

Raiders 125 Timeline – APRIL 1894.



At the beginning of April 1894 Crockett was still in London. He had tea with the Gosses on Sunday April 1st at their home 29 Delmere Terrace (across from Paddington Canal) with Mr and Mrs Pennell, Mr and Mrs Rider Haggard, Mr and Mrs Arthur Waugh and Mr Robert Ross.

On Monday April 2nd, before he left London he wrote to Gosse twice - once before and once after receiving Gosse's letter to him:

11 Craven Street W6

April 2nd 1894

Dear Mr Gosse,

Here is the Raiders, I hope you will go raiding and like it.

I have many things to thank you for in the years that are past, so much so that if I were to begin this quire would not be able to contain the word I should write. Specially do I remember the two splendid months in a tent with no modern literature but your two volumes of essays.

I had the latest with me when I went and saw an advertisement of Josef in a library somewhere, so I arranged with a man going to market to wire Thin of Edinburgh to send a copy to Newton Stewart by train which this man got on his return and by forced marches brought it to me.

A true tale.

Do not forget your [] It was a great pleasure to see you yesterday

Yours cordially

SRC

(Not like your TomCat)

He wrote the second letter using his home address, though he had not yet left Craven Street.

April 2nd

My dear Mr Gosse,

Your letter was charming – one of the most delightful I have ever received, and one which will delight my wife when I go home.

My home address as above is quite sufficient. I am out of the Manse and not yet in Bank House, where I hope one day to see you when you are in the North and can look out from Edinburgh (1/2 hour by rail) but Penicuik will find me at any time.

Will you let me send you ‘The Stickit’ and my little volume of poems ‘The Sins of my Youth’ it ought to be called – yet necessary as a rung of growth so you will understand. For reasons connected with the law of supply and demand it is somewhat scarce and I am not sure that I should commit it to the mercies of any man of letters except yourself. You will I know calmly put it on your shelves, the highest in the corner of the (?) room, and over I the literary spider will spin his reticularies (if that is not a word it ought to be) So like pet [] I am more than usual calm.

It is kind of you to give me such a welcome to your house. It made me very happy to be with you all. I wish I had time to tell your big girl about my little one and our wonderful journeyings. I shall certainly come again on my own account and if I am in the way you must just turn me out.

*I shall be charmed to have *Narcisse*. It is the only published volume of yours so far as I know which I do not possess.*

*You speak so kindly about the Raiders that unless you have the verses and the Stickit you would not know how I got to be by nature both a Cameronian and a Raider. That gives me a sympathy with **Silver Sand**, a character which has been called a **monstrosity**; but with which I have the greatest possible sympathy.*

With all regard

Ever truly yours

SRC

He was back, briefly, in Penicuik from around the 3rd or 4th. We can assume he preached there on Sunday 8th and on Monday 9th he went to St Andrews, spending the week with Andrew Lang. In the week at home, Episode 3 of Mad Sir Uchtred of the Hills was published in the St James' Gazette on Monday 4th April, and on Saturday 7th The Athaeneum published a review of The Raiders.

He wrote again to Gosse on a date that may be April 6th, it's unclear. When he says he has been 'out of town for two days' he may mean that he left London two days ago (on 4th). The Lilac Sunbonnet was still in serial, but this letter shows that it was essentially finished as Gosse must have been given the full manuscript.

Penicuik (Crossed out Craven St)

Ap 6

My dear Mr Gosse,

I am immensely glad you liked the Lilac. It is my idyll I put what I know of love into it, and no one has read it in England save yourself. I have been out of town for two days and only got your letter now. Pardon delay in replying.

Ap 9 (Penicuik)

Somehow this note slipped aside and I have just come on it now. To see you rejoiced me much. I took 'Narcisse' into the country with me and I was quite later out of myself altogether. It has an old garden accent – like Southern wood on a sunny slope. It may be made on your last or anothers, at any rate it is a good last.

