

CENTRE FOR EDITORIAL AND INTERTEXTUAL RESEARCH
(CARDIFF CORVEY: READING THE ROMANTIC TEXT)

Project Report

Number 10

BRITISH FICTION, 1800–1829:
A DATABASE OF PRODUCTION AND RECEPTION
Phase II: Walter Scott, *Tales of My Landlord* (1816): A Publishing
Record

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THE PUBLISHING CONTEXT

'I HAVE thus my dear friend brought to bear what I conceive is a very important business for both of us. If these people had sooner seen their true interest we should have had *Waverley* and both the others. I have been occupied with this for years, and I hope I have now accomplished what will be of immense importance of us.' In such terms William Blackwood wrote confidentially to the London publisher, John Murray II, on 20 April 1816. Blackwood was on the point of finalising an agreement with James Ballantyne the printer for an as yet untitled work of fiction by an unnamed author, and Murray had just written to accept a share in the venture. Behind Blackwood's exultation, and Murray's acceptance, lay a conviction that what was being offered was the latest (the fourth) in a line of publications by 'the author of *Waverley*'. Ballantyne had not said as much directly, but Blackwood felt enough hints had been dropped that Walter Scott was indeed to be the author.

The thought of such an acquisition was to send Blackwood into similar moments of rapture: on completing the contract for what was to be eventually titled *Tales of My Landlord*; on first reading a sizeable chunk of the first story to be included, 'The Black Dwarf', in August; and on publication early in December 1816, when the second and larger story, 'Old Mortality', received especial acclaim from readers, and it rapidly came clear that the two publishers had a runaway success on their hands. But a series of mishaps before and after publication were to send him into equivalently depressed states of mind: convinced in June 1816 that he was the victim of a confidence trick; at odds with Murray during key moments of the early launch, when the two corresponded pointedly through their clerks; and alarmed in the Spring of 1817 that Ballantyne was pushing on with a fourth edition when sizeable numbers of the third remained unsold. Eventually news that the fifth edition had gone to their arch-rival Archibald Constable led to threats of a legal action in May 1819, which, if it had gone ahead, might well have resulted in the author's exposure. Though the parties withdrew from the brink, the effective result was that the *Waverley Novels* from then on were to be published almost exclusively by Constable & Co., whose failure in 1826 led directly to Scott's financial ruin.

Blackwood's position and reactions can only be fully understood in the context of Scottish publishing history in the early nineteenth century. The first decade of the century had seen the spectacular rise of Archibald Constable as a major force in British publishing, though large-scale ventures such as the *Edinburgh Review*, aided too by a profitable engagement in some of Scott's earlier poetical successes. Constable's expansion meant, amongst other things, his taking on Robert Cadell as a partner in 1811. Blackwood, though only two years younger than Constable, had been slower to emerge from a similar apprenticeship in the Edinburgh book trade. Before 1816 his most prominent single publication had been Thomas McCrie's *Life of Knox* (1812), though a successful business in retailing and antiquarian bookselling and the proprietorship of journals such as *The Edinburgh Christian Instructor*, enabled a move that Autumn from South Bridge, opposite Edinburgh College, to fashionable new premises at 17 Prince's Street, in the New Town. By this stage Blackwood was consciously vying with Constable, who was situated in the Edinburgh High Street at the heart of the Old Town, for domination of the Edinburgh scene. The ensuing battle inevitably involved relations with the London trade. Just as its leading publishers for some time had required booksellers in Edinburgh as wholesale agents, for the dispersal of their titles throughout Scotland, so, with the development of publishing in Scotland, Edinburgh publishers were increasingly in pursuit of London houses to share in financing projects and to manage distribution in the South. From an early date Constable had co-operated with the well-established firm of Longman & Co.; while a boost was given to Blackwood's career when he was chosen by John Murray II—then in Fleet Street, but soon to move to Albemarle Street—as his Edinburgh agent in 1811. Blackwood's trade developed apace, and he also enjoyed good relations with other London concerns, such as Cadell & Davies, who were later to become his main London partners. Early in 1817, he was poised to challenge Constable in the literary periodical line, through the launch of *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, whose first monthly number was for April 1817.

A third component in the game between publishers, and more often than not operating as an unpredictable wild card, was the firm of John Ballantyne & Co., which had been set up under Walter Scott's direction in 1808. Scott was already a secret partner in the printing concern of James Ballantyne & Co., and undoubtedly his master plan was to secure control of both the printing and publication of his works. An outstanding success was achieved with *The Lady of the Lake* (1810), but the more pedestrian titles which were meant to move off in the wake of Scott's poetry failed to budge. Invariably, the dross that remained is referred to in later dealings as John Ballantyne's 'stock'. In 1813 proceedings were started to wind up John Ballantyne & Co., with Scott's own finances perilously involved, though it took several years before the final dissolution was achieved, probably in 1817.

In the salvage operation invaluable help was given by Constable, and it was largely as a result of this that Scott granted his firm the management of his first anonymous novel, *Waverley* (1814), though by no means feeling tied to any publisher at this stage. With his next novel, *Guy Mannering* (1815), he turned directly to Longman & Co., impressed by their reliable London bills in payment. His terms (as negotiated through John Ballantyne) usually involved clear half-profits for the author; the printing to be executed by James Ballantyne, who was also to supply paper; incidental expenses, such as advertising, to be paid by the publisher; and the pre-publication purchase of a heavy load of John Ballantyne's stock. Particularly important, from Scott's point of view, was the need to push on subsequent editions, relatively untrammelled with incidental charges, and with payment due as soon as James Ballantyne delivered. Longmans were good payers, but remote in London, not officially apprised of Scott's authorship, and (as Scott was to find with *Guy Mannering*) inclined to be cautious even when pushing best-selling books. With such negatives in mind, Scott turned to Constable as manager again with *The Antiquary*, which was published in Edinburgh on 4 May 1816.

It is at this point that Murray and Blackwood came more openly into the reckoning (the order of names reflects Scott's view of Blackwood primarily as Murray's agent). A relationship between Scott and Murray had already developed, most noticeably through Murray's *Quarterly Review*, to which Scott was a regular contributor; and Scott had already found advantage through Murray's social and literary contacts in London, most spectacularly in the shape of Lord Byron, whom Murray exclusively published. As much to the point, Murray's accepted bills were as good as Longmans', and his house a useful alternative option when dealing with the Constable–Longmans alliance. When Constable & Co. showed signs of hesitating over payment for the third edition of *Waverley*, early in October 1814, Scott immediately drew up a contingency plan for turning to Murray through Blackwood; and in the same month he was also thinking of Murray as a backstop in case negotiations with Longmans for *Guy Mannering* fell through. There is also evidence that Scott at much the same time had virtually promised Murray and Blackwood a 'History of Scotland' to be published under his own name; and it is not unlikely that Murray had been deliberately given a scent of the novels, possibly even before the publication of *Waverley* itself. Meanwhile, Blackwood had been assiduously cultivating Ballantyne by putting printing work his way; Ballantyne, for his part; no doubt found it useful to promise sweetmeats to so useful an employer. This in turn helps explain why Scott in negotiating *Tales of My Landlord* used James rather than John Ballantyne as his agent, though Blackwood's and Murray's poor opinion of the latter was probably another factor.

THE RECORDS

The following records for the first time bring together a comprehensive account of publishing *Tales of My Landlord* from William Blackwood's first excited mention to John Murray of a forthcoming proposal from James Ballantyne, to Constable & Co.'s records of the number of copies still on their hands in the 1820s. The story of *Tales* is unique among early nineteenth century publishing annals not only because it can be so thoroughly documented but also because of its extraordinary complexity and the range of players. Although preparation of this material has been guided

throughout by an intention to allow it to speak for itself, it nevertheless may be helpful briefly to suggest pathways through it, and identify several distinct threads and themes.

1. Preliminary Negotiations: Letters of 21 Feb 1816–1 May 1816.

During this time, William Blackwood and John Murray know only that they are being offered a 'Work of Fiction in four volumes' that they have good reason to believe must be by the 'Author of Waverley'. Relations between the two publishers, and between James Ballantyne (negotiating for Scott) and Blackwood are cordial at this stage, and each participant is guided by a keen awareness of how much each stands to profit by a successful negotiation. The secretive nature of the initial proposal does, however, set the scene for later problems. Moreover, although Blackwood and Murray no doubt prefer dealing with James rather than John Ballantyne, they view him too with a degree of suspicion, and Murray in particular is predisposed to be hostile by memories of an extended angry exchange in 1810, involving a pre-publication review of a work by Dr Gregory.

At this preliminary stage, several concerns are introduced that run at times discordantly through the entire episode. These include:

- a. Scott in the background directing negotiations through Ballantyne as intermediary. Scott allows Ballantyne very little room to manoeuvre in his dealings with the publishers; on the other side, Blackwood and Murray are quick to direct anger or suspicion at him even while they remain anxious to propitiate Scott.
- b. Blackwood's position as lead negotiator for the two publishers, and as manager of the work's publication. Accustomed to taking the leading role himself and viewing the Edinburgh publisher's as a provincial affair, Murray feels and expresses frustration and occasional anger at Blackwood. For his part, Blackwood is often irritated by what he perceives as Murray's high-handed ways, and at the London publisher's failure to respond immediately to his frequent letters.
- c. Finances. The matter in dispute is typically not the amounts to be paid, but the length of the bills of payment. Scott is accustomed to be paid by bills at 6 months; Blackwood and Murray prefer 12 months.
- d. Identity of the author. Although Blackwood and Murray initially seem to have little doubt that Scott is the author, this is never confirmed and the names of various other possibilities—notably Scott's brother, Thomas—are mooted from time to time.

2. Doubts and Disagreements: Letters of 3 May 1816–16 Aug 1816.

This sequence begins with Blackwood expressing to Murray his surprise that, with the ink barely dry on the agreement, Ballantyne is drawing on both publishers for funds. The issue of the length of bills resurfaces because of Scott's insistence on 6 month bills, and leads to the complicated series of letters of 6–7 May 1816, when Blackwood feels compelled to make and send copies for Murray of Ballantyne's various notes to him. Meanwhile, Ballantyne is evidently in close communication with Scott, and is being directed by him. Ballantyne's printing office at Paul's Works (situated approximately where the present Waverley Station yards stand), and Blackwood's publishing house on Princes Street are within easy walking distance, so numerous letters can be delivered by hand during the course of a day. Scott is at Abbotsford at the beginning of May, but then goes to Edinburgh where he too is close by at his home on Castle Street. Blackwood, well aware that his reputation could be made or broken by the promised work, is increasingly anxious about the non-appearance of the two first volumes which had been promised for six to eight weeks from the middle of April. A further irritant is supplied by news that Scott has sold to Archibald Constable a *History of Scotland* (never published) formerly promised to Blackwood and Murray; at this point Blackwood's level of anxiety reaches fever-pitch.

3. *Initial Response and Preparation for Publication: Letters of 21 Aug 1816–20 Nov 1816.*

On 21 Aug 1816 a relieved Ballantyne is finally able to notify Blackwood of the imminent appearance of the first volume, and that he is well-pleased with the work. He also tells Blackwood that the publishers' decision to go ahead with the work must rest with the Edinburgh publisher alone because the book is not to go out of his hands. On 22 Aug Blackwood reads the first 8 sheets or 192 pages of *The Black Dwarf* and writes rapturously of the work to Murray. Although its transmission is not recorded, Murray is evidently sent a copy of the first volume, which he shows to William Gifford, whose criticism of the ending prompts the famous 'Death-head Hussars of literature' letter from Scott. There are no letters from Murray in this section.

At the beginning of this stage plans are still for a four volume work comprising four separate tales; these are modified only as Scott begins work in earnest on *Old Mortality* which was eventually to fill all three of the remaining volumes, and about which he corresponds with both James and John Ballantyne. They implore him to end the novel happily, and James, while admiring the work greatly, complains repeatedly that no individual character is especially prominent.

4. *Publication, Public Reception, and Disagreement: Letters of 22 Nov 1816–31 Dec 1816.*

Printing was complete by 22 Nov 1816, although publication is delayed until 2 Dec to allow Murray to receive the copies destined for London. Response is immediate and overwhelmingly positive, with the 2000 copies of the 1st edn selling out by the end of the month. While Scott is enjoying sending out copies to his friends, and receiving their fulsome compliments on the work, the publishers, with a runaway success on their hands and unable to meet demand, quarrel about the forthcoming 2nd edn. Relations are strained to breaking point, with the underlying point of contention being Blackwood's assumption of a managerial role and Murray's belief that he has badly mishandled affairs. Meanwhile, Murray writes directly to Scott to praise the work, and in his reply Scott first broaches the possibility of writing a review, in partnership with his friend William Erskine, intended effectively to deflect suspicions of his authorship.

5. *Subsequent Editions: Letters of 1 Jan 1817–6 Nov 1817.*

This section covers publication of the 2nd and 3rd edns and preparation of the 4th edn. Relations both between the publishers, and with Ballantyne become particularly strained over the 4th edn about which there is some considerable misunderstanding. Although Murray seems initially enthusiastic for the new edition to proceed, sales figures are dropping and he retracts. Ballantyne, acting on orders from Blackwood, claims to have already printed the edition when he hears that it is to be stopped. Both Ballantyne and Scott require payment—Ballantyne for the expense of printing, and Scott for his half-share of profits. The dispute occasions another complicated series of communications between the various participants on 7–8 April 1817. In the end, publication is delayed until Jan 1818. To the publishers' chagrin, Scott returns to Constable for his next novel, *Rob Roy*.

An important thread during this period concerns the review of *Tales* for Murray's *Quarterly Review*. Murray agrees to Scott's suggestion that he undertake the review with Erskine, no doubt speculating that rumours of Scott's authorship of the review would generate increased sales of the *Quarterly*. Blackwood, for his part, wants his friend, the aging Henry Mackenzie, to write the notice of *Tales*. Blackwood publishes Dr McCrie's hostile response to *Old Mortality* in the *Edinburgh Christian Instructor*, and Scott promises to supply Murray with a Tory or 'Killiecrankie' view of the matter as a counterbalance. Although Mackenzie writes his notice, it is the Scott and Erskine review that is published—a coup for Murray both as publisher of the *Quarterly* and as an assertion of his pre-eminence over Blackwood.

6. *5th Edition: Letters of 8 Mar 1818–15 Dec 1824.*

The 4th edn proves difficult to sell in a by-now saturated market. On 8 Mar 1818, Murray reports to Blackwood on sales figures from his 'Coffee-House Sale' where he offered special rates to other Booksellers; he also mentions a rumour that Constable not only has acquired rights to the promised continuation of *Tales* but also will take over as publisher of the first series. The rumour is found to be true when Constable advertises the 5th edn in early May 1819, and an acrimonious dispute ensues, involving a threatened lawsuit. Blackwood and Murray fear being left with unsold copies of the 4th edn at a time when Constable is pushing both the 5th edn and the new series. Another sequence of letters between Ballantyne, Blackwood, and Murray results on 6–7 May 1819. As part of the eventual settlement in the original publishers' favour, Constable takes all the unsold copies from Blackwood and Murray, paying the full subscription price. The copies prove difficult to sell at a time when both the second (1818: 56) and third series (1819: 61) of *Tales* are also available. Robert Cadell complains in a letter of 14 Jan 1820 that Constable & Co.'s stock still groans with unsold copies of the first series. In one of the final letters presented here, John Galt is seen proposing that his new publishers, Oliver & Boyd, use *Tales* as a model and buy back from Blackwood the novels he had earlier published.

WORKS CONSULTED AND FURTHER READING

- Constable, Thomas. *Archibald Constable and His Literary Correspondents*, 3 vols (Edinburgh: Edmonston and Douglas, 1873).
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- . 'Scott's Self-Reviewal Reviewed', *The Scott Newsletter* 17 (Winter 1990), 4–10.
- Garside, Peter, James Raven, and Rainer Schöwerling. *The English Novel 1770–1829: A Bibliographical Survey of Prose Fiction Published in the British Isles*, 2 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).
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- Scott, Walter. *The Black Dwarf*, ed. P. D. Garside (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1993).
- Scott, Walter. *The Tale of Old Mortality*, ed. Douglas Mack (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1993).
- Smiles, Samuel. *A Publisher and his Friends: Memoir and Correspondence of the Late John Murray*, 2 vols (London: John Murray, 1891).

BRITISH FICTION, 1800–29: 'TALES OF MY LANDLORD', A PUBLISHING RECORD

Reading the Records

Archives at the National Library of Scotland (principally the Blackwood Papers but also the Walpole Collection of letters to Walter Scott, and the Constable Papers), at John Murray's, and from the Longman's collection at Reading University were exhaustively examined for correspondence and accounts relating to the publication of *Tales*. In the case of letters by Scott, we relied on the printed text provided by the Herbert Grierson edition of his correspondence and also noted those corrections supplied by James Corson in his index to the edition. In other cases where a printed source exists (the publishing house histories prepared by Margaret Oliphant for Blackwood's and Samuel Smiles for Murray's), the original was checked against the printed text. The printed text was invariably found to have differences of punctuation and/or wording. We have, therefore, always given precedence to the original text but also supply a reference to the printed version. Entries have been arranged chronologically; where an exact date for an extract has not been established, the entry is placed at the end of the relevant section (that is, if only the month and year are known, the entry appears after all other entries for that month).

