

RLS Site Newsletter

Recent additions to the RLS site

Year 15

No. ii

13 November 2015

I was born [...] within the bounds of an earthly city, illustrious for her beauty, her tragic and picturesque associations, and for the credit of some of her brave sons. [...] I can still behold the profile of her towers and chimneys, and the long tail of her smoke against the sunset; I can still hear those strains of martial music that she goes to bed with, ending each day like an act of an opera, to the notes of bugles; still recall, with a grateful effort of memory, any one of a thousand beautiful and specious circumstances that pleased me, and that must have pleased anyone, in my half remembered past. It is the beautiful that I thus recall; the august air of the castle on its rock, nocturnal passages of lights and trees, the sudden song of a blackbird in a suburban lane, rosy and dusky with winter sunset, the uninhabited splendour of the early dawn, the building up of the city, on a misty day, house above house, spire above spire, until it was received into a sky of softly glowing clouds, and seemed to pass on and upwards, by fresh grades and rises, city behind city, a new Jerusalem, bodily scaling heaven.

(‘Random Memories [Childhood in Edinburgh]’, NLS MS 3112, f 304)



New look
for the RLS
website,
p. 2



Bulgarian
*Treasure
Island*, p. 11



“a certain
handsome scamp
of a diver”, p. 14

RLS Day 2015

Stevenson’s Birthday is being celebrated round the world on 13 November. The main centre is in Edinburgh, but the first to celebrate are those in Samoa; the following message comes from Jim Winegar of the RLS Museum at Vailima:

November 13 is a memorable day for STEVENSONIANS. We acknowledge it with healthy remembrance and gratitude for his life, his contributions, his passion and his exemplary character. To repeat an oft-quoted description of his influence, we are indeed “happier for his presence.”

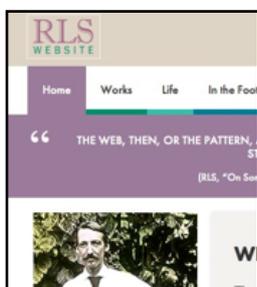
HAPPY BIRTHDAY TUSITALA. Ia Manuia Lou Aso Fanau.

For the Edinburgh programme, see the [city of literature website](#),¹ with events from 9 to 15 November.



One of the many Edinburgh events: a screening of Howard Blake's musical animation 'The Land of Counterpane'

RLS Site



The RLS Website has been renewed: it has a new, more spacious look and is easier to navigate. Many thanks to Callum Egan for his good work on this.

Not all the pages have been inserted yet (so there are titles on some menus without live links), but they will be! Let us know of any snags.

EdRLS:

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



In production (to be published in 2016): *Essays I: Virginibus Puerisque and Other Papers* edited by Robert-Louis Abrahamson, and *Weir of Hermiston* edited by Gillian Hughes.

Close behind: *Fables. Island Nights' Entertainments* edited by William Gray.

Not too far behind: *Essays IV: Uncollected Essays and Book Reviews 1868-79* edited by Richard Dury; *Essays III: Memories and Portraits* edited by Alex Thomson; *The Dynamiter* edited by Penny Fielding.

Our principal funding unfortunately came to an end in September 2015 so we are now proceeding very slowly with the production process (any financial help will be most gratefully received). We have applied for new funding from September 2016, but this is still in the lap of the gods. Follow our blog at <https://edrls.wordpress.com/>.²

Conferences

RLS2017: The planned conference for 2016 unfortunately had to be cancelled, but Prof. Linda Dryden has gallantly accepted to organize the next RLS Conference at Edinburgh Napier University in late June/early July 2017. Many thanks to Linda.

Journal of Stevenson Studies 12

JSS 12 (2015) has just been published; here is the table of contents:

Carla Manfredi, 'Robert Louis Stevenson's and Joseph Strong's "A Samoan Scrapbook"'

Jan Gorak, 'Stevenson's Samoa and the metamorphoses of power'

Sylvie Largeaud-Ortége, 'Robert Louis Stevenson's "voyage of discovery" in *The Beach of Falesá* (1893): an exploration of Pacific history and culture'

Lucio De Capitani, 'The playwright, the moralist and the poet: a Brechtian reading of Stevenson's writings on François Villon'

Duncan Milne, 'Realism and romance: Henry James, Robert Louis Stevenson and the Victorian literary form'

Brian Wall, "'The Situation was apart from ordinary laws": culpability and insanity in the urban landscape of Robert Louis Stevenson's London'

Stuart A. Paterson, 'Tuned in to Radio RLS: "Tacot des Lacs" and "On the occasion of Robert Louis Stevensons 164th birthday"'

Neil Macara Brown, 'Yogi in the woods: reading *The Master* between the pines'

Uncollected Stevenson (4): 'Wallace's *Russia*'

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):

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](#)).³

Recent Studies

Capuano, Peter J. (2015). *Changing Hands: Industry, Evolution, and the Reconfiguration of the Victorian Body*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2015. 'Jekyll and Hyde's Strange Handwriting', 230-36.