We have not yet got settled and indeed I am just going over to bide a few days with Lang at St Andrews – wish me good weather.

Let me say that no episode of my London sojourn gave me more complete pleasure than seeing you and yours. I hear that you saw 'mine' before you saw me. My wife sat beside you at a Manchester Literary Club Picnic at Sefton or some such place when she was Miss Milner in old days which at least she has not forgotten.

Also, I have not forgotten the kind eyes of your wife and her goodness to

Yours always

SRC

Athaeneum Review April 7th 1894.

The Raiders: being some Passages in the Life of John Faa, Lord and Earl of Little Egypt. By S.R.Crockett (Fisher Unwin.)

'Lorna Doone' is a pleasant memory and 'The Raiders' recalls 'Lorna Doone.' A Galloway story of the second decade of the last century, it is told in the first person of Patrick Heron, the young laird of Isle Rathan, and records how he saved from the hill-gipsies his love, that was to be his bride, May Mischief. There is less about gipsies in it than the sub-title suggests, and fortunately for Mr Crockett's knowledge of things Egypt appears to be as slender as was Scott's. Gipsies marry over the tongs here, as in another recent Scottish novel; they never did so in reality. Nor, converted or unconverted, would John Faa ever have counselled ganjoes (non-gipsies) to 'fire at the gipsies,' and let the smugglers be. There is abundance, however, (indeed super abundance), of incident, for there are two distinct sieges and two distinct rescues, in both cases one too many. The local colour is true, and the dialect excellent; the hero is likeable, and the heroine lovable; and two at least of the subsidiary characters, Sammlle and Eppie Tamson, are better than anything in the 'Stickit Minister.' Mr Crockett has made a distinct advance on those earlier sketches, as one who from taking kodak snap-shots should devote himself seriously to portraiture. Only why then did he not take more pains? Then he might have avoided a whole host of petty but irritating anachronisms. A Gretna Green marriage (by a Scotch girl too!) before 1753 is a patent absurdity; and we doubt whether in Galloway in George I's reign staring eyes would be likened to 'tea-dishes,' or falseness to 'a deal door painted mahogany.' We are almost as dubious as to eau-de-Cologne, hair-powder, 'dry socks,' a bell-tent, a knowledge of the bread-fruit, or the widespread use of potatoes. Still, slips such as these are trivial compared with the heinous offence of interlarding what professes to be a plain eighteenth century narrative with modern words, modern phrases, modern word-painting - 'donkey,' 'crescendo,' 'pathos,' 'spontaneity,' 'sense of humour,' 'a happy inspiration,' 'to volunteer information,' 'screamed stridently,' 'soft-palmed plaudits,' the 'morning star turning white in a violet sky,' 'a weird wild world,' a 'wild whirl of drifting whiteness,' 'a kind of Circe's Inferno,' etc. Mr Crockett would do well to make a clean sweep of these in his next edition, and at the same time he might delete a ery ancient 'Dean Ramsay' on p274.

This anonymous review shows a spirit that somewhat misses the point of the romance, but it's interesting none the less to see what the criticisms are. In contrast, and in response to this review the April edition of The Bookman gave this alternative review:

The Bookman: The Raiders. April 1894.

