

Robert Louis Stevenson, 1850-1894

ARCHIVED ONLINE EXHIBIT

Originally exhibited summer 1994-spring 1995
Thomas Cooper Library, University of South Carolina

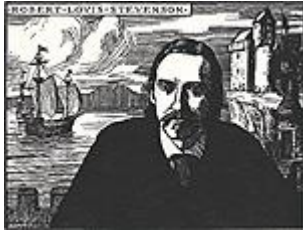
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INTRODUCTION



The University of South Carolina marked the centenary of Robert Louis Stevenson's death in 1894 with a special exhibition illustrating his life and writing career. Drawing on the excellent Stevenson holdings in the University Libraries' Department of Rare Books and Special Collections and on additional items from the G. Ross Roy Collection of Scottish Literature, the original exhibit included most of Stevenson's first editions, the early magazine publication of **Treasure Island** and other adventure stories, and a full range of his travel writings, sensation fiction such as **The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde**, and later Scottish novels. This online version includes additional materials not included in the original exhibit.

The exhibit and accompanying symposium were funded in part by the South Carolina Humanities Commission, a state-level agency of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Acknowledgements are also due to the Thomas Cooper Society, the Department of English, and the College of Library and Information Science for support in various ways.

EARLY LIFE IN EDINBURGH

Stevenson with his mother



As a child, Stevenson was known affectionately as "Smout," a Scots word for a young fish. Like his mother and maternal grandfather, he suffered from sometimes debilitating lung ailments, which, later in life, would force him to seek out ever-healthier climates in ever-more exotic locales.

8 Howard Place



Stevenson's birthplace, Howard Place was on the outskirts of Edinburgh's New Town, a collection of parallel and perpendicular streets that exemplified neoclassical social planning. Built between the mid-eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the New Town provided a distinct contrast to the high tenements and narrow winds of the Old Town.

Stevenson's Baby Book

San Francisco, John Henry Nash for John Howell, 1922.



Stevenson's mother kept this handwritten account of her only child's early childhood, recording his illnesses, his religious training and his precocity. The book she wrote in (**Baby's Record**, London: Field & Tuer, n.d.) presciently advised "young mothers" to keep a "concise registry of their darling's doings" in part as an aid to future medical treatment. This reproduction, from the height of the Stevenson cult, was limited to 500 copies.

Allison Cunningham ("Cummy")



Stevenson's incessant illnesses mandated the hiring of a nurse. After two others proved less than completely competent, the Stevensons hired Alison Cunningham ("Cummy") when Stevenson was about eighteen months old. Cummy's fervent Calvinism and the stories she told of the Covenanters--strident seventeenth-century Presbyterians who opposed encroaching Anglicanism--would prove quite influential in the author's career.

A Cloud of Witnesses for the Royal Prerogatives of Jesus Christ; or, The Last Speeches and Testimonies of Those Who Have Suffered for the Truth in Scotland, Since the Year 1680

Edinburgh, [1714].



An example of the heroic stories of the Scottish Covenanters and their religious persecution in the seventeenth century, which "Cummy" read to her young charge. Stevenson's grasp of stylistic archaism and his interest in historical romances can be traced to such early religious reading. He wrote to J. M. Barrie in 1893 that "My style is from the Covenanting writer."

The Pentland Rising: A Page of History

Edinburgh, Andrew Elliot, 1866.



Stevenson's first pamphlet, privately published at his father's expense, tells the story of the bloody Covenanting battle at Rullion Green in 1666.

Wilson the Stationers

It was at this shop, on the corner of Antigua Street, at the top of Leith Walk, Edinburgh, that the young Stevenson bought the cut-outs figures for the toy theatre described in his essay **A Penny Plain and Twopence Coloured**. The essay's appreciation of creativity and its feeling of *joie de vivre* help to explain the author's appeal to young readers.



"Earl Percy"

from **Theatrical Portraits: A Selection of Penny Plain Reprints**

London, Society for Theatre Research, 1963.



The mid-Victorian Juvenile Drama series (chiefly 1820-1840) was reproduced by a descendant of one of its primary publishers in the early twentieth century. The originals of these cut-out characters for toy theatres were stylized theatrical portraits used as advertising by true theatres. Publishers of juvenile dramas, though, recognized their value as accessory tie-ins, not unlike the relationship between modern films and action figures.

W. E. Lockhart

"Advocates' Close"

from **Edinburgh: Picturesque Notes**

London: Seeley, 1878.



The Old Town of historic Edinburgh, with its tall tenement blocks crowded together, was centered on the High Street or "Royal Mile" that ran between Edinburgh Castle and Holyroodhouse Palace. It has been suggested that the somber streets and dark alleys of **Jekyll and Hyde** are more reminiscent of Old Town Edinburgh than they are of London,

where the story is set. Stevenson's second book, **Edinburgh: Picturesque Notes** was condemned by the **Scotsman's** reviewer for its "sarcastic, if poetic, descriptions."

17 Heriot Row



In 1853, the Stevensons moved from their home at 8 Howard Place to a larger house across the street at 1 Inverleith Terrace. Unfortunately, the house was damp, and, because it was on a corner, particularly exposed to northern winds. On the advice of doctors concerned for the health of both mother and son, the family moved once again in 1856. Their new house, at 17 Heriot Row, was a decided improvement. Located on the back side of the newly landscaped Queen Street Gardens, the Heriot Row house was drier, larger, and less exposed than either of the previous homes. It was also in the New Town proper, the area of Edinburgh inhabited by the most respectable members of the professional class. The photo here was likely taken after the Stevensons had moved out.