JH can be seen in a context of late 19C fiction in which a close link of identity and handwriting often formed part of narrative structure (e.g. Nemo in *Bleak House* and Helen Maddon in *Lady Audley's Secret*). The repeated 'illegibility' of Hyde's face focusses attention on his hands: though Enfield 'can make no hand' of his appearance, Utterson can 'read Satan's signature' in his face. Contemporary readers were informed about graphology, so Hyde's backward sloping writing would have been seen as an index of weak character, and the similarity of the writing of Jekyll and Hyde and the ability of each to imitate the writing of the other would have given the first suspicion of their relationship. At the same time, the bodily hands of the two characters are troublingly different.

Chem, Mingyuan, Carlos Fonseca, Laura Mcaleese, Alba Morollón Díaz-Faes, Elizabeth Nicholas, and Robyn Pritzker (2015). *Decyphering the Dynamiter. A Study in Authorship Attribution*. University of Edinburgh [Website](#).⁴

A report (clearly presented, on an elegant website) of a stylometric analysis, aimed at understanding the contribution of Fanny Stevenson to *The Dynamiter*. (Stylometrics is methodology of quantifying and analysing textual features in order to attribute authorship.) The results suggest that Fanny either wrote 'The Destroying Angel' and 'The Fair Cuban', as she says, but Stevenson edited them so heavily that his footprint became more defined than hers, or she invented and told the stories and Stevenson actually wrote them down. The study incidentally shows Stevenson's important change in style in his Pacific fiction (collected in Roslyn Jolly's *South Seas Tales*); and an additional finding is that Fanny's 1891 tale 'The Half-White', though close to her other works in theme and characterization, is closer her husband's work in stylometric analysis.

Colman, Adam (2015). 'The Optative Movement of *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde's* Addicts'. *Extrapolation* 56.ii: 215-34.

In *JH*, the actions of addiction and obsession are accompanied by optative language ('I should like' etc.).

Higgins, David George (2015). 'Robert Louis Stevenson within Imperial precincts: a study of literary boundaries and marginalised voices'. PhD thesis, University of Glasgow.

Starting with a study of Stevenson's reception in the twentieth century, Higgins looks at S's attention to marginalized groups (from his early interest in the Covenanters onwards). *Treasure Island* anticipates his anti-colonial fiction by making the 'higher' figures on the same plane as the pirates, just as Jekyll and his colleagues contain the dejected Hyde. *The Master of Ballantrae* is set in a globalized imperial system. Both 'Falesá' and *Cartriona* criticize Empire and show concern for marginalized causes. The thesis ends with a chapter traces analogies of Stevenson, Conrad and Graham Greene as critics of the colonial world, followed by a chapter on film versions of S's novels, works which perhaps influenced an exclusion from the literary canon because they emphasized simple adventure narratives. [Abstract and pdf](#).⁵

Holmes, Morgan (2015). 'Bagpipe Nation: Ancient Charm and Terror in Nineteenth-Century Scotland', Nineteenth Century Studies Association, annual conference, Boston 26-28 March 2015.

In 19C bagpipes began to be made of exotic wood (now the norm); but the indigenous bagpipes made of Scottish woods imagined by Stevenson (*Kidnapped* ch. 25) and Donald MacDonald (*A Collection of the Ancient Martial Music of Caledonia*, c. 1819) complicate and enrich normative definitions of Scottish identity in ways that coincide with Stevenson's urging of us (in 'Pan's Pipes') to attend to the goat-footed piper's 'uncouth, outlandish strain throughout the web of the world.'

Lentano, Francesco (2015). 'Lo strano caso del signor Imputato e del dottor Giudice'. Blog [Giustizia a strisce](#)⁶ 13 Aug 2015.

Looks at the first comicbook version (from 1943) of *Dr Jekyll and Hyde* in the *Classics Illustrated* series, and its addition of policemen and a court scene with Hyde before a judge. The blog is related to the exhibition with the same title in Catania, April-May 2015, dedicated to how judges are portrayed in comic books and strips.

Nodelman, Perry (1983). 'Searching for *Treasure Island*'. In Douglas Street (ed.) (1983). *Classic Children's Novels and the Movies* (New York: Ungar). 58-68.

