

# RLS Site Newsletter

Recent additions to the RLS site

Year 19

No. i

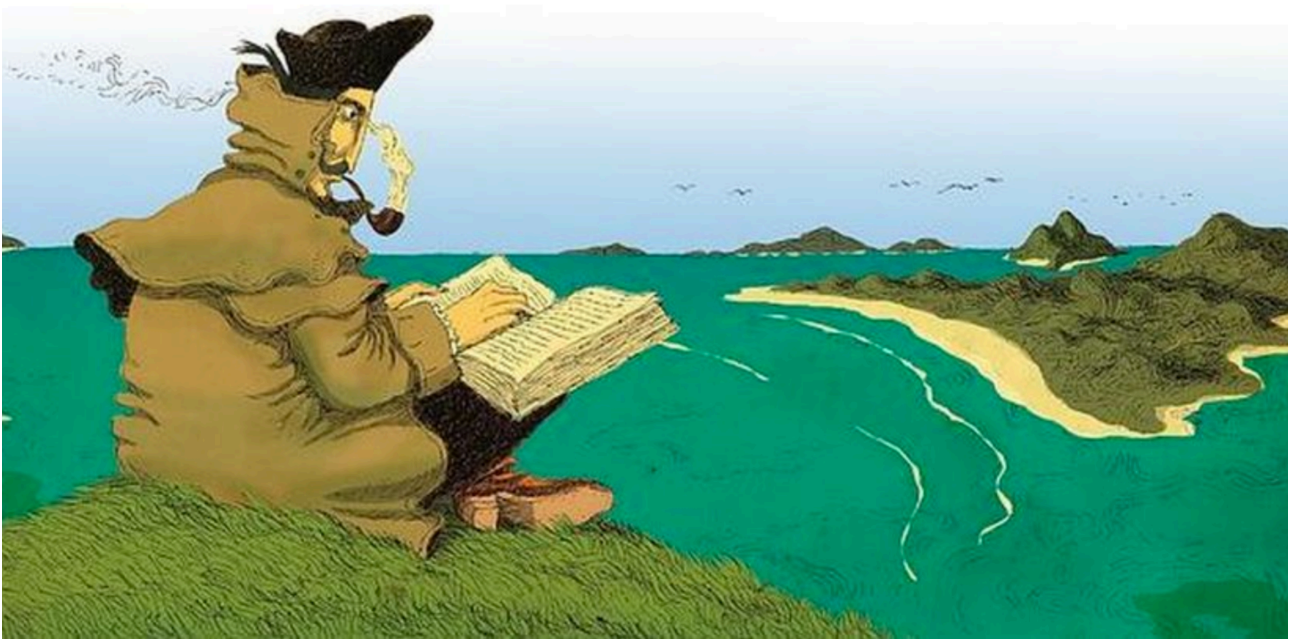
June 2019

Now, if the reader has ever washed down a liberal second breakfast with the wine in question, and gone forth, on the back of these dilutions, into a sultry, sparkling noontide, he will have felt an influence almost as genial, although strangely grosser, than this fairy titillation of the nerves among the snow and sunshine of the Alps.

That also is a mode, we need not say of intoxication, but of insobriety.

Thus also a man walks in a strong sunshine of the mind, and follows smiling, insubstantial meditations.

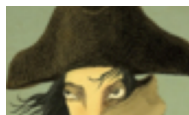
(“Stimulation of the Alps”)



David Pintor



Monterey,  
an outing  
by Fanny's family and  
friends, p. 5



Spanish volume  
dedicated to *Treasure  
Island*, p. 7

RLS and  
the dying  
words of  
Henry  
James,  
p. 8



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## Conferences



RLS, Princess Liliukalani, King Kalakaua, Honolulu 1889

International Association for the Study of the Literatures of Scotland: 'Scotland in the South Seas', Honolulu, Hawai'i, 28–29 June 2019. Convenors: Allison Paynter and Richard Hill.

[Programme](#).<sup>1</sup>



Pont de Pierre across the Garonne, Bordeaux

RLS 2020 'Stevenson and Pleasure': Bordeaux, 18–20 June 2020.

Convenors: Nathalie Jaëck and Lesley Graham.

[CALL FOR PAPERS](#) <sup>2</sup>

Proposals for twenty-minute papers are invited on any aspect of Stevenson and pleasure – experiencing pleasure, giving pleasure, describing pleasure – along with a short biographical note to both convenors: [lesley.graham@u-bordeaux.fr](mailto:lesley.graham@u-bordeaux.fr) and [Nathalie.Jaeck@u-bordeaux-montaigne.fr](mailto:Nathalie.Jaeck@u-bordeaux-montaigne.fr). Deadline: 31 Jan 2020.

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## Public lecture

Roger, G. Swearingen, 'Stevenson's Scotland: Shaping the Modern Myth', Robert Louis Stevenson Museum, St. Helena, California, 15 November 2018.

Swearingen contrasted the prevailing Romantic view of Scotland with Stevenson's inward and subjective view, which also took in the darker sides of Scottish history and religion.

The contrast is easy to see comparing the Victorian lyrics to the 'Skye Boat Song' written and first published by Harold Boulton in 1885)—and RLS's version a few years later, 'Sing Me a Song of a Lad That is Gone'.

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Recent Studies have been moved to the end of the NL

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## RLS Site

On the site, for **Recent Studies** and **Critical Reception**, click on 'Further Studies' on the 'Further Studies' dropdown menu (i.e. title is also the first item on the list), then scroll to the bottom of the resultant page.

