



Moore, George 1852-1933.

**George Moore letters to Lady Leonie Leslie
1897-1977**

Abstract: Collection of eleven letters from Irish writer George Moore to Lady Leonie Leslie, found in Sir Shane Leslie's copy of the book, *GM: Memories of George Moore*. Also includes Sir Shane Leslie's review of the book and three letters written to him.

Descriptive Summary

Identification: MSS 99, F649
Creator: Moore, George 1852-1933.
Title: George Moore letters to Lady Leonie Leslie
Inclusive Dates: 1897–1977
Extent: 15 items
Language: Materials entirely in English.

Administrative Information

Citation: MSS 99, F649, George Moore letters To Lady Leonie Leslie, Special Collections, University of Delaware Library, Newark, Delaware.

Shelving Summary: Shelved in SPEC MSS 099

Location: Special Collections Department, University of Delaware Library Newark, Delaware 19717-5267 Phone: 302-831-2229 Fax: 302-831-6003 URL: <http://www.lib.udel.edu/ud/spec/>

Source: Purchase, October 2000.

Processing: Processed by Anita Wellner, December 2000. Encoded by Debra Johnson, June 2007.

Access Restrictions: The collection is open for research.

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Biographical Note

George Moore

Irish author George Augustus Moore was born February 24, 1852, at Moore Hall, County Mayo.

Most of Moore's childhood was spent in Ireland, where he was tutored locally. In 1861 he was sent for formal education at Oscott. He withdrew from the school in 1867, after an experience which he described with bitterness in *Confessions of a Young Man* (1888). From 1869 to 1873 Moore lived in London, where his father had moved the family in 1869 after his election to Parliament in 1868. After his father's death in 1870, Moore painted, visited art galleries, and led a gentleman's life in England.

From 1873–1880 Moore lived in Paris, studied at l'École des Beaux Arts and the Jullian's Academy, and met many of the period's avant-garde painters and writers. Notable among the many he encountered were Mallarmé, Manet, Monet, Degas, Pissarro, Renoir, Sisley, and Zola.

Although Moore exhibited some talent as a painter, Moore did not believe his ability was sufficient for creating great art. In the 1870s Moore began to write and had probably written a comedy titled *Worldliness* by 1874. No copies of this initial work have survived. His first published work was a volume of poems titled *Flowers of Passion* (1878). The book of poems was followed by *Martin Luther* (1879), a tragedy written in collaboration with dramatist Bernard Lopez.

Financial difficulties forced his return to London in 1880, where he worked at earning a living by writing. In 1883 George Moore's first novel, *A Modern Lover*, appeared. During the 1880s and 1890s his works included *A Mummer's Wife* (1885), *A Drama in Muslin* (1886), *Confessions of a Young Man* (1888), and *Esther Waters* (1894).

In 1901 Moore left London and settled in Dublin, Ireland, where he wrote and produced plays, gave speeches defending the theatre movement, and began writing material which reflected his Irish heritage. During this period he wrote the collection of stories, *The Untilled Field* (1903); a novel, *The Lake* (1905); and his three-volume autobiography, *Hail and Farewell* (1911–1914).

In 1911 Moore returned from Ireland and lived at 121 Ebury Street in London until his death in 1933. From 1911 to 1932 Moore wrote numerous books, including *The Brook Kerith* (1916), *A Story-Teller's Holiday* (1918), *Avowals* (1919), *Héloïse and Abélard* (1921), *Daphnis and Chloe* (1924), *Ulick and Soracha* (1926), and *Aphrodite in Aulis* (1930).

Sources:

Hogan, Robert (ed.) *Dictionary of Irish Literature*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1979. pp. 458-466.

Legg, L. G. Wickham (ed.) *The Dictionary of National Biography, 1931–1940*. London: Oxford University Press, 1975. pp. 625-627.

Sir Shane Leslie and Lady Leonie Leslie

Sir John Leslie, 2nd Baronet, married Leonie Jerome, whose elder sister Jenny married Lord Randolph Churchill. Both of the sisters were excellent pianists, pupils of Czerny, and friends of George Moore. Lady Leslie died in August 1943. Lady Leslie's son, the writer Sir John Randolph (Shane) Leslie, was born on September 24, 1885, at Castle Leslie, County Monaghan, Ireland. He was educated at Eton College and at King's College, Cambridge, where he converted to Roman Catholicism, became an Irish nationalist, began to use the Irish form of his name, Shane, and renounced his family estate.

During World War I, Leslie was assigned to the British Ambulance Corps but on his way to the Dardanelles, he became ill. He was transferred to a military hospital in Malta, where he wrote his first autobiographical work, *The End of a Chapter*, published in 1916.

During 1916 and 1917, Leslie worked in Washington, D.C., with the British ambassador, to improve Irish American relations with England, and to urge the United States to join the war against Germany. While in Washington he published the journal entitled *Ireland*.

