

RLS Site Newsletter

Recent additions to the RLS site

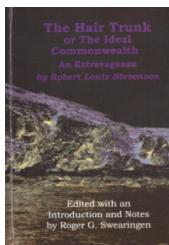
Year 15

No. i

April 2015

Whisky [...] occupies over other liquids a somewhat similar preeminence of purity
to that of mountain atmosphere over all other and meaner sorts of air'

(*The Hair Trunk*)



The Hair Trunk, a previously unpublished work by RLS, p. 8



RLS's mother in 1848, p. 11



'House in Dunoon where RLS stayed as a child, p. 15

and first 'in the wake' journey in Rob-Roy canoes, p. 16

RLS Site

The RLS Website has been undergoing a re-design that will make site content more accessible on mobile devices. This is causing some disruption to the functioning of the site as is. We apologise for this and ask for your patience as we look forward to a re-launch in the near future.

EdRLS:

THE NEW EDINBURGH EDITION
OF THE COLLECTED WORKS OF
ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON



Volumes presently in the last stages of composition: *Essays 1: Virginibus Puerisque and Other Papers* (ed. R.-L. Abrahamson); *Weir of Hermiston* (ed. G. Hughes); *Stories 4: Fables and Tales* (ed. W. Gray).

Weir is based on a new transcription of the Manuscript, while the *Fables* are based on the first ever transcription of the Manuscript in the British Library. The *Journal of*

Stevenson Studies for 2015 will contain a book review by Stevenson never before republished—an anticipation of *Essays 4: Essays and Book Reviews 1868-79* (R. Dury).

Conferences

The Victorian Popular Fiction Association 7th Annual Conference: Victorian Authenticity & Artifice, Institute for English Studies, University of London, 13-15 July 2015.

Three Stevenson papers: Linda Dryden, 'Stevenson and H G Wells: Monomaniacs, Duality and Evolutionary Science' (14 July); Duncan Milne: 'Robert Louis Stevenson: Popularity, Image and Contesting Traditions', Ellie Byrne: 'Artificial Tongues in R L Stevenson's Island Stories' (15 July)

Call for papers for a special number of *Loxias* 15th March 2015: 'Stevenson and Polynesian culture'.

Unpublished essays on Stevenson are invited in the following areas: Pacific travel literature, Pacific fiction, comparative literature, colonial/post-colonial literature, Pacific anthropology/proto-ethnography, Pacific history, visual arts, cross-cultural exchanges, languages, etc.

Abstracts, no longer than half a page, with a short CV should be sent to both Odile.GANNIER@unice.fr and sylvie.ortega@upf.pf together with the authors' complete contact information (name, university affiliation, address and email). Deadline for abstract submission: 30 June 2015; for paper submission: 30 October 2015.

Talks

Dr. Claudine Chalmers, 'In the Emigrants' Footsteps: Coast to Coast with Frenzeny & Tavernier' and Keith Decker, 'The Amateur Emigrant by Robert Louis Stevenson', Stevenson House, Monterey, 30 August 2014.

The journey from Europe to the American West as chronicled by Robert Louis Stevenson, Jules Tavernier and Paul Frenzeny. Dr. Claudine Chalmers, historian of the French in early California, and Keith Decker, RLS enthusiast, actor and playwright, tell their remarkable story.

Dr. Claudine Chalmers, 'Barbizon-by-the Pacific: How Jules Tavernier, Jules Simoneau, and Robert Louis Stevenson Turned Monterey into a Vibrant Barbizon-inspired Art Colony', Monterey Museum of Art, 26 September 2014.

One of the [Jules Tavernier lecture series](#) organized on the occasion of the 'Jules Tavernier: Artist and Adventurer' exhibition at the Monterey Museum of Art, 6 June–20 October 2014: a survey of his career, with a hundred works of art and a fully-illustrated catalogue.

Belinda Thomson, 'Gauguin and RLS in the South Seas', French Institute, 13 Randolph Crescent, Edinburgh, 26 November 2014.

'The Methodology of Biographical Research and the Ernest and Joyce Mehew Collection', 5 Nov 2014; and 'Doctors, Drugs, and Demons: R. L. Stevenson, Arthur Machen and Edith Nesbit', 28 Jan 2015.

David Frier, 'The Double Exoticisation of the Moral Dilemma: Non-European Space and Pacts with the Devil in Robert Louis Stevenson and Eça de Queiroz', University of Leeds, Leeds Humanities Research Institute, 19 November 2014.

The short novel *The Mandarin* (1880) by Portuguese writer Eça de Queiroz compared with 'The Bottle Imp' by RLS: the topos of the Faustian pact with the Devil, the use of non-European space to consider imperial roles, and the deceptive endings of both works.

Roslyn Jolly [interviewed](#)¹ by Margaret Throsby, Australian Broadcasting Company, 18 February 2015: talk about RLS with music.

Andrew Motion [interviewed](#) by James Naughtie talks on Stevenson and *Treasure Island* at the National Theatre on 13 Feb. 2014.

Recent Studies

Dossena, Marina (2015). 'Sublime Caledonia: Description, Narration and Evaluation in Nineteenth-Century Texts on Scotland'. Philip Shaw et al. (eds). *Essays in Honour of Nils-Lennart Johannesson* (Stockholm: Stockholm University Press). 177-192.

Comparison of Nattes' *Scotia Dipicta* (1804) and S's *Edinburgh: Picturesque Notes*. There are more 'involvement strategies' in EPN: 'you' is frequent (Nattes uses 'we' more often); popular and literary references are mixed more freely; S's linguistic skill encourages reader participation.

Dossena, Marina (2015). ' "Across the ocean ferry"; Point of view, description and evaluation in nineteenth-century narrations of ocean crossings'. In Marina Dosses (ed.) (2015). *Transatlantic Perspectives in Late Modern English*. Amsterdam: John Benjamin's. 117-34.

A comparative study of Atlantic-crossing narratives in 19C Scottish letters and diaries, S's *Amateur Emigrant* and De Amicis's *Sull'oceano*. RLS pays attention to people; uses the first person singular relatively frequently; emphasizes the cultural value of music; comments on language-use.

