

the fact that on the afternoon of the landing, on the inshore side of the coastal roadway, a small encampment of Aussie troops had established their site, and in the course of time had set up a brazier, and were brewing tea. It included three brothers, left of five, who had served in the 7th Division since 1939, some of whom had been prisoners of war in North Africa, later rescued by Allied forces and they were continued on duty since, finally ending in the South Pacific. Suddenly, we were all startled by a huge explosion coming from their area, which indeed was caused by a similar mine, and all three were among those killed.

In common with most of my fellow soldiers, it took until about 1995, fifty years after the war, before I really felt able to tell anything of my experiences, when I began to put together my letters home and to fashion them into a book, thus far without benefit of a publisher. In any event, I have never lost my feelings about my brush with the Grim Reaper, and am still wondering subconsciously how I can thank our Creator for the supremely good luck to have escaped with my life. I also can add that I have not been sorry that I did not receive a Purple Heart on that occasion.

J. Roger Newstedt

TUSITALA

May 3, 1999

Robert G. Loudon

My subject tonight is Tusitala. I have taken advantage of the Literary Club tradition that the title of a paper may present a degree of uncertainty about the content. Some of the members attending tonight may be unfamiliar with the Samoan language, so I should start by explaining that "Tusitala" means "The teller of tales."

We have a number of fine portraits of writers around our walls, but not one of Tusitala. There is usually such a portrait only a block away from us, in the Taft Museum, but at the moment it is on a traveling exhibition of portraits by John Singer Sargent. It shows Robert Louis Stevenson, with his high forehead, and perceptive but kindly eyes, holding a cigarette in his sensitive fingers. Stevenson died in Samoa in 1894, three weeks after his 44th birthday. In Samoa, where he spent the last few years of his life, he became known as Tusitala, the teller of tales.

When I was six years old my mother would take us for a walk some Sunday afternoons, to visit her mother, father and sister Doris about a mile up the road in Cramond, a suburb of Edinburgh. I always enjoyed visiting my Aunt Dossie; she was the youngest of her family, and my mother was the oldest. Aunt Dossie was 22, cheerful, pretty, and we would play with her rattan chair that had a reclining back and an extending footrest that slid out and could be fixed in various positions. I could pull out the prop that held up the back and she would suddenly flop back, laugh, and swat at me with her hand. She was supposed to sit outdoors in the fresh air whenever it was warm enough, covered with a rug, and rest, now that she was home from the tuberculosis hospital.

My mother was very fond of the stories and poems of Tusitala, as she called Stevenson. She would recite or read poems from the Child's Garden of Verses, and would point out to me the forbidding entrance gate to The House of Shaws, a vast and gloomy ruined mansion house, half a mile up the road from our house to Granny's. She told me the story of Kidnapped, and how David Balfour's uncle had tried to kill him by sending him without a lantern on a pitch dark night up an outdoor flight of stairs which had missing steps near the top, thirty feet off the ground. She warned me to be careful about climbing stairs in the dark. Young David Balfour in the story had been careful. He had come to claim the Shaws estate that was now rightly his, under the terms of the will of his newly deceased father. His uncle had been living there meantime, and was the only other family member. If David were to die now the uncle would inherit the estate. David deduced

from his uncle's manner, and had now confirmed, that his uncle was trying to kill him. He ran off in the dark and then walked four miles to the Hawes Inn at South Queensferry. I knew it well; sometimes we would take visitors there to have a picnic and to see the ferry-boats and the ships, and the Forth Bridge. David was tracked down at the Inn the next day by his uncle's thugs, kidnapped, and dragged aboard a ship to be sold as a slave in Virginia. The ship went round the north of Scotland, and was wrecked off the west coast of Scotland. Only David and Alan Breck were saved, to survive many more adventures.

The Scottish coast is rocky, misty, and visited from time to time by fog and by storm. The third Eddystone lighthouse, a masterpiece of engineering design by Smeaton, was built on a dangerous reef 14 miles south of Plymouth, England, to replace its two badly needed but short-lived predecessors. It has been the model for all subsequent lighthouses. The design, hyperbolic in vertical cross-section and circular in horizontal cross-section, and the interlocking block construction, resists and deflects 40-foot waves better than any other. The installation of similar lighthouses around the coastline of Scotland proceeded rapidly over the next sesquicentium. Installing a lighthouse is a complex affair: Where do you put it? How high should it be? What sort of foundation do you build it on and how do you secure it? Lighthouse design and construction is a highly specialized branch of civil engineering, and in Scotland one firm, Stevenson and Sons, soon dominated it, with little competition. It isn't the kind of business you can start up with a rowboat and a bag of cement.

