

TIMELINE NOVEMBER 1894

This month there are only a few letters in the archive, but there were lots of reviews and articles about The Lilac Sunbonnet (see November Articles) and the first instance of a key talk on Scottish National Humour (see SNH) which was one of several talks Crockett gave. The SNH talk is significant because we can probably date the genesis of the 'Kailyard' article by Millar/Henley to this. In April 1895 that article came out, at the same time as a fuller fleshed out Scottish National Humour article was published in the Contemporary Review. The rest, as they say, is history!

Bank House

Nov 3 1894

Dear Umwin

With readiness and pleasure if you make it of Magazine format. It would not become me to say much, but I can easily say something readable. Tell me why you want copy - I mean really to go to the press with. Of course I should not take directly or indirectly any pay for it but just give you it as a friend if you will accept it

Ever Yours

SRC

Bank House

Nov 17th

Dear Umwin,

I shall do two pp in a few days. I am going down to stay with Ruskin for a while - going off on Wednesday next. But I'll send from there. If anything special address of J Ruskin, Brantwood, Coulston Lake RSO

I wish you would draw the attention of the Publisher's Circular privately to the note in their Edinburgh Correspondent's article, which mentions Wallace's absurd charge of plagiarism without my reply. If they mention one they should do the other. The Literary World makes the amends this week. If I were you I should send a cutting from the Academy. I have not one of my letter of last Saturday and the enclosed cutting from their cols of this week and ask that as they mention one they should the other.

Wallace wrote a book which never, I suspect, sold 700 copies called 'Scotland Yesterday' at the time of the publication of the Stickit and he has never forgiven its success

Ever yours

After his talks in Edinburgh, that November Crockett was at Ruskin's at Brantwood, from where he wrote as follows:

BRANTWOOD LETTERS

C/o John Ruskin

Brantwood, Coniston Lake RSO

23 Nov 1894

Dear Unwin,

Your letter about the signed titles came to me today. They were sent off from Penicuik on Wednesday and ought to have been in Clark's hand the same night.

I am glad you think the Lilac does not need advertising. But I tell you what I do want you to do - 'want it bad.'

Stodder's people are booming 'The Bonnie Briar Bush' like steam - advertising 12th thousand, which means they are printing they have finished or nearly the second four thousand. I see all over Scotland and the North of England 'The New Scottish writer Ian Maclaren' poster and that '12th thousand' of a first book made manifest.

Now that arouses a desire that my dear able bodied publisher TFU should so soon as the second Lilac seems on the wane and the end of the 10th thousand fairly propinate, proceed the printing of a third of ten or twelve thousand and advertise 20th or 30th thousand as may seem good to him and his manifold wisdom. Say not, depart into Hades and mind thine own business - for the business of TFU is also (and very abundantly) the business of SRC.

Think well on this thing and in thy wisdom direct. I enclose a note of Lang's. He thinks the Academy people are giving us a magnificent ad. So thinks also Dr Nicoll, who has I believe written to remind the enemy that I expressly owned my indebtedness to the Book of Legends in the Bookman the same month in which 'The Raiders' was published. He says however that the silly columns will deceive nobody. It has been done to every author - to Scott, Charles Reade, Dickens (Tale of Two Cities) to Hardy, and Haggard, and Barrie and has not mattered a pin (save as an ad) to any of them. No more will it matter to me.

For the published letters this month see Articles document.

Brantwood

Coniston Lake

Nov 26th

Dear Unwin,

Good chap! Found your books when I came in from long tramp. I gave Mr Ruskin your message and Helen, which he is going to read.

O I don't claim any right in the binding but I think you might have afforded another shade of green at least.

I want a set of your Adventure series - do them in half morocco and charge me for them what is right. I am going to see if I can find anything in them for my purposes.

It is all right about The Lilac, and I am glad it is going. Thank you for not swearing at me. But I am sure you will have out the third edition when you can

Regards

Ever truly yours

SRC

When done please sent Advert to Penicuik.

And finally an UNDATED LETTER FROM BRANTWOOD

Dear Unwin,

Greeting to you. Glad the paper will do. I tried to write de Crocketto but it would not work. So I sent you the first chapter out of a future book rewritten for you. It is also a subtle reproof (which no one will see) to Jerome's first Bookers.

Look here, Unwin, I see you advertise Mrs Craigie's and some [] Louis [] as uniform with 'The Raiders' Now that is all right; but seein' as how I selected that ribbed cloth and I first used it on novels and got the red title printed from my old Scots magazine, you are in duty bound to stand me a copy of each of book so done. It is the least you can do, and when you are about it you might send Hugh Haleburton's Essays all to Brantwood where I (and Mrs Severn) want some light reading.

Also a cloth copy of Reef and Palem for my library. I bought one on my way here and nearly tossed it out of the window when I came to the vengeance of some devil called stacy - stingray flogging. For the love of good

literature tell Becke not to do these horrors any more. They damn a book as good story-telling. The effect of flogging is as inexcusable (and as easy to get) as killing a child by torture. The man did it no doubt, but it should not be written.

But for the rest, I like Becke. He tastes to me like Vattelline wine - rich of the sold heady rough; a vintage to be improved by keeping. I like all he writes and want more, it is my kind of storytelling.

But he must learn that flogging torture, death of children etc so on are deadly things in a book of art. Tis a wellwishing and admiring brother tale teller who writes out of sincere desire that the brave heart which wrote these things may take note of what he deeply feels.

Now send the books and any other future you think good enough. That's a jewel.

Ever

SRC