Graham, Lesley (2014). 'Robert Louis Stevenson's "The Young Chevalier": Unimagined Space'. Allan I Macinnes, Kieran German and Lesley Graham (eds), *Living with Jacobitism, 1690-1788: The Three Kingdoms and Beyond*. London: Pickering & Chatto. 197-208.

Stevenson started planning *The Young Chevalier* in January-March 1892 having done extensive preparatory reading about Jacobitism in books sent to him by Andrew Lang. The latter had given Stevenson the idea for the novel.'

S began writing in May but got no further than the prologue and part of the first chapter. The action of the novel, a love story, was to take place in the south of France around 1750. There are only four characters in the prologue: Francis Blair of Balmile; the Master of Ballantrae; Paradou, a wine-seller of Avignon and Marie-Madeleine, his

wife. Graham examines S's plans to write another Jacobite narrative and assesses the place of this fragment in Stevenson's oeuvre.

Hultgren, Neil (2014). *Melodramatic Imperial Writing. From the Sepoy Rebellion to Cecil Rhodes*. Ohio University Press.

Explores how melodrama was used both to construct and undermine the imperial story. Chapter 4, Stevenson's Melodramatic Anthropology, focuses on Stevenson in Hawaii.

Motion, Andrew (2014). 'Treasure Island: Long John Silver is a secret father figure'. *Guardian* 29 Nov 2014 and [online](#).²

Murray, Isobel (1987). 'Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Oscar Wilde'. *Durham University Journal* 79 (June 1987): 311-19.

(Not so recent, but not listed before.) Wilde admired S and JH provided him with elements to interact with (no doubt he disliked the realism and the moral judgment). In 'The Fisherman and His Soul', to the temptation of curiosity (also present in JH) is added the temptation of love and beauty; the Fisherman's Soul's order to 'smite the child' sounds like H's trampling on the girl. The relations between JH and *Dorian Gray* are closer: set in the city with a contrast between the wealthy and dingy parts, both involve the changing relationship of the protagonist and three male friends; both J and DG are increasingly confined (from increasing anxiety for J, from increasing addiction to looking at his portrait for DG); in both, a 'good' character (Lanyon, Basil, and Alan Campbell), driven by curiosity, seeks the truth about the protagonist, refuses the chance to desist and is changed by the revelation. J's cry 'I have had a lesson--O God, Utterson, what a lesson I have had!', followed by the comment 'And he covered his face for a moment with his hands' is echoed by Dorian's 'Good God, Dorian, what a lesson! What an awful lesson!', preceded by 'Then he [...] buried his face in his hands'. 'The Last Night' and the ending of DG are similar: frightened servants, breaking into the locked room and discovery of the ugly corpse. The memorable focus of J on the hand of Hyde is echoed by DG liking to place his white hand alongside the increasingly ugly hands of the portrait.

Perrotti-Garcia, Ana Julia (2014). 'As transformações de *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*: traduções, adaptações e demais refrações da obra prima de Robert Louis Stevenson' [The transformations of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*: translations, adaptations and refractions of Robert Louis Stevenson's masterpiece]. PhD thesis at the University of São Paulo, Brazil. Available [online](#).³

A study of translations, adaptations and revisions of *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* in Portuguese with a survey of interpretations. A parallel corpus of aligned texts was created and key words and passages were compared and analysed.

Pryor, Sean (2014). 'Stevenson among the Balladeers'. *Victorian Studies* 57.i (214): 33-56.

A study of S's *Ballads* (1890), in particular 'The Song of Rahéro'. The 'ballad' had connotations of ancient or naive poetics but also of sophistication and modernity; S brings together ancient and modern, naive and sophisticated, colonized and colonizer in irresolvable oppositions. The non-Pacific poems are close to ballad metre, but the two Pacific narratives are in hexameters—popular alternative form for historical/mythical narratives from diverse national traditions (e.g. Morris's *Sigurd* (1876)). S's six-beat hexameters often sound like pairs of rhythmical three-beat ballad 'half-meters', but are interrupted by long lines that 'refuse to rollick': Pryor sees the alternation as 'skilled, sophisticated prosody'. 'Rahéro' invokes the ballad's associations with primitive and the classical epic, associating Polynesia with ancient Greece. S's sophistication combines self-conscious naiveté and self-conscious complexity. He also gives coherence to the poems through 'abstract' diction (including repeated and half-repeated formulas invoking

the colloquial) which creates an abstract pattern. S's ballad 'is a mode of thinking and feeling in a time and in a place'. (See also Henville below.)

Valint, Alexandra (2015). 'The Child's Resistance to Adulthood in Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island*: Refusing to Parrot'. *English Literature in Transition, 1880-1920* 58.1 (2015): 3-29.

Dr Livesey (who has a privileged place as narrator of ch 16-18) is often seen as a positive figure, but is cruel, greedy, emotionless, and quick to punish those deemed inferior. Jim resists the doctor's version of adulthood by taking refuge in an eternal and haunted childhood. Jim's 'never-ending youth' marks him as being uninterested in and opposed to the avaricious schemes pursued by all the adults (gentlemen and pirates) around him.

Wong, Amy R. (2014). 'The Poetics of Talk in Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island*'. *SEL Studies in English Literature 1500-1900* 54.4 (Autumn 2014): 901-22.

The relationship between *Treasure Island* and S's ideas on talk and conversation. Both talking and adventuring depend on responsiveness to unpredictable interactions. *Treasure Island* aspires to translate the poetics of talk (based on vitality and openness) into a print medium: more dynamic than print typically is, yet is still ultimately incapable of talk's interactivity.



PAPERS FROM A SINGLE VOLUME 1: McCracken-Flesher, Caroline (ed.) (2013). *Approaches to Teaching the Works of Robert Louis Stevenson*. New York: MLA.

Colley, Ann C. (2013). 'Exposure and Image: A Visual Approach'. In Caroline McCracken-Flesher (ed.) (2012). 141-45.

Stevenson and his family took photos in the Pacific 1888-94: intended for his 'South Seas' book; also sent to publishers to ensure accuracy of illustrations to his works. Students can compare these photos with conventional South Seas images. Photography (representation through light and darkness) can also be taken as a metaphor to explore S's prose: the contrast of light and darkness, discontinuous and intermittent light—in his Pacific writings and earlier works (shadows, gaslight, lanterns).