In 1797 Robert Stevenson succeeded his stepfather as a member of the Scottish Lighthouse Board. For the next 46 years he designed and built lighthouses, including the famous Bell Rock lighthouse; and he invented intermittent and flashing lights. Robert had three sons, who all trained in engineering in Edinburgh and were associated with their father in the family firm. The Stevenson monopoly proved to be both effective and lucrative. Thomas Stevenson took over the family firm from his father, Robert Stevenson. Thomas was happy that his only child was a boy, Robert

Louis Stevenson, born on November 13, 1850, who would, he presumed, succeed him in turn.

There were some problems, however. Robert Louis Stevenson was a rather sickly boy. He was enrolled at the Edinburgh Academy, but after a month in the first grade he had to drop out because of illness, and his education was somewhat erratic thereafter. His nurse, Alison Cunningham was a very devoted and kindly but firm mentor, with constant concerns about damnation and about hell, which she did not hesitate to express in front of her small charge. One of his earliest memories was of clutching her in terror as she called on God to save his parents from the fiery pit to which they were destined, because they gave dinner parties and played cards. In his early teens he read avidly, became interested in writing, and practiced various styles of writing by imitating classical authors whose style he admired.

"Whenever I read a book or a passage that particularly pleased me," he wrote in an essay published when he was 23, "in which there was some conspicuous force or some happy distinction in the style, I must sit down at once and set myself to ape that quality. I was unsuccessful, and knew it, and tried again, and was again unsuccessful; but at least I got some practice in rhythm, in harmony, in construction and in the co-ordination of parts. I have thus played the sedulous ape to Hazlitt, to Lamb, to Wordsworth, to Sir Thomas Browne, to Defoe, to Hawthorne, to Montaigne, to Beaudelaire, and to Oberman."

At age seventeen Robert Louis Stevenson entered Edinburgh University. At first he reluctantly followed his father's instructions that he should study engineering when he went to the University, but his misgivings rapidly increased. He wanted to study literature, and after acrimonious discussions he and his father eventually compromised and he left engineering and transferred to the law faculty, from which he graduated. As a student he developed Bohemian attitudes and habits, grew his hair long and wore a velvet smoking jacket. He questioned authority, and spent his time with fellow students talking endlessly

about their preference for wine and song over the pieties of Victorian rectitude (there were very few women at the University in those days). In 1873, on a visit to a cousin in Suffolk, he met Sidney Colvin and Fanny Sitwell, both of them established authors, and fell in love with the latter, Fanny; but she fell in love with the former, Sidney, and married him. She was several years older than Louis, and took him under her wing. His letters to her continued over the years, but changed from love letters into letters to a close friend and confidante. Louis' friendship with Colvin and his wife continued until the end of his life, and when he later left Britain Sidney Colvin was left to manage Louis' literary affairs.

Later in that same year Robert Louis Stevenson's health deteriorated, and he spent some time in the French Riviera, writing many letters and a few essays which were published in reputable literary magazines with limited circulation. In this way he regained his health, and gained some attention in literary circles. He graduated from Law School, was called to the Scottish bar, but never practiced law. Instead he and one of his many friends set off on a trip through the rivers and canals of France in two sailing canoes. He later described their adventures in "An Inland Voyage", his earliest published book.

"An Inland Voyage" and "Travels with a Donkey in the Cevennes", a similar but more practiced account of a journey, were published a few years later. Meantime Louis had met Fanny Vandegrift Osbourne in France. Again Louis had fallen in love with an older woman. This time she was American, and married, but separated from her husband. His parents were most upset by their son's affair with a married woman, and were relieved when Fanny returned to California in 1878, but horrified when their son followed her to California - she was now divorced - in August 1879. A third travel account "Across the Plains" describes this trip out to America.

I found the last of these three travel accounts the most interesting, perhaps partly because he was learning his craft while writing them, and partly because of the startling contrast between his journey

in an immigrant train across the United States and my immigrant trip to Kansas seventy years later. Here are some quotations from "Across the Plains":

"It was five in the morning when we were all signaled to be present at the Ferry Depot of the Railroad. An emigrant ship had arrived at New York on the Saturday night, another on the Sunday morning, our own on Sunday afternoon, a fourth early on Monday; and as there is no emigrant train on Sunday the great part of the passengers from these four ships was concentrated on the train by which I was to travel. There was a babble of bewildered men, women, and children. The wretched little booking office, and the baggage room, which was not much larger, were crowded thick with emigrants, and were heavy and rank with the atmosphere of dripping clothes. Open carts full of bedding stood by the half-hour in the rain. [After a trip on a crowded ferry-boat to Jersey City]. . .the landing at Jersey City was done in a stampede. I had a fixed sense of calamity, and to judge by conduct, the same persuasion was common to us all. A panic selfishness, like that produced by fear, presided over the disorder of our landing. People pushed, and elbowed, and ran, their families following how they could. Children fell, and were picked up to be rewarded by a blow. . .At the railway station there was no waiting-room, no refreshment room; the cars were locked; and for at least another hour we had to camp on the draughty, gas-lit platform."