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## NEd

The next volume to be published in the New Edinburgh Edition will be *Stories IV: Fables*, edited from the original manuscript by Bill Gray. Sadly it will be a posthumous volume as Bill died this April after a long illness. He published on literature, philosophy and theology, folklore and myth and also wrote an interesting and originally-organized *Robert Louis Stevenson—A Literary Life*. The editor of this Newsletter coordinated closely with him on the New Edinburgh volume: he was a pleasure to work with and a kind, gentle man.

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## Journal of Stevenson Studies

Volume 14 of the *JSS* is now available through the Stevenson page at the University of Napier website: <http://robert-louis-stevenson.org/rls-journal/> .

The *Journal of Stevenson Studies* will henceforth be produced in an exclusively online format (thanks to Kate Simpson for the good work on this). We hope to see a much wider reach for the journal, with even more citation, now that it (and thirteen previous volumes) are freely available online. We do encourage you to spread the word among fellow scholars and students who share our interest in Stevenson and to re-post this announcement to relevant websites in related fields.

Contributions to volume 15 are warmly invited and should be submitted directly to the journal the Editors at [jss@napier.ac.uk](mailto:jss@napier.ac.uk). The text should be submitted in MS WORD files in MHRA format. All contributions are subject to review by members of the Editorial Board.

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## Previously unpublished

Robert Louis Stevenson. *Journal, July 1888 to December 1889* (Huntington Library HM 2412), entry for 4 August 1888 (qu. in Swearingen 2019, see Recent studies below).

'I have found three populations entirely delightful: in the high Cévennes, in the Scottish Highlands and Isles, and here in Anaho [Marquesas Islands]. It is to be observed that with only one of these groups could I communicate fluently: the Cévenols. Gaelic and Kanaka barred me from the others'. In some respects they differ significantly, 'But there

are two conditions common to all three, which I must thus suppose to be, in whatever proportion, the efficient occasion of their charm and kindness': their remoteness and a recent liberation from a prolonged state of war (not modern war but 'the war of the field and the back garden').

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## New letters

Lesley Graham (2019). 'Seven Hitherto Unpublished Letters from Robert Louis Stevenson to Percy William Bunting, 1884–7. *Notes and Queries*, 66.2 (June 2019), pp. 303–307. Full text available [here](#).<sup>3</sup>

Seven letters from 1885-7 to Percy William Bunting, editor of the *Contemporary Review*. The *Review* published three of Stevenson's essays: 'On Style in Literature' (Apr 1885), 'The Day after To-morrow' (Apr 1887), and 'Thomas Stevenson: Civil Engineer' (June 1887). The letters also refer to 'The Ethics of Crime', an essay about political assassination that Stevenson never finished.

**Letter 1** must have accompanied the MS of 'On Style in Literature'.

[late December 1884 / early January 1885]

Bonallie Tower

Dear Sir, You will I fear turn pale to see what I have sent you; for though edifying and much of it very new, it can hardly be called popular. I send you, however, the refusal of it: since I have so long turned a deaf ear, I must at least indicate good will.

Pray acknowledge receipt at your earliest convenience, as I have a rooted mistrust of the post. If too long, the piece *might* go in twain; but your unconscionable page will make but one swallow of it. In the matter of emoluments, I should think the sum you mentioned quite liberal for anything so valuable and laborious as what I now send; but if I were to write you nonsense, such as should cost me no trouble, – ah, then, such are the laws of this world, I think I should have to talk about it.

**Letter 2** accompanies another MS article, which Bunting must have declined. It dates from before April 1885 (when the move to Skerryvore took place), so too early for 'The Day after To-morrow'. It may have been a reaction to Gordon's death at Khartoum (26 Jan 1885) with an early handling of the themes of morality in public life later developed in 'The Day After To-morrow' and 'The Ethics of Crime'.

[late February 1885]

Bonallie Tower

Dear Sir, Herewith, according to promise, a paper of more popular interest. Concerning which, I must of course say one word. It will make me, I fear, personally very obnoxious to many; and for that reason, as I think it right to publish it, I must ask that it shall be published as it is written. I shall of course be quite willing that you should disclaim agreement; if you will, at every second sentence; but my whole sack must be emptied. Of course, I shall be quite prepared to have it back again; I trust, however, not with any loss of your esteem as a man. I feel strongly on this point; and I have written thoughtfully, and I believe morally.

**Letter 3**, dated 5 March 1885 briefly inquires about the receipt of a paper sent 'more than a week ago', most likely the one mentioned in the preceding letter.



**Letter 4** was written more than a year later, after the move to Skerryvore. It mentions an article Stevenson has long had 'in hand'. It is not clear which piece this refers to or indeed if the piece was ever finished or submitted.

17 June 1886

Skerryvore

Dear Sir, I have been from home and fear I have let you in. I cannot undertake to do an article on Doctor Holmes [Oliver Wendell Holmes], much as I admire him; time and health both failing me. I have long had an article meant for you in hand, but my mills, like those of my betters, grind exceeding slowly. I am, dear Sir Yours very truly

R. L. Stevenson

**Letter 5** mentions 'The Ethics of Crime', an unfinished essay referring to Arthur Balfour as Irish Secretary, so dating from after 7 March 1887 when he was appointed to the post. In April 1887, Stevenson's interest in the situation in Ireland was particularly acute at this time (see *Letters* 5: 389–92).

