

Washington Irving

My dear Mrs. Stoddell,

I was unable to come to the opera  
on Saturday night in consequence of being  
with a party who sat at table a la  
cuisine until after ten o'clock. I  
am engaged for this evening & uncertain  
whether I shall be able to get away  
in time for the Opera so I return you  
the ticket you have been so kind as to  
send me as you may wish to give it  
to your own club. Should I be able to  
come to the opera I can enter with-  
out a ticket & will take my chance

to find a seat in your box.

Believe me very truly

Your obliged

Washington Irving

Monday Morn. May 30<sup>th</sup>.

WASHINGTON IRVING, A. L. S., 30 May 18[19?], to  
Mrs. Sitwell.

My dear Mrs. Sitwell,

I was unable to come to the opera on Saturday night in consequence of Irving with a party who sat at table a la anglaise until after ten o'clock. I am engaged for the evening & uncertain whether I shall be able to get away in time for the opera so I return you the ticket you have been so kind as to send me as you may wish to give it to some one

Transcription from:

Kendall, Lyle H., Jr. *A Descriptive Catalogue of the W.L. Lewis Collection--Part One.*

Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 1970.

else. Should I be able to come to the opera I can enter without a ticket & will take my chance [p. 2] to find a seat in your box.

Believe me very truly

Your obliged

Washington Irving

Sunday Morning. May 30<sup>th</sup>

ALS, 2 pages. Single sheet, 16.2 x 11.5 cm.

Wove paper. No watermark.

Provenance: M<sup>c</sup>Devitt Wilson's, Inc. [?] Tipped in to *Old Christmas*, London, 1876, with bookplate of John Platt.

Unpublished.

Notes: 1. Irving's biographers fail to mention Mrs. Sitwell, and I cannot identify her.

2. 1819 as a likely date has not much to recommend it except that its May 30 was a Sunday and that Irving was in London at the time. As for the opera that he may have witnessed part of, it must have been playing at either the King's Theatre, Haymarket, or The English Opera House (according to the *Gentleman's Magazine* the bills at Covent Garden and Drury Lane were *The Cozening* and *The Carib Chief*).