Shortly after he discovered them among his mother’s papers, Mr. J. P. Birch, the great-nephew of the painter Thomas Seddon, kindly invited me to inspect the letters of William Holman Hunt written to Seddon, his travelling companion on his first trip to Egypt and the Bible lands. In his letter to me Mr. Birch accurately described these letters, which date between 1853 and 1855, when he stated: “The early ones are about arrangements for their forthcoming journey to the Middle East, and there are a few written while at Jerusalem. The last is one from Holman Hunt at Constantinople, describing his visit to the Crimean War zone”. There are nine complete letters in Hunt’s hand and two extracts, probably by Seddon himself, from two others.⁠¹ Although these interesting letters contain few major revelations, they provide important information about Hunt, Seddon, and their relationship. They tell us, for instance, about Hunt’s plans for the trip and his reasons for delaying his departure for the Middle East, his advice to Seddon in the matter of that artist’s major work, Hunt’s troubles with protestant missionaries in Jerusalem, and his travels to Turkey and the Crimea.

In addition to providing details of this trip, which proved such a turning point in the career of each artist, the letters also serve another purpose for students of Pre-Raphaelitism. Since Hunt wrote much of Pre-Raphaelitism and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood in a series of articles for the 1886 Contemporary Review—some thirty to thirty-five years, that is, after the events described had taken place—one naturally reads his history of the movement with some scepticism. In particular, one’s scepticism is aroused by his obvious wish to present a version of the Pre-Raphaelite story in which he is centrally important. As the last surviving painter from the original Brotherhood, he wrote both his earlier articles and his memoirs to argue against those who believed that either Ford Madox Brown or Dante Gabriel Rossetti

¹ These letters are now deposited in the John Rylands University Library.
had been the prime force in the PRB. Hunt's claims to provide the correct history of the Brotherhood and its circle of associated artists, writers, and critics has long met with doubt. Indeed, one authority on the Pre-Raphaelite movement has informed me that he thought Hunt a "liar".

Two separate issues arise when we attempt to determine Hunt's authority or even usefulness as a historian of the PRB. The first concerns his truthfulness, the second his accuracy. The evidence of his unpublished letters and diaries demonstrates that one cannot justifiably question his history on the grounds of dishonesty. The treasure trove of Pre-Raphaelite letters and diaries that has come into the public domain during the last decade has demonstrated, to me at least, that his presentations of his earlier career written many years after the event—in some cases fifty years later—match the accounts provided by his letters and diaries at the time. He has not, in other words, distorted or departed from earlier records (such as correspondence) in order to improve his version of the story.

The second issue is the accuracy of his general interpretation of Pre-Raphaelitism. One of the major causes of distrusting his account of the movement (an account with which, one must emphasize, Millais fully agreed) is that Hunt and his critics were often talking about different matters entirely. Whereas the artist was concerned with explaining the nature and purpose of the early Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, many students of Victorian literature and art have been interested only in the later form of Pre-Raphaelitism—the second stage or so-called aesthetic Pre-Raphaelitism, which developed under the leadership of Rossetti. As I have argued elsewhere, Hunt, Millais, and Rossetti first conceived the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood as a group of artists

2 After Hunt published his articles in the Contemporary Review, Millais wrote to Edith Hunt, in a letter of 24 June 1886, that her husband "in his admirable papers in the "Contemporary" has exhausted the subject of PRBism" (Huntington MS.), but later, when Hunt was preparing his memoirs to contradict interpretations of the Brotherhood's history that gave Rossetti or Brown primacy, Millais told him, in a letter of 30 March 1895, that "I entirely agree with your letter as regards" late nineteenth-century accounts of Pre-Raphaelitism in the press. "It has been invariably false ... I am truly glad you have taken up the subject to clear the air ... I know Rossetti was our pupil, if anything" (Huntington MS). In a letter of 28 August 1895 Millais again wrote: "I want to hear you on the PRB movement which has never been honestly written about" (Huntington MS.). These Huntington MSS. have not yet been numbered.
and writers who would vivify the arts by testing all established conventions. In painting, for example, they began by challenging received rules of representation, composition, lighting, colour, chiaroscuro, subject, and facial and figure type. Believing that each artist had to test all these forms and conventions in his own practice, the early members of the Brotherhood attempted an extreme form of pictorial realism, part of the success of which can be seen in the fact that, unlike French Impressionism, it has retained the effect of brashness, even rawness, with which it first confronted its audiences. At the same time that Hunt and his friends tried to push the limits of realistic painting further than had ever been done before, they also tried to create a completely integrated pictorial symbolism, a realism, in other words, in which virtually every detail in a painting could (at least in theory) have a meaning. Thus materialism, they believed, could be elevated and thus fact and symbol, body and spirit, united. Drawing upon the work of Ruskin, Hogarth, early Flemish masters, and contemporary High Church and Evangelical Protestantism, these men experimented with elaborate forms of pictorial symbolism and traditional iconography. All the evidence I have seen suggests, therefore, that Hunt has in fact provided an accurate history of the movement.

Perhaps it would be best to write that he provided an accurate history of what he meant by the movement. He would have entirely agreed with many of his modern critics that Rossetti, a charismatic figure, had enormous influence upon the later circle of his associates. However, Hunt, who wished to limit the term Pre-Raphaelitism to an artistic movement that held ideals closer to the original Brotherhood, would not have agreed that Rossettian Pre-Raphaelitism was necessarily best described as Pre-Raphaelitism at all. Since Hunt earnestly desired to emphasize the essential artistic rightness of the Brotherhood itself, he was unwilling to consider it merely as a step in the development of aestheticism. In contrast, many of those who reject Hunt’s interpretations of the term Pre-Raphaelite are most concerned, and sometimes only concerned, with later developments.

However one chooses to interpret the complex phenomena which constitute Pre-Raphaelitism, any materials that can demonstrate Hunt’s accuracy become doubly useful. One such piece of information is contained in these newly discovered materials, in Letter 10 below. *Pre-Raphaelitism and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood* states that Hunt completed one of his companion’s works after Seddon abruptly departed for home. Allen Staley, who has provided the authoritative discussion of Seddon’s art, writes with justifiable scepticism that “Hunt claimed to have completed one of his travelling companion’s watercolours when Seddon returned home”.4 Hunt’s letter of 31 January 1855, which tells Seddon that he has almost completed his work for him, both substantiates Hunt’s statement in his memoirs and permits us to identify the work in question, thus proving the accuracy of some of Professor Staley’s astute judgments.5

Hunt’s letters to Seddon contain two matters of particular interest to anyone concerned with the former’s life and career. First, there is his relationship with Seddon on this first trip to the Middle East. Second, there is the matter of Hunt’s conflicts with the Protestant mission in Jerusalem. As regards the first, we perceive that Hunt considered his companion in the light of a student or apprentice. We are so used to thinking of Rossetti’s wonderfully charismatic effect upon his contemporaries—he was, after all, largely responsible for diverting Burne-Jones and Morris into lives in art—that we too easily forget that Hunt also had something like a coterie. Robert Martineau, Edward Lear, John Bunney, E. R. Hughes, and Thomas Seddon studied painting with him. Hunt’s earnestness, which has so often struck a sceptical twentieth-century audience as mildly comical, inspired veneration in many of his contemporaries. Certainly, he had a major influence upon Seddon and seems to have been responsible for some of his religious attitudes. Indeed, as Seddon wrote to his sister Mary in a letter from Jerusalem: “I want to know what you think of Hunt’s pictures. He is a thoroughly worthy excellent fellow & in other respects than painting it is a great privilege to have been with him. Tell John it has worked some of my pooh-poohing all scepticism out of me”.6 Looking at Seddon’s letters

5 See note 56 below.
6 His letter, one of the group deposited in the Rylands University Library by Mr. J. P. Birch, is postmarked “Alexandria Jy 12 1854”.
home, one is continually struck by their similarity to those of Hunt. Like Hunt, he found Egypt quite disappointing and only became excited by the landscape of the Middle East when he reached the Holy Land. Like Hunt, he also had intensely spiritual experiences of that landscape, and like his companion, he wrote several moving word-paintings of it. Finally, like Hunt, he seems at times to have been attracted by the possibility of setting his realistic representations of Middle Eastern scenes within a verbal context provided by religious symbolism.

Despite the fact that Hunt had a major influence upon Seddon, one must nonetheless not conclude that he shared with him the kind of relationship he had with Millais, Collins, Tupper, Stephens, and others. Although he praised his companion's practical gifts in making travel arrangements, Hunt also seems to have been annoyed both by his practical jokes and by what he termed his cockneyism. More important, Hunt, who was always a harsh taskmaster in his own affairs, believed that Seddon proved himself unwilling to make the necessary sacrifices to become a good painter.

Hunt's references to Seddon in his memoirs show that he considered him more as a student or apprentice than as an equal. According to Hunt,

Thomas Seddon was an amateur friend of our circle. He had for years desired to convert his furtive indulgence in art into a professional pursuit of it, but being of value in his father's business, he had been indefinitely

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7 See, for example, Memoir and Letters of the Late Thomas Seddon, Artist, ed. J.P. Seddon (London, 1858), pp. 85, 91, 126, 192-93. Hereafter cited as Memoir.