[spring 1887]

My dear Sir, Yes, "The Ethics of Crime," if you will so allow me to extend the basis, is precisely what I have been most thinking of myself. I shall turn to it at once: "crime" we must say, for in the Irish development of this modern lawlessness, assassination seems almost accidental. [...] Yours very truly

Robert Louis Stevenson

**Letter 6** is undated but addressed from 17 Heriot Row, Edinburgh, and accompanied Stevenson's obituary of his father, Thomas Stevenson, who died on 8 May 1887. **Letter 7** refers to receipt of payment for what must have been 'The Day After To-Morrow', which appeared in *The Contemporary Review* in April 1887, and adds 'I hope to get to the ethics of crime soon'.

## Biography



F. M. Osbourne (Fanny Osbourne) (1880). 'Sargent's Rodeo'. *Lippincott's Magazine*, Jan. 1880, pp. 9-20. Online at [Hathi Trust](https://www.hathiitrust.org/).<sup>4</sup>

A chatty account of a camping trip to see a rodeo in the Carmel Valley by a party of friends from Monterey shortly before Stevenson arrived in 1879. The party consisted of Fanny, her daughter Belle and son Sam and Fanny's younger sister Nellie (left, in a drawing by Belle), together with Joe Strong (shortly before his marriage and elopement with Belle) and Joe's younger sisters: Lizzie (also an artist) and Ninole. Also present were 'Antonio' (probably Adulfo Sanches, Nellie's future husband) and 'Bob'. The latter must be Bob Hamel, a local character with a drink problem, for whose good qualities Fanny has kind words to say, though she admits '[he] has never been known to refuse the social glass'. The article contains a vigorous portrait of Bob by Joe Strong. Fanny's complaint at the state of the Carmel Mission no doubt influenced S's similar complaint in 'The Old Pacific Capital'.



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## Derivative works—music

Anton Darusso (music), Robert Louis Stevenson (words). 'Requiem'. *Wings of Destiny* (2019). *Revelations*. CD.

Wings of Destiny is a Puerto Rico heavy metal band, whose concept album *Revelations* is about a young man who undertakes a dark inner journey in which he must face demons and save the world. If you really want to listen to the track, you can do so [here](#).<sup>5</sup>

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## Derivative works—dramatizations



### 2018 *Dr Jekyll & Mr Hyde* (Grinstead and Stromberg)

**Type:** stage play, comedy two-hander

**Author:** Burt Grinstead and Anna Stromberg

**First performance:** 6 Dec 2018, Soho Playhouse, 15 Vandam Street, New York; also April-A

May 2019

**Director:** Anna Stromberg

**Cast:** Burt Grinstead (J/H), Anna Stromberg (everyone else)

**Plot:** simultaneously parodies and finds the inherent drama in the tale.

Originally presented in Los Angeles at The Hollywood Fringe Festival 2018, where it was nominated for six Hollywood Fringe Festival Awards including Best Comedy.

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## In the footsteps

Simmons, Gail (2019). *The Country of Larks: A Chiltern Journey in the Footsteps of Robert Louis Stevenson and the Footprint of the HS2*. Chalfont St. Peter: Bradt

Simmons follows, as far as possible, Stevenson's South to North walk across the Chiltern Hills from High Wycombe to Tring, which he wrote about in 'An Autumn Effect' (included in an appendix, under its working title of 'In the Beechwoods'). She observes changes in the landscape, the loss of flora, fauna and a rural way of life in the intervening 150 years, and predictable further changes with the planned high-speed railway from London to Birmingham. At the same time she comments on the changes to the landscape and herself in the years since she grew up in the area. The endpapers are from a large-scale map of the Chilterns from the 1880s; offset elements in the text give the meaning and Old English derivation of the place names as they occur, adding a further chronological depth to the feeling of loss and on-going loss.

[Hiking the Robert Louis Stevenson Trail](#).<sup>6</sup> photographic record of following the Chemin Stevenson.

Video of photographs and accompanying captions and some evocative video sequences, following Mike Porter and his friend Greg Chase along the GR 70 in April

and May 2018, following the route described in *Travels with a Donkey on the Cévennes*.  
Film produced by The Enlightened Traveller.

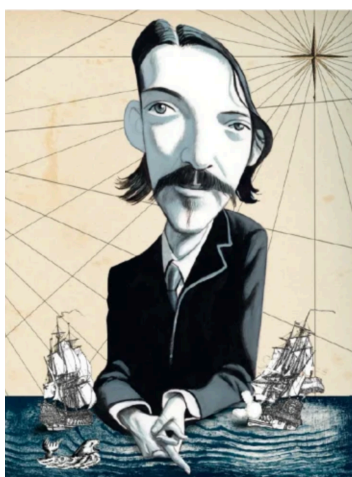
McVey, David (2012). 'Following in the Footsteps of R. L. Stevenson's *Kidnapped*. *The Highlander* [Hull, MA], Nov/Dec 2012.

--- (2013). 'In the Footsteps of Balfour and Breck'. *The Scots Magazine* [Dundee], Feb 2013

Both articles are about the new Stevenson Way with background about RLS.

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## Illustrated editions



*La isla del tesoro. Estudio gráfico y literario sobre la obra maestra de Robert Louis Stevenson*. Madrid: Huerga y Fierro (Graphicclassic, 2), 2014.

Not an edition of the novel but an anthology (in part collected from elsewhere, in part produced for this volume) by writers (Mario Vargas Llosa, Javier Marías, Fernando Savater, Vázquez Montalbán, Antonio Tabucchi and others) and illustrators (more than 50



illustrations, by Fernando Vicente (left), David Pintor (right), Carlos Oriondo (below), Darío García and others).



Vincent Dutrait (ill.), Thomas Leclere (adapted by) (2010). *L'île au trésor*. Montrouge: Tourbillon.