(Not recent, but not previously listed.) A review and perceptive appraisal of movie versions of *Treasure Island*. Praises the Disney version with Robert Newton. Pdf available at [academia.com](#).⁷

Smith, Andrew (2004). *Victorian Demons; Medicine, Masculinity and the Gothic at the Fin De Siècle* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004)

Concentrating on scientific discourse and degeneration theory, Smith deals with *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* in the Introduction, in ch. 1 ('Degeneration, masculinity, nationhood and the Gothic'), and ch. 3 ('The Whitechapel murders: journalism, Gothic London and the medical gaze').

Welch, Bryan (2015). 'Robert Louis Stevenson and Samuel Lloyd Osbourne their partnership and their bookplates'. *The Bookplate Journal* ns 13. 1 (Spring 2015): 9-15.

Moral Emblems and The Graver and the Pen; Stevensons' bookplates.

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

Jaëck, Nathalie (2014), 'Kidnapping the historical novel in Stevenson's *Kidnapped*: an act of literary and political resistance'. *JSS* 11 (2014): 87-104.

In the dedication, *Kidnapped* is presented as entertainment—yet S had more serious literary and political aims: 1. a daring formal experiment with the historical novel where adventurous wanderings replace causal time. 2. a re-appropriation of the colonized Highlands. The mainly blank map serves these two aims: corresponding to the exploratory, open literary project, and erasing the marks of colonial history: a map of resistance not control. The map is deliberately inaccurate (placing the Torran rocks near Earraid), it lacks interpretative instructions or coordinates, and the line showing David's journey goes off the map—reinforcing the incompleteness of the text—and is dotted in part to show uncertainty. S abandons accuracy provocatively in the historical novel—despite his historical research. Several versions of post-45 history, in a process of narrative proliferation, are supplied by David, Alan, Henderland and Rankeillor. History is transposed to literature—gothic novel, picaresque novel, ballad, epic, adventure story—

and time is no longer the ordered and linear retrospective and final closure of Scott, but the moment of imminent future of the adventure and ends in a state of unresolved tension. Politically, the colonization of the Highlands is countered by a re-appropriation of space and a return to native language. David and Alan evade English control by superior native knowledge of their territory. In their walk through occupied territory, they 'rewrite an alternative story of Scotland'

Prosser, Ashleigh (2014). "His bachelor house": the unhomey home of the *fin de siècle's* bourgeois bachelor in Robert Louis Stevenson's *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*. *JSS* 11 (2014): 105-126.

Middle-class 'domesticity' had developed in opposition to the city, the home became an idealized space uniting the masculine and feminine. In JH, this is challenged by the homes of an interconnected group of middle-class men without women. These men are isolated; the hearth reflects anxieties. Hyde, frequently described as a gentleman, has a house in the lower-class area of Soho, which combines luxury with emptiness and a troubling housekeeper. Jekyll's house is also uncanny: a respectable front but dingy surroundings, an uncanny threshold and a contrasted back entrance. In the final private space, the cabinet, 'the homely and unhomey shockingly collide': the comforting hearth and comfortable feminine domesticity coexist with a lifelessly empty space, troubling mirror and a dead body. S's 'uncannily homely and unhomey bachelor spaces' are a 'chronotype', an organising centre of the novella.

Beattie, Hilary J. (2014). 'Fanny Osbourne Stevenson's fiction: "The Nixie" in context'. *JSS* 11 (2014): 127-50.

Fanny Osbourne published two fairy tales in *St Nicholas*: 'Too Many Birthdays', 1878, and 'Chy Lung, the Chinese Fisherman', 1880; in 1887 S insinuated that William Dean Howells may have plagiarized the second (L5: 379-80), already showing quickness to a perceived affront concerning her literary career. 'Sargent's Rodeo' (*Lippincott's Magazine* (1880)) was about cattle ranching near Monterey and illustrated by Joe Strong. 'The Shadow in the Bed' was sent by Henley to the *Cornhill* and *Longman's* and by RLS to *Blackwoods*—all to no avail; it was finally accepted by *Belgravia* under the title 'The Warlock's Shadow'. It is a 'Gothic melodrama of the American West [...] told in an earnest, pedestrian manner'. Parts of setting and characters seem echoed in S's 'Olalla' and a phrase in *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*. Fanny's stories in *The Dynamiter* ('The Destroying Angel' and 'Story of the Fair Cuban') are again fantastic New World adventures and prefigure elements in S's fiction. 'Miss Pringle's Neighbours' was published by *Scribner's Magazine*—sent in by S and published under the name of Mrs Robert Louis Stevenson. 'The Nixie' (inspired by Katerine De Mattos' 'Watersprite') was again sent in by S to *Scribner's Magazine*; it is 'mediocre but its themes and imagery are striking'—a product of the shifting relationship of S and two rival women in his life. The 'Nixie' quarrel involved an outburst of narcissistic rage from S, who later admitted Fanny had gone too far (L6: 172). 'The Hanging Judge'—a play taken over from S and Henley—is 'clumsily constructed', with wooden dialogue. 'The Half-white' was again sent by S to *Scribner's Magazine* (1891); it has 'another convoluted, melodramatic plot'.