8 In a letter which I am preparing for publication Seddon included a poem that provides a typological interpretation of his major work, Jerusalem and the Valley of Jehosaphat.

9 Hunt mentioned both in his memoirs: “Before leaving the desert I engaged two Arabs to take me to the top of the Pyramids. Seddon accompanied me, declaring his determination to write his name on the top; I strove to dissuade him, but when he came down he gloried in having accomplished his object. I contented myself that mine would not be found there, but he retorted, ‘Oh, isn’t it, though? I took care to write yours as large as mine!’” (Pre-Raphaelitism and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, 2 vols. [London, 1905], i. 383). Hunt's memoirs are hereafter cited in the text by page and volume number. See also Hunt's letter of March 1855 to Dante Gabriel Rossetti, which I published in “‘Your Good Influence on Me’: The Correspondence of John Ruskin and William Holman Hunt”, Bulletin, lix (1976-77), 119-120.
chained to it. He was about thirty-three years of age when, hearing of my Eastern project, he asked to join me, and thus by novelty of subject and my instruction make up in a measure for his tardy commencement. As I was not yet ready to start, he elected to go on before me to Cairo, in fear that otherwise he might further lose his freedom (i. 362).

Accepting the role of teacher and guide, Hunt took that role quite seriously—just as he did everything else that concerned him—and part of his disappointment in Seddon derives from the fact that he believed his friend had shown himself unwilling to make the sacrifices necessary to become a first-rate painter. Hunt based his conclusion on something that took place at a crucial stage in the painting of *Jerusalem and the Valley of Jehosaphat*, Seddon's major work, which after his death his friends purchased and donated to the Tate Gallery. According to Hunt, the picture suffered because his friend left Jerusalem before he had completed the necessary work. *Pre-Raphaelitism and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood* relates that when the picture was far advanced, his friend had shown it to him for his comments:

Seddon had asked me to pronounce upon his picture of Jerusalem and Siloam from Aceldama. It was painted throughout elaborately and delicately, but it was scarcely in the pictorial sense a landscape. Sitting before the spot I pointed out to him how completely the tones and tints failed in their due relations, and how essential it was that he should supply the deficiency, explaining that in conventional art the demand for variety of tones was satisfied by exaggeration and tricks, and that these had increased the expectation for effect to such an extent that when a work was done strictly from Nature, unless all the variety that Nature gave was rendered by the painter, the spectator had good cause for declaring the work crude and false; in short that the more truth there was in one direction, the greater there must be in others. I calculated that to do the scene any justice, he must work upon the canvas fully another three weeks (i. 447).

At first accepting this advice, Seddon agreed to devote the necessary time to his painting, but he appeared the next day much upset by a letter from home which demanded his immediate return. Seddon told Hunt that "he should have therefore to depend upon his memory to modulate the tones of his picture... All I could say was that he must judge whether his correspondent could not be persuaded of the critical sacrifice it would be for him to leave so abruptly; if not, he must never regard the painting as anything more than a map" (i. 447-48).
A day or so after he had thus conferred with Seddon about his friend’s plans for his painting, Hunt, who apparently took quite seriously his role as teacher and advisor, wrote to him from Jerusalem and attempted to convince him to stay a little longer. In addition to telling us something of interest about this important Victorian painting and Hunt’s relation to it, the artist’s letter also provides us with an intimate glance at his work as a teacher of other painters. Even more important, it shows the aesthetic theories upon which he based his practice as an artist.

After telling Seddon he does not wish to make him do anything against his will, Hunt asks him to examine his plans for a career. “You say that you have had to work on each of the previous pictures several weeks after you have had them home. This is true and further also that the work was harmonised and rendered agreeable to all eyes in each case”. Therefore, Hunt tells him, they both agree that the time was “well spent, seeing you had no other means of reconciling their condition”. This time, however, the young artist did have a chance to strive for a better effect by remaining on the scene where the landscape was painted. In explaining why Seddon should stay and complete this painting in the Middle East, Hunt simultaneously provides both his fundamental theory of representation and his reason for coming to Jerusalem in the first place. According to Hunt, nature is so infinitely various that it always provides beauties far beyond the capacity of any painter to present. When the artist paints in the absence of the original object or scene, the visual harmony necessary to any successful painting “can only be effected by removing or at least confusing features that you have marked down”. The artist who does not—or will not—work in the presence of nature creates harmony, in other words, only by subtraction, only by removing something present in nature’s infinite variety. In contrast, “before nature the simplifying is done by adding”. Then, emphasizing his own conception of himself as Seddon’s teacher, Hunt reminds him that he must abandon the precedent provided by his earlier work and that he must strive, above all, to avoid the “weak points” in it. After next arguing that his ability to succeed financially as a painter depends directly upon staying in the Middle East and improving this major oil painting, Hunt next raises the spectre of hostile hangers at Royal Academy exhibitions, who delight “to find any excuse for putting it [an unusual work] in a bad light and then such a work finds double
enemies". Nonetheless, admitting that were he in love, he might well be tempted to run home before his work was completed, he closes by blessing his friend.

In addition to telling us much about the relation of Hunt and Seddon and also confirming the accuracy of Hunt's memoirs, these letters also tell us something about his problems with Protestant missionaries in the Middle East, for his letters and memoirs frequently deal with the difficulties he encountered while painting there. Problems with the Protestant missionaries in Jerusalem, the difficulty of obtaining Jewish models, the physical dangers caused by Arab hatred of Christians and foreigners, and the continuing threat of war between Russia and Turkey, which promised to immerse the entire region in chaos and drag Turkey's allies, France and England, into the conflict—all these factors made Hunt's work in the Middle East difficult and often dangerous. As it turned out, his sources of difficulty were interrelated. The entire matter of the Protestant bishopric in Jerusalem, for example, derived from the political manoeuvring which ultimately brought on the Crimean War, and it also relates directly to Hunt's problems in securing Jewish models for The Finding of the Saviour in the Temple. Owen Chadwick points out that the decision of the British government to sanction a Protestant bishop in Jerusalem—a decision to which the Tractarians were bitterly opposed because it obviously suggested that secular government had jurisdiction over the Church of God—was largely a matter of foreign policy.

At bottom this plan was part of British and German policy in the middle east. The powers were manoeuvring for the loot which lay about as Turkey collapsed. The protection of Christians in decaying Turkey had long been an instrument of Russian and French policy. Russia protected the Orthodox, France the Roman Catholics. Britain and Prussia, whose political interests in the middle east were considerable, determined to protect the Protestants. In these high policies of state it mattered little that Turkey contained no Protestants to protect; except a little congregation of six inhabitants, and a few visitors, gathered illegally in Jerusalem by the evangelical London Society for promoting Christianity among the Jews.10

In 1841 the British government agreed to the plan of the Prussian diplomat, Chevalier Bunsen, to force Turkey to recognize Protestant Christianity as a legal religion and then to appoint a bishop, chosen alternately by England and Germany but consecrated by the English hierarchy. Michael Solomon Alexander, Professor of Hebrew at King's College, London, and himself a convert from Judaism, was consecrated on 7 November 1841. After some initial resistance the Turkish authorities, who were wary of allowing the introduction of yet another religious party into the already strained atmosphere of Jerusalem, recognized the new Bishop, but only on condition that he would not attempt to win converts among either Muslims or the other Christian sects. Furthermore, to appease the other Christian denominations, the new Protestant bishop was called, not the Bishop of Jerusalem, but Bishop of the United Church of England and Ireland in Jerusalem. Since there were virtually no Protestants in Jerusalem to whom the new cleric and the associated Mission could minister, Alexander (and his successor Gobat) ended up as bishops to a congregation composed of European missionaries and a few converts from Judaism. European Jews opposed the Mission, and the Rothchilds, who supported the native Jewish community in Jerusalem, tried to prevent its subversion by the missionaries, who were often forced to resort to financial bribery to win converts. Hunt arrived on the scene at a time when an emissary from Rothchild had ordered the members of the local Jewish community to shun all Christians and their employment, since the missionaries had used such employment as a way of making and retaining converts.

At first, both Hunt and Seddon were favourably impressed by the Jerusalem Mission, but after a short time they both became disillusioned with it—Hunt apparently far more so than his companion—and after Seddon left for Europe Hunt became involved in the Hanna Hadoub affair and a subsequent open break with Bishop Gobat.

As Hunt wrote to his friend John Lucas Tupper sometime in 1855, he kept “aloof from the Missionaries because they write home fine things to publish in The Jewish Intelligencer and yet in fact do very little but make a grand show on horseback every afternoon. They have given me up as an unreformable character and this week I have reached the acme of disgrace through my landlord’s announcement to the Bishop that Christianity would
never be spread by such means on my authority". Finally, the painter's opposition to what he believed were also corrupt missionary practices led to what he termed "open warfare" when he undertook to "oppose the course pursued by the Bishop in his Mission work of which they make so great a talk in Exeter Hall".