Katz, Wendy R. (2013). 'The *Jekyll and Hyde* Class: Overcoming Strangeness'. In Caroline McCracken-Flesher (ed.) (2013). 146-51.

And obvious approach to JH is to examine the double, but it is important to get beyond this, and a focus on strangeness identifies an insistent keynote, as well as discouraging students from looking for easy interpretations. The text is opaque, ambiguous, indeterminate, complicated and puzzling in language and meaning. Strangeness can also be studied through gothic themes and motifs and through gender studies (the text's unsettling maleness).

Stiles, Anne. (2013). '*Jekyll and Hyde* as Science Fiction'. In Caroline McCracken-Flesher (ed.) (2013). 152-56

JH belongs less to American pulp 'science fiction' 1937-50 and more to British 'scientific romance' 1880s-1940 with its emphasis on evolutionary narratives; it also has elements of 'scientific fantasy' with its alchemical rather than chemical elements. But JH also contains realistic elements and appropriates scientific discourses of evolution and psychology, in particular feared atavism (though S more interested in the dangers of the resultant repression and hypocrisy). More relevant than Freudianism as context is

evolutionary psychology, dual brain theory and dual consciousness. JH can be seen as medical case study where the hubristic physician becomes patient.

Danahay, Martin. (2013). 'Stevenson and Adaptation: Resources and Materials'. In Caroline McCracken-Flesher (ed.) (2013). 157-61.

An overview of significant derivative works and ideas for exploitation in class. *Jekyll and Hyde*: evolution of characters and themes in adaptations, possible correlation of this to cultural anxieties; influence beyond adaptation; *JH* restaurants and bars. *Treasure Island*: importance of the 1911 Wyeth illustrations. *Kidnapped* adaptations and the 'branding' of Scotland.

Hirsch, Gordon. (2013). 'The Stevenson-Osbourne Collaboration'. In Caroline McCracken-Flesher (ed.) (2013). 162-67.

Questions to investigate about collaboration on *The Wrong Box*, *The Wrecker* and *The Ebb-Tide*: motives, results, type and extent of collaboration, contribution from Osbourne. All three works are odd and unconventional: did collaboration have anything to do with this (or more S's experiences in America and the South Seas)? Students could compare non-collaborative South Seas fiction by S and Osbourne: how do they deal with imperialism, indigenous cultures and sexuality?

Burnham Bloom, Abigail. (2013). 'Stevenson's Poetry in the Victorian Survey'. In Caroline McCracken-Flesher (ed.) (2013). 168-73.

Shares experience of teaching *Child's Garden* poems: voice, reader, view of childhood; metrical analysis; the Victorian child ('Table Rules for Children' and S's parody); complex narrator's point-of-view, naive judgements and adult irony. Links with *Dr Jekyll*: incomprehensible rules of society; complex role of narrator.

McCracken-Flesher, Caroline. (2013). 'The American Journeys in the English Survey: Breaking down the Binaries'. In Caroline McCracken-Flesher (ed.) (2013). 174-78.

I get through conventional interpretations of *The Amateur Emigrant* (age vs youth, conservative Britain vs liberal America) by presenting S struggling with cultural and literary conventions: canonical literature, pressure from family and friends, readers' expectations, publishers' demands. S's initial distant stance gradually weakens and he sees things less influenced by literary convention. The public expected the readable and amusing flâneur: the passages excised by Colvin conflict with this stance.

Rush, Leslie S.. (2013). 'Young Adult Novels for English Secondary Education Students'. In Caroline McCracken-Flesher (ed.) (2013). 179-83.

Using S's 'young adult' novels, *Treasure Island* and *Kidnapped* in training teachers: they combine the difficulty of classic texts with engaging stories for adolescents. Teaching techniques using these texts: theme sets, reading logs, gallery walk.

Hill, Richard J.. (2013). 'The Pacific Story and the Indigenous Student: "The Bottle Imp" and "The Isle of Voices" '. In Caroline McCracken-Flesher (ed.) (2013). 184-8.

Teaching 'The Bottle Imp' and 'The Isle of Voices' to students of Pacific communities. S's empathy and humanity absent from most 19C colonial writing. He adopts indigenous modes of narration, motifs and world-view, but makes them universal by combining elements of Biblical parables and the Arabian Nights as well. Unusual audience: both Anglo-American and local. He includes local references (names, words). Protagonists are indigenous; whites are marginal and malicious; stories deal with the malicious

influence of capitalism. They can be used to analyse and critique colonialism and to discuss the best way to deal with modern capitalistic culture

Riach, Alan. (2013). 'Stevenson's Short Stories in the Creative Writing Classroom'. In Caroline McCracken-Flesher (ed.) (2013). 189-94

In creative writing classes works are read without context to examine techniques and see what can be learned from them. S's short stories combine oral storytelling with literary artifice. 'Thrawn Janet' uses a contrast of standard English and Scots. These narratives can also stimulate adaptations, similar narratives, narratives inspired by them, writing to show how literature enables us to understand reality.

Goldsmith, Jason. (2013). 'Classroom and Courtroom across the Curriculum: *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*'. In Caroline McCracken-Flesher (ed.) (2013). 41-45.

A 'courtroom exercise' for 1st-year seminar with some non-humanities students: the class debates if J is guilty of the crimes of H. Prosecution and defence groups assemble evidence from the text and present their case. Students examine accountability and personal identity and draw on specific evidence.

Wickman, Matthew. (2013). 'Jekyll and Heidegger: Stevenson in the Theory Classroom'. In Caroline McCracken-Flesher (ed.) (2013). 204-8.

JH develops in multiple threads, describes radically divided existence, while Jekyll's narrative attempts to give coherence to them. Theory today involves complex negotiation of discourses and bridge-building. A seminar on Heidegger as crime fiction: focussing on misdeed (forgetting being), and conspiracy (ubiquity of metaphysics). In JH, division is a general condition, like modern loss of being. (The argument of Wickman's contribution was not really understood by this summarizer.)



PAPERS FROM A SINGLE VOLUME 2: *Journal of Stevenson Studies* (JSS) 11 (2014).

McCracken-Flesher, Caroline (2014). 'The future is another country: restlessness and Robert Louis Stevenson'. *Journal of Stevenson Studies* 11 (2014): 3-16.