In his new story Mr Crockett is himself a raider; far into the heart of the country of romance he penetrates, daring much, and proving his right and his might on its highways. There are as many pitfalls and lurking dangers for the literary adventurer into this land as can possibly beset the most reckless of his heroes. His invention had need be as sharp as his gallant's sword; his temper gay, like his lady's eyes; his step must be confident and his course swift. Nothing else matters, unless he be weak enough to fear the prowling critic with the ill-digested learning who will pull him by the sleeve to whisper that his hero's oaths are not of the epoch of his armour or his shoe buckles. For if dulness, unreality, and false sentiment are dangers only too possible, and carrying heavy punishment, his reward, if he escape these, is great - great even in problem-mongering days. The enthusiasm roused by the cleverness and fidelity of some study of contemporary manners, the stirring of the nature by some subtle revelation of the heart of man, these may be strong emotions, but never so keen as the gratitude that repays a good romance. There are incomplete persons who cannot read adventure, just as some are born who cannot feel the scent of violets in a spring wind, and some whose hearts never beat to the rhythm of music. If those to whom romance is a dead thing were sensible of their affliction, it would be as cruel to speak of its joys to them as to glory in the lust of the eyes in the presence and hearing of a blind man. Well, to romance land Mr Crockett has ventured, and you know he is in the right temper for the venture in the very first sentence: 'It was upon Rathan Head that I first heard their bridle-reins jingling clear.' And he has brought back such a trophy, that we bid him rest well that he may the more speedily take the road again. For whatever be his place among his brother romancers, and it is yet too soon to say, he is a man with a good story to tell, and there is no more profitable kind of person dwelling under the sun.

To come to particulars. Doubtless Mr Crockett will often be reminded that had 'Kidnapped' never been written 'The Raiders' phrase and accent had been other than they are. Mr Stevenson invented the style for this generation at least. The imitation is not unhappy, though Mr Crockett has not taken time to pick his steps among the old speech so fastidiously as Mr Stevenson, to whom the lapses and failures here in tone and tune would have been impossible. But Patrick's shrewd reflections are certainly more forcible given in something like the words he would have used, while at every other page we are reminded of the wealth of fine local expressions this manner of narration greatly helps to preserve. If the style be suggested by 'Kidnapped,' Patrick may be said to be derived from David Balfour. Indeed he is David with but a slight difference - barely the difference, perhaps, that should have shown itself between a Galloway lad and one from the south-eastern counties - a trifle less wordly prudence, a trifle more tenderness. Silversand, whose emotional nature breaks out at times in contrast to Patrick's undemonstrative temperament, might be said even to have a distinct kinship with Alan, were we searching for likenesses. The truth is that, so far as David is concerned, he looked on now as a type of the Lowland lad, and Mr Crockett may hold the common and very tenable view that in romance the characters should always tend towards a traditional type, and that invention is best exercised on the incidents. He has certainly not gone to Mr Stevenson to borrow his heroine. May Mischief, in her sharp-tongued 'daffing,'

tomboy stage is partly traditional, but when she is won, her frank, affectionate nature takes its natural course, which includes none of the pruderies, the petty jealousies, and the tiffs, which a much-respected convention has assorted, pigeon-holed, and labelled 'feminine' for the convenience of writers of fiction. Silversand, the real hero of the story, I like so much that I criticise him unwillingly, yet the alien, exotic temperament of the gipsy is hardly enough suggested. He might rather be a Highlander. But it is not a novel of character, and it does not stand or fall by the fashioning of its personages.

It is a story of wild life just after the Great Killing, bitter memories of which still remain, and do not tend to nurse a respect for law. The sherrif's writ does not run speedily or with success in Galloway. Smuggling is an incident in the lives of the more orderly, while the more desperate of the Free-traders, the more lawless of every sort, can count on the aid of the gipsy clans for their darkest enterprises now that John Faa, their lord and earl, has separated his fortunes from theirs. At such a time and in such a land lived Patrick Heron, the young laird of Rathan, a barren island in the Solway. He was not aware that he loved May Mischief - his comfort had been to call her 'impudent besom' over and over again when her teasing was inordinately humiliating - but when she was carried off to be the bride of Hector Faa he learnt the facts of the case with certainty. It is the rescue journey into the heart of the wild country, the return raid of these gipsies, the mysterious comings and goings of Silversand, not the love incidents, that enthrall you, and make you read the story with a swift and eager interest.