Several years after Hunt returned from the Middle East he published a sixty-page pamphlet, *Jerusalem. Bishop Gobat in re Hanna Hadoub: With Original Documents Detailing the Case* (1858). As I have explained elsewhere,

The specific occasion for the controversy was the Bishop's arbitrary decision to allow one Hanna Hadoub, who was reputed to have "lived in part by the prostitution of his mother and sisters, and later by that of his first two wives", to marry a fourteen-year old girl against the wishes of her older brother and guardian. While members of the native Protestant congregation were presenting Gobat with evidence against Hadoub, he had the couple spirited away and married secretly in Nazareth and he allowed his servants to use threats and other pressures against the witnesses. Shortly after the painter left Palestine, Hadoub was arrested for armed robbery and sentenced to life imprisonment. According to Hunt's informants, the Bishop did nothing to make amends to the young wife, who "bore her husband's subsequent cruelty rather than lend herself to his wicked design ... Yet I am informed that she and her mother have suffered very much—even as beggars driven away from the Bishop's door". This cleric's accusation of "Tractarianism" against several devoted men who wished to found a new school finally drove the artist to publish his pamphlet.

The effect upon Hunt's career of such open opposition to Gobat appears to have been great, for, in speaking out openly against Gobat, who had received the support of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the artist did great harm to his career. At least, Hunt himself believed that one reason that he, certainly the best known and perhaps most influential of all Victorian religious painters,

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11 Manuscript in the Huntington Library at San Marino. I would like to thank the authorities of the Huntington and other libraries who have given me permission to quote from manuscripts in their possession.

12 ALS, 12 August 1855, to William Michael Rossetti (Huntington MS.).

had never received an official Church commission lay in his opposition to Gobat.

Like Hunt, Seddon was at first impressed by the missionary establishment in Jerusalem, and, as he wrote to his future wife on 25 June 1854:

Most of the English are more or less occupied here in the missions to the Jews, and they seem to be doing a great deal of good. They have boys’ and girls’ schools on a large scale, and an admirably arranged hospital, making up about thirty beds. There are not many converts yet, though there are some; but the people seem to feel that their intentions are friendly, and the children all read both the Old and New Testaments. The elder men and rabbis show no disinclination to listen and discuss matters; many are wavering, and a great change seems to be anticipated shortly (Memoir, pp. 94-95).

Seddon wrote similarly to his sister Mary about a month later that the “Mission at Jerusalem seems to be producing fruits, though the number of converts is not great ... The ground seems ploughed & before long I do not doubt a movement will take place. At any rate there is a large Protestant congregation of Europeans & apparently a very attentive one. Almost every one stays for communion”.14 Soon, however, Seddon, like Hunt, discovered that he had been mistaken, and, as he explained to his aunt:

I spoke in my earlier letters very hopefully of the mission but further experience makes me modify my opinion very much & I cannot but think that a great deal of their funds is expended in maintaining an extremely bad system of idle beggary. The money that has in so many years proved of so little effect here would have kept almost millions of our own poor from ignorance & vice. If I had a voice I would cashier [the] Jewish Mission box for Ragged Schools. I like the clergy here very much. From having seen much of the world there is much less of that exclusiveness and what one may call narrow-mindedness than you see so often in exclusively clerical society in England where a number of men are brought together with no more extensive field for gaining their experience than their College & Parish afford.

Nonetheless, despite his belief that the Mission itself was a waste of money, Seddon, who had dined with the Bishop, still admired him, and he thus wrote in this same letter: “Bishop Gobat is a man

14 This letter, dated 12 July 1854, appears with the date 2 July in Seddon’s Memoir, p. 101.
of very powerful intellect and his sermons are precious from the real thought in them".  

After Seddon's departure, Hunt became involved in the protest against the Bishop's actions, and Letters 9 and 11 mention the situation. The first tells Seddon that Gobat had received "a testimonial from the Archbishop of Canterbury, York, &c. &c. objecting to the Anti-Gobat movement and professing confidence in the wisdom of any line of conduct which their good brother of Jerusalem may resolve upon". Hunt's next letter wryly parodies some of the rumours which must have been flying back and forth throughout the Jerusalem European community. Letter 11 for the first time tells Seddon how serious the controversy had become: "Before I left Jerusalem for two or three months I was engaged every spare hour in a most serious question with the Bishop and Dr. Sandreczki on the subject of the manner in which they were conducting the Church Mission, in which I was nearly alone with all my art work neck-deep to clear off, while they with Nicholayson &c. &c. had all their day to the work or retaliating (for it became a personal matter at last)". Although Hunt tells Seddon he can not go into the entire matter in this letter from Constantinople, he promises to let him see the documents he had assembled—and three years later would publish in his pamphlet.

In printing previously unpublished manuscripts from the hands of Hunt and Seddon, I have silently emended and regularized spelling and punctuation, though I have only changed capitals when they begin a sentence with a letter in the lower case. Hunt frequently used American, rather than British, orthography, writing "color", for example, rather than "colour", and I have changed this spelling to match that in his published works. Hunt's most common punctuational device is a dot placed in the position of a dash. It may signify a dash, a comma, a period, a semi-colon, or merely that the writer has rested his pen while gathering his

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15 Seddon's letter to his aunt, which was begun in July and continued on 3 August 1854, is also in the Rylands University Library and was one of the manuscripts discovered by Mr. J.P. Birch. Seddon's Memoir (p. 116) contains a letter of 18 September 1854 to a Miss S — (probably the Miss Swale mentioned frequently in the correspondence) in which Seddon writes similarly: "The result of my personal experience in seeing these missions is, that I shall advise everybody to do good at home to the thousands of English poor, who are without teachers or comforts, and where they may be tolerably sure that their money is usefully employed".
thoughts. While making as few changes as possible and employing dashes wherever they seem intended, I have provided whatever punctuation seems necessary. All other changes, such as obviously omitted words and significant crossings-out have been supplied in square brackets.

LETTER 1

August 15th, 1853.
Cheyne Walk
Chelsea

My dear Seddon
I have been staying down at Ewell for a short time, reestablishing my health, which had suffered by close application to work—this fact is not, I feel, sufficient excuse for my neglect of your good-natured epistles, but with the fact that I have been much bothered of late I hope it will tend to reconcile your charitable nature. Your declaration that you will not be able to start before December, altho a disappointment to me, who look forward to getting away much earlier, is much more agreeable than the previous one to start this month—by when I knew I could not be ready. The Turkish affair has blown over for the present. I should not have been prepared to start in the teeth of a war extending itself, as it would have done, over the whole of Europe, and the part of Asia which is our land of promise. Now I see nothing to interfere with our main plan, and accordingly am working daily toward its accomplishment. I have just finished my night picture, and am about commencing a small thing to bring me up to the middle of October, the time which I am advised on all hands to choose for the start. I have spoken a great deal to Layard on

16 Addressed to Seddon “chez Mons’. Ryland, Haut Bourg Neuf, Dinan, Côtes du Nord”.
17 The artist was visiting Rectory Farm, Ewell, the home of his uncle William. Pre-Raphaelitism and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood (i. 305) has a photograph of the farm, one of whose rooms Hunt portrayed in Interior of a Kitchen at Ewell.
18 Hunt alludes to one of several crises which eventually produced the Crimean War. Russian pretensions to protect all Christians in the Turkish Empire, Louis Napoleon’s attempts to curry favour with French Roman Catholics by winning from the Turks the right of controlling certain holy places in Jerusalem, and Ottoman confidence that England, which was determined to oppose Russian expansionism in the Middle East, would not allow Russia to seize Turkish lands, all led to an escalating series of crises. See Llewellyn Woodward, The Age of Reform, 1815-1870, 2nd ed. (Oxford, 1962), pp. 251-64.
19 The Light of the World.
20 Sir Austin Henry Layard (1817-94), the English archaeologist and
the matter of late, who gives me every encouragement, assuring me that there will be no insurmountable difficulties in the way of making use of the wonderful materials to be found for our Art labours. He last night wrote five letters recommending your humble servant to different friends of his in the East. He advises a journey overland to Marseilles, thence to Malta, and thence direct to Beyrout, by which means it will only engage us 9 or 10 days: and we otherwise should be detained by quarantine at Alexandria much longer.

I have not met Lewis 21 yet, but expect to do so within a week or so. I will make careful enquiries then. I believe that he, and Lear, 22 are the only men who can tell us what we shall want. The last says “do not get anything till you are ready, and then only a few things which can not be obtained there”. He laughs at pistols, thinking “poodles” about as useful, and “oysters” much more so. Rejoicing to hear you are progressing I am

My dear Seddon

Yours very Truly
W Holman Hunt

LETTER 2

Monday. Oct 16th 1853.

My dear Seddon

With a feeling of shame at not having written earlier I sit down to-night with a determination to grapple with all the necessary statistics and other business matters connected with our intended trip. I do not feel prepared at this moment to grapple with dates. I am never very strong in this matter, for engagements such as ours seem to me always to preclude the possibility of great precision as to the settlement of time for future undertakings, but I will explain in how far affairs [I have reason to think, struck through] have progressed since your departure. To relieve you however from false hopes I must at once confess that I have not yet been able to attend to any of our arrangements we had determined upon on

21 John Frederick Lewis, R.A. (1805-76), a painter in oils and watercolours of landscape, genre, and exotic subjects, is today best known for his orientalism. Lewis, who lived in Cairo in the decade after 1841, shared many points of technique with the PRB and praised their first efforts, which he encountered upon his return from the Middle East. See Pre-Raphaelitism and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, i. 270-71.

