

Fictional Variation in the Letters of Oscar Wilde

How are these three fictional witnesses related? Collate the witnesses, infer relationships, and draw up a stemma.

Text based on *The Letters of Oscar Wilde*, ed. Rupert Hart-Davis (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1962, p. 20).

K

My dear Boy, I confess not to be a worshiper at the Temple of Reason. I think man's reason the most misleading and thwarting guide that the son looks upon, except perhaps the reason of woman. Faith is, I think, a bright lantern for the feet, though of course an exotic plant in man's mind, and requiring constant culmination. My mother would probably agree with you. Except for the *people*, for whom she thinks dogs necessary, she rejects all forms of superstition and dogma, particularly any notion of priests and sacraments standing between her and God. She has a very strong faith in that aspect of God *we* might call the Holy Ghost—the divine intelligence of which we on earth partake. Here she is very strong, though of course at times troubled by the discord and jarring of the world, when she takes a dip into pessimism.

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