Three days later, somewhat rested and recovered:

"Morning found us far into Ohio. This had early been a favorite home of my imagination; I have played at being in Ohio by the week and enjoyed some capital sport there with a dummy gun. My preference was founded on a work, which appeared in Cassell's Family Paper, and was read aloud to me by my nurse. It narrated the doings of one Custaloga, an Indian brave, who, in the last chapter, very obligingly washed the paint off his face and became Sir Reginald Somebody-or-other; a trick I never forgave him. The idea of a man

being an Indian brave, and then giving that up to be a baronet was one which my mind rejected. But Ohio was not at all as I had pictured it. We were now on these great plains which stretch unbroken to the Rocky Mountains. The country was flat, but far from being dull. It was rich and various, and breathed an elegance peculiar to itself. The tall corn pleased the eye; the trees were graceful in themselves, and framed the plain into long vistas; and the clean, bright, gardened townships spoke of country fare and pleasant summer evenings on the stoop. It was a sort of flat paradise; but, I am afraid, not unfrequented by the devil. That morning dawned with such a freezing chill as I have rarely felt."

But later he found that this society was as yet "incomplete in some points":

". . .or at least it contained, as I passed through, one person incompletely civilized. At North Plate, where we supped that evening, one man asked another to pass the milk-jug. This other was well-dressed and of what we should call a respectable appearance; a well-spoken man, and eating as though he had some usage of society; but he turned upon the first speaker with extraordinary vehemence of tone

"There's a waiter here!" he cried.

"I only asked you to pass the milk," explained the first.

Here is the retort verbatim-

"Pass! Hell! I'm not paid for that business; the waiter's paid for it. You should use civility at table, and, by God, I'll show you how!"

The other man very wisely made no answer, and the bully went on with his supper as though nothing had occurred. It pleases me to think that some day soon he will meet with one of his own kidney; and that perhaps both may fall."

Finally, days later, their train stopped on the Oakland side of San Francisco bay before dawn. The day was breaking as they crossed in the ferry, and fog was

rising over the citted hills of San Francisco. The bay was perfect – "not a ripple, scarce a stain, upon its blue expanse; everything was waiting, breathless, for the sun. . .suddenly the city of San Francisco, and the bay of gold and corn, were lit from end to end with summer daylight."

Life was not all easy during Stevenson's time in San Francisco and Monterey. His descriptions of the scenery, the financial arrangements among the local populace, and his close escape from being lynched for starting a forest fire, are in my opinion beautifully written. Early in 1880 he married Fanny Osbourne, and he got a telegram from his father offering to support him financially and apparently ready to relent and accept the situation. The honeymoon in a deserted Colorado silver mine which this made possible was followed by their return to Scotland, where the Stevenson parents were reconciled with their son and agreeably impressed by their charming, intelligent, and competent new daughter-in-law.

Soon after his return to Scotland, Stevenson's health again deteriorated. The pattern of his illness certainly had followed the common understanding that consumption, as tuberculosis was then called, was likely to deteriorate in cold damp climates, and that it could be helped by sanatorium treatment. This had developed, as a result of work by Brehmer, Dettweiler, and others, as bed rest in a sanatorium, with carefully regulated activity, and slow, accurately defined increase in physical activity as the patient's clinical condition permitted. When at all possible this should be provided in a dry climate that combined a high altitude with sunshine, and preferably in an institution surrounded by pine trees. Stevenson, accompanied by his wife and his stepson Lloyd Osbourne, went on medical advice to Davos, Switzerland. There is a chalet there, once an annex to one of the many sanatoria, that bears a plaque showing the dates on which it was occupied by Stevenson [and later by Thomas Mann, the Nobel prize winner whose novel "The Magic Mountain" described so well the sanatorium regime and atmosphere.]