22 Edward Lear (1812-88), author, illustrator, and landscape painter, had studied with Hunt to learn Pre-Raphaelite oil-painting techniques. Therefore, although he was older than Hunt, he used to refer to him as “Daddy”.

politician, excavated the ruins of Nimrud in 1845-47 and published Nineveh and its Remains (1848), Monuments of Nineveh (1850), and other works.
our last interview, nor do I count upon doing so until another ten days
has gone by, for I find that any evening spent away from my studio is
greatly to the disadvantage of my next day's work for which I have to
make continual provisions by engaging models and making experimental
studies. I have now left Mrs Ford's and have little to attend to but the
figures which are partly done. Still there is so much unfinished that the
loss of time must not be risked—unless indeed it seem practicable to plan
a return to the north of Italy early enough to bestow some time on the
pictures there ere the opening of the Academy exhibition and even then I
should give up reluctantly for in the end of fatal accident in Egypt there
would be not the money procurable which otherwise I should have in
hand at starting.

You will see by my allusions to the subject that I agree to the Nile
expedition. Let me explain however that the impracticality of Syria
would make the route of much less interest. I believe there would be a
difficulty in inducing the people to sit as—as Bartlett\(^\text{23}\) says in any
case—still from the diverse testimony I have received—for Layard,
Leslie\(^\text{24}\) and several others [sic] travellers have assured me that they will
consent to be painted—I cannot think that we should find them all
unmanageable and even if they were we should have the experience of the
journey and with the historical interest of the country this makes it a
matter of regret that we could not arrange to visit all the East in one year
[or consecutive seasons, struck through]. What strengthens this feeling is
a conviction that one visit would always stand as an argument against a
future journey to the neighbouring country, for the time and money
would both be serious items in the means of a lifetime. Now it must not
appear that I wish to retreat—on the contrary I am most desirous to see
Cairo and the Nile and will willingly accompany you but since the
scheme of making some shorter tour and remaining in the North of Italy
or elsewhere on the continent has recommended itself to me from the
facilities it would afford for my [altered from the] acquisition of the
language without unusual effort while engaged at work until political
affairs took a more decided tone, I think it well to represent the same.
I do not disregard your desire to avoid hackneyed subjects but I suppose
it would not be difficult to manage this. There are thousands of places
open—could we not even get to Mount Athos? which is spoken of as

\(^{23}\) Hunt here probably refers to William Henry Bartlett (1809-54), a London
topographical artist who travelled extensively on the Continent, in the Middle
East, and throughout America. His many illustrated works include *Walks about
Jerusalem* (1845).

\(^{24}\) Charles Robert Leslie, R.A. (1794-1859) painted humorous and historic
genre in the manner of Wilkie and Mulready—two artists who had considerable
influence upon the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. Leslie, who was a close friend of
Constable, was Professor of the Royal Academy, 1847-52.
most lovely—but even in Venice itself I should expect to find the best material perfectly unused.

On Saturday your Father called when I was unfortunately away. He left a kind note inviting me to fix a day for dining with your family after a week hence. I hope to write to him this evening to fix some day for enjoying his hospitality. It will scarcely I suppose be necessary to remind him of your desires for bank post pills [sic? for "bills"]; I am to meet Brown there. The umbrellas are dearer than we expected but since they are articles of the greatest use at all times and places I do not think the money ill spent. I have ordered a skirt for mine. I called at Robersons this evening. They have finished the canvass and have most of the other things ordered by you ready. I will attend to any arrangement you please about the place of meeting. Marseilles will suit me perfectly—if it prove most convenient to you it will only cost me the feeling—while travelling—of a rock limpet tossing about between the two coasts. There is the account of the sleeping apparatus in Bradshaw which I have. I will be sure to get two. Powder and shot shall be got, [but] how much? I shall not be able to see Lewis. He is in Scotland for some months. I don’t think Robson’s [sic, for “Roberson’s”] copal medium necessary, does it hold better? Madder dries just as well in hot weather without any medium—and is said by Leslie not to run. Thanks for your notice of

25 Ford Madox Brown (1821-93), an older member of the Pre-Raphaelite circle, shared (and in some cases anticipated) the Brotherhood’s use of hard-edge realism, contemporary and literary subjects, and elaborate pictorial symbolism based upon both Hogarth and Early Netherlandish art.

26 In Pre-Raphaelitism and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, Hunt tells of an overnight visit to Seddon’s camp site outside Jerusalem: "I had to sleep on the ground; I flattered myself that in Egypt I had been hardened to worse beds, but at Aceldama there were ants of prodigious size who ate through my sleeping apparatus (bought on the advice of a guide-book), and would have carried me away to their hole had they been of one mind" (i. 430-31).

27 In a letter Hunt wrote to the painter-poet William Bell Scott on 5 December 1859, he described his use of copal varnish as a medium: “I manage my copal by using but very little indeed and that almost exclusively with colour such as yellow madder & madder lake, and the more transparent and undryable of all sorts. In flesh I employ but very little medium, i.e. copal, which with turpentine in the commencement does the whole of my work. Yet I confess it does very often hamper me very much. It clogs the brush so as to make the fine flowing quality of work impossible. Of late years I have used some made by Webster in his own garden which is more difficult to handle than that you get from the colourman, which dries quicker: I remember that the rapidity with which that dried allowed me to use a layer of tint over another even on the same day, while my present medium will not allow me to do so, altho it has all the disadvantages of a quick drier. If you wish to mix oil with yours to make it a little thinner, let it stand bottled without a cork in a large saucepan filled with water up to the
the French hotel, which I will use. After my work is done I have to go to Oxford for a day or two. This coming on to my other engagements will I fear make it very unlikely that I get to Paris by the 1st. I hope you have better weather than we have. As it is it suits me better, for the sun disturbs me now it is so low by coming into the room. I am strongly pressed to advise you not to scamp your picture for the sake of a day or two's work. Nothing has retarded me so much as being compelled to exhibit a picture when not quite finished and really with my uncertainty it might be useless to hurry for so short a time only.

I have no news to tell you. Gabriel is as unsociable as ever while Millais is as whimsical. Sometimes he is going into a monastery and at others only into the Academy. He has stolen a march on us all now though despite his humours by making designs—with Ruskin—of a new order of architecture which I am told are exquisitely novel and beautiful.\(^28\) I have always thought the task a figure artist's. I am sorry I shall not see him again. He remains in Scotland beyond the time of my departure. I left him last at a ball thinking our parting only for a month or two. Poor Deverell\(^29\) is very bad. I am afraid we shall not see him again on our return. He is a dear, good, innocent fellow.

I must now wish you good bye! or I shall never get through my other letter of the night. Write again and let me know what you do and think.

Yours ever truly,

W Holman Hunt

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bottle's shoulders simmering—not boiling—for five or six hours without which it will not combine with the oil. When you come to London you can try some of mine" (Troxell Collection, Princeton University).

\(^28\) In an undated letter in the Huntington Library at San Marino, Millais wrote to Hunt: “Ruskin and myself are deep in the designing of novel architecture. He is quite delighted and astonished at my designs. He thought that we were simply capable of copying nature, and that we had no invention. Now he admits that he was awfully mistaken”. Millais's *Design for a Gothic Window*, a work executed in charcoal with sepia wash and heightened with white and green, was No. 324 in the 1967 Millais exhibition at the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, and the Royal Academy of Arts, London. Mary Bennett's valuable catalogue contains much important documentation for the work, which is illustrated in *Pre-Raphaelitism and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood*, i. 363.

\(^29\) Walter Howard Deverell (1827-54), whose promising career was cut short by poverty and disease, was an American-born associate of the Pre-Raphaelites who first met D. G. Rossetti at Sass’s Drawing School and shared a studio with him in 1851. Hunt’s portrait of Deverell is reproduced in *Pre-Raphaelitism and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood*, i. 361.
My dear Seddon

I received your good natured epistle yesterday morning before starting to my place of painting—whence I went to your father's house to dinner. I have taken every opportunity of endeavouring to settle the question of our route but find myself still unable to pronounce positively for I cannot tell how far time may affect the matter. Were it merely depending upon inclination I should say "we will go to Egypt at once" but I fear that from what you were saying about the necessary time of starting that my work may detain me too late, for I find that I can scarcely hope to get away before the middle of next month. I owe you an apology for being behind the time fixed at first but I hope it will also be some kind of an exculpation to explain that had I thought it all probable that Syria would have been approachable this season I should not have began the modern picture, and further that I undertook it determining to relinquish it in the event of affairs becoming sufficient[ly] favourable to permit the execution of our project as it first stood, but now with diminished reasons as inducements I cannot feel warrantable in sacrificing £ 300 and the advantage of its exhibition for the sake of the short time it will require to complete. By the 15th within a day or two one way or the other I will join you wherever you may propose and will be ready if you do not think it then too late to travel Egyptwards or any otherwhere we may determine in the meantime. The doubt expressed in my last was founded upon the fear that I could not be ready for the packets you wanted to catch. I quite see the advantage of Egypt as a place of sojourn for the winter months. Had Syria been open however I should have wished only to go through it as a tourist unless we saw something which recom-mended it as a superior place to remain in.