Fields for the entries are arranged in the following order:

1. *Identification*: e.g. 'Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II'.
2. *Date*: has been standardised in day/month/year format. Where the date does not appear on the document itself but can be identified by some other means (typically postmark, docket, or content), it appears enclosed in square brackets. Where the whole date is uncertain, it is preceded by a question mark. Where any one of the three component parts is uncertain, a question mark follows the relevant part. Where necessary, the notes field at the end of each entry elucidates the means of establishing the date.
3. *Text*: extracts have been transcribed as they appear in the original documents, preserving spelling and punctuation. Omitted text is indicated by [...]. Uncertain readings are indicated by [?] following the doubtful word. Paragraph breaks are indicated by //. Where the source material is foliated or paginated, folio or page turns are indicated where they appear in the text by square brackets inclosing the relevant numbers. Editorial commentary has been kept to a minimum, but on occasion omitted text is summarized within square brackets. Postscripts are indicated by [postscript], and information about the location on the letter of the postscript may also be noted.
4. *Source*: this is indicated using the abbreviations listed below. In many cases, Blackwood retained a copy of letters he sent to Murray or to James Ballantyne and these are now preserved in the Blackwood papers at the National Library of Scotland; where possible these have been identified and the references are given. On occasion, the retained copy is evidently a draft, and these also have been identified. In a number of cases, Blackwood made copies for Murray of letters he received from Ballantyne; these are noted.
5. *Notes*: where relevant, this field records the source of information for dating purposes, and also the date as it actually appears on the document—for example, where the correspondent has written the day of the week or time of day. The place from where the correspondent writes the letter is named when it is of interest. The notes field also includes other editorial commentary to help identify the matter or individuals being discussed in the extract.

SOURCES AND ABBREVIATIONS

Archives

- E National Library of Scotland.
 Longman Archives Archives of the House of Longman, Reading University Library.
 Murray Archives John Murray Archives, London.

Printed Material

- Corson James C. Corson, *Notes and Index to Sir Herbert Grierson's Edition of the Letters of Sir Walter Scott* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979).
 [see item] Peter Garside, James Raven, and Rainer Schöwerling. *The English Novel 1770–1829: A Bibliographical Survey of Prose Fiction Published in the British Isles*, 2 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); vol. 2: 1800–29. References to other novels use the identifying codes from this work.
 Grierson Herbert Grierson et al, *The Letters of Sir Walter Scott*, 12 vols (London: Constable and Co., 1932–37).
 Oliphant Margaret Oliphant, *Annals of a Publishing House: William Blackwood and His Sons*, 3 vols (Edinburgh: Blackwood, 1897–98).
 Smiles Samuel Smiles, *A Publisher and his Friends: Memoir and Correspondence of the Late John Murray*, 2 vols (London: John Murray, 1891).

Online Resources

- Millgate Millgate Union Catalogue of Walter Scott Correspondence:
 <<http://www.nls.uk/catalogues/resources/scott/index.html>

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

21 Feb 1816.

The Crafty has been doing every thing he could to be disagreeable to Mr Scott, who on the other hand is more and more disposed to be connected and friendly both with you and me. Ballantyne is to do every thing he possibly can to promote our views, and he assured me that in a very few weeks he would have something very important to propose to us.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 2.

Notes: 'The Crafty' was used by both Blackwood and Murray to refer to Archibald Constable.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

12 Apr 1816.

Sometime ago I wrote you that James Ballantyne had dined with me, and from what then passed I expected I would soon have something very important to communicate. He has now fully explained himself to me with liberty to write you every thing he has communicated to me. This however he entreats of us to keep most entirely to ourselves, trusting to our honour that we will not breathe a syllable of it to the dearest friend we have. // He began by telling me that he thought he had it now in his power to shew me how sensible he was of the services I had done him, and how anxious he was accomplish [*sic*] that union of interests which I had so long been endeavouring to bring about—till now he had only made professions, now he could act—that he was empowered to offer me along with you, a Work of Fiction in four volumes such as *Waverly* [*sic*] &c.—that he had read a considerable part of it, and knowing the plan of the whole, he could answer for its being a production of the very first class, but that he was not yet at liberty to mention its title nor would he be at liberty to give the Author's name. I naturally asked him if it was by the Author of *Waverly* [*sic*] &c He said it was to have no reference to any other work whatever, and every one would be at liberty to form their own conjectures as to the Author. He only requested that whatever we might suppose from any thing that might come afterwards if we should be the publishers we would keep strictly to ourselves. The terms he was empowered by the Author to offer it for were

1. The Author to receive one half of the profits of each edition—these profits to be ascertained by deducting the Paper and Printing from the proceeds of Books sold at sale price—the publishers to be at the whole of the expence of advertising.

2d. The property of the Book to be the publishers, who were to print such editions as they chose
3dly The only condition upon which the Author would agree to these terms, is, that the publishers *should take £600 of John Ballantyne & Cos stock* selected from list annexed, deducting 25 pr cent from the affixed sale prices.

4thly If these terms were agreed to, the Stock to the above amount to be immediately delivered, and bill granted at 12 Mo.

5thly That in the course of six or eight weeks JB expected to be able to put into my hands the two first vols printed, and that if on perusal we did not like the bargain, we should be at liberty to give it up. This he considered as most unlikely, but if it should be the case he bound himself to repay or redeliver the bill on the Books being returned

6thly That the Edition consisting of 2000 copies should be printed as ready for delivery by the first of October

I have thus stated to you as nearly as I can the substance of what passed. I tried in various ways to learn something with regard to the Author, but he was quite impenetrable. My own impression now is that it must be Walter Scott, for no one else would think of burdening any one with such trash as John B's wretched stock. This is such a burden that I am puzzled not a little. I endeavoured every thing I could to get him to propose other terms, but he told me they could not be departed from in a single part, and the other Works had been taken on the same conditions, and he knew they would be greedily accepted again in the same quarter. Consider the matter seriously, and write me as soon as you can. After giving it my consideration and making some calculations, I confess I feel inclined to hazzard [*sic*] the speculation but still I feel doubtful till I hear what you think of it. Do not let my opinion, which may be erroneous, influence you, but judge for yourself. From the very strong terms

in which Jas. B. has spoke of the work I am sanguine enough to expect it will equal if not surpass any of the others. I would not lay so much stress upon what he says if I were not assured that his great interest as well as Mr. Scott's is to stand in the very best way both with you and me. They are anxious to get out of the clutches of the Crafty, and Ballantyne is sensible of the favour I have done and may still do him by giving so much employment, besides what he may expect from you. From the Crafty he can expect nothing. I had almost forgot to mention that he assured me in the most solemn manner that we had got the first offer, and he ardently hoped we would accept of it. If however we did not, he trusted to our honour that we would say nothing of it—that the Author of this work would likely write more—and should we not take this we might have it in our power afterwards to do something with him, provided we acted with delicacy in the transaction, as he had no doubt we would [...]

[postscript, on back of sheet] I have just recd the following calculation from J.B.

2000 Copies Printing 4 vol. in the manner of Waverly [<i>sic</i>] suppose 60 Sheets 55	£165 -
Paid transcribing the whole from Author's M.S.	30 -
Corrections, which are likely to be heavy—say	25 -
260 Reams Dmy —— say 28/	<u>364 -</u>
	£584

[postscript: 13 Apr 1816] As this sheet is wholly devoted to this my important business—I say nothing about my being another day without letters or parcel from you, as I wish you to apply your mind wholly and entirely to this alone, and to write me as soon as you possibly can. Do not delay, as it will be necessary for us to correspond oftener than once perhaps before I give Ballantyne my answer.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 2; also in Smiles, I, 457–59 and Oliphant, I, 57–58, both with errors and omissions.

Notes: Headed 'Most Strictly Confidential'. Dated from Belleville (Blackwood's home) Friday Evg 11 at night.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

13 Apr 1816.

I have just received the following calculations from J[ames] B[allantyne].

Source: E, MS 4001, fol. 216 (copy).

Notes: Note appears above the Bill from Ballantyne to Blackwood, of the same date.

Bill from James Ballantyne to William Blackwood.

13 Apr 1816.

Printing New Work, 4 volumes, in the manner of Waverley,

Suppose 60 sheets, 2000, at £2. 15.

£165.-

Paid transcribing the whole, from the Author's own MS

30.-

The Corrections are like to be *extremely* heavy- say-

25.-

[260 Reams Demy 28/-

£364

£584]

I think this is very near the probable expence. I have not put down paper, which you know better about than I do.

Source: E, MS 4001, fol. 216.

Notes: The figures for paper, enclosed above within square brackets, are added in another hand and pen. Calculations are on the same sheet as Blackwood's note to Murray of the same date.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

15 Apr 1816.

I sent you a long and most confidential letter on Saturday, which I hope you will consider [illeg.] and write me as soon as you can. Every consideration I can give the business inclines me to the project notwithstanding the odd nature of the transaction. Ballantyne says he will put to press immediately, and he talks in a rapturous way of the work—he says he is certain he could get higher terms than what he has ask'd, but his heart's desire is to get out of the clutches of the C[raft]y. [...] he & W.S. must be equally anxious to have done with C—. At all events if we should be disappointed in the Book after seeing two vols. and wish to give up the transaction I think Jas B. will be perfectly good to us [...].

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 2.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

19 Apr 1816.

I expect to hear from [you] tomorrow or Sunday, in answer to my letter and Ballantyne's proposal.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 2.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

20 Apr 1816.

It is a great happiness to me to find that our views and calculations upon so many things coincide so much. The view you have taken of Ballantyne's proposal is exactly what I had from the moment he had mentioned it to me. [...] // I have proceeded upon its being taken for granted that we close with Ballantyne—indeed I have not the smallest hesitation about it—particularly when I consider how much Ballantyne has at stake in keeping well with you & getting free from the Crafty—besides I am to see two vols and then have liberty to give up the bargain. [...] // I have thus my dear friend brought to bear what I conceive is a very important business for both of us. If these people had sooner seen their true interest we should have had Waverley and both the others. I have been occupied with this for years, and I hope have now accomplished what will be of immense importance for us.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 2.

Notes: Headed Confidential.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

27 Apr 1816.

I had a very long interview with Ballantyne yesterday forenoon, which with other things only left me time to write you two lines. The first thing I mentioned was with regard to the Author's profits being settled for. He told me it was a *sine qua non* with the author that so soon as the Book was published the edition which we could make any number we chose should be considered as sold and the profits settled for accordingly by bill at 12 mo. but that any further accommodation as required would be granted. After considering with myself for some minutes, I thought it is well to agree to this, though it adds so much more to the risk. I would not however have done so if we had not had it in our power to give up the bargain should we think there was any risk after seeing a portion of the Book. I think there cannot be any. I then made the proposition to him with regard to the Northern Antiquities. [...] [about taking John Ballantyne's stock] I could not therefore fix upon the Books I was to take. Every thing however is settled, and on Tuesday he is to give me a letter specifying the whole terms of the transaction. He could not do it sooner he said as he had to consult the Author. This I think makes it clearer that it is Walter Scott who is at Abbotsford just now. What surprized me a good deal was James Ballantyne told me his Brother John was gone out there with the Crafty and Godwin whom Scott was anxious to see. They are really a strange set of people [...]. Ballantyne told me yesterday that since he first spoke to me about this business he had learnt that from a certain quarter there had been offers to take £1000 of their stock if any work were ready to be produced. I instantly told him if there was anything of this said to any other house, it would place

you and me in a very awkward situation, as it would then be no longer a secret with us. He solemnly assured me not only that we had got the first offer, but that there had not been a syllable said to any one whatever about it, but this proposal had been mentioned by the other parties in a general way on the supposition that other works were likely to be brought forward. I had almost forgot to mention to you again the necessity of still keeping this transaction a profound secret, but there should be any chance of our giving up the bargain after seeing a portion of the Book. I am not over fond of all these mysteries, but they are a mysterious set of personages, and we must manage with them in the best way we can. [...] The Antiquary I fear will hardly be out next week. You would see by their advertisement they have made the price 24/- this will be all in our favour, but I do not think we should follow their example.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 2. Brief extract in Smiles, I, 460 with errors and omissions.

Letter from Walter Scott to John Ballantyne.

29 Apr 1816.

James has made one or two important mistakes in the bargain with Murray. Briefly as follows. // Having only authority from me to promise 6000 copies he proposes that they shall have the copy-right *for ever*. I will see their noses cheese first. // 2dly. He proposes I shall have 12 mos. Bills—I have always got 6 however I would not stand on that. // 3dly He talks of volumes being put into the publishers hands to consider & decide on. No such thing—a bare perusal at St. John Street only. // Then for omissions. // It is NOT stipulated that we supply the print & paper of successive editions. This must be nailed & not left to understanding. // Secondly, I will have London Bills as well as Blackwoods. // If they agree to these conditions—good & well—if they demur Constable must be instantly tried—giving half to Longman—& *we* drawing on *them* for that money or Constable lodging their bill in our hands. You will understand it is a 4 volume work a Romance totally different in stile and structure from the others—a new cast in short of the net which has hitherto made miraculous draughts. I do not limit you in terms because I think you will make them better than I can do. But he must do more than others since he will not or cannot [497/498] print with us. For every point but this one I would much rather deal with Constable than any one for he has always shewn himself both spirited judicious & liberal & gets off his books faster than anybody [...] At the same time you need not conceal from him that there was some proposals elsewhere but you may add with truth I would rather close with him. [postscript] I think Constable should jump at this affair for I believe the work will be very popular. I need not say I will be anxious to hear.

Source: Grierson, I, 497–98.

Letter from James Ballantyne to William Blackwood.

30 Apr 1816.

I inclose you a formal offer, with this positive assurance, that I *cannot* vary from it in one single particular; so that, if you wish, as I believe most firmly you do, that the bargain shortly be completed, I will sign the offer to-day before dinner. But, I again repeat, that, whatever may be my wishes, I cannot vary from the terms of the offer in any one respect.—By the bye—I should say, that bills for the author's profit will be accepted at 12 months, if you insisted upon it; but I advise you not to insist upon it. The compromise I have put in, of 6 and 12 months, would be extremely well taken by the author. and he well knows he could get them from other quarters.

Source: E, MS 4001, fol. 218. Also in Oliphant, I, 60 with errors.

Letter from James Ballantyne to William Blackwood.

30 Apr 1816.

I hereby, as having authority from the Author, make offer to you of an Edition, or Editions, of a Work of Fiction, to consist of four volumes, demy 12mo., on the following terms:

1. You are to have the privilege of printing any number of copies, not exceeding Six Thousand; and this either in one, or in successive editions, as you shall judge most advisable.

2. The Paper for each Edition, or Editions, is to be supplied, and the printing to be executed, by James Ballantyne and Company.
3. You are to purchase, from the Stock of John Ballantyne and Company, booksellers, books which shall amount to the sum of Six Hundred Pounds sterling, after deduction of a discount of 25 per Cent. on the sale price; and to pay for those books by the Bills, separately accepted, of Mr John Murray, Albemarle Street, London, and yourself, at 12 months from your acceptance of this offer, according to the proportion in which the Work is held betwixt you. [219/219v]
4. Immediately upon the work being finished at press, you are to accept Bills for the Printing, Paper, and Author's Profit, on the following terms:
For the Printing, at 12 months from the completion of the Work.
For the Paper, at prime cost, at 12 months after the receipt of each parcel, the invoices of which shall be shewn to you.
And for the Author's Profits, being one half of the clear Profits, to be ascertained by deducing the expence of printing and paper from sale price, you are to accept bills at 6 and 12 months, in equal proportions; no charge whatever being made by you for advertising, or other extraneous expences. The bills to be granted by Mr Murray and yourself, in the proportions above agreed to for the books to be taken from John Ballantyne & Company's Stock.
5. You are to have the liberty of perusing a volume of the Work at my house in St. John Street; and if, upon such perusal, you shall disapprove of the speculation, you shall have it in your option to annul the bargain; such option to be signified to me within twenty-four hours after perusing the volume. In which case, I hereby bind and oblige the company of James Ballantyne & Company, Printer, as taking burden upon myself for them, to retire any bills which you [219v/220] shall have granted to me with a view to the fulfillment of the bargain.

Source: E, MS 4001, fols 219–20.

Notes: A copy of the agreement, not in Ballantyne's hand, is at E, MS 30001, fols 146–47.

Letter from William Blackwood to James Ballantyne.

30 Apr 1816.

I am just favd with yours of this day making offer to Mr Murray and me of a Work of Fiction in four Volumes. I have great pleasure in accepting your offer of the Work, and hereby agree to the several conditions specified in your letter. I hope however it will not be inconvenient for the Author to extend the credit upon his Profits to Twelve months.

