MAX GATE, DORCHESTER.

4:11:09

Den hudelejontaine: I have just returned from down, of y has known that you were land up there I showed have Called. I hope he chill is not-

I am as shocked ergon ere at the wes of the bedjeron trees in the Publeton row heing destroyed. (mit-) see no way of interpening. although I can influence a London public to a shight extent by

press letters, te, I can influence nobody dom here. I know fun what her happened in simular cases that I only europe people les precipitate metters. I have bean a report too, inghe Chancel at P. T. is Whe bulled down & a new one erected of Greater length. Fancy Destroy on the late Perpendicular (49 remember) væggen rod, he venereke

wells. he 17 - centry wordent. te, which three centuries thoused

render himmune from the ship that

Charge, to put in their place a bran now exection what will have no historic or religious enouations whalever. and yet people are blamed for not foing to church. I worder if this is really to be done? Sinceul yours Momen Hardz. the late Perfoundanders Cops mas member trapportion, the remember walls, nello cally workenship

## THOMAS HARDY, A. L. S., 4 November 1909, to Alfred C. de Lafontaine.

[engraved address] MAX GATE,
DORCHESTER.

4: 11: '09

Dear Mr de Lafontaine:

I have just returned from London, & if I had known that you were laid up there I should have called. I hope the chill is not serious.

I am as shocked as you are at the idea of the hedgerow trees on the Puddletown road being destroyed. But I see no way of interfering. Although I can influence a London public to a slight extent by [p. 2] press letters, &c, I can influence nobody down here. I know from what has happened in similar cases that I only enrage people to precipitate matters.

I have heard a report, too, that the Chancel at P. T. is to be pulled down & a new one erected of greater length! Fancy destroying the late Perpendicular (if I remember) wappen roof, the venerable walls, the 17<sup>th</sup> century woodwork, &c, which three centuries should render immune from the slightest [p. 3] change, to put in their place a bran new erection which will have no historic or religious associations whatever. And yet people are blamed for not going to church. I wonder if this is really to be done?

Sincerely yours
Thomas Hardy.

ALS, 3 pages, Double sheet, 17.6 x 10.6 cm.

Wove paper. Watermark: CROXLEY | AIR DRIED PARCHMENT.

Envelope: 9.5 x 12 cm., with one-penny stamp cancelled at Dorchester, 3:30 p.m., 4 Nov 1909, and postmarked LONDON.W | 3.45 PM | NOV 5 09<sup>A</sup>; (verso) DORCHESTER | 3 AM | NO 6 | 09.

Address: A. C. de Lafontaine, Esq. | 12 Park Lane | London | W. (last 3 lines canceled; readdressed, upper corner: Athelhampton | Dorchester).

Provenance: As for the 5 Dec 1901 letter. Unpublished.

Notes: 1. Hardy seems to be using wappen in the sense of old-fashioned or obsolete.

2. Here published by permission of Miss Irene Cooper Willis (through the courtesy of Macmillan & Co., Ltd., Little Essex Street, London, W.C.2).