I have but little hope of being able to remain in Italy after the twelvemonth has gone by altho' I wish to do so—but so many things may occur as reasons for returning to my family and affairs which at a greater distance would be of insufficient weight. I passed a very pleasant evening yesterday with your family. There was no message of importance but your Mother told me to say that as I was intending to write that they would defer doing so for a day or two. I have ordered a trunk from Easts which should be home by this time so it is too late to [take] advantage of your offer even if settled that you would not require it. Waiting for your judgment and general reply.

I am yours ever truly

W Holman Hunt

30 The Awakening Conscience.
My dear Seddon

Egypt by all means, since you think we shall not be too late—I will make all preparations and will meet you as you propose for the Eastern journey—I am progressing very quickly with my picture and am hoping to be quite free by the 15th and perhaps on my route, but from the thousand interruptions of bad light, social duties &c I can not feel certain enough to ask you to wait any where for me. In fact, I feel that the 18th will be the better day for me especially as I have discovered the necessity for attending my dentist who may not be able to perform his operation of stopping in one sitting and as again I learn that the Oxford people will not be satisfied unless I paint the lamb on the altar of their church: therefore let me know where I am to meet you and I will follow you to the place. I am in the midst of such confusion and yet feel it so necessary not to bother myself with too much consideration of matter not connected with my picture until it is finished that I can not find out what it would be advisable for me to ask you to procure for me in Paris. If however any things are suggested to you as necessaries you will oblige me greatly by procuring them.

I must try your patience very much with my delays. I have a bad character to start with as a fellow traveller, but let me assure you that when I have once joined you I will be most pliant and considerate and I am certain we shall get on excellently. Your methodical arrangement shall regulate all our movements. I wish I were already away, for delivery from my thousand duties alone would be pure enjoyment. * Millais talked last week of coming on with me to Paris but of course there is no dependence upon him. He is still in Edinboro'. I will write to tell our determination to your family and will attend to all your other instructions before leaving.

Let me know when you write how long we should have to wait if we

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31 It is not certain whether Hunt ever executed this commission, the nature of which suggests a location in a Tractarian parish. Since Thomas Combe, his friend, patron, and financial manager, was a devout High Churchman, the altar painting would probably have been intended for St. Barnabas, a church he built and endowed. Hunt's other High Church connection in Oxford was Jesus College, but his manner of describing the "church" of the "Oxford people" makes unlikely the possibility that the work was to be done in Jesus College chapel.
unfortunately missed the Steamer of the 24th. Do not be frightened at this enquiry. What I have written before shall regulate me if possible.

Yours, in haste

W Holman Hunt

[*] He is being elected Associate to-night, I suppose [written up the left margin].

Shall we want guns and pistols? I have been spending so much money lately that unless they are very important I would rather avoid the expense.32

LETTER 5

Nov[embe]r 12th 1853
Chelsea

My dear Seddon

I find that my sense of responsibility as it at present stands, with the thousand torments that come with the eve of my departure, make me so dreadfully nervous that I am totally unable to work in this state, and with the fear of some serious fever, or illness of some kind, which I feel impending, with the necessity of fighting daily with time, feeling it a dreadful impediment to completing my picture and the arrangement of my affairs, I should be glad to feel that in attending to my own interest I was not sacrificing yours. Will you therefore let me beg you not to make any stoppages on my account. This arrangement will I am certain facilitate my movements, and at the same time ensure a greater chance of success with my picture. It may deprive me of the pleasure of your society for a greater part of the way, but this I must endure patiently. If possible I will be at Marseilles by the 24th but if I am not do not wait for me but go on to Cairo.33 You will of course have to wait there some days, and

32 As Hunt relates in Pre-Raphaelitism and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, the weapons turned out to be necessary after all when he was attacked near Jerusalem. Resolving to defend himself, he tells that he “had cause to rejoice at the elementary knowledge of self-defense which I had acquired at school. This, however, would scarcely have protected me from a long horse-pistol with which a special antagonist sought to finish the combat, had I not been provided with a small revolver bought on the eve of my departure from London”. When Hunt drew his weapon, his attacker gave up, and later, on Seddon’s urging, Hunt brought charges against him. Returning to his house in Jerusalem, the painter tried to fire his pistol, “too long undischarged, against a wall. The weapon was a cheap one, a merit which as the last of my disbursements for my voyage was a consideration to me... To my consternation the hammer, when I pulled the trigger, was raised only half an inch, and then no strength of finger would stir it” (i. 413-14).

33 According to the Memoir (p. 29), Seddon, in fact, left Marseilles on 25 November and arrived at Alexandria on 6 December 1853.
then I will overtake you. Let me know your route that I may not pass you on the way. If you require any thing sent on to you for your use ere your arrival in Egypt let me know and I will send it as you direct. Of course if you find no objection, from meeting with places of interest nearer home, I would much rather find you before you left Europe, but act in this matter, I pray you, entirely on your own wishes. I cannot be long behind the day arranged, perhaps not so long as if affairs were left as at present, for if I fell ill we might be upset altogether, and when I start I shall not do so with the conviction that I have scamped the works which I leave behind for next year's exhibition.

Yours ever truly

W Holman Hunt

LETTER 6

[17 February 1854?]

(This fragmentary copy of Hunt's letter, which is apparently in Seddon's hand, is inscribed: "Extract. Hunt's letters Jerusalem Feby 17." The original may have been written in either 1854 or the following year).

The native servants in the house seem to think me an incomprehensible character & when the fellaheen see me sketching hard day after day, when they have asked a question or two they turn around & say to one another, "he's mad", but here when they see me for weeks & months together doing nothing else from morning till night but draw, paint & write, & taking endless pains to obtain opportunities to do the same properly, & see how difficult I am to please, they regard me as a great Howagah who can afford to gratify his whims at any trouble or cost. The other day I had sent for some salt to paint from, & when the servant brought it I was superintending the arrangement of it when he turned round to the landlord & said "Did you ever see such a strange Howagah. He does nothing but play from the moment he gets up to the moment he goes to bed like a child—"

LETTER 7

Monday night—Jerusalem
[October 1854]

My dear Seddon—

I have been wanting to see you again all day, but as I have been obliged to take advantage of the first opportunity I have had to work

34 Hunt was working in his Jerusalem studio on the Dead Sea foreground of *The Scapegoat*. 
from a Jew for a fortnight or three weeks, excepting a few chance sittings from the rascally, uncertain tailor.\textsuperscript{35} And as I must guard each hour of tomorrow still more preciously as I have an engagement for a Jewish youth to sit to me, as a great favour, conceded for Dr. MacGowan’s\textsuperscript{36} sake—I must communicate to you in writing. It is about your picture, which for your good I trust you have succeeded well with to-day. I must at once assure you that I don’t wish to persuade you to do anything against your will, but as the remarks you made yesterday and previously seem to me difficult to reconcile with a reasonable view of your position, I will ask you to take the short time that remains to examine your plans. You say that you have had to work on each of the previous pictures several weeks after you have had them home. This is true and further also that the work was harmonised and rendered more agreeable to all eyes in each case—and therefore the three or four weeks were well spent, seeing that you had no other means of reconciling their condition. Remember however that away from nature itself this can only be effected by removing or at least confusing features that you have marked down; before nature the simplifying is done by adding—now your pictures hitherto have doubtless been successful to that degree to which they have pretended. They have been promising from the fidelity and patience they

\textsuperscript{35} Hunt here alludes to the difficulties he had in securing Jewish models for \textit{The Finding of the Saviour in the Temple}. On 24 July 1854 he wrote to his old friend from the days of \textit{The Germ}, John Lucas Tupper: “I don’t know my course here. I thought to sit down and paint a picture from the Jewish pilgrims as models, but at the commencement an emissary arrives from the Rothchilds, denounces the work of the English mission, forbids any seeking the employment offered by Christians, and that of mine among others” (Huntington MS.). In a letter of 13 August to his future wife, Seddon explained: “We have come here just at a crisis, when the European Jews, alarmed at the proceedings of the mission, have sent over a Mr. Cohen to examine matters. His first step was to lay a heavy curse upon any Jew who held any communication with Christians; and Hunt, who had spoken to some about sitting to him, was put under a special curse. He called on Cohen, to explain that he had no connexion whatever with the missionaries, and that his object was purely an artistic one; and that, even if he wished, he could not convert any, because he could not speak a word that they could understand. But long before he could say all this, Cohen burst into a most ungovernable passion, and stamped, and railed against Christians till he was breathless. The effect has been, that not a soul has dared to come near the house, which has made him lose the whole month. However, Cohen left last week, and one man has come, and I hope others will, for poor Hunt was beginning to despair” (\textit{Memoir}, p. 108). Oddly enough, Hunt came to oppose the missionaries and, devout Christian that he was, he became an ardent Zionist in his later years.