Edinburgh Academy



The Academy had been founded in 1824 by New Town parents (with the assistance of Sir Walter Scott) as a socially upmarket alternative to the traditional Royal High School. Stevenson entered the Greek revival school in 1861, but later wrote "I blush to own I am an Academy boy; it seems modern and smacks not of the soil."

Stevenson with his father



Stevenson's father, Thomas (1818-1887), was a prominent Edinburgh civil engineer, specializing in the development of new light apparatuses for Scotland's many lighthouses. Stevenson dedicated his **Familiar Studies of Men and Books** "To Thomas Stevenson, civil engineer, by whose devices the great sea lights in every quarter of the world now shine more brightly, this volume is in love and gratitude dedicated by his son the author."

"Bell Rock Lighthouse"

from W. H. Davenport Adams, **Lighthouses and Lightships: A Descriptive and Historical Account of Their Mode of Construction and Organization**

London, T. Nelson & Sons, 1870.



This lighthouse, on the famous Bell Rock or Inch Cape at the entrance of the Firth of Forth, was built by Robert Stevenson, the author's grandfather, and completed in 1811. Though Bell Rock had caused the destruction of several ships, building a lighthouse upon it was considered impossible. Robert Stevenson was hailed as a genius for his accomplishment, and the Bell Rock Lighthouse was considered one of the engineering marvels of its day.

"On a New Form of Intermittent Light for Lighthouses"

from the **Transactions of the Royal Scottish Society of Arts**, Vol. VIII, 1870-71.
Edinburgh, Neill and Company, 1871.



Stevenson was originally intended to follow in his father's and grandfather's footsteps and trained at Edinburgh University to become an engineer. He read this essay to the Royal Scottish Society of Arts in March 1871; it was published in the Society's **Transactions**, vol. 8 (1870-71), and won its author a silver medal. Following this success, he gave up engineering, and his father agreed he could read for the Bar.

"Say Not of Me"

Poem XXXVIII, from **Underwoods**
London, Chatto & Windus, 1887.



The ambivalence incorporated in this poem about giving up the "strenuous" family profession in favor of the "childish" life of authorship is a characteristic theme in Stevenson's writing.

Stevenson in his barrister's robes, 1875



On 14 July 1875, Stevenson passed his exams and was admitted to the Scottish bar. His career as a jurist was less than distinguished. Despite a brass plaque affixed to the outside of the Heriot Row house, Stevenson never earned more than a few pounds as a lawyer.

"Some College Memories"

from **The New Amphion, Being the Book of the Edinburgh University Union Fancy Fair**
Edinburgh, T. & A. Constable, 1886.



This essay, a series of portraits of famous professors, laments the decline of Edinburgh University since Stevenson's days: "by an odd chance, I had the very last of the very best of *Alma mater*; the same thing I hear...had previously happened to my father." The portrait (by William Hole) is of the Rev. Philip Kelland (1838-1879), Professor of Mathematics, "the first Englishman with an entirely English education appointed to a chair at Edinburgh." It was claimed that "no man's education is complete, or truly liberal, who knew not Kelland."

"A College Magazine"

from **Memories and Portraits**

London, Chatto & Windus, 1887.



Stevenson's commitment to a literary career was fostered by involvement as an editor of the short-lived **Edinburgh University Magazine**. This outgrowth of the prestigious student debating club, the Speculative Society, lasted for only four numbers (January-April 1871), but included six of Stevenson's early essays.

Robert Hope

"From Above Swanston Cottage"

from L. MacLean Watt, **The Hills of Home, with the Pentland Essays of Robert Louis Stevenson**

London & Edinburgh: T. N. Foulis, 1913.



In Stevenson's early youth his family had summered with his maternal grandparents in the village of Colinton. In 1867, though, his father took up the lease of Swanton Cottage in the Pentland Hills, five miles south of Edinburgh. Later in life, Stevenson would fondly recall his times at Swanston for the solace the provided from the hectic life of the city.

TRAVEL WRITING

An Inland Voyage

London, C. Kegan Paul, 1878.



Stevenson's first regularly-published book is a graceful account of a canoe-trip he had made in 1876 in Belgium and Northern France with Sir Walter Grindlay Simpson (the "Cigarette" to Stevenson's "Arethusa"). The relative proportions of Pan and the canoers he is watching, in the engraved frontispiece by Walter Crane, indicate the self-consciously artful tone of the narrative that follows. The **Vanity Fair** reviewer commented, "the making of bricks without straw is weariness of the flesh...he may yet prove a brickmaker."

Fanny Osbourne



Just prior to leaving on his canoe trip, Stevenson met a married American woman and mother of three, Fanny Van de Grift Osbourne. Though ten years apart in age, the two became friends and, eventually, more. By 1877 the two had become romantically involved, though knowledge of this was limited to a close circle of friends. Marriage was discussed, but her existing marriage and his parents' tacit disapproval made for a difficult situation. This photograph, believed to have been taken in 1876, shows Fanny as she looked around the time she first met Stevenson.