Source: E, MS 4001, fol. 220.

Notes: Note is added below text of agreement of same date sent by Ballantyne, on the same sheet.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

1 May 1816.

I hope and trust you will think I have done for the best in accepting Ballantyne's offer which I now enclose you. I was a good deal puzzled and startled when I found yesterday that I had misunderstood him with respect to a very material point, the absolute conveyance of the property. All it seems he meant or had authority to offer from the Author was limited to six thousand copies. [...] He stated that the Author could not on any account bind himself for ever, but he had his positive authority for stating that he had no intention whatever either of changing his publishers, or expecting any other terms although the six thousand should be sold off in six months—he merely wished to reserve to himself the power if any change of circumstances, which he did not contemplate, should ever occur. The only other article I had any difficulty about was the fifth with regard to the first volume. I wished to have got the volume into my own possession for ten days, so as to send to you, as it is too much for me to take the whole responsibility on my own judgment. This he would not however do. I then tried to get 8 days, to consider the matter and write you fully what occurred to me. Even this he could not grant—he assured me however that he would give me such information while the first volume was going on as would put both your mind and mine quite at rest. Finding nothing else could be done, I wrote the letter of acceptance of which you have also a

copy. I should have mentioned that I am to go [*sic*: word missing] Ballantyne's house, and be shut up by myself, or have it read to me in company with William Erskine. Now I mean to do both though I have not yet said any thing about it. I shall go in a forenoon and bestow three or four hours upon it myself, and in the afternoon take Mrs B with me, and hear it read.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 2.

Letter from James Ballantyne to John Murray II.

1 May 1816.

It is with very sincere pleasure that I have concluded a bargain with our friend Blackwood, for a work in which my satisfaction is increased by knowing that you have a share. If I can venture at all to rely upon my own judgement, it will have a high degree of celebrity. In the course of a month, I think, a great part of the MS. will be put into my hands. // I have taken the liberty of drawing upon you at 12 months for £300 for your share; a measure I hope you will not think precipitate. Mr Blackwood had sealed the letter to you before I called for him, or he would have mentioned my purpose to you. He has accepted his share.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Ballantyne Box.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

3 May 1816.

James Ballantyne called and after a great many apologies begg'd of me to accept of a bill for £300, and that he intended to draw on you likewise by same post. I told him I thought this was a great deal too fast, as I wished to have your answer at all events [...] I [...] granted my acceptance and I hope you will do the same, as whatever may be the final determination which you form after receiving my two last letters, we can break off as I mentioned in my last when the first volume is produced.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 2.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

4 May 1816.

I see by your letter this morning that you have your doubts as well as me with regard to these folks and their mysterious way of making bargains. You will be still more in doubt this morning when you could receive my letter and Ballantyne's with the bill in such a devilish hurry. [...] and should we not think these such as we could go on with even on the supposition of the work being of the first class, I would then be prepared to give up the bargain. If on the other hand we should think it adviseable to go on, I would be prepared and expect to find not merely a good novel, but one that so far as I could judge was indeed of the first class, and would make a noise at once. I think the chances are every way in favour of its being of this description. Ballantyne has such a strong interest as well as the Author that it should be so, as we have it in our favour to give up the bargain—in the next place as you remarked the Author must be conscious of its being such a production as will make a noise, else he would have sheltered himself under the cover of the Author of Waverley [...].

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 2.

Notes: Headed 'Confidential'. Omitted from the passage quoted are details about the bills.

Letter from James Ballantyne to William Blackwood.

6 May 1816.

I have received a letter from the person who acts for the Author of the 4 volume Work in his correspondence with me, from which the following is a verbatim extract. // 'As I have already sacrificed the interests of my friends considerably in compliance with your strong wish of preferring those gentlemen, I cannot consent to any extension of the terms of credit beyond what is stated in the proposals. If the bargain appears in the least hard to Mr B. there are others ready to accept for these profits at six months, the instant the first volume *goes to press*. He is only to accept at 6 & 12

months, from the period that the whole four volumes *come from* press. This preference of your friends you should surely think as much as can reasonably be expected from me.' // To this, my dear friend, I have really nothing to add. The [221/221v] difference is trifling; but you see it will not be given up.

Source: E, MS 4001, fol. 221. MS Copy, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 2. Extracts in Oliphant, I, 60.

Letter from William Blackwood to James Ballantyne.

6 May 1816.

Your letter which I have this moment rec[eiv]ed puzzled and surprized me not a little. In your note which inclosed the formal proposal you expressly say that the article with regard to the credit is the only one you had any liberty to alter, as that *the Author* impowered you to extend it to twelve months. Now really I cannot reconcile all this. I accepted the proposal in the way you yourself pointed out. As I am acting for Mr Murray as well as myself, I shall send him your letter by this day's post.

Source: MS letter (copy), Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 2.

Notes: The copy is written on the back of the copy of letter from James Ballantyne to William Blackwood of 6 May. Both were sent to Murray and appear on the same sheet as the letter from Blackwood to Murray of the same date (beginning "The annexed correspondence"). The postmark is 6 May.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

6 May 1816.

The annexed correspondence leave me little time to write to you. I do not know what to make of these people. [...] I think the whole scent of the business is that Johnnie B has been intriguing with the Crafty since Jas. B. made me the first proposal, and finding they can get higher terms they have been rising in their demands, so as to make me give it up. I am not certain after all but what this would be our best plan, for since I last wrote you, and have finished the Antiquary, I have had frequent misgivings. I dislike [so] much all these mysteries, that I am quite of them. I begin now to have my doubts whether the Book would be such as repay all these risks and mysterious arrangements. It would not answer if it was not a different departure from Guy Mannering and the Antiquary. This last though admirably written throughout and to a Scotsman quite delightful, will not I fear be well liked in England. The story is poor & no way interesting, but its great merit is in the striking sketches of character and manners and scenery.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 2.

Notes: With copy of letters from Ballantyne to Blackwood, and Blackwood to Ballantyne, from 6 May 1816.

Letter from James Ballantyne to William Blackwood.

6 May 1816.

I certainly never said anything to you, in reference to the bargain lately arranged betwixt us, which I did not conceive myself fully authorized to say by my instructions. I thought myself, and I do yet think myself, to have been authorized to say, that I believe the point of accepting 12, in place of 6 month bills, for the Author's profits, would be conceded; but if I ever stated this privately, I certainly acted beyond my powers. [...] [222/222v] // I am deeply concerned to find myself disappointed, and to have been the means of disappointing you. My concern will be still greater, should a bargain, which in my humble opinion promises great advantages to all concerned, be broken off on account of a difference of comparatively trivial moment.

Source: E, MS 4001, fol. 222. MS Copy, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 2.

Notes: About length of bills being negotiated. The copy of Ballantyne's letter, in Blackwood's hand, is annexed to his second letter to Murray of 6 May.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

6 May 1816.

I found this letter of which the above is a copy lying for me on my return from dinner at 6 o'clock and immediately wrote him as follows:

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 2.

Notes: With a copy of the letter from Ballantyne (beginning 'I certainly never') and Blackwood's answer (beginning 'Having sent both').

Letter from William Blackwood to James Ballantyne.

6 May 1816.

Having sent both the proposal and your letter enclosing it to Mr Murray, it was only from memory I quoted it. But I think I cannot be mistaken in the words you used. The difference [...] does not appear to me so very material, but having written to Mr Murray, I must await his reply. In the meantime you have the most satisfactory evidence of my agreeing to the proposal by my having accepted the bill.

Source: MS letter (copy), Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 2.

Notes: Copy annexed to Blackwood to Murray letter of 6–7 May. Postmark is 7 May.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

6–7 May 1816.

What betwixt Ballantyne's letters and mine I daresay you will be as wearied as I am of this correspondence. I would not grudge the time it has occupied me were it not the want of confidence I now feel, as the sickening thought that the whole may end in smoke. On the other side you have Ballantyne's answer to my letter with my reply. I have answered him very formally as I did not wish to be too positive till you send me back his letters which I hope I will receive tomorrow. I am more & more disgusted when I consider the whole progress of this negotiation [*sic*], as there has been an appearance of [...] rise in demands ever since the first proposal was made to me. I would wish to think that Ballantyne has acted a friendly part, but still one's faith is sadly staggered. It is really so teasing and the risk is considerable, that I do not know what to think about it. Should [...] the Work really be such as we expect, it would be most mortifying to allow it to slip out of our hands. As I hope to have your letter to morrow morning I will write you farther on this business, when I see what your views are. // [7 May] I was here, having breakfasted a little earlier than usual by 8 o'clock, and I was much relieved by finding from your short letter that you approved of what I had done. Notwithstanding of all the doubts I had from yesterday's correspondence &c I sent Ballantyne your bill before 9 o'clock, and as he would not get his own letters so early, he could have no reason to think for a moment that either you or I had any doubt on the subject. Thinking of the business farther this morning, I believe it will be best for us to go on, till I see the first volume, and I anxiously hope it will be such as to deserve all this risk and trouble. It surely will or they never would venture to act in the way they do. Be sure to return me if you have not done it already, the proposal and Ballantyne's letter inclosing it.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 2.

Notes: This letter is on the first page with annexed letters from Ballantyne to Blackwood (beginning 'I certainly never') and Blackwood's reply (beginning 'Having sent both'). Dated from Belleville; the postmark is 7 May.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

10 May 1816.

I hope the ticket will turn up a prize, but alas I cannot afford such a venture and must therefore have all my wits about me when the first volume is ready. I shall begin to it with fear and trembling.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 2.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

13 May 1816.

I [...] expect Ballantyne's Proposal & letter inclosing it which I wrote you for. I am anxious to have this last that I may be able to tell him at once that he is not correct, and if he expects either you or me to be of any use to him, we must see every thing clear and fair. They are really a queer set of folks.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 3.

Notes: The letter and proposal to which Blackwood refers are those from 30 April, which he needs to confirm that Ballantyne had stated that the length of the bills for the Author were negotiable. This is the matter in dispute in the complicated series of letters from 6 May.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

6–7 June 1816.

For these six months past there have been various rumours with regard to Greenfield being the Author of these Novels, but I never paid much attention to them, the thing appeared to me so very improbable, as to have arisen chiefly from the strict concealment of the Author's name, which there could be no good reason for, unless they were really written by a person in the situation of this wretched man. // [7 June] [...] From what I have heard lately and from what you state, I now begin to think that Greenfield may be the Author [...] In answer to your inquiries about our Novel, I am not a little mortified to tell you that the printing it not even begun yet, though we were promised that the first volume would be put into my hands by the end of last month. I sent for Ballantyne yesterday, and I expostulated with him very seriously about it. All he could say was that he had been expecting the MS. everyday for a month past—he is to apply again to the Author, and mention what I said, and let me know in a day or two.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 2.

Notes: William Greenfield was a professor of rhetoric at the University of Edinburgh and minister of St. Giles, Edinburgh, who was obliged to resign his posts in 1798. Scott mentions him as possibly the author of the Waverley novels in a letter to Lady Abercorn of 28 Dec 1816 (Grierson, IV, 340–41).

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

15 June 1816.

I saw Jas Ballantyne on Tuesday and expostulated with him a good deal about the Book not being even yet begun. All he could say was that he could not help, he regretted it [illeg.] but that the Author assured him there would be no ultimate delay. [...] [at end of letter] Mr Mackenzie mentioned to me that he was now quite convinced that Thomas Scott, Walters Brother, who is now in Canada, wrote all the Novels.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 2.

Notes: Mr Mackenzie is Henry Mackenzie.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

21 June 1816.

Do not be startled too much when I tell you that I now begin to fear that Sc[ott] B[allantyne] & Co. are a nest of ——: there is neither faith nor truth in them. In my last letter I mentioned to you that there was but the smallest appearance of the work being begun to, and there is as little still. Jas. B. shifts this off his own shoulders by saying he cannot help it. Now my firm belief is that at the time he made such solemn promises to me that the first volume would be in my hands in a month he had not the smallest expectation of this being the case, but he knew that he would not have got our bills, which he absolutely wanted without holding this out.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 2; also in Smiles, I, 461–62 with omissions.

Notes: See note to letter of 25 June 1816.

Letter from John Murray II to William Blackwood.

25 June 1816.

My notion of the whole affair is that B & Co. would do without the Crafty if possible but every now & then may be surprised by his activity & bold offers—intimidated from the fear of breaking with him & not unafraid that *we* have not courage to go through with *all* their plans—& the journey which you told me before Jas[?] took with the Crafty originated in some such backsliding & led to the arrangement which if true, & how could it have been known if not? militates so completely against their promises & our expectations. It is by no means unlikely too, that in this said journey, the engagement with us for *a work of fiction* was also the topic of discussion & that sneers & entreaties were employed to induce our rough riders to throw us off [273/273v] [...] [about accepting John Ballantyne's stock] For ourselves my only anxiety is—that the Novel shall be good—& then we shall do very well—I dare say the fellows have not yet got a line of it—still no matter if when it does come it be good [...].

Source: E, MS 4001, fols 273–74.

Notes: Some of this relates to information that Scott had sold to Constable a *History of Scotland* promised to Blackwood and Murray. Blackwood complained to Ballantyne in a letter of 24 June that he had been promised the work nearly two years earlier. The work was never published.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

28 June 1816.

Your letter which I recd this morning is most excellent. You have taken a most correct and proper view of the whole business. I was so much irritated on Monday by these peoples baseness that I wished to have done with them altogether. On thinking more coolly I am quite of your opinion that we should go on till the Book is produced. You will have received my long epistle & enclosure today, but it will in fact give you nothing new. I have not had the smallest communication from James Ballantyne in answer to my letter. Indeed, he could not answer it, as I think I have laid him completely on his back. I don't know how he will look or pass it off the next time I happen to meet him. In the mean time I cannot apply to him as I could have done to enquire if there is any appearance of the Book put to press.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 2.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

[1–2 July 1816].

I wrote you a few lines on Friday in answer to your's of Tuesday. I would have written you by this day's post, had I been able to make up my mind about your letter of Friday. I have read and considered both[?] again and again without being able to satisfy myself fully as to what is the best course to pursue. Your former letter convinced me that it might be the safest course to go on to the trial of this blind bargain but your letter to day coincides with the strong view I took in my letter (to which it is an answer) as to the necessity of our cutting all connection with these fellows. This was my first impression, and acting upon it, I could both keep much higher ground, and be saved[?] from that most disagreeable and most disquieting state of being obliged to keep up personal intimacy and cordiality with people who are so very thoroughly despised. When on the other hand I began to consider a number of things which you have so well stated in your letter of the 25th I resolved to swallow the pill bitter as it was. I fully coincide with any thing you state in your last letter as to these people's rascality and folly, and the chance that there is of the whole after all coming to nothing [...] [2 July] I laid down my pen last night in utter despair [...] I feel as much puzzled as ever and undetermined whether or not to cut this Gordian knot. Except my wife there is not a friend whom I dare advise with. I have not even ventured to mention the business to my Brother [...] Mrs. B though she always disliked me having any connection with the Ballantynes, rather thinks we should wait a few weeks till we see what is produced. I believe after all this is the safest course to pursue. Take a day or two to consider the matter fully, and then give me your best advice. I shall do nothing till I have your advice which I shall wait for patiently for though not without

anxiety. As to the Crafty & his triumphs, as he will consider them, I perfectly agree with you that they are not to be counted by us [...].

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 2.

Notes: The first part is dated from Belleville, Monday, which was 1 July. Versions of the second part of this letter appear in Smiles, I, 464–65 and Oliphant, I, 62.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

[26 July 1816].

I fear there is too much truth in your pen and that our Work will really be a *Work of Fiction*. In my last letter I wrote you with regard to my applying to Ballantyne, and if your opinion coincides with mine I shall endeavour to get back our bills. They are a sad set.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 2.

Notes: Date is added to the top of the MS in another hand.

Letter from William Blackwood to James Ballantyne.

31 July 1816.

It surely will not be thought unreasonable that Mr Murray and I should, at the distance of three months from the period at which we granted our Acceptances for Six Hundred Pounds feel rather impatient at hearing nothing whatever of the Work of Fiction of which you assured me the first volume would be printed and put into my hands upwards of two months ago. We beg you would now inform us what is doing or is to be done, as it is most unpleasant to have the business hanging in this way.

Source: E, MS 30001, fol. 23. Copy in Blackwood's hand, with copy of Ballantyne's reply of 31 July on lower part of sheet in Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 2. Also in Oliphant, I, 62–63 with errors.

Letter from James Ballantyne to William Blackwood.

31 July 1816.

This matter has taught me a lesson which I will not forget, which is—never to give my own conviction for that of others. In place, therefore, of saying what *I* think upon the subject, I shall tell you what the author says to me. He says, then, that I shall have the 1st volume in my hands by the end of August; and that the whole work will, as he all along said, be ready for publication by Christmas. This I say for him. I will pledge myself no longer. // Along with the 1st volume, I will bind myself [228/228v] satisfactorily to you to retire your bills when due, if you shall not approve of it.