\textsuperscript{36} E. MacGowan, M.D., one of the physicians in service to the Protestant mission in Jerusalem, later supported Hunt’s protests against Bishop Gobat’s practices.
have exhibited and have had other merits, but the course of treatment you pursued with them must not be any example to you in future. No man improves in any art spontaneously. Each new task must be done with the determination of avoiding the weak points of his last work. Now you say again that your object in returning is of more importance than any picture. It may be regarded so, but then you can not separate them unless you give up your profession. Otherwise they are identical as far as I understand: if your object in coming out here was to paint pictures to supply you with means, and towards procuring a firmness of position for a certain object, surely it were unwise to sacrifice the strength of your best chance for the sake of a week or two—especially seeing that delay for the opposite cause would be for a much more serious [following word illegible. time].

As we noticed yesterday the picture has that aspect which cannot fail to attract attention in an Exhibition. In some cases this is an advantage—it mostly however procures the opposition of half the world, and the consequent desire to find faults. The hangers are glad to find any excuse for putting it in a bad light and then such a work finds double enemies. Surely you have had many examples of this before your eyes for the last few years and the consequences are not enviable in any. I have said all now that I have time for. I have to prepare several letters for the post. I leave you weigh the rest for yourself. Perhaps you may have progressed so well as not to require the delay. Even if you have not, however, make allowances for the fact that as fortune has played the tyrant with me a good deal I am hard-hearted both towards myself and others connected with my affairs—and again that perhaps were I in love I might prefer to run tilt without prudence—or any other heathen virtue—rather than wait patiently to have the prize bestowed in due course of approval for stabling [sic, for “stable”] cleaning.

Wishing you God’s blessing
I am yours sincerely

W Holman Hunt

[Endorsed: “Thomas Seddon Esq
Letter written about a month before I left Jerusalem”].

LETTER 8

[3 December 1854]

[The following fragmentary copy of Hunt’s letter is inscribed in Seddon's hand: “Extract. Description of Wady Zoara, Dead Sea, Dec 3rd”].

The Wady Zoara is thought to be that which Lot ascended on his escape from Sodom. For miles around the country is a wilderness of limestone & silica. Not a blade of vegetation is to be seen in 3/4 of a day’s journey except in the winter water channels down which is some scanty
soil & some sandgrass & at great intervals a few thorn trees. The torrent falls into the sea over the cliff at Luaro [written after Zoara, struck through] but during the course of ages it has worn out a channel half way down so that it [half ... it written in pencil over the line] descends more gradually than formerly [followed by half-way down, struck through in pencil]. The torrent in dividing it has left a mass of rock & alluvium at the foot of which I encamped. A castle had formerly stood here, perhaps to keep the Moabites away. Now at this season the watercourse was dry but there was a well near. I descended every day into the plain & painted on the margin of the sea till sunset.37 I told my Arab the history of Sodom & that 4 cities lay under the lake, which extraordinary tale he told to all the other Arabs. Then they accounted for my mad talk by supposing that I intended by magic to get up the treasures from below. In the plain there is a great mountain a few miles long & about 200 ft high, a singular mass of disordered fragments of calcined rocks from which the salt oozes in long pendants in any hollow place beneath. Its Arabic name is Usdoom, a corruption evidently of Sodom. De Saulcy38 pretends to have found ruins here but he was a mendacious chronicler of this & other places which I had the opportunity of examining. No one, not even an Arab, dares to live in the plain. They pass occasionally towards Petra or Jericho, & a few descend to collect salt but all come up at night. It is a place where a painter might be occupied for many years, but I do not expect to hear of any going there in my lifetime. The water was sometimes blacker than London porter & the bread like a mud pie. There were many gazelles & Bedens there but I had no time to lie in wait or track them.

LETTER 9

December 16th, 185439

My dear Seddon,

I was glad to receive your letter of November 8th telling me of your safe and pleasant arrival at Dinan. I sent you a letter about a month since telling you of my trip round Hebron and the Dead Sea, which I hope you received in due course. Since then I have made the other excursion. You

37 Hunt was painting the background of The Scapegoat. For a map of this region and Hunt's description of his expedition there, see Pre-Raphaelitism and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, i. 446-62.
39 The letter is addressed “Thomas Seddon Esq. / 27 Grove Terrace / Kentish Town / London”.

know how I hate Arabs. Let this fact and another, i.e. that I have already had to speak of my adventures once or twice excuse my repetition of a tale in which they are important accessories. I may say however that my bold attempt was, as other efforts I have made, only a complete failure. The first day I descended into the plain I was seized with diarrhoea [sic] which threatened to carry me off at once yet I would not give in but sat working all day on the border of the marsh, and by God’s mercy I recovered in face of the danger. After this I went on steadily day after day. Robbers came up in companies and staid consulting whether it would be worth while to attack me with the chance of receiving the content of my double barrelled mohl stick, for the little I had and these ended altho’ evidently with reluctance in their departure after my one guard had assured them that he believed I should shoot the first man that touched me. Yet and despite all I could say to coax or bribe the beasts my men after they had vainly tried to persuade me to leave the place—all joined together with the muleteer in refusing to wait any longer. I heard the words deechmahn felous backsheesh and girch so often that I began to think there were no other things in the world: I protested that they should stay the fifteen days for which I had agreed but all was useless and eight days after I had arrived I had to mount and return. In coming I had been attacked by fellaheen near Hebron. In going back as a first reverse to my hope of finishing the picture if possible in Jerusalem—my goat fell down and died. The next day in coming to Hebron again I found Abderrachman besieging the town with 6000 fellaheen who stopped me and released me only to make my way along the road between the two armies where bullets were falling [flying written over falling] about me every minute.40 Fortunately I escaped without the loss of anything and what surprised me still more was my good fortune in making the next day’s journey without any other difficulty. Then a difference of opinion as to which had most right to my hafsh, myself, or some five or six rascally Arabs, which I settled in standing aside in the road with my gun ready until the whole had passed out of their grasp and they had turned their horses’ heads.—This is a handful of the fortune I met with by which you may judge of the whole. The natives are growing worse and worse every day. Last time the French mail was stopped at three places on the road between Jaffa and here. The fellahs and Arabs seem to have discovered that there is even less government than usual. At Latahia [sic] they—the Ansarri—murdered a pacha, his son, and several soldiers because they went out to prevent the Ansarii from fighting. Oh! they are all very fine fellows. They throw their cloaks about them very grandly!

40 Pre-Raphaelitism and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, i. 500-01, narrates this adventure.
I regret that I was not able to see the interesting things on the Jaffa road which you mentioned in your letter. I should have gone had I felt any sort of satisfaction with my past work. I am afraid I must give up the hope of seeing Palms in fruit, the white thistle which must have been very beautiful. The country everywhere has been brilliant in colour lately.

I have received my etching and the proof safely. Accept my best thanks for your kind attention to this matter. I think I may be able to make it all right. The biting in was not so bad as some of the work. Don’t let my letter to you at Siloam affect your judgement of your picture. I wrote it with a determination to make every thing bear on one point. You need not fear that it will fail to interest people. I hope you will find it do so to a very high degree. I am humbled you see in having to do my Dead Sea work almost entirely without Nature. I painted the Mountains, the sea, and some of the foreground, but the others, the sky &c I have to do from the top of Sim’s house, or otherwise I must just throw the picture away according to my first impulse. The Prussians here are trying to get up a notion that the Allied armies will be entirely destroyed by the Russians. We have news of a terrible storm in the Crimea and one report says 42 or 64 [sic] transports with provisions and clothing were wrecked. It is growing late in the year for military work. I hope to hear they have taken Sebastapol by Wednesday post from Constantinople.

The Bishop here has received a testimonial from the Archbishop of Canterbury, York, &c &c objecting to the Anti-Gobat movement and professing confidence in the wisdom of any line of conduct which their good brother of Jerusalem may resolve upon.

Be careful not to tell of my difficulties and dangers lest my people at home should hear of them.

Pray give my best remembrances to your family. Give my most hearty greetings to Brown & my respects to his wife and to all others as thou knowest my proper greetings. I shall be glad to hear any good news of you.

Yours very sincerely

W Holman Hunt

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41 Hunt refers to either *The Abundance of Egypt* (1854), upon which he later drew for his oil painting, *The Afterglow in Egypt* (1863), versions in Southampton Art Gallery and Ashmolean Museum, or to *The Desolation of Egypt* (1854), which *Pre-Raphaelitism and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood*, i. 378, reproduces with the title of *Sphinx*.

42 *Pre-Raphaelitism and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood*, i. 502-03, 511, mentions such a Prussian doom saying.
HUNT'S LETTERS TO SEDDON

LETTER 10

Jerusalem—January 31st 1855.43

My dear Seddon

I was very glad to hear of your good news from Dinan.44 I was hoping to learn of a happy termination to your long patient suit, yet I knew you had fears and much uncertainty and it was a happy termination to your disquietude if nothing else. You know I am not a determined woman hater. I don’t regard your defection from bachelorhood as a sin, but rather as an act which not being capable of myself in this day, I abstain to classify lest my judgement should condemn myself, or otherwise in some future day my action should condemn my present judgement. It is enough that you have decided on your course. I shall be glad to hear of the following it out in due order, and I trust you will always have your reasons to rejoice at the future of this new plan of life.