F's real talent was in her diaries (in which she reveals a longing for respect and independence). Her narrative talents were modest; her stories reflect her personal and marital conflicts; S's 'Olalla' may have originated in their shared imaginings.

Recent Editions

Martin Danahay (ed.) (2015). *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (3rd edition 2015). Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview Press.

The 3rd edition adds an appendix on the Victorian gentleman, updates bibliographies and corrects some errors.

Illustrated editions



Lazlo Matulay (ill.), Gwyn Jones (intro.) (1954). *The Treasure of Franchard* (Emmaus, PA/London: Rodale Press).

Lazlo Matulay (1812-1999), Hungarian-American designer, illustrator, fine art painter and educator; the first artistic director at Rodale Inc. in Emmaus. Gwyn Jones may be Gwyn Jones, Professor of English at Aberystwith (1940-64).

'I lead you,' he would say, 'by the green pastures. My system, my beliefs, my medicines, are resumed in one phrase—to avoid excess.'

Translations

Iván Hernández Arbeláez (transl.). *Juego de niños y otros ensayos* (Bogotá, Colombia: Grupo Editorial Norma).

Four essays from *Virginibus Puerisque* and three others: *Juego de niños*, *Del enamorarse*, *Carta a un joven que se dispone abrazar la carrera del arte*, *Los libros que han influido en mí*, *Un periódico escolar*, *Caminatas*, *Apología del ocio*.

Javier Escobar Isaza (transl.). *El extraño caso del Dr. Jekyll y Mr. Hyde* (Bogotá, Colombia: Carvajal Educación).

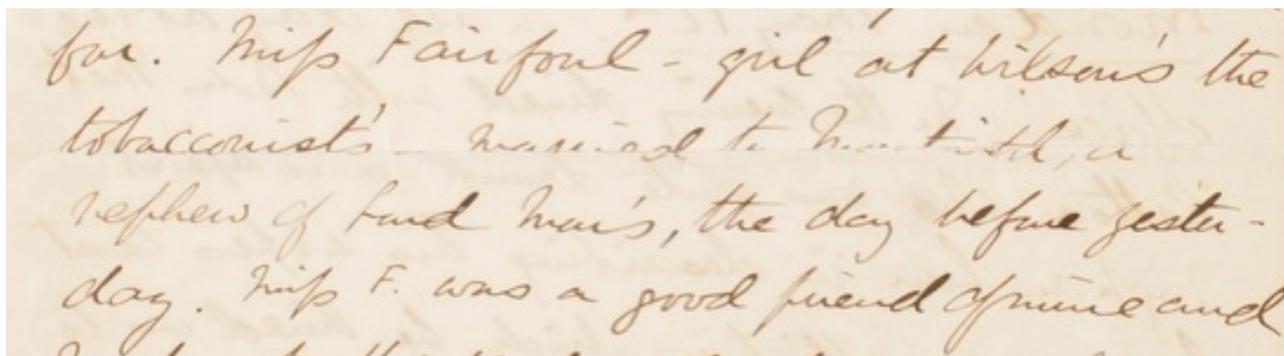
Both this and the above are original translations made and published in Columbia, interesting indication of the vitality of cultural life there.

New Manuscripts

Edinburgh Journal 1872: 4 folios of an occasional diary of six entries (May, July 1872). Sold at Sotheby's, New York, 2 December 2014, Lot 138. Purchaser not known.

This is from the period when S was getting experience in an Edinburgh law firm, Messrs. Skene and Peacock, Writers to the Signet. The journal s was previously transcribed by

William Harris Arnold, in '[My Stevenson's](#)',⁸ *Scribner's Magazine* 71 (1922), 54-5, and in part in [Bafour's biography](#)⁹ (1901), I, 107-09.



for. Miss Fairfoul - girl at Wilson's the
tobacconist's - married to Mr. Montith, a
nephew of Lord Mar's, the day before yester-
day. Miss F. was a good friend of mine and

Transcription: for. Miss Fairfoul [notice long-and-short-s] - girl at Wilson's the tobacconist's-
married to Mr. Montith, a nephew of Lord Mar's, the day before yesterday. Miss F. was a
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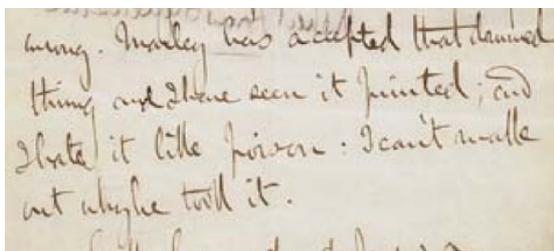
New Letters