Stevenson improved in health, and was considered well enough to leave Davos in April 1881. He spent the summer, at first in Pitlochry and then in Braemar, the closest approach to an Alpine setting in Scotland, and the site of several sanatoria at that time. When I worked there as a physician for two years in the late 1940s there were only two sanatoria left on Deeside. Somerset Maugham had been treated in one of these, and described it in "Sanatorium", one of the short stories included in his book "Trio" and made into an excellent movie. Stevenson started writing "Treasure Island" while he was in Scotland, in spite of intermittent episodes of hemoptysis. "Treasure Island" began with a map he drew as a game with his step-son Lloyd, and continued as a serial in the magazine "Young Folks", starting in October 1881. Stevenson finished the story in Davos, to which he had returned in the autumn when his symptoms worsened.

"Treasure Island" is an adventure story, presented with admirable skill, and with the atmosphere, character, and action carefully interlaced. It is a gripping adventure tale but also a commentary on the ambiguity of human motives, exemplified by the developing and changing relationships among the characters. Even Long John Silver, the peg-legged black-hearted scoundrel of a pirate, turns out to have a human side, and ends up siding with Jim Hawkins against the other five pirates, and saving Jim's life. The ideas behind his next book, "Kidnapped" started while Stevenson was still in Davos. It too was an adventure story, with a more complex historical background of the deadly feuding that was such an important part of Scottish history after the 1745 Jacobite rebellion. The interactions between Alan Breck and David Balfour, and the ways in which their very different backgrounds can suddenly interfere with their total dependence on each other, provide a complicated plot that shows them seeing one another as good and then as evil from hour to hour.

Continuing illness again drove Stevenson from Scotland, this time to Bournemouth, a city in the south of England with a reputation as being desirable for retirement or convalescence, and with the additional advantage of being home to his good friend Henry James.

While there Stevenson had a serious hemorrhage from his lungs, followed by fever. This fever was presumably the result of post-hemoptoic spread of tuberculosis so familiar when I first started working with the disease, but less well understood in Stevenson's day, before the discovery of the tubercle bacillus as the cause of consumption, and before the invention of the x-ray picture to define its extent or show its spread in the lungs. While fevered, he had a nightmare, and in his sleep gave a cry which caused Fanny to wake him. He was indignant, saying "I was dreaming a fine bogey tale." He immediately started, and three days later he finished, the first draft of "The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde."

"Treasure Island", "Kidnapped", and "The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" established Stevenson's reputation. "A Child's Garden of Verses" added to this, and these four publications also demonstrated his versatility as a writer. He could write a thriller for young readers, a topographically and historically detailed novel with complex personal interactions and development, an extraordinary and imaginative tale which is an allegory of man's good and evil vying for his soul, and a unique poetic presentation of adult recollection of a child's interpretations of the world. Instead of seeking publishers, they were now seeking him. He continued to travel, searching for better health. He spent a very cold winter in upstate New York in Saranac Lake at the Trudeau Sanatorium, and in June 1888 left San Francisco for the South Pacific in a chartered yacht. A little more than a year later he settled in Samoa, where he spent most of the rest of his life.

Samoa suited him very well. His tuberculosis appears to have stabilized; although he continued to be almost cadaverous in appearance he was remarkably productive both in quality and quantity of work. He enjoyed playing an active part in a small society, comparable to that of the Scottish Highland Laird, at Vailima, his home in Samoa. He wrote some of his best work there. He completed "The Master of Ballantrae", which he had started in New York, and wrote what is widely regarded as his best novel, "Weir of Hermiston." He was working on it and on another unfinished novel

"St. Ives" at the time of his death. "The Beach of Falesá" is considered by some critics to be his best short story. It has a Samoan setting and presents convincingly some of the aspects in island life in which he was interested, and involved.

On December 3rd, 1894, Stevenson was talking with some friends when he suddenly stopped, said, "What was that?" and fell to the ground, dead. He had had an acute, fatal, cerebral vascular accident, a massive intracranial bleed. It was ironic that after so many close calls with hemoptysis and his remarkable survival, and the apparent quiescence of his tuberculosis after moving to the South Seas, that Robert Louis Stevenson should die suddenly from a totally unrelated cause just as all of his talents appeared to be converging to make him a superb teller of tales.

I was fortunate to be practicing medicine during the years when effective treatment for tuberculosis became available for the first time. As a medical student I remember the disappointment in the medical community when the remarkable efficacy of penicillin was found not to extend to the most important infectious disease, tuberculosis. Streptomycin was introduced while I was an intern, and I recollect trying to get some for a twenty-year old teacher with very early symptoms of tuberculous meningitis. Survival from this was unknown before streptomycin, and at this time enough was made available in Scotland for treatment at any time of twenty patients with tuberculous meningitis. None was available for treatment of other forms of tuberculosis. This young lady made it to the top of the list for streptomycin, and I hoped that one of the patients already on it would die so that she could be given a chance. But they didn't, and she died after a few weeks.