Source: E, MS 4001, fol. 228. Copy of Blackwood's letter of 31 July, with copy of Ballantyne's reply of 31 July on lower part of the same sheet is in Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 2. Also in Oliphant, I, 63 with omission.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

3 Aug 1816.

My interview with our gentleman who deals so much in fiction was very short cool and decisive.

[...] I told him it appeared to me as if the Author whoever he might be had changed his views soon after the transaction was first proposed, and that therefore it was better now to put an end to it. He said I was quite mistaken in my inferences.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 2.

Letter from James Ballantyne to William Blackwood.

5 Aug 1816.

You appear to think, and I rather think you have distinctly stated that you do so, that the Author of the work of fiction has willingly, or rather wilfully, delayed putting the Volume into your hands, 'because he had views elsewhere;' views which you must suppose to have arisen after my first being

impowered to make an offer of the work to you. Now, if this were really the case, it is undeniable, that he would joyfully avail himself of your rejection, and feel that he had accomplished the object he had been driving at. But, so far is this from being the case, that he desires me to express to you, in the strongest terms, his wish *not* to change his publishers. His words are these: 'The work is [230/230v] now ready to go to press; and you will have the copy *in two days* at very farthest. The work will to a certainty be out in the month of November; a period which I have always understood to be the very best for publication. This I beg you will state to Mr Blackwood distinctly and explicitly; and there is so much reason in the thing that I cannot but think he will listen to it.' // Such are the precise words of the author; and whatever other impression they may produce on you, you will surely admit that they at least prove beyond the possibility of denial, that he had, and has, no such views as you ascribed to him; that he does *not* wish to change his publishers; and that 'he has *no* views elsewhere.' Indeed it is with a view of clearing his, and my own, good faith to you and Mr Murray, that we are anxiously desirous you should be convinced, that you refuse the work, if you refuse it, when it is ready for press, and when the author is pledged to its publication at a specific period, and that period the very best in the whole year for publication.

Source: E, MS 4001, fol. 230. Copy in Blackwood's hand in Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 2. Also in Oliphant, I, 64–65 with errors.

Letter from James Ballantyne to William Blackwood.

5 Aug 1816.

In addition to what I stated in my letter to you of this morning, I beg to say, that, rather than have recourse to other publishers than yourself and Mr Murray, the Author of the Work of Fiction authorizes me to agree to the terms of credit which you originally stipulated for—to wit, 12 in place of 6 months.[...] [232/232v] // I beg leave to conclude by asserting, upon my solemn word, not only that the Author has not, nor ever had, 'any views elsewhere,' but that the *existence* of the work in question is at this moment unknown to every human creature except yourself, Mr Murray, myself, and my brother. // As I understand that you are now at Dalhousie Castle, I think this communication of sufficient importance to send it after you. I ought to add, that I have this moment received a considerable portion of the MS of the Work; and that I distinctly pledge the Author's word, that the whole will be ready in the month of November.

Source: E, MS 4001, fol. 232. Copy in Blackwood's hand in Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 2, on reverse of copy of Ballantyne's earlier letter of same date (see above). Copies sent with Blackwood's letter to Murray of 6 August. Also in Oliphant, I, 65–66.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

6 Aug 1816.

I recd the letters of which I inclose you copies last night. By them you will see that matters are now in a more regular shape. I wrote B. two lines saying I could be in tomorrow morning when I could see him. If I have time tomorrow I will write you the result of our interview. You will see by his letters he labours very much to vindicate himself. I do not think we have to thank him much, for if they could do better they would not apply to us. It would not however answer their purpose to make the Crafty publish the Book, and it would not be quite convenient for Ballantyne to allow the matter to drop in a way by which it would evidently appear he had used us both very ill. I have not quite made up my mind as to how I shall act. If the MS. is really in the state he asserts there is nothing to hinder him from having the first volume ready before I set off for London.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 2.

Notes: Dated from Dalhousie Castle. Copies of letters from Ballantyne to Blackwood, both dated 5 Aug 1816, were enclosed.

Letter from James Ballantyne to William Blackwood.

6 Aug 1816.

[fol. 234 concerns works from John Ballantyne's stock, as part of the bargain for *Tales*.] [fol. 234v] Having explained myself [234v/235] on this head, I think there is nothing now to prevent us from coming to an immediate conclusion of the business. The work is now actually in the press,—at least in the hands of the Compositors; and nothing but sickness, or death, humanly speaking, can prevent its publication in the month of November. That Mr Murray and you will be the publishers, is the earnest imputation and desire both of the author and myself. I hope it will be equally yours, on the terms now clearly understood; that is, on the original terms, with the extension of credit from 6 to 12 months.

Source: E, MS 4001, fols 234–35.

Letter from William Blackwood to James Ballantyne.

10 Aug 1816.

I have already mentioned to you the anxiety I feel to be allowed the perusal of the first volume of the *Work of Fiction* while I am in London in order that Mr Murray may read and judge along with me, and that I may thereby be relieved from a part of the heavy responsibility which I will have to bear, if the acceptance or rejection is still to depend on my opinion alone. [...] I would fain hope that the Author also will consider the difficult situation in which I am placed with regard to Mr Murray and on this account be disposed to grant me the indulgence which I ask. [...] I can pledge myself in the most solemn manner that the work should neither be seen nor heard of by a human being except Mr Murray & myself.

Source: MS copy, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 2.

Notes: Letter in Murray Archives is a copy which Blackwood sent to Murray. Blackwood states that the letter was asked for by James Ballantyne in order to show the Author.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

12 Aug 1816.

I had the interview with James Ballantyne on Saturday. [...] The substance of what passed is that some day this week he is to have the bills in his possession and to call on me with the greater part of the first volume. I proposed to him that the volume should be sent to me while in London so that we might judge of it together.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 2.

Notes: See note for Blackwood to Ballantyne letter of 10 Aug 1816.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

13 Aug 1816.

I think you are quite right in your conjecture as to John B. having mentioned the matter to the Crafty, and I have not the smallest doubt but that they were most anxious to break off the negotiation in April. I saw through this and therefore gave up every point till I got James B. to sign and seal. After this was done which he could not help doing, as he saw from my determined tone, I would not be trifled with, I have no doubt there was a disappointment of their plans, and consequently a sort of disinclination to make any exertion to bring forward the *Work*. You are quite mistaken however I think that after all this they had any serious intentions of giving it to the Crafty. [...] With regard however to being permitted to read more than one volume before coming to a determination, I fear there is little chance of their agreeing to this. I shall try however. But if I do not succeed, we must take our chance with the first volume, and if it is really capital, I don't think we need to have many doubts, particularly if they allow it to be sent to London for us judge of together. [...] I wish from the bottom of my heart that this business were over one way or another, as it has given me so much vexation, and occupied so much of my time and thoughts, that I declare I would not encounter such another negotiation for a good round sum.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 2.

Letter from James Ballantyne to William Blackwood.

14 Aug 1816.

[more on John Ballantyne's stock] The Volume is not yet quite ready. I find that what I have received will make about 200 or 250 pages, which will be in proof early next week, when you shall see[?] them, if you chuse; or the whole volume when ready, which I expect [236/236v] it will be about the middle of the week. Meanwhile, that every thing may be ready for finishing the business one way or other, I have retired your bills from the Bankers with whom they lay, and they are now in my possession,—where, however, I shall be glad that they continue. [postscript] I have not yet heard from the author on the subject of sending the volume to London; but I expect his answer daily.

Source: E, MS 4001, fol. 236.

Letter from William Blackwood to James Ballantyne.

16 Aug 1816.

I was so unwell yesterday when I was favd with yours of the 14th that I was unable to write you. I am still laid up and write you this merely to say that I hope to be out on Monday, and will be most happy to have an opportunity of perusing either the portion of 250 pages or the whole of the first volume as it may be most agreeable to you, and any day next week that will suit your convenience. // I anxiously hope the Author will be disposed to allow the volume to be sent to London.

Source: E, MS 4001, fol. 237 (copy).

Notes: The copy is written on the letter of 14 Aug from James Ballantyne. Dated from Belleville.

Letter from James Ballantyne to William Blackwood.

21 Aug 1816.

I will send you about two thirds of the first volume tomorrow evening, which I have myself read with the utmost admiration and delight. The remainder, I think, will be ready for your inspection about the beginning of next week. // I sent your letter regarding the transmission of the volume to London, to the author—thinking that the best mode both of signifying your wish, and the causes on which it was founded. The author's refusal is couched in these words: 'Nothing shall induce me to allow the book to go out of your hands. To send it to London would hazard things which I cannot think of risking. Mr Blackwood's taste is as competent as that of any man, to enable him to come to a just conclusion; and I will not subject the book to the refusal of another.'

Source: E, MS 4001, fol. 238. Also in Oliphant, I, 66 with errors.

Letter from James Ballantyne to William Blackwood.

22 Aug 1816.

You shall have all that is throw off, and what is imposed, before dinner. The remainder of the volume will be ready, I think, early next week. // Tastes are as different as faces; and you may not like what I think altogether exquisite. But I have strong hopes of our coming to an immediate and mutually agreeable conclusion of this business. [postscript] By waiting till *Seven* this evening, I find I shall be able to send you 8 sheets; and as the two last are perhaps the finest of the whole, I am averse to your not getting them.

Source: E, MS 4001, fol. 240. Also in Oliphant, I, 67–68 with errors (notably the substitution of 'composed' for 'imposed').

Letter from James Ballantyne to William Blackwood.

[22 Aug 1816].

I send you the 'Tales of my Landlord' down to page 192. There is an unaccountable confusion, as you will see, betwixt the *grandmother* and *mother* of Hobbie Elliott; but the author will of course correct it in the sheets not yet thrown off. It is a noble work. // Each volume contains a Tale; so there will be four in all. The next relates to the period with the Covenanters. // I shall be glad to hear from you at your early leisure. The bills are lying by me useless, and I want cash a good deal. A word to

the wise. I need not remind you, that no creature sees the sheets.

Source: E, MS 4001, fol. 268.

Notes: Headed Thursday, ½ past 6; actual date is inferred from Ballantyne's letter of the same day at fol. 240.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

[22–23 Aug 1816].

I have this moment finished the reading of 192 pages of our Book for ours it must be, and I cannot go to bed without telling you what a very strong & most favourable impression it has made on me; if the remainder is at all equal which it cannot fail to be from the genius displayed in what is now before me, we have been most fortunate indeed. // The title is 'Tales of My Landlord, collected and repeated by Jedediah Cleisbotham, Parish-Clerk and Schoolmaster of Gandercleugh' The introduction consisting of 20 pages is finely given in the character of a Scotch Dominie, whose style is scriptural pedantic and tautological interlarded with scraps of Latin—After dwelling with great complacency on his own endowments, and talking big at the Critics who would be snarling at his tales he says 'I will let these Critics know, to their own eternal shame and confusion, as well as to their abashment and discomfiture of all who shall rashly take up a song against me, that I am *not* the writer, redacter, or compiler of the Tales of My Landlord; nor am I, in one single iota, answerable for their contents, more or less' He afterwards mentions that they were written by one 'I chanced to have contracted (with) for teaching the lower forms, a young person called Peter, or Patrick, Pattieson, who had been educated in our Holy Church, yea, had by the license of presbytery, his voice opened therein as a preacher, who delighted in the collection of olden Tales and legends, and in garnishing them with the flowers of poesy, whereof he was a vain and parlous professor.'

[followed by more quotations] // The title of the tale which will occupy this volume is 'The Black Dwarf.' The preliminary chapter commences thus [long quotation and plot summary] // [letter continued on Friday at 2 o'clock] I have not time to resume my analysis, but I can only tell you that the remainder is most interesting. The character of the Dwarf is well brought out as an object of wonderment to all his neighbourhood from his great skill in diseases and superior knowledge he is consulted on all occasions, and gives advice & relief in his own rugged way. By the vulgar he is reckoned to be connected with the evil one. [plot summary] // Mr Elliot called to take leave of me a little ago, and I read him the analysis I have given you, and showed him several passages. He agreed perfectly with me in thinking that I had done quite right in writing Ballantyne early this morning that I was perfectly satisfied, as there could not be a shadow of a doubt with regard to the splendid merits of the Work. I would never have done to have hesitated and [tear in ms] niggled about seeing more volumes. In the note which accompanied the sheets Ballantyne says Each volume contains a Tale; so there will be four in all. The next relates to the period of the Coven[anters: page torn] I have [page torn] neither doubts nor fears with regard to the whole being good, and I anxiously hope you will have as little. // I am so happy at this fortunate termination of all my pains and anxieties that I cannot be in bad humour with you for not writing me two lines in answer to my two last letters.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 2. Extracts in Smiles, I, 466 and Oliphant, I, 68.

Notes: A long letter of 9 pages. Blackwood dates the first part Thursday Night, 12 O'clock. He apparently sent the letter first to Ballantyne; see Ballantyne's letter of 23 Aug. Mr Elliot was Murray's father-in-law.

Letter from James Ballantyne to William Blackwood.

23 Aug 1816.

I need not say that your letter has given me great pleasure. [...] Your approbation is given as it ought to be. Had it been calm, it would have been unworthy both of the work and of yourself. Yes. It is a work of *tremendous* splendour; and may it turn out—it must turn out—as we both expect. Your letter to Murray, which I enclose, is a most excellent *precis*. // Keep the sheets as long as you like; but I beg you to return them. *Source:* E, MS 4001, fol. 242. Copy also at MS 30001, fol. 25. Also in

Oliphant, I, 69 with errors.

Notes: A postscript on fol. 242v points out that since getting up the bills for the work has stretched Ballantyne's resources, he stands in need of a loan of £100 for a week: 'And you know I am punctual as a clock in repayment.'

Letter from James Ballantyne to William Blackwood.

26 Aug 1816.

I have had a letter from our worthy friend Jedediah Cleishbotham, who says 'I return the letter of Mr Blackwood, and am glad he is pleased; but he will like the second volume much better than the first, and so will you, I think. But I want some covenanting books sadly, to ascertain and identify my facts and dates by, before committing myself to the irrevocable operation of the press. The following I especially want; and you must get them from Blackwood in the name of the learned Jedediah:

Wodrow's History of the K[irk] of Scotland, 2 vols. folio.

Scottish Worthies, 1 8vo.

[item not legible]

Histy. of Mr Veitch, 1 small 4to.

Cloud of Witnesses, 1 Crown 8vo.

Scottish Presby.—Eloquence, with the Answer

History of Mago-pico

[244/244v] Without the means of the most accurate comparison of what I have written with these volumes, Jedediah hath too much regard unto verity to print or publish. The sooner they can be supplied, the sooner you will receive the copy. I have some idea of printing a Glossary in the name and style of said learned Jedediah. I am, if I may say so, confident of the success of this work.' // This is no bad heartening—although it must be confessed authors are not always the best judges of their own composition. I do *not* hope to like the Covenanting Tale better than the Black Dwarf.

Source: E, MS 4001, fol. 244.

Notes: The list of books is presented in a double column, with *Cloud of Witnesses* appearing at the head of the second. The proposed Glossary was not printed with the work; see Scott to Ballantyne letter of 27 Oct, and Lady Louisa Stuart to Scott letter of 5 Dec.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

28 Aug 1816.

I hope you have recd my long letter of Friday, and that from the acct. I gave you of our Book you are pleased with it. I have got other four sheets and read them with increased delight. I recd a note from Ballantyne on Monday in which he says 'I have had a letter from our worthy friend Jedediah Cleishbotham, who says 'I return the letter of Mr Blackwood [...].

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 2; also in Smiles, I, 467.

Notes: The letter quoted is Ballantyne's of 26 Aug from E, MS 4001, fol. 244.

Letter from James Ballantyne to William Blackwood.

1 Sep 1816.

Our friend Jedediah highly approves of your management with respect to the Tales, and thinks your setting up a rival author an excellent thought. He leaves you at perfect Liberty to present a copy of Vol 1st to Mr Murray as a matter of Course, and to Lord Dalhousie according to your own discretion; not doubting that they will be managed with a due regard to inviolable secrecy.

Source: E, MS 4001, fol. 246. Also in Oliphant, I, 72.

Notes: Ballantyne is ill, and his mother acts as his amanuensis, which requires him to be brief for reasons of secrecy about *Tales*. Dated from Kelso. Blackwood was visiting London at this time, and the letter was sent to him there, first to Albemarle Street, then redirected to Sander's Somerset Hotel, 162 Strand.

Letter from James Ballantyne to William Blackwood.