S travelled to USA from a city laden with meaning to a territory he expected to be new and authentic. On one hand, however, he was to inevitably be conditioned by previous narratives, and on the other he lacked the language to describe, so understand, the new, seen as empty and unreal (even beautiful Wyoming!). California, however, is a return to the familiar and yet a sense of newness, the authentic and real. He continued to search for the shock of unfamiliarity that signals the new.

Sandison, Alan (2014). 'Remembering forward'. *Journal of Stevenson Studies* 11 (2014): 17-44.

Affinities between the aesthetics of S and those of Australian Aboriginal art. Both find energy in the inarticulable, both focus on materials and technique, with the artist 'living' the art; focus too on abstract pattern. Aboriginal art is guided by 'Dreamtime', the mythological ancestral foundations of everyday life, and is anchored in the landscape. S too defines himself against the past, explores identity of landscape and community on *Weir*, has a moral and intellectual core to his pattern-making.

Henville, Letitia (2014). 'Ballad haunting: Stevenson's "The Song of Rahéro"'. *Journal of Stevenson Studies* 11 (2014): 45-70.

S's adoption of the ballad form uses a dead genre for a people and culture that are dying, by identifying with the Tahitians (as a 'Beretani', Briton, whose Empire will disappear, and as bearer of Scottish culture and language under more immediate threat) S mourns a shared fate. For S, the ballad was associated more with conventional characters and plots (rather than metre). Here it celebrates an active and living pre-contact culture, contrasting with the passivity and death of island cultures described in ISS. By feeling a shared fate, S displays empathy.

Journal of Stevenson Studies

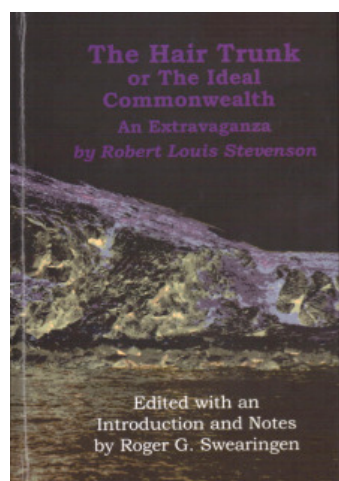
JSS can now be ordered online and paid by credit card (£15):

Go to the University of Stirling online shop
click My Account and register
From the green menu (top left-hand corner) choose Product Catalogue > Schools and Divisions > School of Arts and Humanities
Add 'Journal of Stevenson Studies' to your basket (this will be the latest number)

You can also order back numbers (£10): the contents of all numbers can be found [here](#).

Add 'Back numbers of Journal of Stevenson Studies' to your basket
The next window asks you for the volume number(s) required (for contents of back numbers, click [here](#)).⁴

Recent Editions



The Hair Trunk or the Ideal Commonwealth: An Extravaganza, ed. Roger G. Swearingen (Kilkerran: humming earth/Zeticula, 2014). Available from Amazon, UK £35, USA \$60.

The edition is based on the 1879 fair-copy MS in the Huntington Library, closely based on an earlier draft made sometime after April or early May 1877.

The story starts with five students and a mysterious friend, Blackburn, disoriented just after their period at University has ended. They hit on the idea of setting up an ideal commonwealth on the Navigator Islands, i.e. Samoa, and before that to spend the summer and winter in an island off the West coast of Scotland, sailing and preparing for the greater project. To fund this, Blackburn proposes that they appropriate a hoard of gold in a hair trunk (a horsehair-covered trunk) which he just happens to know

about. The adventure to take possession of the treasure occupies the remaining 4 chapters of the unfinished book. More information and sample pages on the [EdRLS blog](#).⁵

Ian Duncan (ed). (2014). *Kidnapped*. Oxford: Oxford University Press (Oxford World's Classics)

Based on the 1895 Cassell's edition with changes made by Stevenson. Duncan's Introduction covers 'History' (the historical events), 'Romance' (the influence of Scott) and 'Adventure' (the influence of *Kidnapped* on the adventure story). Stevenson's narrative differs from Scott in the greater emotional intensity between the protagonists and in the focus on bodily discomfort (where the historical context becomes less important).

Mario Vargas Llosa, et al. (2015). *La Isla del Tesoro. El Mapa de los Sueños*. Madrid: Ilarión Ediciones (*Graphicclassic* 2).

Not an edition of *Treasure Island* but an anthology of texts and illustrations about it—. including texts by Mario Vargas Llosa, Jodorowsky, Rosa Montero, Fernando Savater, Vazquez-Figueroa and many others. Illustrations by Fernando Vicente, Federico del Barrio, David Pintor...

Translations

Silvia Franceschini e Antonio Tozzi (transl.) (2010). *La filosofia dell'ombrello*. Prato: Piano B.

Translations into Italian of 'An Apology for idlers', 'The Characters of Dogs', 'Crabbed Age and Youth', 'The Philosophy of Umbrellas', 'Talk and talkers', 'On the Enjoyment of Unpleasant Places', 'Pulvis et Umbra'.

'An important and overlooked part of Stevenson's literary output', 'His writing, now concise, now rich in hyperbole and allusion; the style oscillating between refined and colloquial, impeccable and eclectic, the recurrent question on morality and ethics—make these essays similar to philosophical exercises, rich in the irony and vivacity of youth.'

Alice Martin (transl.) (1997). *Kävelyretkistä* [Walking Tours] Helsinki: Jack-in-the-box.

Translations into Finnish of 'Roads', 'On the Enjoyment of Unpleasant Places' and 'Walking Tours'.

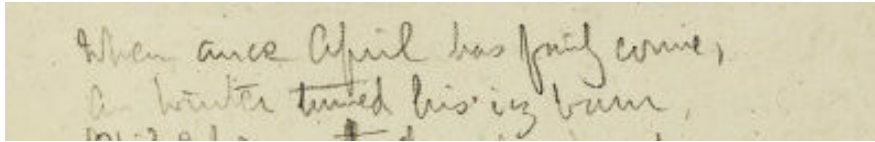
New Manuscripts

1. 1874 Notebook with pencil verse and prose drafts and law notes in ink, sold at Christie's New York 18 June 2014 (The Clark Family Treasures), lot 28.