Letter, sold by [Swann](#) of New York 23 May 2013, Sale 2316 Lot 245; written to Mr Dick, the chief clerk of the Stevenson engineering partnership, on Savile Club stationery and looking back to earlier days at the club; he says that 'All here in great satisfaction about General Robert's success' and thanks him for a book, explaining that '[M]y purpose was to get scraps of law latin for a character'

Not in the Yale letters, where the first letter to Mr Dick is July 1882 (L3, 339) and the last is July 1887 (L5, 434). What book could this be? *Kidnapped*?

Letter, sold by [Swann](#) of New York 3 Nov 2011, Sale 2259 Lot 275; written to Thomas G. Legatt 28 Dec 1892.

The Yale letters has sentences from this letter transcribed from an auction catalogue (L7, 457).



many. Marley has accepted that damned
thing and I have seen it printed; and
I hate it like poison: I can't write
out why he told it.

Letter, sold by [Swann](#) of New York 14 November 2002, Sale 1952 Lot 285; written to Sidney Colvin, c. 23 May 1874, referring to his first book review review 'Lord Lytton's *Fables in Verse*' as 'that damned thing'. Stevenson refers to reading the first proofs to Fanny Sitwell with the same feelings on 23 May (L2, 11).

Not in the Yale letters. It starts 'You are so regular a correspondent, that the slightest failure astonishes: you have all the weight of too good a character upon you; and so because you have been four days in answering my letter, I begin to tell myself all sorts of gloomy reasons why. I hope there is nothing wrong.' After the mention of his article being accepted, he continues 'Look here do drop us a line. I have got nervous about it somehow, and try to find out all manner of causes of offence that I could have given you; but you have only to name it and I will go through any humiliation you choose to stipulate. Do write, I say; I am put out somehow.'

This fits in with a letter shortly afterwards that Mehew estimates as ?4 June 1874, which begins 'Many thanks for your letter. I had got somehow unhinged about your silence' (L2, 18).

Life—dramatizations

Foster, John (2015). *The Weevil in the Biscuit*.

Stevenson's creative struggle in writing the Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde while living at Skerryvore in Bournemouth. First performed by Doppelganger Productions in Bournemouth in August 2015 and then in Dorset October-November 2015. For performance venues and dates, see [here](#).¹⁰

Derivative works—music

Louise Welsh (libretto), Stuart MacRae (music) (2016). *The Devil Inside*. Scottish Opera and Music Theatre Wales, première in Glasgow, January 2016. Will tour to Edinburgh and on to a further 11 locations south of the border.

A full-length opera for four voices based on 'The Bottle Imp'. It follows a couple, James (Ben McAteer) and Catherine (Rachel Kelly) whose lives fall apart after they achieve happiness with the contents of a supernatural bottle.

Gary Carpenter (2014). *The Lamplighter: Four songs for children's choir and piano or orchestra* (Camden Music).

The Lamplighter, Escape At Bedtime, Marching Song (Young Night Thought), The Moon (& Coda - Time To Rise). Commissioned by Vacation Chamber Orchestra. Soundcloud link: <https://soundcloud.com/gary-carpenter/sets/the-lamplighter>

Jason Hook, Ivan Moody and Five Finger Death Punch (2015), 'Jekyll and Hyde'. *Got Your Six*.

The lead single from the Los Angeles heavy metal band Five Finger Death Punch's sixth studio album, *Got Your Six*. The chorus (the grace of the music perfectly matching the beauty of the words): 'Oh, yo, yo, there's a demon inside / Oh, yo, yo, just like Jekyll and Hyde / Oh, yo, yo, all this anger inside / Oh, yo, yo, I feel like Jekyll and Hyde'. This seems in the tradition of the Hyde-inspired figure of Hulk and the Hyde of *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*. Scroll down [this page](#)¹¹ for streaming audio of the song.

Derivative works—films

Jekyll and Hyde (Higson, 2015)

Director: Charlie Higson

Screenplay: Charlie Higson

Production: ITV

Cast: Tom Bateman (Robert Jekyll/Mr Hyde)

Notes: 10-part TV series of an updated Jekyll story: The series is set in 1930s London, and will focus on the grandson of the doctor; Hyde resembles the comic-book Hulk (strong, invulnerable, but out of control). First broadcast starting from 25 Oct 2015.