3 Sep 1816.

I have ordered two copies of the 'Black Dwarf' to be sent up to your address at Mr Murray's and I trust that they will reach you as early or earlier than this letter. The second tale will occupy the second and third volumes, and a Highland tale will form the fourth. The second tale is already far advanced. I mean that I have received a large quantity of copy, for you will easily see that my unfortunate illness must necessarily a good deal retard its actual progress at press, there will however be no ultimate delay, as you may be sure that immediately on my recovery, it will be pushed on with double celerity. This plan, you will perceive, differs [248/248v] from the original intention of the Author, which was to have given a tale to each volume; but it appears that the admirable narrative, illustrative of the Covenanting period, cannot receive full justice in less than two volumes. The original plan will be completed by the addition of two supplementary volumes, which I have no doubt will go with the same hands as the original work, this however, I should add, I say without authority; but I see every reason for it, and no reason against it. // The immediate purpose of my writing is to say, that as my brother is still to be absent for some weeks, and as I am myself confined to bed, at forty miles distance from the money market, I am of course a little put about in pecuniary matters [...].

Source: E, MS 4001, fols. 248–49.

Notes: Fols 248v–49 state that he has drawn bills on Blackwood for £180 and Murray for £200, and Ballantyne apologises for having to do this. The letter is in the hand of James's wife, Mrs Christina Ballantyne, because he is still laid up with illness at Kelso. Directed to Blackwood at Albemarle Street, and redirected to Sander's Somerset Hotel, 162 Strand.

Letter from James Ballantyne to Walter Scott.

9 Sep 1816.

[summarising business while JB has been confined at Kelso with] Same day I wrote to Mr Blackwood at London, enclosing two drafts, one on himself at 3ms for £180, and another for £190,—on Mr Murray, which I requested him to accept, and get accepted, and return by first post stated my illness as the apology for this liberty, sent at same time, 2 Copies of Black Dwarf and stating rapid progress of the 2d volume.

Source: E, MS 861, pp. 38–39 (copy).

Letter from James Ballantyne to John Murray II.

13 Sep 1816.

The Tale of the Covenanters is, in my opinion, very strikingly superior to that of the Black Dwarf; at least in as far as I am entitled to form an opinion of that part of it which I have seen. It bears the odd title of 'Old Mortality', which it has gained by an Introduction so exquisitely striking, pathetic, and original, as, I think, to equal any similar composition in the English language. In the course of a very few days, not exceeding three, I shall send you the Tale, so far as it is printed. My illness has hitherto retarded it greatly. // The author, as well as myself, is no doubt very desirous to make up for lost time; but I think he will only make that 'haste' which is compatible with 'good speed'.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Ballantyne Box.

Letter from James Ballantyne to Walter Scott.

15 Sep 1816.

Nothing can exceed the splendour of Old Mortality. It beats the Dwarf out of the field. The scene with the old Lady Margt & Cuddie's Mother is *transcendent*.

Source: E, MS 21059, fol. 33 (copy).

Letter from James Ballantyne to Walter Scott.

19 Sep 1816

[...] I expect in the course of a couple of months that betwixt £200 and £300 will fall in from the printing office, exclusive of the Register and Tales which are paid already [...] The transaction is simply thus; when I received from Blackwood & Murray their bills for £600 on account of Stock taken with Tales of my Landlord, I gave them to John, who at that period did all the pecuniary part of our business. They were deposited by him with Forbes & Co in Security.

Source: E, MS 861, p. 45 (copy).

Notes: 'Register' refers to *Edinburgh Annual Register*.

Letter from James Ballantyne to Walter Scott.

19 Sep 1816.

It would be vain to demand such a plot as Tom Jones, which stands alone in the world of imagination in that respect; but I would, if I could, stipulate for as good a one as Guy Mannering. Indeed I think even the *characters*, meaning their power of producing effect, of the Dwarf & Hobbie Elliott, are much lessened by the un-importance of the scenes in which they are engaged; for the forces & the rescue, altho most admirably described, do in truth lead to nothing, & therefore want verisimilitude.—I acknowledge I prefer Old Mortality greatly. So far as it has gone it has a singular air of truth. The character of Bothwell, though not by any means so humorous or striking as some others that occur in your other compositions, has an especial charm to me. It is life itself. He never for one moment, or in any circumstances diverges from the reality [34/35] of his character. Never to the right, or left, above or below. Cuddie & his mother are a pair of perfect portraits. What we have seen of Burley leaves an evident longing to meet him again; & I do confess that, as to Claverhouse, whom your last portion of MS is just ushering in, I anticipate with no fear of disappointment a portraiture like Shakespeares Lear or Richard.—Is there not by the bye, as yet, a want of some prominent individual? None is prominent, because all are prominent. [...] [fol. 38] I have this moment recd your letter with the proofs. Mr Erskine returned yesterday & is busy with the Dwarf & Mortality. he says the Tales altho advertised, are never spoke of, so far as he hears. The secret is well kept. [38/39] They will soon be revised 'with a rattling peel of thunder'. I shall be delighted if Mortality runs to 3 Vols. It is a subject & period to linger on.

Source: E, MS 21059, fols 34–39 (copy).

Letter from Walter Scott to William Erskine.

1? Oct 1816.

[Thanks Erskine for his encouragement with writing *Tales* and discusses William Gifford's criticism, saying that it contained nothing he did not already know and that he will not make any corrections. Also says that he completed Vol. 3 in four rainy days, and will be finished the work soon if the bad weather continues.]

Source: MS letter (photocopy), British Library R.P. 175. The original is in the Robert H. Taylor Collection, Princeton University Library.

Notes: Date is from Millgate #4102; the letter is docketed 'Received 4 Oct 1816.' Gifford's criticism of *The Black Dwarf*, which Gifford had seen as a result of Murray showing it to him, is the matter to which Scott responds in his letter to Ballantyne of 3 Oct.

Letter from Walter Scott to James Ballantyne.

3 Oct 1816.

My respects to the Booksellers & I belong to the Death-head Hussars of literature who neither *take* nor *give* criticism. I know no business they had to show my work to Gifford nor would I cancel a leaf to please all the critics of Edinburgh & London and so let that be as it is. I never heard of such impudence in my life. Do they think I dont [*sic*] know when I am writing ill as well as Gifford can tell me. It is good enough for them and they had better make up the £200 they propose to swindle

me out of than trouble themselves about the content.

Source: Grierson, IV, 276.

Letter from James Ballantyne to William Blackwood.

4 Oct 1816.

Our application to the Author of Tales of my Landlord has been anything but successful; and, in order to explain to you the reason why I must decline to address him in this way in future, I shall copy his answer *verbatim*. // 'My respects to our friends the booksellers. I belong to the Death-head Hussars of literature, who neither *take* nor *give* criticism. I am extremely sorry they shewed my work to Gifford, nor would I cancel a leaf to please all the critics of Edinburgh and London; and so let that be as it is. They are mistaken if they think I dont [*sic*] know when I am writing ill or well as Gifford can tell me.—I beg there may be no more communications with critics.' // Observe—that I shall at all times be ready to convey anything from you to the Author, in a written form; but I do not feel warranted to interfere further.

Source: E, MS 4001, fol. 250. Also printed (with some slight differences of punctuation) as a footnote to the Scott to Ballantyne letter of 3 Oct 1816 in Grierson, IV, 276–77. Also in Oliphant, I, 73 with errors.

Letter from William Blackwood to James Ballantyne.

5 Oct 1816.

I never had for one moment the naivety to think that from any poor remark of mine, or indeed of any human being, he would be induced to blot one line or alter a single incident unless the same idea occurred to his own powerful mind. On stating to you what struck me and finding that your opinion coincided with mine, I was induced to request of you to state it to the author in order that he might be aware that the expence of cancelling of the sheets was no object to me. [...] I trust the Author will do me the justice to believe that it is quite impossible for any one to have a higher admiration of his most extraordinary talents [250v/251] and speaking merely as a Publisher it would be quite unnecessary to be at the expence of altering even one line although the Author himself (who alone can be the proper judge) should wish it, as the success of the work must be rapid great and certain. // With regard to the first volume having been shewn to Mr Gifford I must state in justification of Mr Murray, that Mr G. is the only friend whom he consults on all occasions and to whom his most secret transactions are laid open. He gave him the Work not for the purpose of criticism, but that as a friend he might partake of the enjoyment he had in such an extraordinary performance.

Source: E, MS 4001, fols 250v–251(draft copy). Version also in Oliphant, I, 74.

Notes: The draft copy, with several deletions, is written on James Ballantyne's letter of 4 Oct 1816. One deleted phrase, with respect to showing the work to William Gifford, is 'this was wholly Mr Murray's doing not mine.'

Letter from James Ballantyne to Walter Scott.

10 Oct 1816.

The tales go on in the most triumphant manner, I send along with some proofs a note from Mr Erskine about them & a message to you.

Source: E, MS 21059, fol. 45 (copy). Another copy is at MS 861, fols 54–57.

Letter from James Ballantyne to John Murray II.

12 [Oct] 1816.

I am instructed, by the Author of Tales of my Landlord, to say, that, as the work will be ready for publication early in November, he requests that you and Mr. Blackwood will each oblige me with a bill, on his account, at 3 months, for £250—to be of course renewed till the full period of credit is expired. // I have now got copy of two-thirds of Volume 3d, and I have no doubt that you will be

enabled to publish in London by the 20th or 25th of November. The work increases in excellence.
Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Ballantyne Box.

Letter from Walter Scott to John Ballantyne.

26 Oct 1816.

[postscript] The 3d part of Vol iv is finishd so that with little exertion I can let you have the whole by Saturday or Sunday if I have no more worrying about other matters to put me off work.

Source: Grierson, I, 506.

Letter from Walter Scott to James Ballantyne.

27 Oct 1816.

I expect the tales will be out of my hand by this day sennight and it is necessary the press should be forced on to meet the engagements in the middle of the month. [...] // I wishd much to see you here to consult you about the tales as well as to settle our accompts. I can end my story either tragically or otherwise—the last is the most commonplace but the most pleasing—on this I had wishd your advice most particularly. You have never sent the running copy which makes me drop my notion of a glossary by Jedediah which will be now too late. I intreat title pages and all the dragwork may be got forward.

Source: Grierson, I, 508.

Letter from James Ballantyne to Walter Scott.

28 Oct 1816.

Will you allow me to pass from this subject to that of the Tales.—I think that, in point of story, you far exceed your other compositions; & the truth which you have given to your historical personages has alone been equalled, & on my soul not excelled, by Shakespeare. I think Burley loses, in his cunning as well as savage compliances with his supposed duties, a good deal of the interst which he excited at first. The additional MS to the last sheet of the Vol I feel inclined particularly to dislike. It makes him a cunning little Isaac, & I think hurts his identity. Monmouth & Dalzell are inimitably sustained—inimitably. If a hero *could* be interesting, Morton would be so; but he is not, for no hero ever was. No nominal hero, I mean; or rather no nominal *modern* hero. Lovelace is interesting, because his vices preponderate; but what is Sir Charles? Glenaquoich is interesting because he has a thousand faults & interesting foibles; so is even Hector McIntyre; so is the Antiquary, & the immortal & blessed Baron, whose oddities if [51/52] not their vices predominate. But Brown, & Waverley, & Lovel, & Morton, sink & must sink in the scale. But Morton is the best of them [...]. Cuddie is powerful with a vile name. Had I had the least idea he was to be so prominent I should have prayed for Andrew or Simon or any name not quite that of an ass. & I think he is too foolish. Jenny is a capital jadd [*sic* for jade?]. But so are they all a galaxy of glories. Yet—(a plague upon but—yet) there is none PROMINENT, none quite starting forth upon every tongue like 'Lord! Was there ever the like of the Baron?' Yes, the Baillie 'Ah but Meg Merrilies!' 'Na but Dandy Dinmont' or Dirk or Fergus or Flora—or, or, *or*. this I feel to be a want, yet I think this the finest of all your works as a whole. What a pity Bothwell died so soon! // No, it must not be tragic, one might philosophize, & say let it be tragic, & so now. But all hearts proclaim, it must not be tragic.

Source: E, MS 21059, fols 51–52 (copy).

Letter from John Ballantyne to Walter Scott.

[late Oct] 1816.

Allow me in concluding, to entreat you will finish happily; it would be a crying sin to make poor Edith miserable, who never had a higher enjoyment in her lover than a cauld crack in a moonlight night for which she had a mile or two to walk, & Morton too, a spirited fellow who has created great interest. Vol. 1 His father is called Colonel Milnwood when first introduced, this should be cancelled.

Source: E, MS 21059, fol. 57 (copy).

Notes: Date from contents.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

1 Nov 1816.

By to morrows Mail therefore I will send you [...] the 2nd & 3d vols of the Tales.

Source: E, MS 30301, p. 339 (copy).

Letter from James Ballantyne to Walter Scott.

8 Nov 1816.

I think Old Mortality a glorious work, & have belief amounting to conviction, of its triumphant success. But it strikes me to resemble a building having many turrets without a tower. The want of Dundees death will be much felt by those who are ignorant that it awaits them, time & place convenient.

Source: E, MS 21059, fol. 55 (copy).

Letter from Walter Scott to Daniel Terry.

12 Nov 1816.

You will receive, in the course of a few days, my late *whereabouts* in four volumes; there are two tales—the last of which I really prefer to any fictitious narrative I have yet been able to produce—the first is wish-washy enough. The subject of the second tale lies among the old Scottish Cameronians—nay, I'll tickle ye off a Covenanter as readily as old Jack could do a young Prince; and a rare fellow he is, when brought forth in his true colours. Were it not for the necessity of using scriptural language, which is essential to the character, but improper for the stage, it would be very dramatic. But of all this you will judge by and by. To give the go-by to the public, I have doubled and leaped into my form, like a hare in snow: that is, I have changed my publisher, and come forth like a maiden knight's white shield (there is a conceit!) without any adhesion to fame gained in former adventures (another!) or, in other words, with a virgin title-page (another!)—I [288/289] should not be so light-hearted about all this, but that it is nearly finished and out, which is always a blithe moment for Mr. Author.

Source: Grierson, IV, 288–89.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

13 Nov 1816.

Having now had nearly the whole of the fourth volume of the Tales, I feel so certain of the complete success and instant sale of the Book that I have ordered Ballantyne to put other 2000 to press directly as they will take a good while to print, and it would be such a pity to lose even one weeks sale while the first rage for it continues. // The whole will be in proof in a few days & Ballantyne expects to be ready for delivery in a fortnight.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 2. Also E, MS 30301, p. 340 (copy).

Letter from Walter Scott to Lady Louisa Stuart.

14 Nov 1816.

In the midst of all these avocations & at the expense of neglecting the correspondence of some valued friend (among whom none can rank more highly than Lady Louisa Stuart) I have accomplished a novel or rather four volumes of tales, chiefly that I might not ruin myself or do injustice to my family by this same rage of improving like any mad. I intended to have written four tales illustrative of the manners in Scotland in her different provinces. But as no man that wrote so much ever knew so little what he intended to do when he began to write or executed less of the little which he had premeditated I totally altered my plans before I had completed my first volume. I began a border tale well enough but tired of the ground I had trode so often before I had walked over two thirds of the course. Besides I found I had circumscribed my bounds [292/293] too much

& in manege [*sic*] phrase that my imagination not being well in hand could not lounge easily within so small a circle. So I quarrelled with my story, & bungled up a conclusion as a boarding school Miss finishes a task which she had commenced with great glee & accuracy. In the next tale I have succeeded better, at least I think so; it is a covenanting story the time lies in the era of *Bothwell Brigg* the scene in Lanarkshire; there are noble subjects for narrative during that period full of the strongest light & shadow, all human passions stirr'd up & stimulated by the most powerful motives, & the contending parties as distinctly contrasted in manners & in modes of thinking as in political principles. I am complete master of the whole history of these strange times both of persecutors & persecuted so I trust I have come decently off for as Falstaff very reasonably asks is not the *truth* the *truth*. You will soon judge for yourself as I will take care to send an early copy to Gloucester Street conditionally that your Ladyship will have the goodness not to shew to any one till it is regularly published in London for it is very odd what trifles are summon'd up as articles of evidence. [293/294] I will tell you when we meet what may have given rise to the my brothers being named as the author of *Waverley* &c. it is a report which if he would avail himself of the very strong talents both of pathetic & humourous description which he really possesses (*car il y est de quoi*) he might make it a very fortunate report for himself.

Source: Grierson, IV, 292–94.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

20 Nov 1816.

I trouble you with this as Ballantyne has just been with me, and informs me that the last sheet & titles of the *Tales* will go to press tomorrow, and I expect to be able to send you 6 complete copies by Friday's mail. He is to make every exertion to have copies ready on Tuesday so that we may ship for you by that day's smack. I will not be able to put off the publication here longer than Monday se'night 2nd Dec as the Author is impatient to have it fairly out and I have so many inquiries about it, that I hope you will think this will not be too early, as it will not be possible for any one to send up copies by Coach before your copies arrive. // I suppose you will have no objections that this will be a stock Book and managed by me as you did *Hall's Architecture*.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 2. Copy at E, MS 30301, p. 342.

Letter from William Blackwood to James Ballantyne.