Dutrait had previously illustrated a school edition of *Treasure Island* for a South Korean publisher but here takes the opportunity of more space in this adapted French version.



Images of *A Child's Garden of Verses* illustrated by Charles Robinson (New York: Scribner's, 1895), a copy that belonged to Oliver Wendell Holmes, is available (for vision and downloading) in high resolution page images on the [Library of Congress Website](#).<sup>7</sup>

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## Derivative works—Prequels and sequels

Euan Macpherson (2019). *City of the Dreadful Night: The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Jack the Ripper*. Menzies and Wood Publishing.

Investigates the connections between Jack the Ripper and respectable doctor, Dr Jekyll, while following Detective Harry Ramsay in London in 1888 to investigate a series of New York murders; Ramsay comes across clues that point to the Ripper being Scottish and connected to a mysterious Mr Hyde.

Opening words: 'Pairs of eyes were upon her as soon as she turned into the street. Uneven lumps of horse dung lay scattered across the cobbled street. Poole had told her not to come here.'

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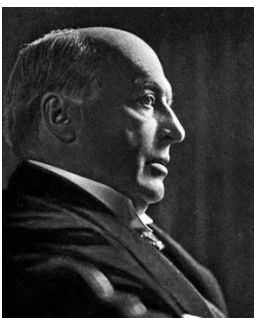
## Critical reception: Opinion of other writers

Rudyard Kipling was an enthusiastic and appreciative reader of Stevenson and wanted to go and visit him in Samoa:

I had had some notion of sailing from Auckland to visit Robert Louis Stevenson at Samoa, for he had done me the honour to write me about some of my tales; and moreover I was Eminent Past Master R.L.S. Even to-day I would back myself to take seventy-five per cent marks in written or *viva voce* examination on *The Wrong Box* which, as the Initiated know, is the Test Volume of that Degree. I read it first in a small hotel in Boston in '89, when the negro waiter nearly turned me out of the dining-room for spluttering over my meal.

But Auckland, soft and lovely in the sunshine, seemed the end of organized travel; for the captain of a fruit-boat, which might or might not go to Samoa at some time or other, was so devotedly drunk that I decided to turn south, and work back to India.

(Rudyard Kipling, *Something of Myself and Other Autobiographical Writings*, ed. Thomas Pinney, Cambridge: CUP, 1991; p. 60 in ch. 4, 'Interregnum').



Henry James mentioned R.L.S. as he lay dying:

From 8 to 12 December 1915 the mind of the 72-year-old Henry James rambled as he lay, after a heavy fall, ill with pneumonia in his flat in Carlyle Mansions, Chelsea. In this period he dictated several fragments, mostly about Napoleon, to his secretary Miss Bosanquet. These are mainly finished sentences but of varying coherence within and between



themselves. His last fragment and the last thing he wrote was ends as follows:

‘One of the earliest of the consumers of the great globe in the interest of the attraction exercised by the great R.L.S. of those days, comes in, afterwards, a visitor at Vailima and [word lost] there and pious antiquities to his domestic annals.’

(Leon Edel, ‘The Deathbed Notes of Henry James’, *Atlantic Monthly*, June 1968).

He survived the pneumonia but died on 28 February 1916. Not only does he salute ‘the great R. L. S.’ with his last words but (interpreting the incoherent words) probably identifies himself as one of the first people (‘consumers’) in the world who appreciated ‘the interest of the attraction’ exercised by him, and finally—with his dying words—imagines entering as a visitor to Vailima and so forming part of his ‘domestic annals’.

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## Recent Studies

Beattie, Hilary J. (2018). ‘The enigma of Katharine de Mattos: reflections on her life and writings’. *Journal of Stevenson Studies* 14 (2018), 47-71.

Traces in detail KDM’s life through documentary sources and what can be understood from her fiction and poetry. Her life was afflicted by a series of personal catastrophes and difficulties: her father’s wasting illness and death, the collapse of her marriage and subsequent hardship, and rejection by her admired cousin, RLS (for the relationship between Henley, Fanny, Katharine and RLS: pp. 51-7). She nevertheless managed to maintain herself by reviewing for the *Athenæum* and publishing short fiction and poetry in magazines and had a social life in London in the 1890s—where, in a tantalizing glimpse, we see her as a ‘brilliant conversationalist’ who mixed with artists and writers such as Aubrey Beardsley and Alice Meynell.

Benkhodja, Flora (2018). ‘Reading the “sea runes”: hermeneutics in “The Merry Men” ’. *Journal of Stevenson Studies* 14 (2018), 139-155.

In MM, ‘The act of interpretation is the key to the understanding of the story’. The narrative of the shipwrecks is known only through clues left behind and their interpretation by Charles and Gordon. But the signs are illegible, e.g. the ‘undecipherable marks—sea runes’, and their interpretations tell us more about the interpreters than the signs: Charles supposes that for Gordon ‘M’ is interpreted as ‘murderer’—but this is not certain (and it could be taken as ‘madness’ (an idea repeatedly invoked) or ‘Merry Men’). Charles is an unreliable narrator (and benefits romantically and financially from his uncle’s guilt). He is also fails in his task of interpretation and cannot turn the fragments into a logical narrative. With Gordon increasingly referred to in animal terms, Charles’s vain quest for meaning may reflect a post-Darwinian feeling of meaninglessness in the world.

Danta, Chris (2018). ‘ “The Highest Civilisation among Ants”: Stevenson and the Fable’. Ch. 3 in Chris Danta, *Animal Fables after Darwin: Literature, Speciesism, and Metaphor*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 61-95.

