

MAX GATE,
DORCHESTER.

Oct 5. 1910

Dear Mr & Mrs Fontaine.

I should much like to accept your kind invitation, but unhappily for that - we have some friends coming Friday to stay over the week-end.

Another friend or two, interested in old houses, may I think be here some time next-week or later, & I should much like to be able to call on you any afternoon with them that night suit. I am thus vague because I don't know their dates

for the moment. If you are leaving home on Monday perhaps you would kindly let me know when you come back again? Sincerely yours
Thomas Hardy.

P. S. Puddletown Church! What a tragedy - Z. H.

THOMAS HARDY, A. L. S., 5 October 1910, to
Alfred C. de Lafontaine.

[engraved address] MAX GATE,
DORCHESTER.

Oct 5. 1910

Dear Mr De LaFontaine:

I should much like to accept your kind invitation, but unhappily for that we have some friends coming Friday to stay over the week-end.

Another friend or two, interested in old houses, may I think be here some time next week or later, & I should much like to be able to call on you any afternoon with them that might suit. I am thus vague because I don't know their dates [p. 2] for the moment. If you are leaving home on Monday perhaps you would kindly let me know when you come back again?

Sincerely yours
Thomas Hardy.

P.S. Puddletown Church! What a tragedy—T.H.

ALS, 2 pages. Double sheet, 17.6 x 10.6 cm.

Laid paper. Watermarks: [Coronet]; The | Coronet | Note.

Envelope: 9.5 x 12 cm., with one-penny stamp cancelled DOR-
CHESTER | 9.30 PM | OC. 5 | 10.

Address: A. C. de Lafontaine Esq. | Athelhampton | Dorchester.

Provenance: As for the 5 Dec 1901 letter.

Unpublished.

Notes: 1. "The Children and Sir Nameless," pages 134–135 of *Late Lyrics and Earlier*, 1922, was perhaps suggested by a vandalized effigy in the "Athelhampton" aisle of Puddletown Church.

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