22 Nov 1816.

I send you two copies of our glorious Book for the Author, one of which I have no doubt he will present Mr Ballantyne with, else I would have done myself that pleasure. I need not tell you that any copies he wishes to present will be at all times at his command. I hope he will pardon me for having sent the very first copy I had done up to Mr Scott. The next I shall send to the Author of *Julia de Roubigne*.

Source: E, MS 30001, fol. 28v (copy). Also in Oliphant, I, 76 with error.

Notes: On fol. 28 is a copy of the letter sending a presentation copy to Scott.

Letter from William Blackwood to Walter Scott.

22 Nov 1816.

It is with no little satisfaction that I send you the first perfect copy I have got of the *Tales of my Landlord*. If Jedediah interests the public at all in the way he has interested (you will excuse me for saying) his fortunate publisher, he will be the most successful Editor who has almost ever appeared.

Source: E, MS 30001, fol. 28 (copy). Also in Oliphant, I, 76 with error.

Notes: As Blackwood's letter to Ballantyne of the same date shows, the copy for Scott was sent to him via Ballantyne. On fol. 28v is a copy of the letter to Ballantyne of the same date.

Letter from Walter Scott to John Bacon Sawrey Morritt.

22 Nov 1816.

But to descend from Shakespeare, his bust and cabinet, to matters of humbler import, you will receive in a day or two the *Tales of My Landlord*. The last is, I think, the best I have yet been able to execute, although written by snatches and at intervals. It is quite finished, and I expect to get copies in boards by Friday or Saturday. Yours of course sits among the foremost, and I will be glad to learn it reaches your safe and gives you amusement. // [...] they have ordered a new edition of the *Tales* which will help out these mighty operations they are set agoing.

Source: Grierson, IV, 296.

Notes: The 'mighty operations' are Scott's building projects at Abbotsford. 22 Nov was a Friday, so it seems possible Scott had begun the letter earlier in the week.

Letter from James Ballantyne to William Blackwood.

22 Nov 1816.

I wish you had spoken to me before fixing the price of Tales of my Landlord, as I find the author much dissatisfied that it is lower than £1. 12.—I hope it is not too late to alter it, and that you will think it right to do so. As the book is not subscribing, I should think [? page torn] the price might be altered in future advertisements.

Source: E, MS 4001, fol. 252.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

22 Nov 1816.

I now send you 6 Copies of the Tale [*sic*] of My Landlord. [...] The Copies which you mentioned as presents for Mail have not yet arrived—I have sent copies in the meantime to Mr Scott Mr Erskine & Mrs Elliot.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 2.

Notes: Not in Blackwood's hand; signed for Mr Blackwood by J. M. Lachlan. Dated from Princes Street, Friday 3 o'clock, which from contents establishes the date as 22 Nov. Mrs Elliot was Murray's mother-in-law.

Letter from Robert Cadell to Archibald Constable.

22 Nov 1816.

I have seen J B Jr [John Ballantyne?] he does not deny *to me* all about the Tales—but says the bookseller if he is circulating the Reports you allude to, and which are current here, he will do himself no small harm—the book appears on the 2d December [...].

Source E, MS 322, fol. 44.

Bill from James Ballantyne to William Blackwood.

23 Nov 1816.

To printing Tales of my Landlord, 60 sheets, pica 12mo, 2000 copies
at 55/- per sh[heet]

£165.

To very numerous corrections

22. 4

To copying the original MS for press

30.

Back titles

.16

£218.

To 270 Reams paper, at 25/

£337.10

To printing acct.

£218.

£555.10

By Cash on acct.

£400.

Balance

£155.10

[254/254v] Two thousand copies at 18/4d off paper and printing	£1833. 6. 8 <u>555.10</u> £1277.16. 8
Author's half	£638.18. 4
Mr Blackwood's half of D[itt]o	£319. 9. 2
A Bill to be drawn at 6 Mo. to be renewed for 7 mo. longer	
Mr Blackwood's half of Paper and Printing	£277.15.
A Bill to be drawn at 12 Mo. And the bill of £200 due 9th Decr to be retired by Mr Ballantyne.	£597. 4. 2

Source: E, MS 4001, fol. 254.

Notes: The bill was sent with the letter from Ballantyne to Blackwood of 25 Nov 1816. In another pen on fol. 254, £400 and the balance are stroked through, and 277.15 [i.e. ½ of £555 10s] written in. At the bottom is added:

'2000 at Sale price 18s. 8d. = £1866.13s. 4d.' and '1/2 = £933. 6. 8d.'

Letter from Robert Cadell to Archibald Constable.

24 Nov 1816.

[...] all and sundry are talking about Tales of my Landlord—R. Miller gaping about them to an amusing extent.

Source E, MS 322, fol. 49v.

Notes: Robert Miller was an Edinburgh bookseller.

Letter from James Ballantyne to William Blackwood.

25 Nov 1816.

I hope you will find the preceding Accts. correct; and, as it is of the greatest consequence to me, that they be retired[?] immediately, I trust you will find it convenient to accept for your share *tomorrow*. // Two bills of course will be drawn; one for printing and paper, and one for Author's profits.

Source: E, MS 4001, fol. 255.

Notes: Sent with account on fol. 254. Another portion of bill appears separately on fol. 256, and this includes a division of the costs for paper and printing. Total cost of these was £555 10s; Blackwood's half was £277 15s. Blackwood's share of the Author's profits is noted as £319 9s 2d. Murray's half of paper and printing was £277 15s. He was credited £200 for cash payment, and £12 10s for interest at 15%. After these deductions from the amount of his share, he owed £65 5s, plus the £319 9s 2d for Author's profits, giving a total of £384 14s 2d.

Letter from William Blackwood's clerk to John Murray II.

25 Nov 1816.

Mr Blackwood desires me to inform you that 700 copies of The Tales being all that could by every exertion be got ready, are shipped on board [space left for word] which sails this afternoon. On the other side you have a note of Ballantyne's Acct, and the inclosed bill you will please accept and return to Mr Blackwood.

Source: E, MS 30001, fol. 29 (draft copy).

Notes: Dated from note about bill on bottom of fol. 29. Copy does not include Ballantyne's bill.

Deletions on this letter suggest it is a draft. That a space was left for the name of the ship indicates that the copy was prepared before Blackwood knew on which ship the bales containing *Tales* would travel.

Letter from William Blackwood's clerk to John Murray II.

26 Nov 1816.

Mr Blackwood forgot to desire me to mention when I wrote yesterday [...] [about copies of *Childe Harold* 3d Canto and about delay in receiving bales containing the latest *Quarterly Review*] To prevent

the possibility of any mistake of this kind Mr Blackwood sent his Porter down to Leith yesterday along with the seven bales of the Tales, and he found[?] them safe on board of the Hope. As they are at the very top of the hold, they can be delivered so soon as the vessel gets to the Wharf, which with this wind may be on Saturday. // Mr Blackwood expected you would have announced The Tales in a few of the Papers. The corrected Advertisements now sent you will now of course attend to.

Source: E, MS 30001, fol. 29v (draft copy).

Notes: Blackwood is communicating with Murray via his clerk. Deletions suggest this is a draft. Dated from the letter of Blackwood's clerk to Murray of 25 Nov 1816.

Letter from H. Thompson to William Blackwood.

29 Nov 1816.

By this days post Mr Murray was favor'd with yours of the 26 Instant with an account of Expences of Tales of My Landlord also inclosing J. Ballantyne's D[ra]ft. for £384. 14. 2. Mr Murray originally paid J. Ballantyne 300£ toward the Amt of Books he was to have received
Of that Amount he has recd value in Books
should not 25 per Ct. be deducted

291.11. 5
<u>72.15.</u>
218.16. 5
<u>81. 3. 7</u>
300.

This would leave a bal. of the 300£ in Mr Murray's favor

If this is correct please to say whether the above 81.3.7 should be deducted from J. Ballantyne's D[ra]ft. You will further oblige by ascertaining the amt overdrawn on Paul's Letters that both transactions may be settled at the same time. [277/277v] Mr Murray desires me to say that he does not perceive the necessity of putting another Edition to press immediately but would rather wait til [*sic*] the present one is in some degree sold off.

Source: E, MS 4001, fol. 277. A copy is in Murray Archives, Letter Book (Mar 1803–Sep 1823), p. 389, omitting the calculations.

Notes: H. Thompson was evidently a clerk, writing for John Murray II. Relations between the publishers were at a very low ebb at this point; another letter, written by Murray on 25 Nov 1816 (fols 275–76) confirms this. Murray complains of Blackwood communicating through his clerk, so the Thompson letter is his response to this tactic. Blackwood quotes the last sentence in the above passage in his letter to Murray of 16 Dec, stating that he received the letter on 3 Dec. Scott's *Paul's Letters to his Kinsfolk* was published in February 1816 jointly by Constable, Longman, and Murray.

Letter from Walter Scott to Anne Jane Gore Hamilton, Marchioness of Abercorn.

29 Nov 1816.

I have sent under Mr. Arbuthnot's cover four volumes of a novel or rather a set of novels which I am strongly inclined to swear are the production of the unknown author of *Guy Mannering* about which you are so much interested. I suppose it will be soon published in London but I hope these volumes will reach your Ladyship before that takes place. The Bookseller here says he is not to publish till next week but gave me a reading of the volumes and at my earnest entreaty parted with the set I have the honour to beg your acceptance of. I do not like the first story at all. But the long one which occupies three volumes is a most extraordinary production. I cannot think it at all likely that Young Henry Mackenzie wrote these books. I know him very well and have no idea that he has either time or disposition to bestow it on such compositions. He is high at the bar and has a great deal too much to do for writing novels. His brother James might be more likely to amuse himself in that way but I think this also is unlikely. I should like to know if you are of my opinion as to these new volumes coming from the same hand.

Source: Grierson, IV, 307.

Notes: By 'Young Henry Mackenzie', Scott is referring to the eldest son (Joshua Henry Mackenzie, later Lord Mackenzie) of Henry Mackenzie, author of *The Man of Feeling*. An earlier letter to Lady

Abercorn, printed in Grierson, IV, 283 and dated *c.* 14 June 1816 by Corson (Corson, 124), mentions Henry Mackenzie (the elder) as unlikely to have written the novels.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray.

3 Dec 1816.

With regard to the second edition, I assure you the reception of the Book has not diminished the confidence I had in its success, when I ordered it to be begun at a time I had only my own judgment to depend upon. I think you would have had as little difficulty if you had had time to look [31/31v] at the complete Book I sent you by the Mail. I have already sold upwards of 400 though I only began to give it out yesterday. // I have shipped for you as on the other side. The Author has got several copies, but as it is a stock book this can be arranged afterwards.

Source: E, MS 30001, fol. 31 (draft copy).

Notes: Deletions mark this as a draft. It has some interesting variations from the version actually sent to Murray (see below). The draft is not in Blackwood's hand. The 1st edn of the novel appeared on 2 Dec 1816; however Blackwood had ordered a 2nd edn while the 1st was in its final printing stages (see his letter of 13 Nov to Murray). The 2nd edn appeared early in Jan 1817.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

3 Dec 1816.

With regard to the second edition, I assure you the reception the Book has met with, these two days, does not make me sorry I ordered it, at a time I trusted solely to my own judgment. I have already sold upwards of 400 copies, and I shall be much mistaken if you are not out of copies instantly.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 2.

Letter from James Ballantyne to John Murray II.

3 Dec 1816.

I learn from Mr Blackwood that you have declined to accept my d[ra]ft for the author's profits, and the balance of paper & printing, on the Tales of My Landlord, on the ground that you wish previously to make a settlement of the books taken from John Ballantyne & Co's stock, and of any overdraft which may have been made on the score of Paul's Letters. // I am extremely sorry, that my having mixed the paper & printing acct with the author's profits has given rise to this unpleasant delay. It was done merely to save trouble and unnecessary stamps. But, as it is quite obvious that the author's interest in Tales of My Landlord, ought not to be interfering with the account of any claims that may be justly made against his agent, I have taken the liberty of drawing a separate bill for his profits, which I request you will have the goodness to return accepted; in course of post. The balance, due on the paper and printing Acct, can stand over till the other matters alluded to are settled to your satisfaction. [...] With regard to the books taken from John Ballantyne's stock, on the score of Tales of My Landlord, I have already settled with Mr Blackwood, and in a manner that is satisfactory to him, that any difficulties on that score shall be arranged before the bills become due that were granted for them.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Ballantyne Box. Copy at E, MS 4001, fol. 258 (copy in Blackwood's hand).

Notes: Letter was sent to Murray via Blackwood; it includes a request from Ballantyne to Blackwood that the letter be transmitted to Murray.

Letter from Robert Cadell to Archibald Constable.

3 Dec 1816.

[...] all and sundry recognise the author of the Tales, and I may add they are almost universally admired—some good judges say that [67v/68] the second, Old Mortality, is the best of the Authors productions—I am not inclined in any great degree, at any time to call names—but this I will say that there was a monstrous want of candour in the Author of these books going past us in the way

he has done [...].

Source E, MS 322, fols 67v–68.

Letter from Lady Louisa Stuart to Walter Scott.

5 Dec 1816.

I got no sleep from a kind of fever of mind [*Tales*] had occasioned. It seemed as if I had been an eye & ear witness of all the passages, and I could not lull the agitation into calmness [...] One thing I regret, that like the author of the Antiquary Jedidiah did not add a Glossary; because even I, a mongrel, occasionally paying long visits to Scotland [...] have found a great many words absolute Hebrew to me [...] I have as yet only one great attack to make & that upon a single word—but such a word! Such an anachronism! Claverhouse says he has no time to hear *sentimental* speeches. My dear Sir! Tell Jedidiah that Claverhouse never heard the sound of those four syllables in his life. We are used to them; but *sentiment* & *sentimental* were, I believe, first introduced into the language by Sterne, & are hardly as old as I am. Let alone the Covenanters days, I am persuaded you would look in vain for them in the works of Richardson & Fielding, authors of George the 2nds reign.
Source: Grierson, IV, 293. See also Millgate #12125.

Letter from Robert Cadell to Archibald Constable.

6 Dec 1816.

Say nothing about Tales of My Landlord—things will come round—I hear there is some precious bickering—I praise the book in all quarters both to James and John Doe [i.e. the Ballantynes].
Source E, MS 322, fol. 71v.

Letter from James Ballantyne to William Blackwood.

6 Dec 1816.

Miller tells me the Tales occupy the whole talk, to the utter exclusion of the Prisoner of Chillon.
Source: E, MS 4001, fol. 260.

Notes: Miller is presumably the Edinburgh bookseller, Robert Miller; Byron's 'The Prisoner of Chillon' was reviewed favourably by Scott with the Third Canto of *Childe Harold* in *Quarterly Review* 16 (1816), 172–208.

Letter from William Blackwood to Charles Grey, 2nd Earl Grey.

[between 4 and 12] Dec 1816.

Being the publisher of the Tales of My Landlord, I am sorry I cannot answer your Lordships queries with regard to the Author. I can neither affirm nor deny and as your Lordship may suppose am not at liberty to say one word on the subject—The Book has given most universal satisfaction and the sale has been very great.

Source: E, MS 30301, p. 8 (copy).

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

12 Dec 1816.

I would be obliged to you to cause any of your clerks to write me how the Tales are going off, and what is said about them. I would not trouble you with this request, were it not that I look so foolish when certain people are daily enquiring 'What are the accounts from London'. A few extracts in the Courier & Morning Chronicle would have a prodigious effect—here nothing of the kind is required as the Book engrosses the whole conversation in every company. Buchanan however promised to notice it in the Mercury.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 2. Copy at E, MS 30301, p. 343.

Notes: David Buchanan was editor of the *Caledonian Mercury*.

Letter from John Murray II to William Blackwood.

13 Dec 1816.

Having now heard every ones opinion about our Tales of my Landlord I feel competent to assure you that it is universally in their favour—there is only Meg Merrilies in their way—to be considered even superior to the other three Novels.—You may go on printing as many & as fast as you can for we certainly need not stop until we come to the end of our (unfortunately) limited 6,000. I have no objection to the Work being a Stock book & Messrs Constable & co will explain to you the terms on which they regulate the similar works of Guy Mannering &c. upon which plan I of course suppose you intend this to be. My Copies are more than gone & if you have any to spare pray send them up instantly—we have advertised in all the all the best papers—but the manner in which I distributed the 6 Mail Copies—has operated as an immediate & most effective advertisement & has been the means of making the work known instantly. If you recollect I suggested to you when here, that if the work succeeded we should ask for Ballantyne to let us print 3000 at a time instead of 2000 to save the Composition & therefore I thought it in every way premature & irregular for you to say you had put the work to press without asking me first—but it has proved fortunate & no great harm is done. [...] [postscript] My second supply of The Tales has not arrived & I have 100 more with[?] imperfections [illeg.].

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 2; extracts also in Smiles, I, 469.

Notes: Folds in the paper of this letter suggest that it was subsequently returned to Murray inclosed in another letter, perhaps during the course of the ensuing dispute with Blackwood about the management of the 2nd edn. This would account for its presence in the Murray Archives.