How the fable was adapted by 19C and 20C authors to challenge traditional views of species hierarchy. Ch. 1: the post-Darwinian animal fable inverts the spiritual vs animal hierarchy to produce ‘the theological grotesque’, presenting the human as animal and undermining man’s intellectual and spiritual pretensions. S was perhaps the first to



realize that after Darwin a new type of fable forces readers to confront their animal nature.

Ch. 3: S's perspectivist and anthropological fables are important precursors of 20C examples of the genre. In a *pensée* of 1874-5 he speculates that ants feel themselves superior to all others and that the world was made for them—undermining anthropocentrism and an example of 'the theological grotesque'. S uses the fable to examine the human from a nonhuman p-o-v (e.g. in 'The Distinguished Stranger'). At the same time as Nietzsche developed his idea that 'there is *only* a perspectivist seeing' (1887) S was illustrating a similar idea in the perspectivist dialogue of several fables. He also explores divided identity and its changeability over time ('The Tadpole and the Frog') and criticizes those who try to avoid the physical or moral burdens of life by intellectualizing them ('The Sinking Ship')—two ideas also explored in *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*. S challenges the assumption that the present is an advance from the past. He ridicules scientific, philosophical and theological certainty by bestowing the same on animals; 'The Scientific Ape' makes us see that humans have no basis for separating themselves from other animals. In 'The Clockmaker' physical reality ultimately takes precedence over intellectual speculation.

Dobosiewicz, Ilona (2018). 'The early reception of Robert Louis Stevenson in Poland'. *Journal of Stevenson Studies* 14 (2018), 72-89.

With Poland eliminated from the map in 19C, Polish literature and publishing was focused on maintaining national identity, and translations of S's works came relatively late and mostly in journals, hence the preference for short stories: 'The Story of the Young Man with the Cream Tarts' (1888), 'Olalla' (1889), and (serialized) *The Merry Men and Other Tales* (1890). Longer works came a little later: *Treasure Island* (1892), *Prince Otto* (1897), *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (1909). The 1890s saw the first mention in critical overviews, but it was in the new century that Stevenson benefitted greatly from the critical work of Stanislaw Brzozowski and the careful translations of Jozef Birkenmajer: *Treasure Island* (1925), *Kidnapped* (1927), and *Ballantrae* (1935).

Fielding, Penny (2012). 'Robert Louis Stevenson'. In Gerard Carruthers & Liam McIlvanney (eds). *The Cambridge Companion to Scottish Literature*. Cambridge: CUP. 157-72.

S, a constantly-experimental writer, took advantage of developments in the literary market and in emerging non-realist genres. For him 'romance' involved the reader's understanding of direct sensory experience and practical decisions; but also the world of chaotic impressions eluding careful exploration. The reader enjoys the romance text aesthetically as a child enjoys play, a relationship that does not exclude darker imaginative forms. Though he returned to Scottish themes and settings in his fiction much of his early work is about travelling away from Scotland; his Scottish stories are touched with madness and doubled personalities; and he gives pictures of diasporic Scotland and of global spatiality in a world of modern communications. *Kidnapped*, S's most Scott-like novel, does not present a common Highland heritage for all Scots, and speakers 'must constantly adjust or translate language according to circumstances'. In *Ballantrae* historical forces are chaotic and experienced as random, absurd events. Similar absurd and fragmentary moments are experienced in the contemporary setting of *The Dynamiter*.

S, mythologized as 'the teller of tales', actually avoids clear plots and resolutions; despite the common views, his fiction does not correspond closely with the emerging genre of adventure stories: his island romances are not idyllic and degenerate into crime, his Pacific fiction traces the influence of a colonial ideological presence. *Weir* first confronts Calvinist authoritarianism and rejection of literature, then explores a Border territory where fiction is woven into social discourse. S typically dismantles antitheses: he refused 'to accept clear distinctions between realism and romance, serious fiction

and adventure, ethics and aesthetics, Scotland and the world, modern and primitive' and even (in his essay on style in literature) 'between fiction as artificial and as experience'.

France, Rose (2019). '“The Shadow and the Law”': Stevenson, Nabokov and Dostoevsky". *Studies in Scottish Literature*, 44. Pp. 37–44.

In his Cornell lectures Nabokov praised S's *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* but condemned Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*—for melodramatic clichés and leaving the sin committed unspecified, though the same could be said of *JH*. This attitude to D could be the product of anxiety of influence, or because he preferred the doubles narrative (like his own *Lolita*) to end in 'madness, despair and death' rather than D's Christian redemption.

Gay, Julie (2018). 'The Island in R. L. Stevenson's *The Beach of Falesá*: Confluenc(s) as Subversion. *Cahiers victoriens et édouardiens*, 87, <https://journals.openedition.org/cve/3448>.

The island in *Falesá* is a place of polyphony and confluence, where traditional dialectics are questioned. Races and languages are fluidly mixed; there is a fluidity too of literary genres, as realism in the first part is replaced by adventure, fantasy and the symbolic. The adventure story, a hybrid genre since its origins, was used by Conrad and S to associate high and low literature. Here the obstacles to the protagonist are mainly cultural and linguistic codes, which he has to interpret.

Glez, Montero (2019). 'Robert Louis Stevenson y la psicología moderna'. *El País* 14 March 2019.

Short newspaper article about the affinities of *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* and Freudian psychology: questions of good and evil are examined as a scientific problem; the non-unitary subconscious and an element of it controlled by instinctive urges; the relation between repression and violent return of the repressed

Gordon, Harriet (2018). '“We all belong to many countries”: alternative geographical imaginations in Stevenson's Californian writing'. *Journal of Stevenson Studies* 14 (2018), 110-38.