Apart from the story which is his own, there another thing Mr Crockett can claim. There are traditions of character which a romancer may adhere to and so save his intention. But one thing he cannot borrow with impugny. There is, today at least, no tradition by which to describe the outside world. A story-teller may leave it alone, but if he call in the scent of the sea, the sound of the wind, the shape of the hill-side, or the colours of the sky to help him in his picture, then no help but a dead weight will these be unless they have spoken to his heart with separate friendliness. So called nature-description is not much insisted on in 'The Raiders' but the whole book is steeped in the open air. However thick may have been the walls of the room that shut the writer and his manuscript, while he wrote the wind over a moorland country was in his ears, and in his eyes the glory of morning on the Solway.

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Placing these two reviews side by side, the cliché that springs to mind is 'you pays your money and you takes your choice.' For us, it is interesting to see the 'battleground' that was being fought over.

While he was in St Andrews Crockett got news that he was invited to talk at the prestigious *Pen and Pencil Club* in Edinburgh on 1st May and he had to arrange accomodation.

FCM

April 14th

Dear Mrs Thin,

I kenna gin ye can gie me a shakedown on the 1st o' May, but gin ye can I wad be sair obligated till ye.

There's a wheen bodies that are ca'ad the Pen and Pencil Club and they want to gie me my denner an' that's something for a hungry body.

Can ye gie me my bed? An breakfast? An' a crack? Ye telled me to be sure on som [] on ye, ye ken

Aye your auld free'

SRC

My respects to the guideman an' my service to yousel.

On his return to Penicuik he had been sent *Vox Clamantium*, in which 'Incubus' had been published.

FCM

April 17th

(dictated) Messers A.D. Innes & Co.

Dear Sirs,

*I am much obliged to you for sending me copies of *Vox Clamantium*. The format of the book does great credit to your firm. It has been thoroughly well produced and makes a delightful volume. I hope it may prove exceedingly successful. Mr Morgan of Burns & Co told me that he was binding it for you and certainly he has done his part exceedingly well. I am putting a notice of it into some papers with which I am connected.*

Yours very truly

SRC.

Back at Penicuik there was correspondence to catch up on.

FCM

April 18

My dear Charles (???)

How splendid if you can come out. But you are a beast not to stay with us and to go hawking with Geddes. If you can't come on Saturday, come on Sunday. There is one morning train about nine sometime to Pomathorn whence you can walk down the hill in ten minutes. I'm glad you like Voc C. The Chronicle gave my little story 'Incubus and Co' a splendid notice. Did you see it?

I fear I could not come in on Monday. I have got a big job (worth about £500! Tell it not in Gath) on for Good Words next year and must stick in a earn my money and no swipes.

Take to litterarcher Charles. It is better than grubbing among the cinders yet.

Ever affectionately

SRC

I'm not sure who the Charles is - but the 'big job' is *The Men of the Moss Hags* which he was now writing. Doubtless it had been the topic of much conversation in his recent stay with Andrew Lang.

Another letter was written to a 'Mr Hocking' who still remains a mystery to me at present.

Bank House

April 19th 1894

Dear Mr Hocking

I am much indebted to you for your kind letter which touched me much – and my wife more.

*I am glad you like *The Raiders*. The dialect is a bother I know; but there are infinite and untrodden depths in its tenderness. I shall stick to it yet awhile, though here and there I make excursions as in this month's *Pall Mall Magazine*.*

*Once I wrote a very bad story for a little paper called the *Young Woman* with a kind of *Southport* atmosphere. But my wife laughed so much that I swore I should never do so any more.*

*I have friends and good ones too in *Southport* and like much to come there, though I have not got there for some years now*

Permit me to say that I was much moved long ago when a student, of your story 'Her Being' and my wife (daughter of George Milner of Country Pleasures and the Manchester Literary Club) likes your Manchester story 'Chips'

With Kind regard

Faithfully yours

SRC

The 'bad story' he refers to could well be Saucy Susy Singleton which you will recall was in Young Woman, March 1894. It is interesting to note that Crockett clearly had well developed critical faculties about his work.