During his life Leslie was a prolific writer of prose and verse, including his last published work, the autobiographical *Long Shadows* (1966). He also lectured on Irish politics, culture, and reforestation.

Sources:

Leslie, Anita. "Leslie, Sir John Randolph ('Shane')." *Dictionary of National Biography, 1971–1980*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1986. pp. 501-502.

Scope and Content Note

The fifteen items in this small collection include eleven letters written by George Moore to Lady Leonie Leslie that are tipped into Sir Shane Leslie's copy of Nancy Cunard's *GM: Memories of George Moore* (London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1956). George Moore was a close friend of Lady Emerald Cunard, Nancy Cunard's mother, and encouraged Nancy when she began her own writing career. This first edition, which bears Sir Shane Leslie's bookplate and signature on the inside front cover, also includes three letters written to Sir Shane Leslie by other individuals and an article clipped from a newspaper. The three letters regarding George Moore, which were laid in the volume, are housed in MSS 99 F649, with photocopies of the Moore letters. The eleven original letters written by George Moore remain tipped into the book.

Moore's eleven letters, which were written between 1897 and 1925, suggest a long and amiable friendship with Lady Leslie. George Moore wrote in response to invitations for social events and dinner engagements. In his letters he discussed travel plans, offered his opinions on recently observed plays, and mentioned mutual acquaintances such as Lady Cunard and Lady Charles. In one lengthy letter to Lady Leslie, Moore commented regarding her son, Sir Shane Leslie, who had converted to Catholicism and become an ardent proponent of Irish nationalism.

Four additional items were found in this volume, including a clipping of Sir Shane Leslie's review "George Moore in Love," which remains tipped into the book, and the three loose letters to Sir Leslie which have been removed from the book. These three letters were written by two of George Moore's biographers and by Lady Cunard. The letter from Emerald Cunard is a transcription of a letter in which she declined to allow her letters from George Moore to be edited or published. Joseph Hone's four-page letter regarded the correspondence between Moore and Nancy Cunard. The typed letter from Robert Becker (addressed to "madam") discussed Moore's letters to Lady Leslie, as well as Moore's relationship with Lady Randolph Churchill, Lady Leonie Leslie's sister.

The letters written by George Moore to Lady Leslie, with the letters written regarding Moore found in his copy of Nancy Cunard's *GM: Memories of George Moore*, enhance an interesting association copy, which confirms the life-long friendship between George Moore and Lady Leslie.

Selected Search Terms

Personal Names

Leslie, Leonie, b. 1859.

Cunard, Nancy, 1896-1965.

Cunard, Maud Alice Burke, Lady, 1872-1948.

Topical Terms

Authors, Irish--History--19th century--Sources.

Authors, Irish--History--20th century--Sources.

Form/Genre Terms

Correspondence.

Reviews.

Occupation

Authors.

Personal Contributors

Leslie, Shane, 1885-1971.

Related Materials in This Repository

MSS 99, F580 Nancy Cunard and Hugh Ford letters to David Garnett

MSS 107 Christopher Ward papers (F183)

MSS 212 Lennox Robinson papers related to John Quinn (F15)

MSS 266 George Moore papers

Letters are tipped into Sir Shane Leslie's copy of Nancy Cunard, *GM: Memories of George Moore* (London : Rupert Hart-Davis, 1956). (SPEC In process).

Arrangement Note

Letters are tipped into Sir Shane Leslie's copy of Nancy Cunard's *GM: Memories of George Moore* (available in Special Collections). The letters are arranged in the order in which they are tipped into the Cunard volume.

Detailed Description of the Collection

Series I. Letters written by George Moore to Lady Leonie Leslie, 1897–1925

Autograph letter signed, 1925 January 11 [Box 39 F649]

1 p.

Autograph letter signed, [1898 July 8] [Box 39 F649]

2 pp.

Autograph letter signed, undated [Box 39 F649]

2 pp.

Autograph letter signed, [1898 January 14] [Box 39 F649]

2 pp.

Autograph letter signed, [1898] September 10 [Box 39 F649]

3 pp.

Autograph letter signed, [1897 December 15] [Box 39 F649]

2 pp.

Autograph letter signed, undated [Box 39 F649]

2 pp.

Autograph letter signed, 1925 May [Box 39 F649]

1 p.

Autograph letter signed, undated [Box 39 F649]

1 p.

Typed letter signed, 1916 September 22 [Box 39 F649]

2 pp.

Autograph letter signed, undated [Box 39 F649]

1 p.

Series II. Letters to Sir Shane Leslie, undated

Letter from Joseph Hone, undated [Box 39 F649]

4 pp.

Letter from Robert Becker, undated [Box 39 F649]

Letter from Lady Emerald Cunard (transcription), undated [Box 39 F649]

"George Moore in Love" (article), undated [Box 39 F649]

Review written by Sir Shane Leslie.