S's Californian writing shows a changing view of place and national identity in his focus on proliferating networks of transport and migration, the speed of change in continually remade settlements. Place is presented as a process, as fluid, porous and susceptible to change, with no fixed image and identity: San Francisco 'leaves upon the mind no general and stable picture', its inhabitants mixed and changing too. Leaving behind any simple idea to identify he saw that 'we all belong to many nations'.

Graham, Lesley (2018). 'Toing and froing in Stevenson's construction of personal history in some of the later essays (1880-94)'. *Journal of Stevenson Studies* 14 (2018), 5-17.

S's autobiographical essays, frequently tied to places, are non-linear with constant switches of perspective in time, place, scale, and identity (past/present, I/he, child/adult). He even fluidly combines his identity with that of his grandfather walking around Edinburgh ('The Manse') or interweaves memories of dreams ('A Chapter on Dreams'). In these essays and in the act of writing he tests the unity or difference of the present, past and possible future selves.

Jaëck, Nathalie (2018). '“The valley was as clear as a picture”: landscape as an ideological tool to come to terms with Scottish identity in Stevenson's *Kidnapped*'. *Journal of Stevenson Studies* 14 (2018), 90-109.

David moves from comfortable Lowlands to a Highlands he cannot decipher. In the former he views space as picturesque landscape (from a prospect, a source of enjoyment) representing a harmonious national identity. In the Highlands he is the one seen (trapped in the picture), and he gets fragmented glimpses of an incoherent mass of 'sublime' elements: it is an unpleasant, inhospitable place of turbulent elements. But then he learns a new type of vision and sees the Highlands as territory, contested terrain. What seemed a wasteland is now experienced as a lived-in nomadic space of social-spatial links, invisible to outsiders. The smooth 'face' of the land may be occupied, but there is a rhizomatic space below. Returning to the Lowlands he now perceives the pastoral scenes as peopled, no longer a static canvas.

Holmes, Morgan (2018). 'Ancient, wild, indigenous: Stevenson's bagpipe nation'. *Journal of Stevenson Studies* 14 (2018), 186-207.

The bagpipe contest, the last event of the Highlands section of *Kidnapped*, exploits the association of bagpipes with shared Scottishness but without the 19C imperial and regimental associations. Their music dissolves personal, clan and Highland/Lowland enmities in reconciliation, hospitality and generosity. While some readers may imagine the 'Great Highland bagpipe' with three drones, S's reference to 'a pair of bagpipes' suggests the smaller two-drone instrument. Rather than Scots-regimental connotations S probably wished to invoke the quasi-mythic roots of the instrument, outlandish but here also contained in a familiar domestic space.

Kerr, Douglas (2018). 'The strange case of the creeping man'. *Journal of Stevenson Studies* 14 (2018), 156-170.

In Conan Doyle's later Sherlock Holmes story 'The Creeping Man' (1923) a respectable professional man performs bizarre and violent acts as a consequence of a self-administered drug. It is inspired in part by S's *Jekyll and Hyde*: man of high intellect regresses to an animal state in cautionary science fiction tale. But the motives of the protagonist are different: wanting to marry a young girl he has taken a serum derived from a monkey. Doyle removes troubling elements and an orderly existence is restored at the end by the authoritative words of Holmes, so that the threat of materialist modernity (to Doyle interested in Spiritualism) is contained.

Miras Orozco, José Luis (2018). 'A Teleological Approach to the Essays of Robert Louis Stevenson'. PhD thesis, Universidad Complutense de Madrid. Available [here](#).<sup>8</sup>

Miras identifies three aims in Stevenson's essays: an understanding of himself and of phenomena; a non-dogmatic morality and ethical guide to conduct; and a personal and innovative aesthetics based on deliberate artifice. Stevenson's mind-style and world view are characterized by flux and constant mobility; mobility is for him a vehicle of cognition and a way to approach his three aims; he has 'a mind in a sweet unrest, wondering in its tolerance, seeking to understand first, to sympathize later'.

Naugrette, Jean-Pierre. 'Revisiting the "chambers of the brain": Stevenson's 'A Chapter on Dreams' between Poe and Wilde, with Sherlock Holmes'. *Journal of Stevenson Studies* 14 (2018), 171-185.

The uncanny room of Gothic fiction was adopted in the second half of the 19C to represent a veritable part of the mind, the site of memory and the unconscious. S's 'chambers of the brain' (1888) is repeated in Wilde's *Dorian Gray* (1891); in the same essay S locates his Brownies in a 'back garret', and just a month before, Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes (*A Study in Scarlet*) talked about the need to keep only useful things in his 'brain-attic'. Both Holmes and S talk of ordering their minds for their professional advantage, but for S this involves allowing dreamwork to influence literary creation,

coming to terms with an uncanny part of oneself. Holmes, on the other hand, is interested in de-cluttering the mind.

MacLachlan, Christopher (2015), 'Robert Louis Stevenson's Highlanders'. MacLachlan, Christopher and Renton, Ronald W. *Gael and Lowlander in Scottish Literature: Cross-currents in Scottish Writing in the Nineteenth Century*. Association for Scottish Literary Studies, 2015. Pp. 190-202.

S does not accept unquestioned the conventional post-Scott view of Highlanders as exciting and glamorous but has a mixed view: generally admiring with Alan Breck and critical with James More but also presenting Alan Breck as a combination of the attractive and the off-putting, 'both engaging and alarming'. The Highland island of 'The Merry Men' gives a critical view of the Ossianic clichés of the supernatural and portentous.