Travels with a Donkey in the Cévennes

London, C. Kegan Paul, 1879.



Stevenson's second travel narrative (and third book) was a 227-page memoir of his 12-day walking tour with his long-suffering donkey, Modestine, through the Cévennes of France's Massif Central in 1878. The journey occurred immediately after Fanny returned to the United States, and Stevenson's hopes for marriage seemed over. The frontispiece, again by Walter Crane, shows Stevenson smoking in his specially-made sheepskin open-air sleeping bag. "What a thing it is to be young," commented **Fraser's Magazine**, "to be super-refined, to load a donkey with all one's belongings...this is the last whim of exquisite youth."

The Amateur Emigrant, with Some First Impressions of America

Edited by Roger G. Swearingen
Ashland, Lewis Osborne, 1976.

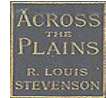


In August 1879, Stevenson sailed from Greenock, Scotland, for America in hopes of persuading Fanny Osbourne to marry him. Though he considered the voyage a romantic adventure, Stevenson's friends were opposed to it on the grounds that it would affect his fragile health and further alienate him from his parents (who thought him in London). He

travelled in second class, better than steerage but still uncomfortable enough. Part of Stevenson's account of the voyage was set in type in 1880 but withdrawn at his father's suggestion. An abridged version of his Atlantic crossing appeared as part of the posthumously published Edinburgh Edition.

Across the Plains, with Other Memories and Essays

London, Chatto & Windus, 1892.



Having arrived in New York, Stevenson found himself in a miserable crush of emigrants forced to wait days for an overcrowded train heading west. Once aboard, sleep was all but impossible, and, by the time he reached Wyoming, Stevenson's health was starting to break down. Part of this impressionistic account of his journey was published in **Longman's Magazine** in 1883, but it did not appear as a separate volume until 1892, by which time Stevenson's literary reputation was sufficient to make any book with his name on the cover profitable.

The Silverado Squatters

London, Chatto & Windus, 1883.



Fanny's divorce was finalized in December 1879, and on May 19 of the next year she and Stevenson married in San Francisco. Soon thereafter they took up residence at an abandoned mine called Silverado, on the slopes of Mt. St. Helena, well away from the damp fogs of the city, remaining there till the end of June. This rewritten journal-account first appeared in two installments in the **Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine** (November-December 1883). The image here, which was the frontispiece of the first edition, shows Fanny and Louis in the bunks of their Silverado cabin. The woodcut was designed by Joe Strong, Fanny's son-in-law.

THE FICTION OF ADVENTURE

Treasure Island; or, The Mutiny of the Hispaniola
from **Young Folks; A Boys' and Girls' Paper of Instructive and Entertaining Literature**, vol. XIX, no. 565 (Saturday, October 1, 1881).



Stevenson began this adventure story while on a wet Scottish holiday in Braemar with his father and his step-son, Lloyd Osbourne. The germ of the story lay in the hand-painted map of an imaginary island. Stevenson wrote rapidly: "it was to be a story for boys; no need of psychology or fine writing; and I had a boy at hand to be a touchstone." The original title, **The Sea-Cook**, referred to the novel's most famous character, Long John Silver, who was modelled in part on Stevenson's friend and collaborator W. E. Henley. For its initial serial publication in seventeen weekly installments, Stevenson gratefully received £30. This part issue of **Treasure Island** was published under the pseudonym "Captain George North." Aside from illuminated letters at the beginning of every installment, this was the only illustration.

Treasure Island
London, Cassell & Company, 1883.



Stevenson revised the periodical text for this first book edition. "Long John Silver" himself, W. E. Henley, negotiated arrangements with Cassell; Stevenson received £100 on publication and ongoing royalty payments thereafter. Neither Stevenson nor his friends immediately recognized his achievement. Whereas the story was not particularly well received by the readers of **Young Folks**, it sold briskly in book form. In David Daiches' words, **Treasure Island** "transform[ed] the cliché-ridden Victorian boys' adventure story into a classic." The many subsequent reprintings and illustrated editions show its grip on generations of readers. The frontispiece was meant to be the original watercolor map that had served as the story's inspiration; sadly, it was lost, and Stevenson considered this replacement, drawn by him in his father's office, a poor substitute.

Treasure Island
New York, Limited Editions Club, 1941.



The Limited Editions Club, in many ways the American counterpart of the British Nonesuch Press, commissioned work from private presses and from good commercial printers. These generally combined carefully designed and executed typography with original designs; both Matisse and Picasso illustrated Limited Editions Club publications. The 1941 **Treasure Island** contains designs, typical of American book-illustration of the period, by the Scots-born American illustrator Edward A. Wilson (b.1884).

Treasure Island

London, Paul Elek, [1947].



John Minton (1917-1957) is now recognized among the important British artistic talents of the decade following the Second World War. His *œuvre* includes work in theatre design, posters and commercial design, and book illustration. **Treasure Island**, his second illustrative commission and one of only twelve books illustrated by him, is one of his finest works in the genre.

Treasure Island

London, Nonesuch Press, [1963].