Letter from John Murray II to Lord Byron.

13 Dec 1816.

I have since published 'Tales of my Landlord,' another novel, I believe (but I really don't know) by the author of 'Waverley'; but much superior to what has already appeared, excepting the character of Meg Merrilies. Every one is in ecstasy about it, and I would give a finger if I could send it to you, but this I will contrive.

Source: Smiles, I, 369.

Letter from Walter Scott to Charles Scott, 4th Duke of Buccleuch.

14 Dec 1816.

As your Grace is in the way of idle reading I have forward[ed] by the Coach a copy of certain historical affairs call'd Tales of my Landlord which give no bad picture of the ancient covenanting period in Scotland. I was surprized to find Ballantyne had not sent a copy to Bowhill.

Source: Grierson, IV, 316.

Notes: Grierson has 'forward[ed]'.

Letter from John Murray II to Walter Scott.

14 Dec 1816.

Although I dare not address you as the author of certain 'Tales' (which however must be written either by Walter Scott or the Devil) yet, nothing can restrain me from thinking that it is to your influence with the Author of them that I am indebted for the essential honour of being one of their publishers, and I must intrude upon you to offer my most hearty thanks—not divided [141/141v] but doubled alike for my worldly gain therin [*sic*] and for the great acquisition of professional reputation which their publication has already procured me. As to delight I believe I could under any oath that could be proposed, swear that I never experienced such great & unmixed pleasure in all my life—as the reading of this exquisite work has afforded me—and if you witnessed [*sic*] my wet eyes & grinning cheeks with which as the author's Literary chamberlain I receive the unanimous & vehement praise of them from every one who has read them or heard the [141v/142] curses of those whose needs my scanty supply could not satisfy—you might judge of the sincerity with which I can entreat you to assure the author of the most compleat success—after this I could

throw all the other books with which I have the misfortune to have in the press into the Thames—for no one will either read them or buy—Lord Holland said when I asked his opinion—‘Opinion? We did not one of us go to bed all night—& nothing slept but my Gout’ Frere, Hallam, Boswell—Lord Glenbervie came to me with tears in his eyes yesterday—it is a cordial [142/142v] [he] said which saved Lady Glenbervie’s Life—Heber, who found it on his table on his arrival from a journey—had no rest till he had read it—he has only this moment left me—& he with many others agrees that it surpass all the other Novels. Idem Mrs Lamb. // Gifford never read any thing like it he says—& his estimation of it absolutely increases at every recollection of it—Barrow with great difficulty was at last forced to read it & he said yesterday—very good to be sure but what powerful writing is *thrown* away—Heber says there are only two men in the World Walter Scott & Lord Byron—between you, you have given existence to a *Third*.

Source: E, MS 3887, fols 141–42. Also in Smiles, I, 469–70 and Oliphant, I, 77, both with errors and omissions.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

16 Dec 1816.

I am fav[oure]d with yours of the 13th—The success of the Tales is only what I most confidently anticipated would take place & go on so soon as they were known. // When I ordered Ballantyne (& intimated[?] to you) on the 13th of Nov to put 2000 more copies to press, I did what I thought was for the best as I explained to you in my letter of the 1st Cur[ren]t—Had your opinion then differed from mine, I ought to have heard from you on the 19th. On the 3d Cur[ren]t to be sure I had a letter from your Clerk on the subject as follows ‘Mr Murray desires me to say that he does not perceive any necessity of putting another edition to press immediately but would rather *wait until the present one is in some degree sold off*.’ This certainly was a positive negation of what I had done, but I thought it better to go on, and had I waited till I recd your letter of to day a month’s sale would certainly have been lost, as it will be three weeks yet before the new edition can be ready. So that in place of merely having done no great harm, I think I have done great good. I was the more satisfied of this when I rec[eive]d another letter on the 9th stating that your ‘reason for saying that a new edition should not have gone to press was that untill [*sic*] from the general opinion you *could* have ascertained what might be the proper number to put to press’—I had not forgot what we had said about making the 2d ed. 3000 copies, but as I had neither encouragement nor advice from you, I thought I went far enough with 2000, as this number could be enlarged in 6 days if you were as sanguine as I was, and you had the same opportunity of judging for yourself as I had. // It appears to me quite unnecessary to consult Messrs Constable & Co (whom I assure you I am not in the habit of advising with) about how they managed Guy Mannering or any thing else. [...] You do not say what sheets the 100 copies want, but I suppose it to be the end of vol 1 [...] I have only about 250 Books left, and though I know I could sell the whole of them in the course of a few days or at any rate some time before the new edition can be ready, I shall ship for you to morrow 100 copies which will help you a little in the mean time.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 2. A draft, with some deletions and omissions is at E, MS 30001, fols 175–76.

Notes: Much of the letter discusses management of 2nd edn, over which there was disagreement between the publishers.

Letter from Longman & Co to John Ballantyne.

16 Dec 1816.

You may send us the 25 Tales of My Landlord.

Source: Longman Archives. Longman I, 100, no. 44 (draft copy).

Letter from John Murray II to William Blackwood.

17 Dec 1816.

The Bales containing the 291 Copies 1st edn of Tales of my Landlord have this moment arrived—we wrote to you last week desiring that you would send them, and as many more as you could spare—and to this I have received no answer—nor do you give me any notice of the Number or progress of the New Edition—we also wrote to Ballantyne informing him that we have already got notice[?] of at least 50 Copies of Vol 1 being incompleat wanting four leaves at the end—that Number has already swollen to 100 [...] [279/279v] [...] Even now I never have had enough Copies to subscribe Tales of my Landlord & if you have actually copies to spare & have [279v/280] not sent them to me—to our stopping the Sale of the Work the 6,000 copies of which I will _ensure_—so pray tell me, Mr Manager, what you are about [...]. [postscript] Send up the last ¼ sheet of Vol 1 for 150 Copies. // I have not a Copy left except the Imperfect ones [...].

Source: E, MS 4001, fol. 279.

Letter from James Ballantyne to John Murray II.

18 Dec 1816.

I had the pleasure of receiving your polite letter of the 13th and am as much gratified as I can be with the ample sanction it contains of my own enthusiastic admiration of Old Mortality. The Author, to whom I communicated its contents, expressed much satisfaction at the success of the work. // The reviews of Waverley, Mannering, &c did certainly surprise the readers of these works in this quarter; but we were lenient to the unlucky Southron, who clearly knew no better. ‘The Englishers, I’m tauld,’ says Neil Blane, ‘amaist live upon wheat flour; but the pock-puddings, nae doubt, ken nae better.’— a better, as well as a more favourable account of these fine productions, I think I can venture to promise you; but I do not promise it *yet*. I shall write you again in a very few days, stating decidedly whether, and when, I can fulfil our mutual desire. Depend upon it, I shall send you nothing but what is excellent.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Ballantyne Box.

Letter from Walter Scott to John Murray II.

18 Dec 1816.

I give you heartily joy of the success of the Tales, although I do not claim that paternal interest in them which my friends do me the credit to assign me. I assure you I have never read a volume of them till they were printed, and can only join with the rest of the world in applauding the true and striking portraits which they present of old Scottish manners. I do not expect implicit reliance to be placed on my disavowal, because I know very well that he who is resolved not to own a work must necessarily deny it, and that otherwise his secret be at the mercy of all who chose to ask the question, since silence in such a case must always pass for consent, or rather assent. But I have a mode of convincing you that I am perfectly serious in my denial—pretty similar to that by which Solomon distinguished the fictitious from the real mother—and that is, by reviewing the work, which I take to be an operation similar to the experiment of quartering the child. But this is only on condition I can have Mr. Erskine’s assistance, who admires the work greatly more than I do, though I think the painting of the second tale both true and powerful. I knew Old Mortality very well; his name was Paterson, but few knew him otherwise than by his nickname. The first tale is not very original in its [318/319] concoction, and lame [and] impotent in the conclusion.

Source: Grierson, IV, 318–19. Also in Smiles, I, 470–71.

Notes: Grierson has ‘[and]’.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

20 Dec 1816.

Difficult as it is to follow your hurried and confused statements, I shall endeavour to put them in some shape and reply to them point by point. You inquire in the first place if it is 291 copies I had shipp’d. If you will take the trouble to turn to my letter of the 3d Cur[ren]t and you will find a

statement of the numbers you ought to have received. And though you had this notice so long ago, yet you say you wrote for them last week and had received no notice whatever. That my letter of the 3d has not been mis-sent I know by your sending the answer to Mr Ballantyne which ought to have come to me along with information as to the Books. // You next say that when you wrote for the 300 you asked me to send as many more as I could spare. In your Clerk's letter of the 5th which is the only one I recd on the subject, there is not one word either of your having recd the 700 (which if the information I had from my friend Mr Henry Mackenzie be correct you had got two days before) nor is there one word with regard to the probability of copies being likely to be wanted. [...] Your next article of complaint is with regard to the leaves wanting for copies of vol 1 not being sent you, and your receiving no notice with regard to them. I received your letter on Monday last in which you mentioned you wanted *imperfections* for 100 copies. Concluding that this would be these ends which Ballantyne's man had suspected were wanting for 50 copies & which were presumably sent off I sent you the other 50 by Coach. How do you conceive you could have had an answer on the 17 to your letter of the 13th? If *my management* implied my ascertaining myself that every individual Book was perfect before it was packed, then you might have grounds for sneering at *Mr Manager's* first exhibition as you phrase it. // I think you have as little reason for saying one word with regard to my not supplying you with copies. I made every possible exertion to send as many and as early as I could to you, as I have already apprised you in my former letters. [...] If you have not copies to subscribe or supply the demand, this surely is not my fault. Since Monday last that I gave notice to Ballantyne, he has doubled his exertions and he tells me to day the three first volumes are done. Your letter of the 13 was so indefinite that we did not venture to enlarge the impression till I heard again from you. Today however I have desired him to print 4000 of vol. 4 but as he said it would retard this edition, he will not begin to print up the other 2000 of the 3 first vols till it is finished, which he hopes he will be able by great exertions to accomplish by the end of next week. // [...] I hope we will be able to get up an article for the Review that will redeem the former ones.—Mr Scott also told me about the very satisfactory letter he had from you. // I need not tell you how cordially I agree with you in thinking that this work is one of the most extraordinary that has appeared in our times. I reckon it one of the proudest things of my life to have obtained it.[...] [postscript, 21 Dec] [...] I have only 50 or 60 of the Tales left.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 2. Also E, MS 30001, fols 33–34 (incomplete draft copy with insertions, deletions, and some differences in wording from the above). Another complete copy is at fols 35–38; fol. 35 of this is damaged. Another copy, incomplete, is at fols 139–40 where it has been misdated 1818 by the cataloguer.

Notes: Long letter of 5 pages, mostly dealing with disagreement or misunderstanding between publishers about printing more copies of the 2nd edn.

Letter from Robert Cadell to Archibald Constable.

21 Dec 1816.

Blackwood they say has got off his first 2000 Tales of My Landlord—we would have dismissed 5000 in less time [...].

Source: E, MS 322, fol. 98.

Letter from Walter Scott to Joseph Train.

21 Dec 1816.

You will be surprized to find Old Mortality has got into print. The novel in which he appears belongs to the same cycle and appears to be written by the same author as those of Waverley and Guy Mannering, and displays the same knowlege [*sic*] of Scottish manners and scenery and the same carelessness as to arrangement of the story which characterize these curious narratives. Why the author should conceal himself, and in this case even change his publishers as if to insure his remaining concealed is a curious problem. I get the credit of them and wish I deserved it but I dare say the real author will one day appear. As a trifling return for your attention and presuming that the tales will interest you I send a copy for your acceptance by the Portpatrick mail the Ballantynes

having sent me a couple of copies as they usually do of any thing that they print which they think have merit. The first tale in my opinion is rather [323/324] below par but the second is exceedingly good indeed. I shall be glad if they afford you some amusement.

Source: Grierson IV, 323–24.

Letter from Walter Scott to John Richardson.

23 Dec 1816.

I hope you had the *Tales of my Landlord*, an early copy, though you have not said that they came to hand. They have apparently succeeded to a wish. At least no sale could be better than theirs is reported to be.

Source: Grierson, IV, 325.

Account from James Ballantyne to John Murray II.

25 Dec 1816.

Tales of My Landlord

One half of paper & printing, as per last account	£277.15. 0
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D[itt]o. Author's profits per d[itt]o.	<u>319. 9. 2</u>
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	£597. 4. 2
--	------------

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Ballantyne Box.

Notes: Account appears at the head of Ballantyne's letter to Murray of the same date. Expenses are presumably an estimate for the 2nd edn based on those for the 1st; the actual expenses were slightly different (see addendum).

Letter from James Ballantyne to John Murray II.

25 Dec 1816.

In consequence of your polite offer of the 13th current, as of the over-draft on Paul's Letters being now paid, I have taken the liberty to draw upon you at 6 months for £550.—which is somewhat less than your share of the expence & author's profits of the present edition (the second) of Tales of My Landlord. You will do me an essential service by returning the bill in course of post, as I count upon it as provision in aid of some heavy payments due at this time. Should you think the draft too large, in consequence of the differences in the amount of books[?] accepted for & delivered from John Ballantyne & Company's stock, have the goodness to send your promr note for £500.—which *must* be under the mark, after all deduction. When this edition is shipped, *which it positively shall be on Tuesday the 31st current*, I shall send an exact account of the transactions between us on the score of this noble work. // You may rely upon receiving the article for the Quarterly, in time for the next number. It is already in progress, and I have seen part of it. It is masterly. I believe you will think the Review has never boasted a more splendid article. // Again reminding you that I rely on your kind compliance with my request of the return of the bill *in course*.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Ballantyne Box.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Cumming.

27 Dec 1816.

I am favoured with yours of the 23d but am sorry I cannot at present supply you with the Tales, which are out of print. We have sold 2000 Copies in less than a fortnight. The new edition will be ready, however, by the middle or end of next week. But being a stock book I cannot give you them below sale price 18/4 for which you will send me your note at 12 Mos as I should not wish the transaction to be mixed with the Encyclopaedia concerns [...].

Source: E, MS 30301, p. 10.

Notes: Cumming was a Dublin bookseller.

Letter from Walter Scott to Anne Jane Gore Hamilton, Marchioness of Abercorn.

28 Dec 1816.

I am truly glad the *Tales* have amused you. In my poor opinion they are the best of the four sets; though perhaps I only think so on account of their opening ground less familiar to me than the manners of the Highlanders. I can assure your Ladyship your laudable curiosity about the author would not remain ungratified. But if Tom wrote these volumes he has not put me in his secret. He has certainly powers both of pathos and humour and has also read a great deal of old-fashioned sort of reading but I greatly doubt his possessing the steadiness of application necessary to write twelve or thirteen volumes in the space of two or three years. And moreover I do not see why he should so rigorously keep his secret. [...] // To return to the *Tales*. General rumour here imputes them to a very ingenious but most unhappy man, a [340/341] clergyman of the Church of Scotland who many years since was obliged to retire from his profession & from society and to hide himself under a borrowed name. This hypothesis seems to account satisfactorily for the rigid secrecy observed but from what I recollect of the unfortunate individual these are of the kind of productions I should have expected from him. // Burley is a real person and appears in the melancholy history of the period as the Leader of the party who killed Archbishop Sharpe on Magus Moor, near Saint Andrews. [...] [p. 343] [...] After all I recollect one circumstance which may interest you concerning these tales. Old Mortality was a living person—I have myself seen him about twenty years ago repairing the Covenanters' tombs as far north as Dunnottar. It was his sole occupation and only business on earth. I have an indistinct recollection that he was from [343/344] the parish of Closeburn in Nithsdale and that his name was Paterson.

Source: Grierson, IV, 340–44.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

28 Dec 1816.

By the most vexing mistake that could possibly have happened just now your packet containing your letter of the 21 was only delivered to me about two hours ago. [...]. I sent your letter which was inclosed in my packet to Mr Ballantyne [...]. I shall see him on Monday morning when I hope to find the second edition in such a state as to be able to ship you a good quantity on Tuesday. I shall write to you then.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 3.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

[31 Dec 1816].

By the people working all night we have been able to ship for you 700 of the 2d edition. I hope to be able to ship for you 700 or 800 more by Friday's Smack. [postscript] Though I have not had a copy of the *Tales* for some days I have kept none for myself & will not publish till Thursday.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 3.

Notes: Dated Tuesday 3 o'clock. 2nd edn was advertised as 'this day published' in the *Edinburgh Evening Courant* of Thursday 2 Jan 1817. This would make the date of this letter 31 Dec 1816. It is docketed Jan 1817, and is filed with other letters from 1817 at the Murray Archives. It can also be dated by Ballantyne's statement in his letter of 25 Dec to Murray that the 2nd edn will be shipped on 'Tuesday the 31st current'.

Lady Caroline Lamb to John Murray II.