Derivative works—drama (stage and radio)

The Strange Case of Jekyll and Hyde (Pearson, 2015)

Type: Stage play (educational)

Author: Morna Pearson

First performance: Lung Ha Theatre Company and Drake Music Scotland at the Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh, 19 March 2015

Notes: Lung Ha is a theatre company of and for young people with learning disabilities; the story is set in Edinburgh New and Old Towns and includes Jekyll's wife and daughter.

The Strange Case of Jekyll and Hyde (MacDougall and Seierup, 2015)

Type: aerial performance, music and dance

Author: Lucien MacDougall and Benedicte Seierup

First performance: 3 Nov 2015, Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, Glasgow

2015 Hyde (Van Pelt and Golden, 2015)

Type: stage play

Author: Beverly Van Pelt and Patrick R. Golden

Director: Kelsey Posey

First performance: 16 Oct 2015, Paper Wing Theatre, Monterey

Cast: Larry Oblander II (J), Patrick Golden (H)

Notes: 'a completely new work based on the themes of Stevenson's classic'

Kidnapped (McClaren, 2015)

Type: aerial performance, music and dance

Author: Graham McLaren

First performance: 3 Nov 2015, Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, Glasgow

Treasure Island (Zimmerman, 2015)

Type: stage play

Author: Mary Zimmerman

First performance: Lookingglass Theatre, Chicago, 17 Oct 2015

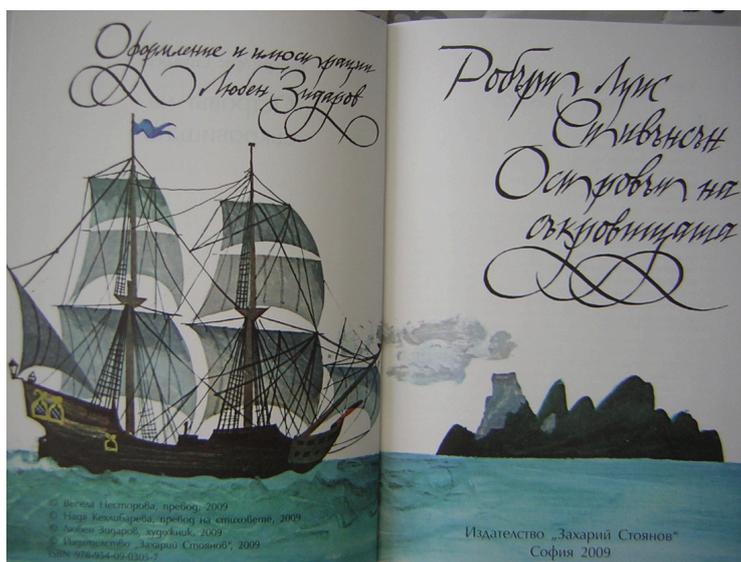
Director: Mary Zimmerman

Cast: John Babbo (Jim), Lawrence E. DeStasi (Silver)

Notes: Mary Zimmerman has won Tony awards for her adaptations of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, and the *Arabian Nights*

Derivative works—illustrated editions

Lyuben Zidarov (ill.) (1977). *Островът на съкровищата* [*Treasure Island*] (Sofia: Narodna Mladezh). Cover and 27 colour plates. New edition 2009 with partly new or reworked illustrations (Sofia: Zaharii Stoyanov).



Zidarov's 2009 title page spread

This was the third Bulgarian edition of *Treasure Island*. The first was published in 1945 with the George Roux illustrations from 1885; for the second (Sofia: Narodna Mladezh, 1960), Zidarov provided a coloured cover (below), with the monochrome Salomon van Abbé illustrations inside taken from the 1948 Dent & Dutton edition. This 1977 edition illustrated by Zidarov was the third Bulgarian edition. The edition of 1977 had

printing flaws common in books produced in Bulgaria in those years, so to take advantage of better production processes, in 2009 Zidarov prepared a new edition with partly new or reworked illustrations (Sofia: Zaharii Stoyanov).

In the mid-60s Zidarov had created a *Treasure Island* comic strip that appeared in a weekly paper. It was later reworked in a colour version and was published as a comic book (Sofia: VedArt, 2003).

In 2014 Lyuben Zidarov, then 91, was commissioned to illustrate a contemporary sequel of *Treasure Island* - *Silver* (Силвър) by Andrew Motion, published by the Prozoretz publishing house.



Zidarov's cover for the 1960 edition



Sterling Hundley (ill.), Michael Morpurgo (intro.) (2014). *Treasure Island* (London: Folio Society).

12 colour illustrations and decorated cover and slipcase. At the V&A Illustration Awards 2015, Hundley won the Book Illustration category for this work and was also awarded the overall prize.

The artist has admitted he felt the need to get away from the influence of Wyeth, but left a homage to him in the figure of Silver on the cover.