Page 9 has a version the poem published in *Underwoods* ('In Scots', III) as:

*When aince Aprile has fairly come,
An' birds may bigg in winter's lum* [make their nests; chimney]

Here is an earlier version with a more Chaucerian second line:



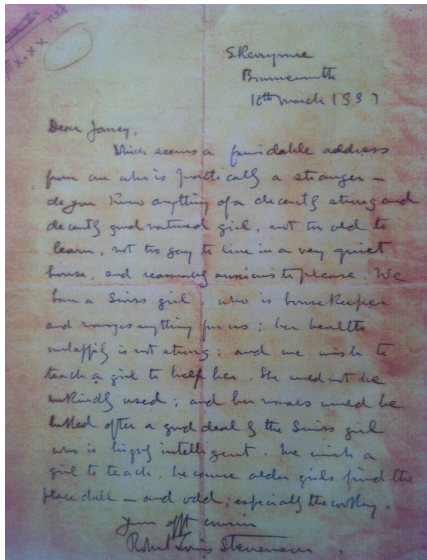
*When once April has fairly come,
An Winter turned his icy bum,*

2. Princess Kaiulani's Autograph Book, containing the poem written by Robert Louis Stevenson for her in April 1889 on the eve of her departure for England in 1889 to continue her education there. Goldberg's, New York, 30 June 2012, Sale 68 lot 195

*Forth from her land to mine she goes
The island maid, the island rose,
Light of heart and bright of face:
The daughter of a double race. [...]*

3. Emory University, Rare Book Library, Atlanta GA, Ms Coll 775 (Will David Howe, Robert Louis Stevenson Collection) box 1 folder 13: 3 page MS outline of Part IV of 'The South Seas'.

New Letter



A copy of this privately owned letter has been deposited at the Robert Louis Stevenson Cottage, Saranac Lake.

It is clearly the letter to 'Janey' of March 1887 that was sold (then lost sight of) in 1928, though in the catalogue the date is given as 18 March. It is referred to as 'the enclosed' in a short note to Maud Babington (L5, 370; Letter 1774) asking her to send it on to her sister Janey.

It is interesting to observe how, even in this letter, Stevenson likes to use the semicolon ('her health unhappily is not strong; and we wish to teach a girl to help her.').

16th March 1887

Skerryvore

Dear Janey,

Which seems a formidable address from one who is practically a stranger—do you know anything of a decently strong and decently good natured girl, not too old to learn, not too gay to live in a very quiet house, and reasonably anxious to please. We have a Swiss girl, who is housekeeper and manages everything for us; her health unhappily is not strong; and we wish to teach a girl to help her. She would not be unkindly used; and her

morals would be looked after a good deal by the Swiss girl who is highly intelligent. We wish a girl to teach, because older girls find the place dull—and odd; especially the cooking.

Your affectionate cousin

Robert Louis Stevenson

Notes

Janey: Jane Whytt Carlton Greene (Graham Green's grandmother), née Wilson, daughter of Marion Wilson née Balfour, Stevenson's aunt.

the Swiss girl: Valentine Roch who joined the Stevensons at Hyères in 1883 and spent the next six years with them 'as servant and friend' (Mehew, *Selected Letters*, 256n).

Photographs

Margaret Stevenson, 1848

Bridgeman Art Gallery and [Magnolia Box](#).⁶ No further information on this fine studio portrait, but it looks like early 1850s photographs of Stevenson's Mother. 1848 was the year of her marriage to Thomas Stevenson (28 Aug 1848)



MIS, 1854



Biographies



Elayne Wareing Fitzpatrick (2014). *Our Quixotic Robert Louis Stevenson: Noble Rascal, Expiring Wanderer, Arch Bohemian, Prince of Storytellers*. CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform (available via Amazon etc.).

'Revised and Expanded edition' of EWF's *Robert Louis Stevenson's Ethics for Rascals* (2000). Biography plus ethics and 'hints for glad living'. First sentence: 'Ill and nearly penniless after a gruelling, peer and parent-defying journey across ocean, plains, and mountains, one of the world's most beloved story-tellers arrived in Monterey, California, in late August 1879.'

Derivative works—comic books



Sébastien Vastra (script and art). *Jim Hawkins. Tome 1: Le Testament de Flint* (Roubaix, F: Ankama).

The first volume follows Stevenson's text quite closely, through the characters are anthropomorphic animals. A pleasure for the eye: Atmospheric watercolour washes and adventurous impagination.

Derivative works—prequels and sequels

Andrew Motion (2014). *The New World*. London: Jonathan Cape.

Continues where Motion's *Silver* (2012), his first sequel to *Treasure Island*, left off. Jim and Natty, only survivors of the wreck, are immediately captured by Native Americans. During their long journey through American landscapes, they encounter three different tribes: one savage, one spiritual, one tragic.

Derivative works—films

2012 *Treasure Island* (Barron)

Author: Stewart Harcourt

Director: Steve Barron

Production: RHI Entertainment (producer: Laurie Borg)

Cast: Eddie Izzard (Silver), Toby Regbo (Jim), Donald Sutherland (Flint)

Plot: some changes to the original story; Squire Trelawny (Rupert Penry-Jones) is greedy and stupid; Silver's wife comes to the Admiral Bembow fleeing from Black Dog and befriends Jim's mother; at the end, Jim throws all the treasure overboard

Notes: 2x90 min TV miniseries, first shown in the UK on Sky1 1 and 2 Jan 2012; mixed critical reception

2015 *Jekyll & Hyde* (Higson, announced)

Author: Charlie Higson

Director: Colin Teague

Production: Charlie Higson, Francis Hopkinson, Foz Allan for ITV

Plot: set in 1930s London Robert Jekyll (Henry J's grandson) goes on a quest to discover the curse left on his family, which sees him transforming into the wicked Hyde in moments of extreme anger, stress or when human life is threatened (so similar to the 2007 Jekyll). 'Jekyll is a young, sensitive and naïve man of intellect and morality, a well meaning if slightly repressed character who slips between his two personas unwillingly. Hyde is a totally different person; a superhero with super powers, great strength, speed and invulnerability. He is confident, risk-taking and lives life on the edge. His self-destructive nature gets him into trouble, and yet he is an incredibly powerful force. He is a man of action who gets things done despite the consequences!' (so this sounds like Hulk) 'Throughout the series we will witness Jekyll wrestling with the dark, brooding personality of Hyde as he struggles to come to terms with his superhero alter ego' (sounds like 2007 Jekyll again). 'Monsters will thrive throughout the series and there'll be spooky creatures, ghouls, zombies, werewolves and vampires' (N/L editor feels quite faint).