Some time in April (after the Athaeneum and Review of Reviews articles) The April edition of The Bookman ran an article on Crockett in its feature 'New Writers.' Two authors were mentioned: The first Mr D.S. Meldrum - a Fife man, journalist and author of 'Margredel'. Crockett was given more extensive coverage. Bookman was under the editorship of William Robertson Nicoll, so this is a 'puff' article as much as anything. Once again it show the battleground - was Crockett writing realism, romance, was he historically and culturally accurate or inaccurate - all these were issues people took positions on. The adage all publicity is good publicity was being tested in the 1890s and Crockett's treatment at hands of literary friends and foes stands testament to the turbulence of the times when the battleground over literature was at its most fierce.

THE BOOKMAN 'NEW WRITERS'

Today Galloway lies calm and quiet - only distressed by the fall in agricultural values and the fact that she does not understand the interest in Mr Crockett's stories of the past. These have hitherto slept quietly in Nicholson and Murray, and been talked of in the herd's cot among the hills. It seems impossible that such things should attract attention at a time when Castle Douglas is pulling down her auction marts and building greater.

Mr Crockett was born at the little farmhouse of Duchrae (about a mile from the present New Galloway Station), somewhere about the end of the year 1859. The Duchrae folk are not yet forgotten in the parish, though the little, thin-soiled farm has been twenty five years in the hands of others. Patient, quiet, 'nurtured and admonished in the Lord,' these douce Cameronians fulfilled their daily toil, and on Sabbath rattled solemnly off to the Kirk at Castle Douglas nine miles away, in order that, in Mr Barrie's characteristic phrase, they might hear the Gospel properly preached.

From the farm the future author of 'The Raiders,' went to the little school at Lawrieston, at which tradition he says he was a somewhat irregular and truant-playing scholar. About 1868 Mr Crockett's family had to leave the farm and go to Castle-Douglas to reside in a little white house in a side street, which they occupy to this day.

There was an excellent school at Castle Douglas at that time called the Free Church Institution. The master was one to whom many have professed great obligations, the late John Cowper who died some years ago as Lecturer on English, at Moray House, Normal College, in Edinburgh. Mr Crockett was pupil teacher in this school for some years, teaching privately as well in the evening in the houses of the burghesses.

In 1876 Mr Crockett came to Edinburgh University, having obtained a good bursary. He was then hardly sixteen, and he remained there for some years. He then went abroad to travel first with one pupil and then with another, in time taking in the whole of Europe, with parts of North Africa and Asia.

During the whole of this time from 1885 onwards, Mr Crockett wrote verses on all subjects, which appeared duly in various Scottish papers. Most of these were collected into a volume of verse issued by Messrs. Kegan, Paul, Trench and Co, under the title of 'Dulce Cor,' the poems of Ford Bereton. This book bore date 1886, but was really ready a year before. A very scarce little pamphlet was also published by Mr David Douglas, of Edinburgh, but apparently no copies were ever sold.

Mr Crockett went to Penicuik in 1886 immediately after completing his theological course, and has remained minister of that little hillside village ever since. In 1887 he married the daughter of George Milner, author of 'Country Pleasures' and 'Studies on the Coast of Arran.'

The 'Stickit Minister' was begun casually in 1891, previous to which the author had written no prose, finished in 1892, and published in March 1893. It has since gone through six editions. 'The Raiders' was written from old Galloway traditions and most of the incidents are perfectly true. Captain Yawkins was the quite real name of a quite real character. His cramming of his wig into a great gun and shooting it on board his pursuer, which has been variously represented as

