

Letter from A.P. Watt to S.R. Crockett

Hastings House

7, Rue Scribe, Paris
30th October 1902

My dear Crockett,

I am this morning in receipt of yours of the 28th inst.

The cablegram to which you refer duly came to hand. I saw Gilder the same afternoon and later in the day sent him the two formal agreements covering the terms of the arrangement at which we have arrived. I expect to get them back duly signed either tomorrow or on Saturday.

I am glad to hear that you are so well pleased with this arrangement. Provided Gilder signs the documents - and I have now no reason to doubt that he will - we are, I think, excellently well out of what seemed at one time likely to be rather a nasty hole.

I note what you say regarding Blacks "Scott" stories and will write to them accordingly. I am rather keen on that book and I don't think you should let it go if you can possibly manage it. Hodder & Stoughton have not so far made any difficulty about not having received 'copy' of "Grey Galloway" and it is possible that they might agree to a further postponement if we on our side agree to give them interest on the amount which they have already paid Pennell for his drawings.

The agreements for the new serial have now gone in to Lock and I am expecting them back, duly signed, within the next day or two, when I shall as usual send you the duplicates.

And now for another matter of considerable importance. I think I told you, did I not, that I recently offered the 'copy' of "May Margaret" to Joyce and he after reading it and considering it for some time has now written to me as follows:-

"On further ... [as above] ... letter of agreement".

This cannot be said to be a very tempting offer but it is one which after carefully considering all the circumstances I am inclined to advise you to accept. In the first place the drop in the price has nothing personal in it to you. The "Graphic" announced their intention some little time ago of not paying the same high prices they have paid in the past for their serial stories and that they are carrying out this expressed intention I know to be a fact. However, that would not lead me to advise you to accept their offer if I did not think that in this particular case it is probably as good as we are likely to get. As you know, the "Windsor" people have declined the story because in their opinion it was not adapted for publication in a periodical such as theirs, appealing to the domestic circle. Messrs. MacMillan declined our offer of it because they now say they cannot pay more than a few hundreds - a very few - for the serials in "Macmillan's" and "Temple Bar". The Editor of "The Strand Magazine" declined it, Pearson's people, to whom I offered it for use either in "Pearson's Magazine" or "The Lady's Magazine", also declined it and it met the same fate at the hands of Hutchinson, to whom I had submitted it with a view to publication in "The Lady's Realm". Of the other likely quarters the "Queen" people have no opening before 1906 and it would I am afraid be impossible for you to offer it either to Nicoll or to Clarke as the stories which they have commissioned you to write. The "Cornhill" people are also full up until 1906. Apart from all this I think it is not a bad thing for you to have another story in an illustrated weekly such as the

“Graphic”. An appearance there has always, I think, a tendency to bring orders from other similar quarters and it is just as well not to have one's eggs all in the religious basket, by which I mean the Clarkes and Nicoll. Should you agree with me that it would be it would probably be well under the circumstances to accept the “Graphic” offer, I would then propose to sell the book rights to Nicoll who I am sure would be glad to have the story for publication, at any rate, in that form, and would I think do as well with it as anyone else; apart from which he should be encouraged in well doing, that is, the beginning of serials.

With kindest regards,

Believe me

Yours sincerely,

(signed) A.P. Watt