Notes: 10-part TV series

Derivative works—drama (stage and radio)

2014 Treasure Island (Sobal)

Type: clown show stage play

Author: Stephen Sobal and clowning improvisations from the actors

Director: Stephen Sobal

First performance: by Fourth Monkey Theatre Company, 1-23 August 2014, Edinburgh Festival

2014 Treasure Island (Lavery)

First performance: National Theatre, London, 3 Dec. 2014.

Interviews with writer, director, cast and Claire Harman [here](#).

2015 The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde (Noah Smith, 2014)

Type: stage play performed in deaf sign language

Author: Noah Smith

Director: Marlee Koenigsberg

First performance: June Havoc Theatre, New York City, 7 Nov. 2014

Cast: Robert DeMayo (J/H)

Notes: New York Deaf Theater production with dialogue in ASL simultaneously voiced by the actors or others.

2014 Jekyll n' Hyde: A Rap Musical (Taylor, Carr, Keyes, Hibbard)

Type: stage musical

Author: Lindsay Taylor and Mike Carr (Book), Jordan Keyes and Hans Hibbard (music and lyrics)

First performance: Orlando Fringe Festival, May 15—25, 2014

Director: Chelsea Hilend

Cast: Chris Dinger (J), Carl Krickmire (H), Max Hilend (Lanyon)

Notes: 'Something's off / Something's wrong / Something I can't put my finger on...'

2015 Jekyll & Hyde (Clifford)

Type: stage play for three actors

Author: Jo Clifford

First performance: Sell A Door Theatre company, Greenwich Theatre, 14 February 2015; then on UK tour

Director: David Hutchinson

Cast: Nathan Ives-Moiba (J/H), Lyle Barke (Utterson), Rowena Lennon (other parts)

Notes: relocates the action to steampunk future; Jekyll is a star medical researcher.

Through his experimentation with various drugs, he produces the murderous and uncontrollable Hyde. Jekyll is homosexual but was part of the movement which ensured that homosexuality was re-criminalised. Modern language is combined with phrases from Stevenson's text.

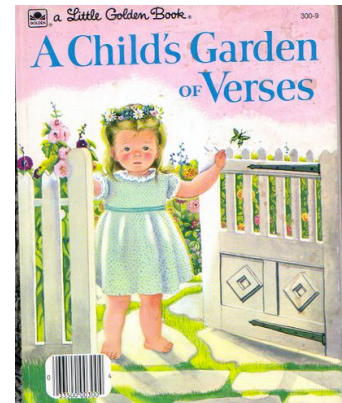
Derivative works—illustrated editions



Eloise Burns Wilkin (ill.), *A Child's Garden of Verses*. Chicago, M. A. Donahue (Little Golden Book 289), 1930.

Eloise Wilkin (née Burns) (1904-1987), illustrator of 47 Little Golden Books and many other children's books.

An edition of CGV illustrated by Burns Wilkin is listed as Little Golden Book , 493 (1957); it is not clear if this is a reissue or a totally new edition with new illustrations. The cover (left) of the 1930 edition is certainly different from that (right) of the 1957 edition, a more typical Wilkins later style.



The illustration (right), signed Eloise Burns, with its Japanese print influences - and a cheeky Singer Sargent reference in the falling shoulder

strap - could well be from the 1930 edition, made just before Burns's marriage and 10-year absence from illustration. It shows certain affinities with the Mars and Squire image from 1900 (left).



Derivative works—artefacts



'Green Days in Forests', signed print, 33cm in diameter on square sheet, £18.

This new circular print is inspired by Susan McGill's own ceramic design work. It features words by RLS ('I will build a palace, fit for you and me / With Green days in forests and blue days at sea'). The prints are in black on white paper and printed in Scotland in small batches. Each print is signed by the artist.

Also a limited edition of a companion print, 'I will Make you Brooches'. See [Susan McGill Designs](#).⁷

In the footsteps



Robert Louis Stevenson stayed in Dunoon on the outer Firth of Clyde, a small port and Victorian resort, on two occasions: the first time in his 'distant childhood', so probably in the second half of the 1850s, when he stayed at 'Rose More' (later renamed 'Park Lea') in Auchamore Road next to Auchamore Farm.

The house is now 'Parklea', 142 Auchamore Road (Google Maps wrongly labels the street Kilbride Road), 10 minutes walk from the centre of town. On his second visit in 1870 he revisited the house and was interested to see how his memory did not correspond exactly to

what he found. The 'paradise of a garden' had become a kailyard—this is probably the garden at the back, now occupied by two more recent houses. He asks himself, 'Is that little turfed slope, the huge and perilous green bank, down which I counted it a feat and the gardener a sin, to run?'—perhaps a reference to the sloping front lawn. He also refers to 'the wall on which M— and I thought it no small exploit to walk upon'—probably the front street wall. (M— could be his mother Margaret or an unknown child companion.)

In 1870, Stevenson stayed at the Argyll Hotel from 26 April to 3 May.

One of the oldest hotels in Dunoon, it is now part of the Best Western chain. On the 28 or 29 April, Stevenson had his fortune told in the coffee room by a crazy Highland woman, who predicted 'that I was to visit America, that I was to be very happy, and that I was to be much upon the sea'. Rereading this in 1887 he added a note about how much of this had come true.



Stevenson en kayak. Donatien Garnier from Bordeaux, after constructing two wooden one-sail Rob Roy canoes (baptised Vailima and Silverado), set off from Antwerp to follow Stevenson's *Inland Voyage* in the company of photographer Jean-Marie Huron on 9 September 2014.

They completed the journey in 17 days. For more information, see Garnier's [facebook page](#)⁸ and Garnier's reportage 'En kayak dans le sillage de Stevenson', *Chasse-marain* [Douarnenez] No. 267 (avril 2015), 46-57. This article explains the motivations for the project, the unforeseen incidents, the fascinating variety of chance meetings and the solidarity of other waterway -users. Like Stevenson and Simpson they were the guests of the Royal Sport Nautique in Brussels. This seems to have been the first retracing of the *Inland Voyage* route in Rob Roy canoes (kayaks with a single sail).