Stevenson in works of fiction

Matthew Pearl (2015). *The Last Bookaneer* (New York: Penguin).

Paris specializes in historical literary thrillers. Two pirates of intellectual property journey to Samoa just before international copyright becomes law in the USA, to steal the manuscript of RLS's *The Shovelers of Newton French*.

From reviews: 'the clever final twist will surprise the general reader, and please Stevenson scholars' (*The Independent*); 'Despite his attempts to depict an enlightened Robert Louis Stevenson, many elements of Pearl's plot are surprisingly typical: a great white father, loyal brown servants...' (*NY Times*); 'Despite the occasional frustrations, those who love books will want to keep reading' (*The Guardian*).

In the footsteps

Alan S. Robinson (2015). *In the footsteps of an ass*. Kindle edition.

Light-hearted account of experiences and thoughts while following the Stevenson Trail in the Cevennes. Available via Amazon.

[Kidnapped130](#):¹² in the summer of 2016 two 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

Critical reception—influence on other writers

In 1985, Argentine publisher Hyspamerica asked Jorge Luis Borges (1899-1986) to select 100 great works of literature for a series called 'Jorge Luis Borges: Biblioteca Personal' and write introductions for each volume. Before he died 74 volumes were published, including No. 9: Stevenson's *Las Nuevas Noches Arabes. Markheim* (transl. R. Duran, José Luis López Muñoz).

If anyone can send me a copy of the pages of the introduction or translation of interesting passages from it I'll be happy to publish them here.

In a 1973 interview Kurt Vonnegut (1922-2007) was asked 'What writers have influenced you?' After saying that this was one of the most frequent questions that writers are asked, he continued,

'I customarily say Orwell, and that is fairly close to the truth, but ordinarily I forget until long after the interview is over a man to whom I am deeply indebted, and he is Robert Louis Stevenson. He seems to be somewhat forgotten now [1973], but as a boy I read an awful lot of Robert Louis Stevenson and was excited by stories which were well-made. Real "story" stories . . . with a beginning, middle, and end. Because of the early admiration for him I still try to be a stroyteller, to tell a story with some shape to it. So basically, Robert Louis Stevenson.'

(Frank McLaughlin (1973). 'An Interview with Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.' *Media and Methods* May 1973: 38-41, 45-46. Repr. in William Rodney Adam (ed.) (1988). *Conversations with Kurt Vonnegut* (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi). 66-75. This quote from p. 66.

The Irish novelist, essayist and poet Colm Tóibín, asked recently in an interview in the *New York Times* Book Review (Oct 1 2015), what three writers he would invite to a literary dinner party, chose James Baldwin, RLS and Christopher Marlowe.

Canadian novelist Andre Alexis has been awarded the Scotiabank Giller Prize for his novel *Fifteen Dogs*. It is the second of five planned novels inspired by Pier Paolo Pasolini's film *Teorema* (about a powerful being that comes down to Earth and changes the lives of a bourgeois family). The first in the series was *Pastoral*, and the third, already written but not yet published, is *The Hidden Keys*, which is set in Toronto and was influenced by *Treasure Island*.

Links

[The R.L. Stevenson European Cultural Route](#)¹³ is an association of local groups involved in celebrating Stevenson's presence in their areas.

Etc.



[The Johnston Collection](#):¹⁴ photographs by three generations of Caithness photographers, 1863-1975.

Robert Bain (Olig, Caithness c.1842 — Wick 1882) described as 'Mason and Diver'; in the 1871 census, as 'Mason' in 1881; buried in the old section of Wick Cemetery, his occupation, Mason/Diver, inscribed on the stone.

Bain was the diver who instructed and accompanied RLS on his experience of diving in autumn 1868, while in Wick to observe work on the breakwater:

'To go down in the diving-dress, that was my absorbing fancy; and with the countenance of a certain handsome scamp of a diver, Bob Bain by name, I gratified the whim.' ('The Education of an Engineer')

Construction of breakwater (began 1863)



Construction of breakwater (another copy has the caption; Building Stevenson's breakwater, Wick - 1864)



The old breakwater damaged by storm



The breakwater was constructed by the engineering firm of Stevenson's father, Thomas Stevenson. In the 1874 second edition of his *The Design and Construction of Harbours* (45-48), Thomas added a detailed account of the 'incredible' storm of 1872 which destroyed part of the breakwater. In the plates section he also published a photograph (by Johnston of Wick) of a huge block dislodged by the storm. The breakwater was rebuilt by the Stevenson firm, and destroyed again by the waves in 1877. In the 1886 edition, Thomas Stevenson added a further paragraph about this (52).

The 2015 RLS Club Creative Writing Competition for Schools has been won by Alba Strachan of Banchory Academy for a short story, 'Driftwood Boats'.

