

RAIDERS 125 – CROCKETT TIMELINE FOR JULY 1894.

Crockett was still in Galloway at the beginning of July 1894 and writing to Unwin as follows:

The Lochinvar Hotel

Dalry

Galloway

July 3rd 1894.

Dear Unwin,

The drawings (reproduction) are exceedingly satisfactory and the book should be a very beautiful one. I shall set to work immediately.

I shall write a list with a note or two on the drawings severally.

I am wearying to see Mad Sir U. We stay here till Saturday. If you have a copy ready you might send one here. You had better send five dozen to Penicuik (Note for the [] of your young men) who say - in 'un 'e is always a wantin' summat!!

You might have a copy but in vellum for old Masson (Dedicatee)

Ever yours

SRC

(DRAWING) Beautiful country, Ken windings thus, white farmhouses, black bulls that object to fishers.

He presumably travelled back on Saturday 7th and was writing from Penicuik on Sunday July 8th...

Bank House

July 8th 1894

My dear Unwin

I had thought of all you say about 'Bog Myrtle and Peat' and there is truth in it. But I have been refurnishing and need money. So I have just one way of getting it, selling my wares, just the same as if I were a publisher.

Of course Bog Myrtle and Peat is mostly reprints, but so is nearly everything that a novelist writes nowadays. The 'Serial rights' system makes it so.

And they were no more reprints than 'The Stickit' was.

But I shall keep them all up to my standard and I don't think it will much matter. I shall not publish anything I need be ashamed of.

Yours in haste

SRC

PS Just home from Galloway

PS Duncan McKellar of Glasgow [drums?] me for a fiver for two pictures which I arranged with him to do for the Stickit. What has come of them? I thought it necessary to have Glasgow represented and I shall have to pay for them in any case. So look them up and put in one instead of the telegraph post drawing and I shall pay for the reproduction of the other if you like.

Unwin was not keen on 'Bog Myrtle' which in the end was published by Bliss, Sands and Co in 1895.

Note that the issue of pictures (and paying for them) for the illustrated 'Stickit Minister' is still ongoing.

After the trouble with 'The Raiders' pre-publication review from March, Unwin obviously tells Crockett not to let anyone see Uchtred until publication date (due later in July)

Bank House

11th July 1894

Dear Unwin,

I shall take care that Mad Sir Uchtred does not pass out of my hands. McKellar's pictures were not sent to me so far as I can find, but I do find a note in one of your letters saying that you had received at least one of them, and that it would go to the reproducers. They are figure subjects and I have to pay for them in any case so we had better use them. Kindly look them up. they must have got shoved to the background somewhere.

With kind regards

Faithfully yours

SRC

I have sent back proof of Dudgeon's Glossary revised.

But Crockett's main project was still the 'Covenanting Buik' which would become 'Men of the Moss Hags' and on July 12th he wrote to Dan Mowatt as follows:

Bank House

12th July 1894

My Dear Mr Mowatt,

Your letter is so exceeding kind that I cannot make myself so pressed but what I must reply with a word. Dictated letters never say exactly what one would say with a quill.

Some day I think you must teach me to play golf. I stay at St A. with Lang pretty often and he abuses me for a beat hen man and a publican for not playing. I tell him I don't believe he can play much – only enough to impose on a novice. Some day I shall see a real player to teach me and then I shall give him a hole! I think (providentially) you must be the man. Now I am hard on the track of the Covenant and I have been so seedy these last few weeks that I have hardly done a stroke. Next week I must settle down in earnest.

The 'buiks' have not come yet, but will be much appreciated when they do. Thanks for the weekly Cit. Cd you send me a paper? My dear Logroller, it is a most excellent thing to logroll – so long as it is my log. It is only when you take to rolling other fellows' logs that we high-minded literary gents are offended, and write admirable articles in the 19th Cj. Denouncing the civil custom. It shocks us.

Weyman is a first-class story teller. He lacks a distinctive style – personality to quite 'get home.' He never drew a tear, and but few laughs; but of a trust he can stir the pulse

Mad Sir Uchtred is ready (waiting on America as usual)

The Lilac Sunbonnet on September 15th

The Play Actress on November 30th

Bog Myrtle and Peat Galloway Tales Mar 30th 1895

The Unnamed Covenant buik on October 15th 1895 but will start in words on Jan 1st. How's that for hard work?

What a letter! Guid preserve us, an' the morn the Sabbath! Think shame o' yerself!

Yours faithfully

SRC

Note that at this point he had not taken up golf. Just two years later he (once) beat Old Tom Morris and boasted about it in a humorous letter to Mowatt. It is also likely that a stray golf ball hitting his jaw may have contributed to the cancer he had to deal with in 1898/99. He had an operation on his jaw in March 1899 to remove a tumour.

Also interesting is his laying out of the schedule of his forthcoming publications. That we have relatively few letters from him in July may well be a result of the amount of work he was undertaking. Pressed for time, he had to resort to a postcard in his correspondence with Unwin:

Postcard

July 14th 1894

Dear U

Sorry to worry you. Have found McKellar's drawings. I have entered them as Murdochs on the index but will correct in proof. Have been very seedy this week.

Yrs

SRC

There was obviously some contractual back and forth (possibly a spin off from Bog Myrtle talks) and Crockett felt he had to remind Unwin of the role of his agent in his affairs as follows:

Bank House

July 18th

My dear Unwin

I am drawing together all my literary affairs under Mr AP Watt's care and think it best that the Stickit in all its forms should be included.

Kindly therefore treat with him in future, as to rendering accounts and paying monies in regard to it.

I want to give all my time to writing and to commit all my business affairs of every sort to my agent.

Faithfully yours

SRC

We know that Unwin wasn't happy about Crockett having Watt as an agent - and agents in general were getting a very bad press around this time as parasites (mostly from publishers, who had, it must be acknowledged, something of a vested interest.) Here we can see Crockett in the midst of the big conflict regarding the commercialisation of publishing. Crockett's relationship with Unwin was under strain and would break down over the next couple of years, but for now they were tied together. The following week Crockett writes:

Bank House

21 July

My dear Unwin,

The first of the two drawings enclosed might go at page 199 as an illustration of 'An Edinburgh Pend' and the second upon any vacant page with the legend 'In the Canongate'. With regard to the Lilac, I did not know that I was keeping the proof back in any way. We arranged that I was to wait until a large portion of it came in before correction, and then going straight through with it. You will find this if you refer back to our correspondence, but I

really don't believe that you read half of what I write to you. I have told you at least half a dozen times that the reason I am correcting carefully from the American edition for you, is that Appletons only gave me a scroll proof to correct, although I asked them for a revise. They must therefor dree their weird. However, it is a funny thing if you object to getting as perfect a book as possible.

With kind regards

Faithfully yours

SRC

I am pushing on with the Lilac corrections.

And at the end of the month a cursory note...

28th July

This completes all the Lilac proofs the printers have sent me.