When other yet more effective drugs were introduced, and combined chemotherapy was improved by studying and comparing various regimens over a couple of decades, a disease which had killed more people than either heart disease or cancer was reduced to the minor leagues. In my first job in the tuberculosis hospital in Edinburgh assigned to long-term cases we had 210

beds, and a waiting list of 380 patients who required admission. During the year that I was there we discharged a total of 156 patients, 50 patients as improved, 54 were discharged as "MHB" - Maximum Hospital Benefit - which meant that they were not improving enough to justify continuing their hospital stay; and 52 died in hospital. I didn't know it at the time, of course, but my Aunt Dossie had been discharged MHB, eighteen years earlier. She died at home about a year after discharge from hospital, when I was seven and she was 23.

Robert Louis Stevenson had disobeyed his father's instructions, had argued and eventually compromised with him, studied law but then failed to practice what he had learned, and had ended up following his inner, powerful need to write. He didn't become a lighthouse engineer - but he did introduce the lantern-bearers in an essay of that name, *Leerie the Lamplighter* in one of his poems, and the brilliant pyrotechnics which were the climax of "The Beach at Falesá." He didn't practice Law - but "Weir of Hermiston" is about a judge, and his son who didn't follow his father's instructions. Stevenson did write, and very well, thanks to his inner drive, years of hard work, and basic abilities. Was his success in part due to his need to prove something to his father? Anyhow, he did prove that his decision to ignore his father's guiding beacon and to steer his career towards a different light and into a different vocational port had in the end proved very successful, and his father recognized it.

Whether it was the result of his Samoan experiences, his reconciliation with his father, or simply the aging process, Robert Louis Stevenson's attitudes changed. In his essay "A Christmas Sermon" he said:

"To be honest, to be kind - to earn a little and to spend a little less, to make upon the whole a family happier for his presence, to renounce when that shall be necessary and not be embittered, to keep a few friends but these without capitulation - above all, on the same grim condition, to keep friends with himself - here is

a task for all that a man has of fortitude and delicacy."

"There is an idea abroad among moral people that they should make their neighbours good. One person I have to make good: myself. But my duty to my neighbour is much more nearly expressed by saying that I have to make him happy – if I may."

It has been suggested that this attitude was much easier to adopt in Samoa than in London, and it was his remoteness from modern industrial civilization that allowed him to preserve this moral equanimity when his contemporaries were moving more and more to pessimism. Be that as it may, he continued to present and consider serious social, political, judicial and personal problems in his stories and in his fiction, and illuminate them from a number of viewpoints, to the end of his life.

His story-telling abilities steadily matured. His practice as a sedulous ape in the rhythms and harmony of words paid off. For example, in the Child's Garden of Verses, he wrote:

From The Railway Carriage.

Faster than fairies, faster than witches,
Bridges and houses, hedges and ditches;
And charging along like troops in a battle,
All through the meadows the horses and cattle;
All of the sights of the hill and the plain
Fly as thick as driving rain;
And ever again, in the wink of an eye,
Painted stations whistle by.

Stevenson's descriptions of landscapes and of seascapes are as vivid as any, except perhaps the seascapes of Conrad. His characters live – perhaps not in as wide a range as those of Dickens, Thackeray or Tolstoy, but they live robustly and often the character takes over and drives the plot. His plots work, and his creative imagination, for example in the "Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," makes the plots exciting, enthralling, and memorable.

Stephen Jay Gould said: "Humans are story-telling creatures preeminently. We organize the world as a set of tales." Stevenson was a preeminent teller of tales.

AMCM & THE GARDEN CLUB OF AMERICA¹

May 10, 1999

John L. Campbell

Many of you will recall the wonderful paper that G.G. Carey delivered about his father and the experiences which the elder Mr. Carey had while serving as a spy for the United States in the 1930s and 1940s. You will recall the sage advice given to Gibby by Mr. Carey that he was to "never trust a Rumanian."

This is a story about another sleuth known by many of you as Angela Mitchell, Angela Campbell, or more recently as Angela Meeske.

The facts and specifics of this paper must be drawn from snippets of information which have become known over the years. A spy must maintain anonymity for life. This is particularly true in the case of Angela Mitchell Campbell Meeske, AMCM, or "the Venus fly trap" as she is known in the trade, since she may again be called upon to assist the CIA or some other U.S. intelligence agency in the collection of information.

¹ The Author wishes to recognize the editorial assistance of his wife Janet Campbell and the assistance of his mother, Angela Mitchell Campbell Meeske, who has inadvertently provided snippets of information over the years, which when mixed with a dash of imagination, have provided the substance of this paper.