[Kidnapped130](#).⁹ in the summer of 2016 four Scottish athletes will follow the *Kidnapped* route 130 years after the books publication, unaided, non-stop (15-18 days) from South Queensferry round Cape Wrath and back to Edinburgh

David Duddles (ed.) & Craig Duddles (photography) (2008). *Silverado Squatters in Pictures*. Chapel Hill, NC: Blue Pylon Creative. 2013, [lulu.com e-book version](#).¹⁰

Selections from *The Silverado Squatters* with accompanying photographs.

Critical reception—influence on other writers

John Buchan's 'Sing a Song of Sixpence', a tale in *The Runagates Club*, has an epigraph from 'A Gossip on Romance':

The effect of night, of any flowing water, of lighted cities, of the peep of day, of ships, of the open ocean, calls up in the mind an army of anonymous desires and pleasures. Something, we feel, should happen; we know not what, yet we proceed in quest of it.

R. L. Stevenson

Anna Buchan (John Buchan's sister), writing as O. Douglas, has three references to RLS (two of them to essays) in her epistolary novel *Olivia in India* (1913). Olivia goes out to India to visit her brother and on her travels writes to a male friend at home.

Travelling to India, the seasick Olivia writes, alluding to 'Pastoral': 'I don't even care to read any of the books I brought with me, except now and then a page or two of *Memories and Portraits*. It comforts me to read of such steady, quiet places as the Pentland Hills and of the decent men who do their herding there.

While in India Olivia writes to thank her young man correspondent for a Christmas present: 'Very many thanks for the book you sent me. You couldn't possibly have given me anything I like better. Somehow, I have never possessed a copy of *A Child's Garden of Verses*, and this one, so exquisitely, specially bound, will be a great treasure. ... We had what R.L.S. calls a "covenanting childhood". ...'

On receiving a proposal of marriage from the young man Olivia replies, quoting from 'Virginibus Puerisque II': "There is one thing I want to say to you. You know what Robert Louis says about married men? – that there is no wandering in pleasant by-paths for them, that the road lies long and straight and dusty to the grave. It dulls me to think of it. Don't feel that. Don't let it be true. We mustn't let our lives be dusty and straight and narrow."

In ch. 5 of Irène Némirovsky's *Les chiens et les loups* (1940), Ada imagines all the children leaving to live in another country together: 'C'était le petit matin. Ou, mieux encore, la nuit noire, sans une lumière; tout dort, et, de chaque maison, sortent les enfants [...], et chaque porte une lanterne sourde (cela, c'était le point le plus important) chachée sous son manteau.'

This seems very close to the following passage in 'The Lantern-Bearers' (similar words have been italicized): '*the nights were already black, we would begin to sally from our respective villas, each equipped with a tin bull's-eye lantern. [...] We wore them buckled to the waist upon a cricket belt, and over them, such was the rigour of the game, a buttoned top-coat. [...] The essence of this bliss was to walk by yourself in the black night; the slide shut, the top-coat buttoned.*' Even the 'lanterne sourde' (dark lantern) seems to echo the lantern with 'the slide shut'. This essay is certainly one of those that has appealed many to other writers.

Stuart Paterson, blogging from Grez sur Loing

Stuart Paterson, poet and Stevenson Fellow 2014, has written some blog reports of his time at Grez, interspersed with poems.

[It all began late last year](#)¹¹

[Tuned in](#)¹²

[Things I've Learned in France](#)¹³

[Happy Birthday, Mr Stevenson](#)¹⁴

Here's the ending of '[On the Occasion of Robert Louis Stevenson's 164th Birthday](#)'

Tonight, Louis, we'll show them who's boss,
Slap imaginary shoulders, put right the world
To when it was, down Normandy Calvados
And when midnight comes walk to the old bridge,

Drink the river, unpaint the moon,
Meet each other this beautiful side of never.

‘Nitor aquis’ noch einmal, one more time again

In the Newsletter 2006.10 we quoted RLS’s letter of December 1879:

I have that peculiar and delicious sense of being born again in an expurgated edition which belongs to convalescence. It will not be for long; I hear the breakers roar; I shall be steering head first for another rapid before many days; nitor aquis, said a certain Eton boy, translating for his sins a part of the *Inland Voyage* into Latin elegiacs; and from the hour I saw it, or rather a friend of mine, the admirable Jenkin, saw and recognised its absurd appropriateness, I took it for my device in life. I have *knighted* with the waters steadily since I was nineteen, and the great billows have gone over my soul [...] I am going for thirty now, and unless I can snatch a little rest before long, I have [...] no hope of seeing thirty-one.[...] I may be wrong: but if the *knighting* is to continue, I believe I must go...’(L3, 32)

The problems are: 1. which passage could it be, 2. what does ‘nitor aquis’ mean, and 3. why is it absurdly appropriate?

In subsequent discussions and contributions, it was thought that the passage could be ‘The stream ran away with my heels...’ (from in the ‘Oise in Flood’ chapter).

Translations of ‘nitor aquis’ offered were ‘I am pressed down by the waters’ and ‘I struggle against the waters’ (the latter supported by ‘I have *knighted* [=nit-ed] with the waters’ meaning ‘I have struggled’).

The ‘absurd appropriateness’ maybe from the use of two words to translate the seventeen: ‘The stream ran away with my heels as fast as I could pull up my shoulders, and I seemed, by the weight, to have all the water of the Oise in my trousers-pockets.’

Now Mafalda Cipollone (who, as a curator at the Umbria Archaeological Museum, has to interpret Latin in her daily activities) writes:

The verb ‘nitor’ makes me think more of a passivity, letting oneself be carried away by the water against which one can offer no resistance. The Ancients would have liked this as a symbol of the journey to the afterlife: Egyptians, Greeks and Etruscans all saw this as a journey across water. I’m not totally convinced by the story of the water in the trouser-pockets.

And in her [blog post](#),¹⁵ she suggests as a translation ‘I consign myself to the waters’. In support of this translation, the Lewis and Short Latin-English dictionary has

II.A ‘to strive’, and
II.B ‘to rest, rely, depend upon’

Although ‘*knighted* with the waters’ must mean ‘struggled with the waters’, Stevenson later uses the phrase in a mock (but prophetic) epitaph for himself (L3: 66-7):

Robert Louis Stevenson
[...]
died - - - - -
—
‘Nitor Aquis’
—

Home is the sailor, home from sea,
And the hunter home from the hill.