having been copied from Scott, from Stevenson, and from Charles Reade, actually took place at the mouth of the Dee. Much of the story is familiar to every student of Galloway traditions, and Mr Crockett's true Quellen may be found in a rough but precious volume of 'Galloway legends' published by William Nicholson at Kirkcudbright about 1840. Still more must have been derived from old dwellers in the wild uplands about the 'springs of Dee.' Few books are less original than 'The Raiders' in so far that almost every prominent incident has been taken from contemporary sources, and in the main is true. Joseph Train supplied Scott with much information about the Galloway gypsies, to be found in that admirable 'Additional Note of Galwegian Localities and personages which have been supposed to be alluded to in the word,' which seems, most strangely, wholly to have escaped the attention of the critics of 'The Raiders.' Scott, who was ignorant of Galloway, obtained all his material from the 'Castle Douglas exciseman,' and in this interesting chapter we have with fair accuracy the stories of Captain Yawkins and his lugger The Black Prince, the fight with the two cutters, the incident of the wig, the lingtonmen, the smugglers, the great caird, Willie Marshall, the Faas of Yetholm, and the king of the gypsies. But much more may also be found in the scarce 'Life of Train' and in his invaluable and delightful 'History of the Isle of Man,' in reading which it is very instructive to compare the actual status and history of the Galloway smugglers and gypsies with the treatment of them in Mr Crockett's fiction.

At the end of the month there are a few letters which offer insight into various aspects of Crockett's personal and literary life. He notes to Dickson (a friend who sourced books for him) that he is moving house, and that a career change is coming. He gives detail about the swift sales of The Raiders and his time in St Andrews with Lang - referencing The Men of the Moss Hags again. Covenanting is clearly on his mind.

FCM

26th April 1894

My dear Dickson,

It was a pleasure to see your scrawling but not abject cacography on an envelope once again. You must look us up sometime ere long. After May 20th we are at Bank House. I am leaving the Manse; I fear me in time the Kirk also, but that we shall see.

The Lang was grateful and I am glad to respossess it. I sent a circular note to all my friends when I wrote to you, and got back indignant letters from them (and from WRN a specially elusive one) denying the fact. So I said within me 'Kismet! Some evil beast has devoured it. Jeahannan? Awaits him. It is well!'

Now you will probably get off!

Thank you for your kind words about The Raiders. It certainly has had a success far beyond my hopes. We have sold in all the editions here and overseas about 24,000 copies in five weeks.

Curiously I am writing a long Covenanting story for Good Words for next year. I had a delightful week with Lang at St Andrews ten day ago. He is a splendid host and we were lively – some.

You do Miss Lind injustice. She is a remarkably nice girl. I have the honour of her acquaintance I am sure the Covenanting forefathers would have been pleased with her manners. I am sure Mr S Pepys would.

Ever yours

SRC

Bank House

27th April 1894.

Dear Friends among the hills. I hope to look up your way before very long. We are just flitting from the Manse, not yet from the Kirk, and going into a larger house. Certainly and surely Mrs Crockett and I are coming up. It is the dream of her life to see Loch Enoch – as it is now the dream of many folks lives. I fear you will be more pestered even than now but I am glad to think that you have kept the warmest part of your heart for the man who wrote 'The Raiders' and whom your good hearted husband took to see Loch Enoch. All the rest I had seen before on the Kells range and Loch Dee side; but not Enoch and the Wolf's Slack. I knew Slack was right, but Slock was the better word for writing.

I am glad you liked The Raiders. I thought you would. I have just finished a short book called 'Mad Sir Uchtred of the Hills' I have used the Clints of Clashdan – which I have called Clashdaan, and the Dungeon as a background. The names are so grand. I have to come down again to get stuff for a great book (in slips) about the Galloway Covenanters. So John must be picking up all the tales he can for me about them. You would see how I used the 'Breaking loose of Loch Valley' and other things. I never forget anything. This Covenanting story is bought by Good Words to be their leading story next year, running through the whole year.

So I must come to you, if you can stick me in somewhere – a shakedown will do, and if I am in the way you must tell me just to march. I think of making Glenhead a leading place in the story – a headquarters of the hill folk. So it will be famous some day, no doubt.

I must see the Dhu Loch, Loch Macaterick, and get over into Shalloch on Minnoch. Perhaps John can get a day off and go with us. Now you will just tell me whenever I write if it is not convenient.

With regard and affection from my wife and myself.