To-day I received a letter from my Father in which I learned that you had received my epistle referring to my journey to the Dead Sea.45 I think by this time you also received a letter or note rather about my three-weeks second trip, so that little remains in the way of news, excepting some very surprizing facts of a negative kind which may have some interest to you.46 First rumour has not yet accused the Bishop Gobat of murdering his predecessor Alexander, nor has it yet hinted any unfoulness in his family arrangement altho’ it is known that he lost a child in Abyssinia and that Mrs Gobat has lately disappointed the good people here of two little bishops. Still more am I surprized at not having heard that Mr Graham47 has absconded with the Society’s Cash box,

43 Hunt apparently enclosed this letter to Seddon within one to someone else, since it bears no postage and is addressed and inscribed as follows: “Please to post this immediately / Thomas Seddon, Junr. Esq. / Grove Terrace / Kentish Town / London”.
44 Seddon’s engagement to be married.
45 See Letter 7 above.
46 Although Hunt writes with tongue in cheek about the conflicts within the missionary community in Jerusalem, he broaches the serious matter of the Hanna Hadoub affair—an affair that had grave effects on the artist’s own career.
47 In Pre-Raphaelitism and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, Hunt mentions that James Graham, lay secretary to the Jerusalem Mission to the Jews, “had been one of the directors of a Glasgow bank which had failed some years before; being a large shareholder, with no Limited Liability Act then existing, he was financially ruined. He had obtained an appointment in Jerusalem to save him from taxing his friends, and to be out of the way of others. He was a Churchman with a strong tendency to Presbyterianism; he was good-nature itself, but prosy, and an incorrigible procrastinator. Tall, fair, and brawny, riding beautifully, and having a deliberate polite gait and manner, he took rank at once as a person of
and it is truly inexplicable that Crawford has not been accused of cannibalism. It is difficult to account for remissness of the Christian society of this place in respect to these matters particularly when their faculties appreciative have led them to the humblest profession of admiration for Nicholayson's distinguished talents in plain sermoning. I go to Sim's to paint my pictures with the Mountains in sight. Otherwise I keep out of all their ways—not in all cases because I dislike the people—some such as Crawford I like very much—but because I have no time to spend away from my work. Sim is obliging. I have given him much trouble. Last post he wrote to you telling you of a splendid Eagle he had sent to England to Revd Harchell, which you were to paint from if you liked. I hope you get his letter in time. I have just found another goat after an incredible amount of trouble, and even this will not do solely, for his face is brown, and another fault worse than all is his inartistic taste. I spend half an hour in persuading him to stand gracefully and as I turn around in satisfaction he lies down exhausted with effort. —He evidently has no impression of the responsibility of his position and I am hopeless of finding the tone of seriousness requisite for my object, until he be convinced of the folly of his Moslem course of life—I write thus foolishly only to disguise a somewhat troublesome conviction of having found a match in this part of my campaign with Fortune but as I see I have overplayed my part I have to expose my motive. (I don't intend to give in, of course). It was a sad business that of Brown's sale. I see no method of remedying but in waiting. To send the picture for sale again might injure Brown in stopping dealers' advances, which in time may make B's right in value. If he is painting now possibly another exhibition may do all. Therefore I advise you to keep the picture at least another year. If you want the money in the meantime, as circumstances render probable, write to me, or if in greater haste send

distinction” (i. 425). Elsewhere in his memoirs Hunt mentions travelling with Graham and his photographic apparatus on expeditions around Jerusalem.

48 The Rev. Henry Crawford, one of the members of the Protestant Mission to the Jews in Jerusalem, is several times mentioned with fondness by both men.

49 The Rev. John Nicholayson was head of the English Mission to the Jews and Dean of the English Church belonging to the Mission, Christ Church, Jerusalem.

50 In a letter of 5 March 1855 to his betrothed, Seddon explained: “I have heard from Dr. Sim, at Jerusalem. He says he has shot me a grand eagle, four feet high, and eight feet from wing to wing, which he is sending over to me in a box; it will enable me to put a grand foreground into my small picture of Mount Zion” (Memoir, p. 133).

51 F. M. Brown, who long endured great poverty, had attempted to sell some of his paintings by auction—with disastrous results.
this as an order to Mr Combe, Oxford. I am not very strong in cash box, yet I would rather risk running myself out than having Brown's success [written after rights, struck through] retarded. I fully understand your object to be the same as my own, so I do not fear any misunderstanding of this proposal. I received the case duly. I think I have already thanked you for it. I was sorry not to find a penknife—yet I manage pretty well with one that Mr Beamont Sen[io]r gave to me. I worked two or three evenings on your sketch but required another evening.

Hunt has included an ink-sketch of a man in profile.

Thomas Combe (1797-1872), Printer to the University of Oxford, was a High Churchman who was one of the first and most important benefactors of the Pre-Raphaelite circle. With the exception of The Light of the World (which was bequeathed to Keble College), his collection of Pre-Raphaelite painting is now in the Ashmolean Museum. In Pre-Raphaelitism and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, Hunt explained how his friend came to act as his banker: "On my last visit to Oxford at Christmas [1854], Mr. Combe declared that he did not think I could be trusted with my little money, and that it would be wise for him to take care of it, that I could thus better defend myself from borrowers, and that with him as my banker I could draw drafts for sums as they became needful" (i. 362). The John Rylands University Library possesses most of the artist's fascinating letters to Combe in Ryl. English MS. 1213.

Throughout his career Hunt tried to advance Brown. In an undated fragment of a letter, possibly written to F. G. Stephens, which internal evidence suggests was written after 1877, Hunt states: "Brown is one of those heroes all young men make of one of their superiors. I can remember how I had perfect confidence that he was just about to do something that would put him at the very top of his profession, but I always had to admit that there was in the pictures hitherto seen an excusable reason for the public not to admit his stupendous merit. Year by year it has always been the same. Even now I believe he can do the noblest of works ... He is one ... [of those] who nearly succeed, but yet fail ... He has never treated his Art like a harlot but worshipped her loyally & nobly" (Bodleian MS. Don. e 67).

Pre-Raphaelitism and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood mentions a "Mr. Beamont, a young Fellow of Trinity, Cambridge, whom we had met in Cairo" (i. 404), who travelled with him through Syria and Palestine. The Dead Sea expedition was apparently made in the company of Beamont's father and son, and in his memoirs Hunt states: "I have glanced only at our experience upon the later part of this journey, because Mr. Beamont wrote a faithful and bright account of our expedition", and he provides a note to William Beamont's Diary of a Journey to the East in The Autumn of 1856, which was published by Longman, Brown, Green and Longman in 1856.

Hunt's mention here of working on one of Seddon's sketches for him demonstrates that he tried to advance his friend's career by doing more than simply proffering unwanted advice to remain longer in the Middle East. Pre-Raphaelitism and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, ii. 128, also mentions that after Seddon's death his friends banded together to finish incomplete works but, Hunt writes, "as I was hard-pressed by my own work and had given time to
when I went away to the Dead Sea. Since then I have had to work at the Mountains to the last glimpse of daylight excepting when it has been too wet or cold to be out of doors working. Before I leave I shall be able to find an opportunity for finishing it as it is only some rock work now that is left. I will send it in my cases home when I leave here which I hope to do about the end of March.

Remember me kindly to your family—and believe me to be yours sincerely.

W Holman Hunt

Feby 2nd. My goat is dead. This is a hard thrust to me when he was the result of several weeks’ searching and a high payment. This however only makes me more obstinate. Tomorrow I will take a horse and commence a fresh search. He died the day after he came—yesterday—before I had been able to do anything for at first I was unprepared and the next day he was poorly and could not stand. Sim and others to whom I mentioned you desired to be remembered. Do not urge any one to write to me. I won’t beg letters. Remember me most kindly to Brown. Excuse my not having written in showing how often one is too bothered to have any very acceptable tone of mind to communicate to a friend who already has enough to think of—H

LETTER 11

Constantinople
December 22nd 1855

My dear Seddon

As I am now on my way home with arrangements for going as uninterruptedly as the mail when I have spent a few days in sight seeing in this city, it may appear that writing at this moment will answer no practical end; but the kind tone of your last letter dated August 26th, which I received in Beyrout has made me somewhat repentant that I complete a watercolour of his when he left Syria so suddenly in 1854, I did not take part in this work”. Hunt’s writing about having to finish some “rock work” helps one tentatively to identify the work under present consideration as either Seddon’s The Well of Enrogel (1854), a watercolour in the Harris Museum and Art Gallery, Preston, or The Mountains of Moab (1854), a watercolour in the Ashmolean Museum. Both works are illustrated in Allen Staley, The Pre-Raphaelite Landscape, Plates 52a and b. Writing of this last picture, Professor Staley comments: “Stylistically, the watercolour is closer to Holman Hunt’s Eastern landscapes than to Seddon’s other works, and, although Seddon described it in colouristic terms early in his stay in Jerusalem and promised that it would be the best he had done, Hunt’s hand may, in fact, be present” (The Pre-Raphaelite Landscape, p. 102).
wrote you in so grieved a spirit on the subject of my father's loan of my letters to you, convincing me that I should have trusted your good nature with so much of my family foibles as might have come to your knowledge by such means, and this I must express to you in as intelligible a manner as you have patiently received my hastily written remonstrances from Jerusalem. Your first note to which you refer did not fall into my hands. Perhaps it was sent back to Paris or London in the long interval which elapsed from its arrival at Beyrut to my application for it, but the later one contained enough to give me knowledge of your new career as a Benedict with all the trials conditional to your struggles artistic. I think I have already expressed my congratulations to you at having obtained the prize for which you have so long fought yet I must repeat a sincere expression of my sympathetic rejoicings with you, and a hope that you will ever feel cause to bless God for the happy dignity you have assumed.