The Nonesuch Press was founded in the early 1920's by Sir Francis Meynell with the purpose of publishing finely-designed illustrated and printed books, produced by good commercial printers and marketed at affordable prices. The Press's artistic heyday was the 1920's and 30's, but production continued into the 1960's. **Treasure Island** has neat, unobtrusive typography and illustrations by Robert Micklewright in the post-war British tradition also seen in John Minton's illustrations.

The Black Arrow: A Tale of Tunstall Forst

from **Young Folks; A Boys' and Girls' Paper of Instructive and Entertaining Literature**, vol. XXII, no. 656 (Saturday, June 30, 1883).



Despite the less than enthusiastic reactions of his readers to **Treasure Island**, James Henderson, the publisher of **Young Folks**, was eager for another serial by "Captain George North." To this end, Stevenson produced **The Black Arrow**, which he dismissed as "tushery." Ironically, the paper's readers found this second story much more acceptable, its "blood-and-thunder" action conforming more suitably to the conventions of the adventure genre. As a result, **The Black Arrow** was fully illustrated, and many of its installments appeared on the serial's front page.

The Black Arrow: A Tale of the Two Roses

London, Cassell & Co., 1888.



Though it received more positive comments from its original audience, **The Black Arrow** has never rivalled the popularity of its predecessor **Treasure Island**; as Stevenson remarked in his preface, "Those who read volumes and those who read story papers belong to different worlds." Book publication was long delayed; this first British book edition (August 1888) was preceded by reserialization in America and is printed from plates of Scribner's American book edition (June 1888).

Kidnapped; or, The Lad with the Silver Button

from **Young Folks Paper: Literary Olympic and Tournament** vol. XXVIII, no. 805 (Saturday, May 1 1886).



By the time his third and final serial appeared in **Young Folks**, Stevenson had quite a reputation. **Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde** had been published the previous January, and its phenomenal popularity prompted one biographer to label it "a superseller": 40,000 copies of the British edition were sold in the first six months, and the novella was equally popular in America. With such popular acclaim, the pseudonym was dropped, and **Kidnapped** appeared on the front page of the periodical for almost its entire run.

Kidnapped, Being Memoirs of the Adventures of David Balfour in the Year 1751

London, Cassell & Company, 1886.



This adventure story of David Balfour and his romantic Jacobite mentor Alan Breck Stewart in the Scottish Highlands was Stevenson's first full-length Scottish novel, taking on himself the mantle (or plaid) of Sir Walter Scott. Through the conflicts of Lowlanders and Highlanders, Whigs and Jacobites, Stevenson explored the psychological dualities of Scottish culture. Perhaps the portrait of David's grasping uncle Ebenezer Balfour expresses some of Stevenson's resentment of his father's business-like respectability, but the descriptions of Scottish landscape during David's travels more than counterbalance anything negative; as R. H. Hutton commented in **The Spectator**, "for the lovers of Scotch scenery and Scotch character it is altogether delightful." The image here is of the fold-out map showing the cruise of the *Covenant* and David Balfour's wanderings.

Kidnapped

New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1940.



N.C. Wyeth's illustrations for Stevenson's **Treasure Island** and **Kidnapped** are among the most successful examples of twentieth-century "realist" book illustration. Though stylistically unquestionably of their time (Wyeth lived from 1885 to 1945; the **Kidnapped** illustrations were published in 1913), the illustrations transcend one's consciousness of the period of execution and command our attention as firmly today as they must have done 80 years ago.

STEVENSON AS POET AND ESSAYIST

A Child's Garden of Verses

London, Longmans, Green and Co., 1885.



Stevenson's interest in children's imagination, and his own memories of his invalid childhood, may have been stimulated by the success of his boys' adventures in the mid-1880s. The influence of Kate Greenaway's **Birthdays Book for Children** (1880) is also notable. Many of the poems were written while the adult Stevenson was again confined to bed or convalescent at Hyères in Southern France in 1884 or in his new home at Bournemouth in 1885. The book was dedicated to his beloved Calvinist nurse, "Cummy," and the book testifies to the fears, fantasies and loneliness of Stevenson's childhood, not just to its pleasures.

A Child's Garden of Verses

London, John Lane/Bodley Head; New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1896.



This, one of Stevenson's most lastingly popular books (USCAN lists 23 editions published between 1885 and 1986), is also among the most frequently-illustrated of his works, its illustrations an index to changing taste and fashion. Ironically, the book never appeared with illustrations during Stevenson's lifetime. The 1896 edition, with the distinguished double imprint of Lane and Scribner, was illustrated by Charles Robinson (1870-1937), a fashionable book-illustrator of the period. Robinson's illustrations bear an understandable affinity to the work of his better-known younger brother, the illustrator and British Rube Goldberg, W. Heath Robinson, but there is strong stylistic relationship with the work of other contemporary illustrators and book-designers. Beardsley's influence, for example, is evident in the spare, strongly defined outline of certain vignettes. The binding, also designed by Robinson, is a pleasing and impressive specimen of a British transitional Arts & Crafts/Art Nouveau style.

Ethelbert Nevin

Three Songs from "A Child's Garden of Verses"

London, Schott & Co., n.d.



Edith Swepstone

Robert Louis Stevenson's Songs for Children Set to Music

London, J. Curwen & Sons, n.d.

These illustrated settings of Stevenson's **Child's Garden** testify both to his influence with adults and, perhaps, to the way early twentieth-century readers sentimentalized and softened his darker memories of childhood.