Your friend

SRC

[I have just been staying a week with Andrew Lang. I promised to bring him up for a night to Glenhead. James Barrie also wants to come with some time. May I bring them at some time? They want to see Enoch and the Dungeon.]

It's interesting to note that both Andrew Lang and J.M.Barrie were keen to visit 'Crockett Country' - they were not along. *The Raiders* kicked off a tourism boom in Galloway the likes of which has not been seen since. It's a classic case of throwing the baby out with the bathwater. Denying Crockett his rightful place in Scots literary and cultural history denies Galloway of one of her best cultural tourism assets.

As the month ended with a letter to his new friend Marriott-Watson in which he notes the 'death' of the National Observer (Henley's Editorship was over but the magazine continued on till????? We see Crockett here not at daggers drawn with the Henley faction, though he's clearly well aware of the 'Tory' enmity - W.T.Stead in Review of Reviews. Stead was (insert info)

Bank House

April 30th

Dear Marriott,

Here I am home again, and just embarking on the perils by now means 'sweet perils' of flitting. I wish mine was indeed like Lucy's 'her wee kist an' her a' init' must have been quite ideal baggage.

How are you since I bade you goodbye at the door of excellent Jersey Lodge. I have written to parties 'various' since but have heard no word from any living soul – I presume you are all living and also Peter the most adorable Peter. I wish he would come and live in my old ivy tree.

I have finished 'Mad Sir Uchtred of the Hills' some chapters of which appeared in the St James since I came home. I think it is about the strongest I have done, but a man never knows. It is not clap trap anyway, and I did once run must on the mountainside even thus, though my skin did not crack and scale and other disagreeable things. I have not come across any Marriottian tales anywhere since the N.O. died by hands unnatural. But on the other hand I have 'read considerable' as M Waitinies? Says in 'Diogenes' which is the finest [greek] reading in the world.

Now, my man, you must come and see us when we get settled, which I fear will not be till July. There is a fearful lot to do at this new house – more than I had any conception of.

You will be glad to hear, for you take an interest and I have not told anyone else, that I have sold the serial rights of my next book on which I am working to Good Words here and McClure's Syndicate in America for the pleasant sum of seven hundred.

It is quite funny the number of letters I get telling me that I am an immensely over-rated writer, that I am quite unreadable and other home truths – all true and pointed no doubt. You must tell the Lady of the Garden to believe all these things – cause why Mr W T Stead says so this months Review of Reviews. I begin to fancy myself again when I share Mr Stead's abuse.

I don't want to bring you to an early grave, but I enclose you a leaf of a paper which came from Canada this morning. If you survive you are a 'tough' that's all I can say.

Ever your friend

SRC

I have not been able to find Stead's damning words on Crockett. He was by reputation somewhat mercurial and prejudiced but he was also an influential editor, formerly of The Pall Mall Gazette. His main preoccupations in the 1890s appear to have been Imperialism, 'social purity' and Spiritualism. That *The Raiders* made as many enemies among the London literary elite as it did friends among the reading public, is hardly surprising - but an often overlooked area of research. For far too long one 'view' has been perpetuated but we are now in a position to question that view, using primary source material and increased awareness and knowledge of the contemporary context in which Crockett's star rose. The comment on N.O 'dying by unnatural hands' is interesting. The National Observer still continued after Henley left (March 1894) but the periodical was so closely associated with him that Crockett's observation may be about Henley. It was less than a month after Henley had written the damning review of *The Raiders*, and suggests that there is much more to the 'story' of the relations between Henley, his 'Young Men' and Crockett than has ever been revealed. Marriott-Watson and J.M.Barrie were both relatively close to Henley and yet Crockett was definitely not accepted into this fold. Henley was often unkind to his friends (note RLS for one) and much worse to his foes. I don't think Crockett did anything to deserve Henley's ire other than be successful - in the wrong place at the wrong time. However, Henley was not the most stable of characters and so perhaps we should take his criticisms with a pinch of salt. It's a shame this has not been done over the past century.