Before I left Jerusalem for two or three months I was engaged every spare hour in a most serious question with the Bishop and Dr. Sandreszki [sic] on the subject of the manner in which they were conducting the Church Mission, in which I was nearly alone with all my art work neck-deep to clear off, while they with Nicolayson [sic] &c &c &c had all their day to the work of retaliating (for it became a personal matter at last). I cannot go into the subject here, but I have all the correspondence in my box for England and I hope to let you go fully into the question before. I only mention it now to account for this latter time having been without a due amount of correspondence from me to my old friends in London, which may be accounted for still further by the fact that my continuous labours at last brought on a very severe fever just as I was leaving the unholy city, and that altho' this was overcome, and I was able to pursue my journey, it has left me in that state wherein the slightest inattention to oneself [altered from myself] is followed by

57 In an undated fragment Seddon wrote to his family from Jerusalem. He tells them: "I also want to tell you not to get intimate with Hunt's family. He writes almost every post. I should not write except when obliged & my father better not call again; Hunt does not wish it for good reasons which I will tell you when I return" (Rylands MS.). Hunt, who was always quite reticent about personal matters, does not indicate elsewhere the cause of problems he was apparently having with his family.

58 Missing.

59 Charles Sandrezki, Secretary to the Church Missionary Society, was responsible for superintending that Society's Mission to the native Christians.

60 Hunt has apparently omitted several words, so it is not clear if he meant to tell Seddon that he intended to go into the question of missionary practices at some earlier date or if he wishes to go into the matter more fully before he publishes the materials, as he later did in his pamphlet on Bishop Gobat.
violent attacks on whichever quarter one has left unguarded; and when therefore it is often necessary to abstain from the pleasant exercise of corresponding to home friends for the drearier duty of covering oneself in blankets and sleeping on sovereign remedies against the insidious attacks of Death's, or Disease's generals. Don't be alarmed at this. I speak merely in a broad sense wherein our great enemy may be regarded as a constant hanger-on to all of us, of which one has too frequent reminiscences at times, and of which I have to give you one instance in the case of your bright-eyed Siloam boy, Saleh. I learned this one day in meeting some girls with water pitchers from the village, when I took the opportunity of asking after your old errand taker. It was in July I think and he had died a few weeks before just as he was on the point of being married. I learned [the] sad particulars of the sorry event afterwards from Sim's old servant Ibraheem. Saleh's intended marriage with his betrothed vexed the mother-in-law of the girl who wanted him to be married to her daughter, and who not being able to attain her object is suspected to have poisoned him at the marriage feast to satisfy her hatred toward the bride.

I was much more grieved than I felt ready to express. This account of one of your servants leads me to a reference to Nicola Beyruti, the older one. Until within the last two months he was engaged by Dr Sanndreczki as footman when very suddenly he was enticed by the consular advertisement for British recruits, and joined as one of the land transport corps for the Crimea. I was less surprized afterwards when I heard that as the whole band were being drafted down to Jaffa each was seized with a violent fit of inconsolable sorrow at the irretrievable step taken, and walked to the tune of violent sobbings. By a curious chance when I got on board the French boat at Beyrout I found him among a crowd of his fellows and 105 Bashi Bazouks who were coming here. He made most affectionate enquiries after you which I answered to his expressions of infinite satisfaction from your letter of August 26th. Our acquaintanceship however was without further result than salams &c until in Smyrna harbour the Bashi Bazouks mutinied and caused a [altered from some] sanguinary struggle of some difficulty before they were overcome and given into the custody of a French frigate. When as the culprits had hidden themselves in all nooks and corners of the vessel amongst others who had not joined in the melee, and they were not all wounded, the selection of prisoners was necessarily made in [altered from of] an arbitrary manner, Nicola had to complain that one of his friends who had had no part in the rebellion was put in irons with those actually guilty; so that I had to exert myself for his liberation, which I effected to their great joy. The Captain of our vessel however in a natural prejudice against the whole lot of Syrians refused to have any of them in his ship longer, and so poor Nicola was put ashore to be draughted into a
Turkish ship of the line for this place. As I was returning on board from a walk round the town I met him and had to listen to his fears that he would suffer from the bad conduct of the others, but after a visit to the British Consul I was able to allay his fears on this subject, and so left him comparatively easy.

I arrived here about a fortnight ago and after some little delay in attending to necessary affairs, calling upon people I set off for the Crimea. I had a letter to Admiral Sir E. Lyons, which I merely regarded as a formal ticket so that being pressed to leave Kamisch I should not have presented it had I not wished to see the man and the flag ship. It was fortunate I went for he sent a midy in his gig with me for my traps and made me his guest, giving me his private cabin for five days and the loan of his horses and the company of his nephew as a guide to me in Sebastapol. I don’t think I could have met with so good a chance anyhow of getting grounded in a knowledge of the state of affairs in our war in the East. Afterwards I went to Balaklava for a few days, leaving it last Tuesday in a small steamer, which after knocking about fearfully for four days in the worst storms of the year landed me in this city on Saturday morning. I am here quietly stationed in lodgings with the correspondent of the DN\textsuperscript{62} not willing to repeat my call on Lord Napier until after Christmas day lest he should feel constrained to ask me to dinner. Lady N told me that Lockwood\textsuperscript{64} was returning to Cairo from England with a wife, a very beautiful, refined, and high-born lady, an old friend of hers. Really it does seem that all the world is marrying. I have been much delighted to find several letters here from old friends. I got one from Brown in Beyrout which much gratified my old remembrances of the good fellow. I found one in this place from Millais, another from Collins, and a third from Stephens of late date which by the

\textsuperscript{61} Edmund, 1st Baron Lyons (1790-1858), who was made a peer in 1856, commanded the British naval forces in the Crimea.

\textsuperscript{62} Daily News.

\textsuperscript{63} Although \textit{Pre-Raphaelitism and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood}, ii. 76, mentions that Sir Robert Napier helped create a reputation of British military invincibility throughout the Muslim world when he conquered Acre, Hunt seems to have confused Sir Robert Napier (1810-90), a great military leader in India and the Far East, with Sir Charles Napier (1786-1860), an experienced naval commander with many successes in the Napoleonic wars and in the Middle East. He stormed Sidon, attacked Acre, and blockaded Alexandria in the campaign against Mehemet Ali—all actions which would have won Hunt’s respect. After leaving the Navy, he sat in Parliament and worked for reform of the naval administration.

\textsuperscript{64} Frederick Lockwood, the attaché to the British Consul-General in Cairo, the Hon. Frederick Bruce. Hunt describes them “as both constant in their good offices in helping me” (\textit{Pre-Raphaelitism and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood}, i. 39).
bye informs one that merry Halliday had started for the Crimea, by which I judge that he should be here now, a notion communicating most agitating hopes on my part which however there is but little chance of being realized by running against the man and having him as a companion home. Lear's letter of May I found also. He is now I find in Corfu. How I wish I could go and see him! but this would delay my return and the necessary quiet I hope thus to obtain. How brutally and self-sufficiently the Royal Academy behaved. I am not surprized and I know it will never be better. I have no confidence in the pluck of others, or I would soon become an active rebel. I want to talk to Brown of this.

Good bye
Yours ever truly
W Holman Hunt

65 Michael Frederick Halliday (1822-69), an amateur painter with a position at the House of Lords who was a friend of the Pre-Raphaelite circle, exhibited at the Royal Academy (1853-56), and shared a studio with Hunt after their return to England. As Hunt relates in his memoirs, "I had met my friend Mike Halliday at Pera coming back from the Crimea, and we travelled together to Paris" (ii. 83).

66 Hunt is apparently writing about his own rejection for an associate membership in the Royal Academy. He tells the story in Pre-Raphaelitism and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, ii. 137-41.

67 Throughout his career Hunt believed he had been badly treated by the Royal Academy. On 2 June 1874, for example, he wrote to his old friend the Rugby drawing-master and minor sculptor John Lucas Tupper: "I trace things as rancour and honest prejudice alike to the Academy, whose members go all about the country to collectors of pictures ridiculing those of mine they find so much and in relays of various tones so persistently that there are but few who have the courage to hold to their opinions and keep the pictures. These pictures are therefore often at Christie's until they sell for very reduced prices and except for exhibition subjects, like that of the 'Shadow of Death', I can't get any sum that will pay rent and taxes. I had the other day to buy back one of my old pictures, 'The Festival of St. Swithin', at £380" (Huntington MS.).

68 Hunt similarly wrote to Edward Lear on 4 December 1856: "I hesitate cowardly before rushing into the professional world yet I must. What to do about the Academy I cannot decide. I feel rebellious but can depend on nobody and one patriot is nothing but a mad suicide" (Rylands Eng. MS. 1214).