McVey, David (2008). 'The First Buddy Movie'. *The Eildon Tree* [Selkirk], 16 (Dec 2008).

*Kidnapped* as the 'first buddy movie', prototype of *Lethal Weapon* etc.

McVey, David (2014). 'The Means of Hanging a Great Number'. *The Reader* [Liverpool], Summer 2014.

A look at the famous painting of Lord Braxfield, the model for Weir of Hermiston, in the SNPG, with references to the novel.

Olsen, Trenton B. (2018). 'Robert Louis Stevenson's annotated Wordsworth: a complete transcript'. *Journal of Stevenson Studies* 14 (2018), 208-17.

A short introduction notes that S's annotations show repeated reading over many years, a mixture of praise and criticism and a particular interest in Wordsworth's verse on childhood; the following 6 pp are a full transcription of the markings and annotations in the six vols of S's Wordsworth.

Phillips, Lawrence (2012). *The South Pacific Narratives of Robert Louis Stevenson and Jack London: Race, Class, Imperialism*. London: Continuum.

Ch. 2, 'Race', Class and Imperialism in Stevenson's *The Amateur Emigrant*; Ch. 4, Death, Disease and Paradise: A Parable of Imperial Expansion [*In the South Seas*]; Ch. 5, The Inequities of Trade: Adventure Narratives, Ethics and Imperial Commerce in Robert Louis Stevenson's *The Wrecker*; Ch. 7, Fragments of Empire, Fractured identities [*The Beach of Falesá, The Ebb-Tide*]

Exploring a unique moment in South Pacific and Western history through the work of two critical voices of colonialism, Stevenson and London, this study assesses the impact of their national identities on their writing; shows how they negotiated different cultures and peoples and considers where both writers are placed in the Western tradition of writing about the Pacific.

Sanderson, Ivan D. and Mark J. Sanderson (2018). ' "The strangely fanciful device of repeating the same idea": chiasmus in Robert Louis Stevenson's essays'. *Journal of Stevenson Studies* 14 (2018), 18-46.

Chiasmus in S's essays is an example of juxtaposition of opposites in thought and form and allows multiple viewpoints of the same idea. Possible influences include the Bible, Shakespeare ('An Autumn Effect' has interlocking series of parallel figures not unlike Shakespeare's) and French writers—Montaigne in particular who often uses chiasmus in his explorations of the multiplicities and uncertainties of the world.

Simpson, Kenneth (2012). ‘“The great affair is to move”: Stevenson’s Journeys’. *Scottish Cultural Review of Language and Literature*, 18 (2012), pp. 231-48.

Abstract: The pioneering impulse was strong in Stevenson: travel prompted self-exploration, investigation of the human psyche, and significant innovation in narrative strategies. His “kinetic method” identifies him as a harbinger of Modernism and, with his agnosticism, locates his work in the movement from Absolutism to Relativism, which is further reflected in his engagement with the concept of evolution – of humankind, of the earth, and of fiction itself. Stevenson’s writing throughout is characterised by the interplay of values of motion and stasis. Sophisticated techniques such as fragmentary form and free indirect narration require the reader’s alertness on the journey through the text.

Keywords: kinetic; Relativism; Modernism; narrative experimentation; reader response; Scottish writer-adventurers; evolutionary theory; stream of consciousness; duality; free indirect narration; Travels with a Donkey in the Cévennes; The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde; Weir of Hermiston; “On Some Technical Elements of Style in Literature”; Henry James.

Swearingen, Roger G. (2019). ‘Le regard de Robert Louis Stevenson sur les Cévenols, les Écossais des Hautes Terres et les habitants des îles du Pacifique Sud’. *Causses & Cévennes: revue du Club Cévenol*, 24:1 (Jan-Feb-Mar 2019). Pp. 166-7.

A short cancelled passage on three populations of ‘charm and kindliness’: the Cévenols, Highlanders, and South Sea Islanders (see ‘Previously unpublished’ above).

Swearingen, Roger G. (2019). ‘La réputation de Robert Louis Stevenson en Écosse et dans le monde’ [Robert Louis Stevenson’s Reputation in Scotland and Worldwide]. *Causses & Cévennes: revue du Club Cévenol*, 24:1 (Jan-Feb-Mar 2019). Pp. 170-72.

Stevenson’s reputation endured ten or twenty years after his death; the people, places, and values that he celebrated in his writings, the paradoxical optimism of his philosophy of life, and what was known of his own personal and public behaviour, all resonated deeply with the late-Victorian and Edwardian middle-class reading public in Britain and America (and worldwide).

But with his wife Fanny Stevenson’s death in February 1914, it was now possible—so it was said—to tell the truth about aspects of Stevenson’s life and behaviour that for at least two decades had been concealed in silence. Clayton Hamilton, George S. Hellman, and J. A. Steuart marshalled insubstantial evidence trying to give names and stories to Stevenson’s early sexual experiences and presenting him as a kind of highly-sexed re-incarnation of Robert Burns.

Yan, Rae X. (2019). ‘Robert Louis Stevenson as Philosophical Anatomist: The Body Snatcher’. *English Literature in Transition, 1880-1920*, 62.4 (2019), pp. 458-481.