A Child's Garden of Verses

San Francisco, The Press in Tuscany Alley, 1978.



The 1978 **Child's Garden**, printed by the distinguished book-designer Adrian Wilson with woodblock illustrations and decorative initials by his wife, Joyce Lancaster Wilson, includes nine poems contained in the 1883 trial proof of **Child's Garden** but excluded from subsequent published editions. The introduction is by Janet Adam Smith, editor of Stevenson's **Collected Poems**. This book, and the Grabhorn Press **R.L.S. to J.M. Barrie** also included in the exhibition, are typical productions of the modern San Francisco fine press movement.

Moral Emblems and Other Poems Written and Illustrated with Woodcuts

London, Chatto & Windus, 1921.



This volume collected the small booklets of children's poems that Stevenson had written in Davos, Switzerland, in 1881-82, for his stepson Lloyd Osbourne, then aged 12, to print on a small handpress. The woodblocks were also by Stevenson, and the small pamphlets became hot items of sale among the hotel visitors. As Stevenson wrote:

The pamphlet here presented
Was planned and printed by,
A printer unindented,
A bard whom all decry.

A Stevenson Medley

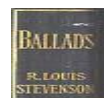
London, Chatto & Windus, 1899.



This posthumous collection reproduced much the original format of the Davos pamphlets. The example displayed is from the second pamphlet of **Moral Emblems**, "S. L. Osbourne & Company, Davos-Platz."

Ballads

London, Chatto & Windus, 1890.



This volume collected some of Stevenson's longer poems, including **The Song of Rahéro**; **The Feast of Famine**; **Heather Ale**, **A Galloway Legend**; and **Christmas at Sea**. Perhaps most notable, though, is **Ticonderoga**, **A Legend of the West Highlands**, a poem whose mysterious denouement in upstate New York provides an interesting parallel to that of **The Master of Ballantrae**. Stevenson expressed himself as bemused by the ballads' relative failure: "they failed to entertain a coy public...all the crickets sing so in their crickety papers...I don't think I shall get into that galley any more."

Underwoods

London, Chatto & Windus, 1887. One of 50 large paper copies.



Stevenson's best-known collection of poetry intended for an adult audience is divided into two books: poems in English and poems in Scots. The introduction discusses the orthographic difficulties of presenting Lowland Scots and argues against demanding a philological exactness in presenting the multiplicity of variant Scots dialects: "I simply wrote my Scots as well as I was able...And if it be not pure, alas! what matters it?" The poem displayed, **Ille Terrarum**, illustrates Stevenson's grasp of the traditional "standard Habbie" stanza-form and his affectionate treatment of Scottish landscape.

Virginibus Puerisque and Other Papers

London. C. Kegan Paul & Co., 1881.



This first collection of Stevenson's periodical essays, mostly from the **Cornhill** magazine, was dedicated to his friend W. E. Henley. The long title essay, a gentle discourse on behalf of the younger generation about the emotional conflicts in accepting adulthood, marriage, and love, concludes with a passionate plea against Victorian hypocrisy and for "truth of intercourse." Stevenson, complained the **British Quarterly Review** on behalf of Victorian orthodoxy, "is too intensely sarcastic to be quite playful, and too self-conscious to be innocently amusing."

Familiar Studies of Men and Books

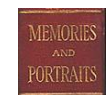
London, Chatto & Windus, 1882.



Along with essays on Victor Hugo, François Villon, Walt Whitman, and Henry David Thoreau, this collection reprints two essays on Scottish topics, "**John Knox and Women**" (from **Macmillan's**, September 1875) and his essay on Robert Burns, originally written for the **Encyclopaedia Britannica** in 1875 but rejected and eventually reworked for the **Cornhill** in October 1879. The assertion that Burns "had trifled with life, and must pay the penalty" caused great controversy in Scotland, but, as David Daiches points out, shows the continuing dialectic of the poet and the Calvinist in Stevenson's writing.

Memories and Portraits

London, Chatto & Windus, 1887.



This heavily autobiographical volume is probably the best-loved of Stevenson's essay-collections. It reprinted, among others, his essays on his father, on his grandfather's manse and his childhood visits to the Pentland Hills, and on college life, as well as the important essay "**A Humble Remonstrance**" (originally in **Longman's Magazine**, December 1884), Stevenson's intervention in the debates between Henry James, William Dean Howells, and Walter Besant over the art of fiction.

Essays in the Art of Writing

London, Chatto & Windus, 1905.



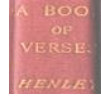
This posthumous collection gathers Stevenson's important essays on authorship, "**On Some Technical Elements of Style**" (originally in **Contemporary Review**, April 1885) and "**The Morality of the Profession of Letters**" (originally in **Fortnightly Review**, April 1881), as well as Stevenson's accounts of writing **Treasure Island** and **The Master of Ballantrae**.

STEVENSON AND HENLEY

William Ernest Henley

A Book of Verses

London, David Nutt, 1888.



The poem **Apparition** records Stevenson's first visit to Henley on February 13, 1875; Henley suffered from tuberculosis of the leg and was in the old Royal Infirmary, Edinburgh, under the treatment of Joseph Lister from 1873-1875. His sequence of poems **In Hospital** had just been accepted for the **Cornhill** magazine by Leslie Stephen, who introduced Stevenson to him and so began their collaboration.

