin Ross, 'The Bookman' 297 (1916): 65-6.

2. Items from the E. OE. Somerville Archive, Drishane House, Co. Cork

Cat. No. 2	Daguerrotypes taken in Dublin of Edith Somerville as a little girl, and of her father and mother
Cat. No. 7	Mendelssohn's Wedding March - annotated by Edith Somerville.
Cat. No. 26	The Gregory Medal for literature
Cat. No. 33	Selection of Edith Somerville's ball-room cards
Cat. No. 38	Edith Somerville's hunting horn
Cat. No. 46	Edith Somerville's fountain pen

1929	1930	1932	1933
ES tours America with Hildegarde; exhibition of paintings at the Aiken Gallery, South Carolina, the Ackerman Galleries, New York and Boston; ES writes a letter to 'Time and Tide' criticizing Sylvia Lynd's review of Elizabeth Bowen's <i>The Last September</i> .	Publication of <i>The States Through Irish Eyes</i> first in America, then England; ES visits her former art studio in Paris; carries out research in the British Museum Library on her and VM's great-grandfather, Charles Kendal Bushe; visits Czechoslovakia.	Lennox Robinson writes to ES to suggest that <i>An Irish Cousin</i> would make a more suitable dramatic adaptation than the Irish R.M. tales; publication of <i>An Incorruptible Irishman</i> (an account of Charles Kendal Bushe's life); an Honorary D.Litt is conferred upon ES by Trinity College Dublin; publication of ES's 'Ireland: The Recreators' in 'The Spectator.'	Publication of <i>The Smile and the Tear</i> ; at the invitation of W.B. Yeats, ES becomes a founder member of the Irish Academy of Letters; ES attends an Irish Academy of Letters dinner in Dublin where she has a 'great talk about spiritualism' with a 'rather splendid looking' Mr. Yeats; begins exporting horses to the United States; applies to the Royal

- Cat. No. 47 Edith Somerville's box of oil paints, plus some brushes and a palette
- Cat. No. 56 An account of Edith Somerville's visit to the clinic of Louis Pasteur for the staff magazine of the Whitbread Company
- Cat. No. 61 Two out of Edith Somerville's four graded text books for the study of Irish
- Uncat. Oil painting by Martin Ross

B. Framed Illustrations

- Ms 17/911 Pen and wash illustrations for 'In the State of Denmark' by Edith Somerville, nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 10, c. 1893

C. Wall Display

Board 1

- Ms 17/917 Somerville and Ross's annotated edition of *By the Brown Bog: Stories of Irish Life & Sport* by Owen Roe and Honor Urse (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1913) pp. 10 & 11
- hPR8899.S6/SOME *Some Experiences of An Irish R.M.* by E. OE. Somerville and Martin Ross (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1901 [1899]) p. 185

Board 2

- Ms 17/898 Membership card for the Munster Women's Franchise League'
- Ms 17/898 With Thanks for Kind Enquiries. A brief Review of the War Work of Suffragists' by E. OE. Somerville and Martin Ross. Published by the Conservative and Unionist Women's Franchise Association, c. 1915
- Ms 17/911 Pen and wash illustration, 'Chez Fröken Krebs', by Edith Somerville from 'In the State of Denmark', 1894

	1934	1935	1936
Literary Fund for financial assistance and receives a cheque for £300; laments the demise of Cosgrave and De Valera's coming to power, stating that 'the powers of Darkness have triumphed'.	ES sells further manuscripts of the Irish R.M. tales for £1,250 to Count de Suzan-net.	ES collaborates with Cummins on a film scenario of <i>An Irish Cousin</i> , spends time in Aix-les-Bains for her health.	Murder of ES's brother, Boyle, in front of his house in Castletownshend by the I.R.A.; ES tours Ireland in the car of the American Sylvia Warren, acting as her guide in the purchase of horses; ES travels to the States for a second time but returns home prematurely owing to bad health; publication of <i>The Sweet Cry of Hounds</i> .

Board 3

Ms 17/874

Edith Somerville's diary for December 1915 plus insert photograph and chalk drawing of Martin Ross;

Ms 17/904/16

Séance notebook, example of Edith Somerville's automatic writing, c. 1930-41

Board 4

Ms 17/908

Illustration by Edith Somerville for *Beggars on Horseback*, 1893

Ms 17/902

Initial illustration for chapter 9 of *The States Through Irish Eyes* by Edith Somerville, 1929

Ms 17/914

Sketch of female artist in an art studio, Paris, c. 1890

Board 5

Ms 17/905

Playbills, invites and cast list for 'Chloral, or the Sleeping Beauty', 1916; Drishane Archive Photograph of Martin Ross dressed for a Greek ball, n.d.

Board 6

Ms 17/MISC

Edith Somerville signing a copy of *Happy Days!*, c. 1946

D. Edith Somerville/Ethel Smyth Correspondence, 1918-1943, Digitized Database

E. UTV Documentary: the making of the Irish R.M. television series, starring Peter Bowles, and directed by James Mitchell. The series was originally distributed on Channel 4, Ulster Television, and RTÉ between 1983-5

1938

Publication of *Sarah's Youth*.

1940

Publication of 'The Records of the Somerville Family'.

1941

Publication of *Notions in Garrison*; ES and VM awarded the Gregory Medal by the Irish Academy of Letters; ES visits David Gray, U.S. ambassador to wartime Ireland, at the Chief Secretary's Lodge, Dublin.

1942

Death of Cameron; Elizabeth Hudson publishes a bibliography of first editions of ES and VM's works; ES applies again to the Royal Literary Fund for financial assistance, as well as the Civil Pension List, both applications are unsuccessful.

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Text and photographs by Anne Jamison.



Queen's University
Belfast

1943	1944	1945	1946
Publication of ES's 'Whispered Magic' in 'Country Life' magazine; ES's picture 'An Old Widow Woman' is accepted by the Municipal Gallery in Dublin; she also exhibits in 'The Irish Exhibition of Living Art'.	ES corresponds with G.B. Shaw over Charlotte's will, suggesting the money is put towards opening a small amateur theatre in Cork; Smyth dies.	ES is guest of honour at the Swift Bicentenary Banquet organized by the University Philosophical Society at the Metropole Hotel in Cork on St. Andrew's Day.	Publication of <i>Happy Days!</i> ; sale of some of ES's manuscript papers at Sotheby's, London; ES moves out of Drishane House with Hildagarde to Tally Ho, another family home in Castletownshend.

1947	1948	1949
ES contributes nine drawings to a Louis Pasteur Exhibition in London.	<i>The Real Charlotte</i> published in 'World's Classics' series.	Publication of <i>Maria and Some Other Dogs</i> ; ES dies on 8 October; she is buried next to VM in the churchyard of St. Barrahan's Church, Castletownshend.