In ‘The Body Snatcher’ the character K— gives a negative representation of the anatomist Dr Robert Knox as colluder in the body trade, and (anachronistically) upholder of social Darwinianism. Yet Knox was an admired pioneer of ‘philosophical [or ‘transcendental’] anatomy’, whose aim was to identify (by similarities and the comparative method) an Ideal Type behind the multiplicity of visible structures in the animal and vegetable kingdoms, and made connections between natural history, history, literature and philosophy. S’s distaste for his own story (not republished in his lifetime) may derive from a sense of his unfairness (indeed, at the same time he was writing in ‘The Morality of the Profession of Letters’ that the writer has only one tool: sympathy). In part also from his new ideas of distinguishing patterns (like Knox) in his early 1880s literary essays. There was also an unfairness in filtering Fettes’ narrative through the unnamed frame narrator. In *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* Jekyll has affinities with Knox (his



interest in ‘transcendental medicine’; his inheritance of the dissecting theatre ‘once crowded with eager students’) but in this case is allowed a space to explain himself.

*Causses & Cévennes: revue du Club Cévenol*, 24:1 (Jan-Feb-Mar 2019).

Special number: ‘Stevenson et les Cévennes: une histoire d’amour’. Contains two articles by Roger Swearingen (mentioned above), also a memoir by Gordon Golding on the preparation and publication of Stevenson’s Cévennes Journal in 1978; and other articles about the creation of the route Stevenson, the 1978 centenary celebrations, the formation of the Association ‘Sur le Chemin de Robert Louis Stevenson’, the first translation of selected passages from *Travels with a Donkey* into French (1901). For information on the issue, one might write to the Club Cévenol <gepada@free.fr>.

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Etc.



The mystery of the broken cast-iron plate with a lighthouse discovered by Neil Adam and Judy half-buried in the lawn outside the Vailima house has been solved.<sup>9</sup>

It is the back panel of a Beacon Light stove, manufactured in Sydney, Australia, from 1888 by the Metters Company, so very possibly bought by Fanny for the Vailima kitchen.



*RLS: A Beautiful Adventure* a film-project to be directed and produced by Sarah Purser and Tommy Gormley (*Newsletter* 2018.11) was presented at the City Arts Centre, Edinburgh, 1 Sep 2018. It is to be a story of the writing of *Weir of Hermiston* in Samoa as Stevenson’s health declines and civil war approaches intertwined with the story of *Weir* itself.

The successful 1997 musical *Jekyll and Hyde* by Frank Wildhorn, Steve Cuden and Leslie Bricusse is to be made into a film, written and produced by Alexander Dinlaris (*Variety*, 19 March 2019).

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## Social media



Twitter: [R.L. Stevenson](#)<sup>10</sup> — RLS tweets, including news from the editors of the The New Edinburgh Edition [of](#) the Collected Works of Robert Louis Stevenson

Flickr: [Robert Louis Stevenson Group Pool](#) — images connected with RLS and his works.

Tumblr: [Robert Louis Stevenson Snippets](#)<sup>11</sup> collects images, video clips etc. flagged by Twitter [twitter.com/@RLSte](#) or posted on Flickr.

Pinterest: The Silverado [RLS Museum](#)<sup>12</sup> at St. Helena, California, has five Pinterest boards, collecting RLS images from the web: The World of RLS, Works of, Images of, Travels of, Inspired by.

The (illustrated) [Letters of Robert Louis Stevenson](#):<sup>13</sup> Mafalda Cipollone's blog of the most interesting letters with relevant illustrations and video clips.

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## New subscribers

David McVey is a writer and part-time lecturer at New College Lanarkshire. He writes, 'I became interested in RLS in my teens - I remember being impressed by the ITV/German co-production of *Kidnapped* in the late 1970s. As a hillwalker, *Kidnapped* resonated there as well. I was especially drawn to some of RLS's short stories, both as a writer of short stories and as a reader of them. I think RLS anticipated many features of what we'd see as the modern short story.'

Chrystal Holley is a retired high school English teacher from Slaton, Texas. She writes 'I have enjoyed the writing of Stevenson since I was a little girl when I remember a children's book of poetry that included "The Swing".'

Alexander Rusakov, professor of Albanian and General Linguistics at Saint Petersburg State University, writes 'RLS is one of my favorite writers since my childhood'

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Neil Adam, Richard Ambrosini, Chris Danta, Burkhard Niederhoff, Roger G. Swearingen

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Richard Dury  
RLS Site

[www.robert-louis-stevenson.org](http://www.robert-louis-stevenson.org)

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Endnotes: URLs not given in text:

<sup>1</sup> <https://chaminade2019.wordpress.com/>

<sup>2</sup> <http://saesfrance.org/june-18-20-2020-stevenson-and-pleasure-universite-bordeaux-montaigne-france/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://academic.oup.com/nq/article/66/2/303/5476071?questAccessKey=46b2c2f9-3d73-4548-98ed-787612b7a743>

<sup>4</sup> <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=pst.000020207892;view=1up;seq=15>

<sup>5</sup> <https://wingsofdestinymrrartist.bandcamp.com/track/requiem>

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- <sup>6</sup> [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nLIMgh5\\_JoA&t=8s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nLIMgh5_JoA&t=8s)
  - <sup>7</sup> <https://www.loc.gov/item/75300509/>
  - <sup>8</sup> <https://eprints.ucm.es/51589/1/T40933.pdf>
  - <sup>9</sup> <https://www.neiladamandjudyturner.com/blog/the-vailima-artefact-what-is-it>
  - <sup>10</sup> <https://twitter.com/RLSte>
  - <sup>11</sup> <http://rlsnippets.tumblr.com/>
  - <sup>12</sup> <http://pinterest.com/rlsmuseum/>
  - <sup>13</sup> <http://lettersofrobertlouisstevenson.wordpress.com/>