The old Royal Infirmary, Edinburgh



This image of the Edinburgh's Royal Infirmary served as the title vignette of Henley's 1888 **A Book of Verses**. The picturesque old hospital, replaced soon after Henley's stay, was less comfortable for patients; in Henley's phrase from **In Hospital**, its "corridors and stairs of stone and iron" seemed "half-workhouse and half-jail."

William Ernest Henley



Henley was influential in Stevenson's career not only as the inspiration for Long John Silver but also as an editor of several periodicals. Some of Stevenson's earliest fiction appeared in the short-lived journal **London**, essays on aesthetics and city life (in Edinburgh and San Francisco) were first published in **The Magazine of Art**, and depictions of life in the South Pacific first circulated in the **Scots** (later **National**) **Observer**.

Autograph letter, Stevenson to W. E. Henley, ca.1880



This short letter illustrates the tone of Stevenson's and Henley's early collaboration, as they co-authored stage-plays with mixed success. Fanny thought Henley pushed Louis too much, and in this letter Stevenson protests in mock-French that he is working as hard as his weak health allowed: "je workerai comme un trump."

Robert Louis Stevenson and His Wife, 1885



This painting, perhaps the most famous of Stevenson, was executed by the "American" portrait painter John Singer Sargent. It shows Louis pacing in the drawing-room at Skerryvore, the Stevensons' Bournemouth home, while Fanny, in an Indian dress,

reclines on the right-hand margin in a chair that Henry James took during his visits. (Though it has been claimed that Sargent introduced the two writers in 1884, they had in fact met one another earlier.) Sargent had first painted Stevenson in December of the previous year, but the earlier painting was not to the artist's or the subject's liking. Stevenson thought it depicted him as "a weird, very pretty, large-eyed, chicken-boned, slightly contorted poet." This earlier portrait seems to have been destroyed by Fanny.

Three Plays by W. E. Henley and R. L. Stevenson

London, David Nutt, 1892. One of 100 large paper copies.



Though published years after the two writers quarrelled over Henley's slur against Fanny Stevenson as a plagiarist, this volume, significantly from Henley's publisher, represents the most substantial outcome of their collaboration in writing for the stage. The lead play, their first, **Deacon Brodie, or the Double Life**, about the respectable Edinburgh cabinetmaker who moonlighted as a housebreaker, anticipates the dualism of Stevenson's own, much more successful **Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde**. It was first performed in Bradford on December 28, 1882, and again in Aberdeen in April of the following year before appearing at the Prince's Theatre, London, in July 1884.

SENSATION AND COLLABORATION

Robert Louis Stevenson, 1887



John Singer Sargent's third portrait of Stevenson (and the second to survive) was commissioned by the Boston banker Charles Fairchild as a present for his wife. As with the previous two, this portrait shows Stevenson in the Skerryvore parlor, this time alone. Sargent's claim, made in a letter to Henry James in 1885, that Stevenson "seemed to me the most intense creature I had ever met," is evident in the author's luminous eyes and attenuated hands.

The Body Snatcher

London, Pall Mall, 1884.



This short crime story first appeared in the **Pall Mall**'s special Christmas "Extra" issue. The cover treatment is representative of the "shocker" market that stimulated Stevenson's imagination and his success in the mid-1880s.

More New Arabian Nights: The Dynamiter

London, Longmans, Green, 1885.



The stories in this volume originated as a series of tales Fanny told Louis during his illness in Hyères early in 1884. The thread connecting them exploited the contemporary fear of Irish Fenian terrorism. Though not originally intended for publication, the summer of 1884 saw the Stevensons in need of money, and **The Dynamiter**, which could be worked up quickly and with little strain upon Louis's fragile health, became the pot-boiler of the moment.

Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde

London, Longmans, Green, 1886.



Originally planned for serialization in **Longman's Magazine**, and written in less than ten weeks from first conception, this story was instead published separately and earned Stevenson a substantial royalty of one-sixth of the retail price on all copies sold, with an immediate advance for the first 10,000, and half of all proceeds from foreign sales; it won a rave review in **The Times** ("every connoisseur...must certainly read it twice...he works out the essential power of Evil") and sold 40,000 copies in the first six months. It touched a raw nerve in the late-Victorian imagination. As Gerard Manley Hopkins wrote to a friend, "You are certainly wrong about Hyde being overdrawn; my Hyde is worse." Vladimir Nabokov asserted in his Cornell lecture "that it was a fable belonging to the same order of art as...Madame Bovary."

Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde

New York, George Munro, Seaside Library Pocket Edition, 1886.



The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde

New York, John W. Lovell Company, Lovell's Library, 1886.

These two paper-covered "dime novels" show the immediate popularity of Stevenson's novella on both sides of the Atlantic. The first American edition of **Jekyll & Hyde** was published by Scribner's three days before the first British edition was published by Longmans, and therefore should have enjoyed copyright. The pirates, though, enjoyed considerable profits with little risk.

The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde

New York, Random House, 1929.



This 1929 edition includes a facsimile of the first page of Stevenson's autograph manuscript of the final chapter, Henry Jekyll's full statement of the case.

Dr Jekyll & Mr. Hyde

London, The Folio Society, 1948.