In this context, 'Nitor Aquis' must mean something like 'I consign myself to the waters', as Mafalda suggests.

With this in mind, the 'absurd appropriateness' may be the oddly competing translations of 'I struggle against the waters' and 'I rest on / I consign myself to the waters' and perhaps the impossibility of doing the latter without the former, or life being a combination of the two. It also brings back another candidate for the the passage referred to, a passage from the same chapter:

'The canoe was like a leaf in the current. It took it up and shook it, and carried it masterfully away, like a Centaur carrying off a nymph....'

Here, 'the canoe was like a leaf on the current' could be summarized as 'I was supported by the waters'. And surely this passage is more in the style of Latin poetry and has a classical allusion and would therefore an appropriate choice for translation.

Etc.



Building with *Kidnapped* associations under threat of demolition.

Kingairloch estate plans to replace the manse, later school and schoolhouse at Camusnacroise, Kingairloch, with a modern version to much the same scale. The Highland Council planning committee says it cannot refuse the plans because the building is not listed by Historic Scotland.

In Stevenson's novel, David Balfour meets the catechist, Mr. Henderland, on the shore of Loch Linnhe, who 'proposed that I should make a short stage, and lie the night in his house a little beyond Kingairloch. ... Accordingly we shook hands upon the bargain, and came in the afternoon to a small house, standing alone by the shore of the Linnhe Loch. The sun was already gone from the desert mountains of Ardgour upon the hither side, but shone on those of Appin on the farther; the loch lay as still as a lake, only the gulls were crying round the sides of it; and the whole place seemed solemn and uncouth.' The house is in the right solemn and uncouth position and is of similar size to the one sketched in *Kidnapped*.

The only other detail Stevenson gives us is this: 'Before we went to bed he offered me sixpence to help me on my way, out of a scanty store he kept in the turf wall of his house': does this mean the house was made of turf, or that there was a stack of turf along a wall of the interior? (If the former, then the present stone house cannot be identified with it.)

Scottish Book Trust have announced the winners of the 2015 RLS Scholarships: writer Lynsey May (32), writer, director and translator Alan McKendrick (35), poet and playwright Michael Pedersen (30) and debut author Malachy Tallack (34).

Each Fellowship consists of a month-long writing residency at the Hôtel Cheillon International Arts Centre at Grez-sur-Loing in France together with travel and living expenses.

Social media



Twitter: [R.L. Stevenson](#)¹⁶ — 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](#)¹⁷ collects images, video clips etc. flagged by Twitter [twitter.com/@RLSte](#) or posted on Flickr.

Pinterest: The very active Silverado [RLS Museum](#)¹⁸ 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](#):¹⁹ Mafalda Cipollone's blog of the most interesting letters with relevant illustrations and video clips.

New members

Flora Benkhodja (flora dot benkhodja at gmail dot com), is an English teacher in Paris who is presently working on a doctoral thesis ("Narrative voices, manuscripts and writing strategies in Robert Louis Stevenson's novels and short stories"). She writes 'My first contact with RLS was when I read *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*', and it immediately triggered my interest. The more I read RLS's stories, the more fascinated I was (and continue to be) by the great number of documents in the stories (letters, manuscripts, contracts) and their functions – all these papers being continually lost, misread, buried and excavated, making RLS an actual "body snatcher" when it comes to the body of the text. I am also interested in the motif of the hand in RLS's fiction in general, and the importance of handwriting.'

Thanks to

Elizabeth Baird, Neil Macara Brown, Marina Dossena, Donatien Garnier, Pam Horton, Antonio J. Iriarte, Christian König, John Macfie, Eleanor Mckay

Richard Dury
RLS Site

www.robert-louis-stevenson.org

Nothing in RLS Site Newsletter is copyright unless indicated by ©. Please feel free to download it, store it electronically whole or in part, copy and paste parts of it, and forward it to colleagues.

If you wish to be removed from this mailing list, send the message 'Please remove from RLS list' to xrichard.dury@gmail.com (remove X before mailing)

Endnotes: URLs not given in text:

- ¹ <http://www.abc.net.au/radio/programitem/pe0EDnn1gD?play=true>
- ² <http://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2014/nov/29/treasure-island-long-john-silver-is-a-secret-father-figure>
- ³ <http://www.teses.usp.br/teses/disponiveis/8/8147/tde-06042015-191813/pt-br.php>
- ⁴ <http://www.robert-louis-stevenson.org/documents/jss/jss-article-index.pdf>
- ⁵ <https://edrls.wordpress.com/2014/09/08/stevensons-the-hair-trunk-published/>
- ⁶ <http://www.magnoliabox.com/art/387668/margaret-stevenson-1848>
- ⁷ <http://www.susanmcgilldesigns.com/product-art-prints/susan-mcgill-designs-fife-scottish-art-prints-make-you-brooches.html>
- ⁸ <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Stevenson-en-kayak/627799503936725?fref=ts>
- ⁹ <http://www.kidnapped130.com/>
- ¹⁰ <http://www.lulu.com/shop/david-duddles-and-robert-louis-stevenson/silverado-squatters-in-pictures/ebook/product-20706626.html>
- ¹¹ <http://www.glasgowwestend.co.uk/it-all-began-late-last-year-stuart-paterson-blogging-from-grez-sur-loing/>
- ¹² <http://www.glasgowwestend.co.uk/tuned-in/>
- ¹³ <http://www.glasgowwestend.co.uk/things-ive-learned-in-france/>
- ¹⁴ <http://www.glasgowwestend.co.uk/happy-birthday-mr-stevenson/>
- ¹⁵ <https://lettersofrobertlouisstevenson.wordpress.com/2015/01/07/can-i-make-some-one-happier-this-day-before-i-lie-down-to-sleep/>
- ¹⁶ <https://twitter.com/RLSte>
- ¹⁷ <http://rlsnippets.tumblr.com/>
- ¹⁸ <http://pinterest.com/rlsmuseum/>
- ¹⁹ <http://lettersofrobertlouisstevenson.wordpress.com/>