My feet nestle in the smooth silky sand. Water pools where the toes press, leaving their small stamp on the world for that brief pause before the tide smooths it flat...

Blogger Margaret H. Laing tells of [a meeting with RLS](#),¹⁵ who advises her on the importance of the imagination in writing (Margaret Serious blog, 5 Feb 2015).

Edinburgh City Council plans to place a Jekyll and Hyde sculpture in the Lawnmarket, according to [The Scotsman](#).¹⁶

Apparently this will be one character on one side of the road and the other opposite. The editor of this Newsletter fears this will end up as a simplistic positive vs negative opposition. A better idea would be a single statue that changes into the other character as you walk round it.

Ernest and Joyce Mehew Stevenson Collection at Edinburgh Napier University will very soon be open to the public in its dedicated room; the on-line catalogue should be finished and published by the end of the year.



One of the many RLS events in Edinburgh: 'Kidnapped: When Kilts Were Banned', Scottish Storytelling Center, 14 Nov; [video clip](#).¹⁷

Schools

BBC School Radio: [Treasure Island](#)

10 short video episodes of *Treasure Island*, in a new adaptation for 9 to 11 year olds. Each video is accompanied by a transcript of the text. There is also a set of [Teacher's Notes](#) (4.65 MB) mapping the content to the curriculum and offering follow-up activities.

The Guardian Teacher Network: [How to teach ... The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde](#).¹⁸

Lesson resources and ideas.

Social media



Twitter: [R.L. Stevenson](#)¹⁹ — 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](#)²⁰ collects images, video clips etc. flagged by Twitter twitter.com/@RLSte or posted on Flickr.

Pinterest: The very active Silverado [RLS Museum](#)²¹ 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](#):²² Mafalda Cipollone's blog of the most interesting letters with relevant illustrations and video clips.

New members

Kate Garland (kate_garland at hotmail dot co dot uk) is a postgraduate student at the University of Nottingham, who writes 'I had the pleasure of first encountering Stevenson - in an academic capacity - during a module on 'Religion and Fantasy' as part of my undergraduate degree. So enamoured was I with RLS, that I opted to base my current MRes in Religious Studies thesis on him. Here I shall be undertaking a Theological reading of the double in his works, arguing that when read in light of a Calvinist and Presbyterian influence, a positive duality persists.'

Laura Léotoing, a member of the Réseau européen Sur les traces de Robert Louis Stevenson / European Network In The Footsteps of Robert Louis Stevenson (reseau.europeen.stevenson@gmail.com): for more information on this association promoting places associated with Stevenson, see their [website](#).

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RLS Site

www.robert-louis-stevenson.org

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Endnotes: URLs not given in text:

- ¹ <http://www.cityofliterature.com/rlsday-2015/events/>
- ² <https://edrls.wordpress.com/>
- ³ <http://www.robert-louis-stevenson.org/documents/jss/jss-article-index.pdf>
- ⁴ <http://thedynamiter.llc.ed.ac.uk/>
- ⁵ <http://theses.gla.ac.uk/6414/>
- ⁶ <http://giustiziascienze.blogspot.it/2015/08/lo-strano-caso-del-signor-imputato-e.html>
- ⁷ https://www.academia.edu/17586810/Searching_for_Treasure_Island
- ⁸ <http://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=umn.31951001920044a;view=1up;seq=68>
- ⁹ <https://archive.org/stream/lifeofrobertloui01balfrich#page/106/mode/2up>
- ¹⁰ <http://doppelgangerproductions.com/2015/05/31/the-weevil-in-the-biscuit/>
- ¹¹ <https://www.monsterenergy.com/us/en/bands/five-finger-death-punch/#>
- ¹² <http://www.kidnapped130.com/>
- ¹³ <http://www.rlstevenson-europe.org/en/r-l-stevenson/>
- ¹⁴ <http://www.johnstoncollection.net/default.aspx>
- ¹⁵ <http://www.chicagonow.com/margaret-serious/2015/02/when-margaret-met-louis-a-fictional-conversation/>
- ¹⁶ <http://www.scotsman.com/lifestyle/strange-case-of-edinburgh-jekyll-and-hyde-gardens-1-3781689>
- ¹⁷ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x86y5w79Udg>
- ¹⁸ <http://www.theguardian.com/teacher-network/2015/oct/12/how-to-teach-the-strange-case-of-dr-jekyll-and-mr-hyde>
- ¹⁹ <https://twitter.com/RLSte>
- ²⁰ <http://rlssnippets.tumblr.com/>
- ²¹ <http://pinterest.com/rlsmuseum/>
- ²² <http://lettersofrobertlouisstevenson.wordpress.com/>