The potential inherent in Stevenson's **Jekyll & Hyde** has attracted the attention of many distinguished illustrators. The illustrations of 1948 Folio Society edition are the work of Mervyn Peake (1911-1968). Peake, who illustrated **Treasure Island** in the following year, was a leading book-illustrator of the 1940's. In the following decade he was engrossed in the composition of the Titus trilogy (the novels Titus Groan, Gormenghast, and Titus alone), which may broadly, though inadequately, be termed "fantasy" novels. His career as an illustrator was effectively ended by the progress of Parkinson's disease. The sense of the macabre that permeates Peake's fiction is equally evident in his graphic art.

The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde

New York, Limited Editions Club, 1952.



A mid-century **Jekyll & Hyde** published in quarto format, this edition's lithographs by John Mason Brown are a splendid example of the Victorian gothic revival of the 1950's.

The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde

Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, [1990].



This commercial edition of **Jekyll & Hyde**, introduced by Joyce Carol Oates, was illustrated and designed by Barry Moser, proprietor of the Pennyroyal Press, widely regarded as the leading modern American private press. Moser is a highly talented wood-engraver, with a fine eye for contrast and detail excellently suited to the illustrating of Stevenson's novella.

The Merry Men and Other Tales and Fables

London, Chatto & Windus, 1887.



This collection of short fiction not only shows Stevenson's developing interest in the sensational but also features the first book-form publication of his powerful Scottish story "**Thrawn Janet**" (originally in the **Cornhill** magazine, October 1881) and his Dostoevsky-like murder story, "**Markheim**" (originally in a Christmas anthology, **The Broken Shaft**, ed. Henry Norman, London, T. Fisher Unwin, 1886).

Prince Otto, a Romance

London, Chatto & Windus, 1885.



This fantasy-romance, set in an imaginary middle-European principality, involves the reconciliation of Otto and his estranged wife Princess Seraphina; it is dedicated to Fanny, who also helped with the book's revision, and its picture of court intrigue casts an interesting sidelight on the Stevensons' relations with their myriad acquaintances, relatives and hangers-on, as well as on Stevenson's relationship to Fanny herself.

The Wrong Box

London, Longmans, Green, 1889.



This collaborative novel was drafted by Lloyd Osbourne, Stevenson's stepson, and then revised by Stevenson. Its farcical plot, hinging on the inheritance of a "tontine" by the last survivor of twenty heirs, was the basis of the successful Peter Cook-Dudley Moore film in 1966.

The Wrecker

London, Cassell & Company, 1892.



This novel, written collaboratively, was originally serialized in **Scribner's Magazine**, August-July 1892, and then published in Britain from Scribner's sheets. It originated in the mysterious disappearance of the ship *The Wandering Minstrel* in the South Seas in 1889. Following discussion, Lloyd Osbourne drafted each chapter and Stevenson rewrote it. Stevenson was much annoyed when **The Wrecker** sold better than **The Master of Ballantrae**. The image, from the first edition's frontispiece, shows Carthew and Wicks just

as Wicks is about to have his "accident." Stevenson was not happy with Willard Leroy Metcalf's illustrations:

I will take for a test case the picture you have chosen for frontispiece. Consider the attitude of the tonsured priest who is sitting on the cabin table. If (in such a position) the Rev. gentleman shall be able to drive his knife through his hand, or even through a Swedish match-box, I will give Mr. W. L. Metcalf two-and sixpence and a new umbrella.

IN THE SOUTH SEAS

The schooner *Casco*



The Stevensons chartered this yacht in San Francisco in June 1888 from Dr. Samuel Merrit. A physician and native of Maine (the city of Portland is situated on Casco Bay), Merrit arrived in San Francisco just as the gold rush began, made a fortune in real estate, and eventually served as mayor of nearby Oakland in the late 1860's. Though he expected Stevenson would be "a kind of crank," Merrit was impressed when he met the author in person and agreed to a seven-month lease of the yacht at \$500/month plus expenses.

Father Damien: An Open Letter to the Reverend Dr. Hyde of Honolulu

London, Chatto and Windus, 1890.



Stevenson had visited the leper colony on Molokai in May 1889, shortly after Father Damien himself died of leprosy. In Samoa that December, he learnt that a Protestant missionary in Hawaii had attacked Damien's reputation; this outraged defense was first privately printed in Sydney, Australia, in March 1890, and subsequently published in Henley's **Scots Observer**.

In the South Seas

New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1914.



This volume was originally published in a limited edition, for copyright purposes, in London in 1890, and then serialized in **The Sun** (New York) and **Black and White** (London). It collects Stevenson's account of his cruises on the *Casco* and *Equator* in 1888 and 1889-90; the later Scribner's reprint, displayed here, shows in its colored map the extraordinary distances Stevenson covered in his quest for a healthy climate.

Vailima



The Stevensons built this house outside Apia on the island of Upolu, which today is part of Western Samoa, the first island nation of the South Pacific to have achieved independence. The Stevenson purchased a 300-acre tract in 1890 and began building soon thereafter. What at first was merely a house developed into an extensive estate with Stevenson playing the role of lord of the manor. It was at Vailima that Stevenson died, aged 44, on December 3, 1894, and on the hill above it that he was buried. On December 5, 1994, exactly one hundred years after Stevenson's funeral, Vailima was opened to the public as the **Robert Louis Stevenson Museum**. (Use the "Back" button to return to this exhibit.) The image here is from a relatively early stage of the building's development; Stevenson can be seen on the upstairs verandah.

A Footnote to History: Eight Years of Trouble in Samoa

London, Cassell & Co., 1892.



During the 1890s, Stevenson became deeply involved in Samoan-European politics, and this book, in effect a short history of Samoa, traces the competing influence of German, British and American interests in the strategically-important islands. Stevenson romantically sided with the traditional ruler against the Great Powers' puppet-kings, and his letters back to **The Times** in London led to threats of deportation.

R.L.S. to J. M. Barrie, a Vailima Portrait

San Francisco, The Book Club of California, 1962.



The text of this book is a letter dated April 2/3, 1893, from Stevenson to J.M. Barrie (1860-1937), a fellow Scot and author of **Peter Pan**. The book was printed for the Book Club of California by the Grabhorn Press of San Francisco, America's pre-eminent mid-century "fine" press. The expansive, slightly eccentric approach to design and layout is typical of West-coast fine printing of the period.

Island Nights' Entertainments

London, Cassell & Co., 1893.



This collection of South Sea stories includes an important novella, **The Beach of Falesá**, an ironic depiction of a white man imposing his culture on a more primitive civilization, an interesting anticipation of (and influence on) Conrad's **Heart of Darkness** (1899). It originally appeared as a serial in **The Illustrated London News**, where its frank depiction of sexuality was partially censored, leaving what Stevenson called "slashed and gaping ruins."

The Ebb-Tide: A Trio and Quartette

London, William Heinemann, 1894.



This thriller, written in a long-drawn-out collaboration with Lloyd Osbourne but finished by Stevenson alone, traces the adventures of a penniless man of letters hunting treasure among the Pacific Islands, reflecting Stevenson's own move to the South Pacific. It was originally serialized in **To-day** and **McClure's** magazine.

A RETURN TO SCOTTISH THEMES

The Master of Ballantrae, a Winter's Tale

London, Cassell & Co., 1889.



By general agreement, this and the unfinished **Weir of Hermiston** rank as the best of Stevenson's Scottish novels. Returning to the conflicts of mid-eighteenth-century post-Jacobite Scotland that had been used so effectively in **Kidnapped**, **The Master of Ballantrae** similarly explores the dualities of the Scottish cultural revolution. Like much of Stevenson's later work, it was first serialized in **Scribner's** magazine, in twelve parts, November 1888-October 1889. Its composition involved Stevenson in original historical research, not only on Scottish history, but on the pre-Revolution period in North America. Much of the novel was actually written at Saranac Lake, New York, where Stevenson was nursing a recurring lung ailment. It was immediately recognized as a turn from his earlier adventure stories to a darker, more complex psychological fiction, "more akin," wrote Andrew Lang in the **Daily News**, "to the temper of M. Zola than of Scott."

Catriona, a Sequel to Kidnapped

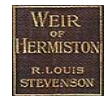
London, Cassell & Co., 1893.



Henry James, in his article on Stevenson in 1888, had complained that **Kidnapped** stopped "without ending." This sequel was first serialized under the title **David Balfour** in **Atalanta** in ten installments, December 1892-September 1893. The title changed for British book-publication that same year, but American editors maintained the periodical title. As the title-change indicates, the book not only recounts David's later adventures, but also introduces a fully developed female character for the first time in Stevenson's adventure stories. As Edward Burne-Jones commented to Stevenson's friend Sidney Colvin: "I am right glad he has made a woman at last, and why did he delay?"

Weir of Hermiston, an Unfinished Romance

London, Chatto & Windus, 1896.



This last of Stevenson's Scottish novels remained unfinished at his death. Vladimir Nabokov wrote that it "has all the air of being the complete, the unanswerably great Scottish novel." Stevenson's portrait of an eighteenth-century "hanging judge," Lord Weir, was based on John MacQueen, Lord Braxfield, but the conflict between Weir and his son reflects also Stevenson's struggle with his father and his father's culture. Like **Catriona**, **Weir of Hermiston** gives much fuller pictures of women than in Stevenson's early fiction and makes a more confident use of vernacular Scots language. Having settled on Samoa, Stevenson wrote to the Scottish novelist S. R. Crockett, "I shall never see Auld Reekie [Edinburgh]. I shall never set my foot again upon the heather. Here I am until I die, and here I will be buried." Stevenson's words proved prophetic; he died a year-and-a-half later in Samoa having never returned to Scotland.

St. Ives, Being the Adventures of a French Prisoner in England

London: William Heinemann, 1898.



At his death, Stevenson left several unfinished manuscripts in addition to **Weir of Hermiston**. This novel had been left off just short of its conclusion; it appeared as a serial in 1897 with chapters 31-36 written by the critic Arthur Quiller-Couch ("Q"). Stevenson considered this story about a French prisoner's escape from Edinburgh Castle "unintellectual, and except as an adventure novel, dull."

Songs of Travel and Other Verses

London, Chatto & Windus, 1896.



This posthumous collection of Stevenson's poetry closes with these two poems about R. L. S.'s exile from Scotland and imminent death. This particular copy is signed on the half-title page by Stevenson's mother who gave it as a gift.