[Dec. 1816]

I wish it were possible for me to say half of what I think of *Tales of My Landlord* or that when I had said it my opinion were better worth. The truth is that nothing that has been written for many years is so spirited and charming[?] as the account of Claverhouse the Battle of Tillietudlum Wm Lamb is as much pleased as I am & so no one else has seen it as you desired but many have heard so much from us that you will be reproached no doubt—it was impossible not to speak of what is so very good. Pray tell the Author to write more he is almost the only author to whom I should think this

advice would be good—as they all in these days write too much and too fast—but this one improves every time. I did not like the Antiquary as much as Meg Merrilies, but it was very very greatly admired by others. The Dwarf I have not yet read.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Byron Box 4A, Folder 2.

Notes: Murray had evidently sent Lamb an early copy of the *Tales of My Landlord*.

Letter from John Murray II to William Blackwood.

[?Dec 1816–Jan 1817].

I can assure you, *but in the greatest confidence*, that I have discovered the Author of all thes [*sic*] Novels to be Thomas Scott—Walter Scott's brother—he is now at Canada—I make no doubt but that Mr Walter Scott did a great deal to the first—Waverley for his anxiety to serve his brother, & his doubt about the success of the work—this accounts for the many Stories he which many persons had previously heard from Mr Scott—but you may rely upon the certainty of what I have told you. // The whole country is starving [281/281v] for want of a Compleat Supply of Tales of My Landlord—respecting which the Interest & Merit of which there continues to be but one sentiment. I make no doubt that you are carrying on the printing of new Editions which may not stop I calculate until it arrives at about the Eighth—as I told you in my last I have never had any Copies last a day in my hands and all that you have been so good as to [illeg.] for me have been bespoke.

Source: E, MS 4001, fol. 281. A copy is at Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 2. Also in Smiles, I, 473, with omissions.

Notes: Smiles dates this January 1817, but the MS is dated only 'Thursday'. It is docketed '1816?'

Letter from Walter Scott to Lady Louisa Stuart.

1 Jan 1817.

My private agent reports 4000 copies [of *Tales*] sold & 2000 in active preparation all bespoke: so that they have come off with all acceptance. No circumstance in the matter however can give me half the pleasure of your Ladyships kind approbation which I value beyond a whole wilderness of critics or monkies either. I hope there is no great harm in the lies I am obliged to tell in self defence since my secret would otherwise be at the mercy of every one who chose to ask a blunt question. I very often qualify [345/346] my denial with this statement. It is very diverting how people are divided—but from those I have lived much with I cannot escape & they have only the politeness to be silent on the question. I suppose a thousand peculiarities of feeling & expression besides little anecdotes rooted in ones mind mark such compositions to those who see much of you. In the meantime the *mystification* of those who would see *very far* into the mill stone is sufficiently diverting. Morritt is in the secret: you may communicate with him on the subject with all freedom. [...] [p. 347] I must not forget to thank your Ladyship for your acute & indisputable criticism on the application of the word sentimental: how it escaped my pen I know not unless that the word owed me a grudge for the ill will I have uniformly borne it & was resolved to slip itself in for the express purpose of disgracing me. I will certainly turn it out the first opportunity.

Source: Grierson, IV, 346–47.

Notes: Scott kept his word: 'Sentimental speeches' from *Old Mortality* was altered to 'fine speeches' in the 2nd edn. See Douglas Mack's edn, p. 374.

Letter from James Ballantyne to William Blackwood.

1 Jan [1817].

In the belief that you will find the annexed Acct correct, I shall call upon you tomorrow early, in order to a settlement.

Source: E, MS 4002, fol. 26.

Notes: Ballantyne misdates 1816. The annexed account and settlement appear on fol. 25.

Account from James Ballantyne to William Blackwood.

1 Jan [1817].

Decr 31: To printing Tales of my Landlord, 2d edition, 2000 copies, 59 sheets, 8 pages @ 55/- per sheet	£164.2.
Correction of small letters	£1.8.
Back-titles <u>.16.</u>	£166.6.
Deduct 9½ sheets at case, which were kept standing <u>10.18.6</u>	£155.7.6
Paper used—270 Reams at 23/	£310.10.
Amount of paper & printing	465.17.6
[carried to fol. 25v]	£465.17.6
do. of 2000 copies at 18/4d as before	£1833.6.8.
off paper & printing 465.17.6.—	£1367.9.2.
Author's half	683.14.7
Mr Blackwood's half of paper & printing—	£232.18.9
D[itt]o d[itt]o of Author's profits	<u>341.17.3</u>
	£574.16.

Source: E, MS 4002, fol. 25.**Letter from John Murray II to William Blackwood.**

1 Jan 1817.

[...] with regard to Tales of my Landlord, as a Stock Book, it is the invariable rule to allow either partner 10 p Cent from Sale upon what they sell beyond the other [...] Longmans get 10 p Cent on Scott's works Elphinstone &c, in which I am concerned with them, and Constable allows it on the Three Novels—& in every thing—and I may mention to you he never does interfere with the sale in *England* for partners would be cutting each others throats [...].

Source: MS 4002, fol. 224.**Settlement from James Ballantyne to William Blackwood.**

3 Jan 1817.

I have recd from you a bill at 12 mos for £232.18.9d and another at 6 mos for £341.17.3d which last bill shall be renewed for 6 months longer.

Source: E, MS 4002, fol. 25v.**Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.**

4 Jan 1817.

I was much vexed yesterday that it was not in my power to ship you a quantity of the Tales. I could not get any ready till late last night on acct. of the idleness & dissipation which takes place in all Printing offices at this season. I was however told that a smack was to sail to day, and we packed up all that were sent to us (200 copies) this morning.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 3.**Letter from William Blackwood to John Wilson Croker.**

6 Jan 1817.

I flatter myself that when you read the Tales of my Landlord you would not think I had praised them overmuch when I had the honor of seeing you. They have made a wonderful impression here, though our good honest presbyterians cannot help complaining that the Covenanters have not had more than justice done them.

Source: E, MS 30301, p. 13.

Notes: Recipient's name is spelled Crocker on MS copy. The letter mostly concerns a dedication to Croker on a book about compass variation by J. Bain. A subsequent letter on the same subject at page 19 of the same MS confirms that recipient is J. W. Croker.

Account from Longman & Co to John Ballantyne.

8 Jan 1817.

To reducing the Tales of my Landlord to cash we have deducted 5 P Cent & included them in the present settlement.

Source: Longman Archives. Longman I, 100, no. 54 (draft copy).

Letter from Walter Scott to John Murray II.

10 Jan 1817.

I have pressed Erskine to undertake the Novel with all the arguments I can use & trust I shall succeed as I have offerd him all the accumulated lore which I am possessd of to facilitate his labour. I find James Ballantyne had already spoke to him on the subject.

Source: Grierson, IV, 365.

Notes: Concerns Scott's plan for himself and William Erskine to undertake a review of *Tales* for the *Quarterly Review*.

Letter from John Murray II to William Blackwood.

10 Jan 1817.

We will split our difference about the Commission on Tales of My Landlord by making it 7 ½ percent & so end this matter. [...] // I am very much obliged by your great exertion in sending off so many of the Tales of My Landlord—and for your kindness in sparing me so many of yours—but I of course work for our mutual Good. I got yesterday the 300 copies, & this Day 400 more which will not supply my orders [...] & I have not the least doubt but that the 100 & the 800 books you have since spared me will be engaged completely before their arrival [...] though I may tell you I will engage to command 5000 more in less than as many months if you can get them to send. Indeed I do consider this to be the most extraordinary Work that any time has produced [...].

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 3.

Notes: See the letter of 1 Jan 1817 from Murray to Blackwood about the percentage of commission.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

14 Jan 1817.

It gives me great pleasure to hear that the demand for the Tales is so brisk and likely to go on. Though I have only left myself 50 or 60 which are in boards, I have packed up for you another bale containing 100 copies, which I have shipped on board The Lord Wellington which sails this afternoon. Ballantyne is to push on the new edition as fast as possible, but it will be three weeks before it can be ready. Do you think we should add other two thousand to this edition? Write me in course with regard to this and I will then see if Ballantyne makes any additional claim for the Author. I hope he will not, and adheres to what he said at first. I expect to be able to write you to morrow with regard to the article for the Review.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 3.

Notes: The letter concerns plans for a 3rd edn.

Letter from John Murray II to William Blackwood.

[17 Jan 1817]

[...] pray print new Editions of the Tales as fast a possible—I will *ensure* the sale of 10,000 more. I hope they wont make a new bargain with us—but I daresay they will [...] // The 800 Tales have just arrived & will be gone tomorrow.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 2.

Notes: Letter has 'Friday'. It seems likely to refer to the 3rd edn, and to come after the Murray to Blackwood letter of 10 Jan 1817. Work on the 3rd edn began in January, and was finished in February.

Letter from James Ballantyne to William Blackwood.

20 Jan 1817.

As the last edition of the Tales, to which our bargain was extended, is now nearly finished, and a new one—I hope many new ones—will probably soon be wanted, I hasten to say, that it will be delivered to you as soon as it can be got ready, on one[?: page torn] single condition, that you take the £200. additional from the stock[?: page torn] of John Ballantyne & Co, which the error of their Clerks prevented you from taking when the bills were granted in terms of the original bargain. To this I feel assured that you will not object, as it is a very light rider indeed upon a transaction which hitherto has proved so remarkably advantageous; and I will thank you to inform me upon the subject, when you have consulted Mr Murray.

Source: E, MS 4002, fol. 17. Also in Oliphant, I, 79–80 with error.

Letter from James Ballantyne to William Blackwood.

21 Jan 1817.

You have done the thing very handsomely indeed, and I thank you. It can hardly, I think, be doubted that Mr Murray will do the same. // With regard to subsequent editions, I expect and believe, that everything will go on in the same harmonious and agreeable manner. [fol. 19v: postscript] *Entre nous*, is it not more than usually strange that Murray does nothing whatever with me in the way of printing? What other motive *can* induce me to use my influence with the Author, to give him a preference? 'It is not, and it cannot come to, good.'

Source: E, MS 4002, fol. 19.

Letter from Walter Scott to John Murray II.

22 Jan 1817.

I will speak to Mr. Erskine again about the tales. He is very busy just now and I fear the end of the session as hardly a circumstance to mend it. But I will jog his memory & let you know what can be done.

Source: Grierson, IV, 378.

Notes: Concerns preparing the review of *Tales*.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

22 Jan 1817.

In the No of the Xtian Instructor which I have had to day there is a long article on the Tales. It is written with great talent, though hurriedly, by my friend Dr McCrie. The historical facts are valuable and most accurate, but there are many things in it, which I could have wish'd otherwise, and I feel very awkward as being the publisher of it. I explained however both to Mr Scott and Ballantyne so soon as I heard there was to be an article on the subject in this number, what I know from conversation were the Editor's sentiments [...] Mr S. told me it was not to be thought for one moment that I could have any thing to say in the matter, and that some of honest Jedediah's friends would have as good a Cavalier article in answer to this round head when it appears.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 3.

Notes: The article by Dr Thomas McCrie was serialised in *Edinburgh Christian Instructor* 14 (Jan–Mar 1817), 41–73, 100–40, 170–201. The magazine was published by Blackwoods.

Letter from William Blackwood to William Davies.

23 Jan 1817.

I am happy you are all so much amazed by the Tales. It is indeed an extraordinary book, and too much cannot be said in its praise. You would be able to relish the most admirable Scotch with which it is so largely sprinkled, but it would be a little hard at first for Mrs Davies and your young folks. The idiom is so classically pure, that to a Scotsman who enters into all its niceties, it is truly delightful, and as my friend Dr McCrie says (in a critique which I published in the Christian Instructor a few days ago) it resembles, the felicity with which the learned men of the 16th Century

wrote in the language of Rome. This Critique by the by is well worth your reading, I inclosed a copy for you in a parcel to Ogle Duncan & Cochrane which I hope you will receive. You will see by it, that while my friend the Dr. gives the full credit (which every one must [15/16] give [*sic*: closing bracket omitted] to the wonderful extent to the Author of the Tales, he very finely points out his tory partiality and the gross injustice done to the worthy Covenanters to whom Scotchmen owe so much. This will also be more apparent in the conclusion to the critique to be published next month, in which you will I expect find a full reference to all the best Books and authorities for illustrating the history of that gloomy period. [...] With regard to who this said Author really is, all is as much mystery as ever. I have heard nothing certain yet with regard to the Continuation, but I flatter myself that I shall be so fortunate as to publish it likewise.

Source: E, MS 30301, pp. 15–16 (copy).

Notes: William Davies was the publisher (Cadell & Davies).

Letter from Walter Scott to John Murray II.

28 Jan 1817.

[...] I beg to announce a Killie-crankie article which you will receive in the course of a few days.

[postscript] I shall content myself with furnishing materials to Mr. Erskine who on assurance of my finding him straw has agreed to make the bricks.

Source: Grierson, IV, 379.

Notes: That is, furnishing materials for the review of *Tales*. 'Killie-crankie' here signifies that the notice was to be from the Tory viewpoint, in distinction from Dr McCrie's.

Letter from James Ballantyne to William Blackwood.

29 Jan 1817.

I think I may venture positively to promise you, that the 3d edition Tales will be ready for shipment on Friday week, the 7th of February. This, you will observe, is a week earlier than we talked of. [fol. 21v: postscript] The Author, by the bye, stipulates, that, for the 4th and all succeeding editions, he shall receive bills at 6 months, renewable for 6 more at the expence of the booksellers. I have every reason to believe that no other conditions whatever will clog your future transactions with him. Will you be so good as mention this to Mr Murray?

Source: E, MS 4002, fol. 21.

Letter from Walter Scott to Lady Louisa Stuart.

31 Jan 1817.

What my kind correspondent had anticipated on account of Jedediah's effusions has actually taken place; and the author of a very good life of Knox has, I understand, made a most energetic attack, upon the score that the old Covenanters are not treated with decorum. I have not read it, and certainly never shall. I really think there is nothing in the book that is not very fair and legitimate subject of raillery; and I own I have my suspicions of that very susceptible devotion which so readily takes offence: such men should not read books of amusement; but do they suppose, because they are virtuous, and choose to be though outrageously so, 'there shall be no cakes and ale?'—'Ay, by our lady, and ginger shall be hot in the mouth too.' As for the consequences to the author, they can only affect his fortune or his temper—the former, such as it is, has been long fixed beyond shot of these sort of fowlers; and for my temper, I considered always, that by subjecting myself to the irritability which much greater authors have felt on occasions of literary dispute, I should be laying in a plentiful stock of unhappiness for the rest of my life. I therefore make it a rule never to read the attacks made upon me.

Source: Grierson, IV, 381.

Letter from Walter Scott to John Bacon Sawrey Morritt.

31 Jan 1817.

My next good tidings are that Jedediah carries the world before him 6000 have been disposed of and 3000 more pressing onward which will be worth 2500 to the worthy paedagogue of Ganderscleugh. Some of the Scotch Whigs of the right old fanatical leaven have waxd wroth with Jedediah [...].

Source: Grierson, IV, 385.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Cumming.

[between 24 Jan and 4 Feb 1817].

The second edition of the Tales of my Landlord has been out of print for ten days, and the new edition will not be ready for a fortnight, but most fortunately some Copies has [*sic*] been made up, which enable me to complete your order. The bale is forwarded according to your directions by this days waggon [...]. [20/21] [postscript] The Third edition of the Tales will be all sold off immediately when published there is such a demand for it in London. As it is likely you will want a great many more, from no other Irish Bookseller having got copies, you had better write me soon.

Source: E, MS 30301, pp. 20–21 (copy).

Letter from John Murray II to William Blackwood.

[?Jan 1817]

I beg to acquaint you that the 100 Copies of Tales are arrived today, they will be all gone in the course of tomorrow & if you can send more I shall be glad to receive them by first ship Be so good as send the few imperfections by first opportunity [...].

2 copies wants sig: F V. 1 sig: F. V 4th & cancels

1 Copy wants Vol: 1.

Source: MS copy, Murray Archives, Letter Book (Mar 1803–Sep 1823), p. 390.

Notes: The letter is not signed. Murray Ledger Book B, fol. 38, which gives the accounts for *Tales of My Landlord*, indicates that Murray received shipments of 100 copies from Blackwood on 27 Dec 1816 and again on 27 Jan 1817.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

1 Feb 1817.

I was not much disappointed when Ballantyne told me the other day that Mr Erskine was not to write the article on the Tales. He would not have done the subject justice—his love of the *malignants* is so very great. As you had [illeg.] my respected Mr H. Mackenzie, I immediately called on him. At first he declined it altogether, but then said he would think of it. I saw him again this morning, and was happy to find he had been making some Memoranda. He says he has not time to write the article, but will furnish as much as he possibly can so that we can easily get some one to dress the whole up[?].

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 3.

Letter from John Murray II to Walter Scott.

[4 Feb 1817].

I am sadly put out by the receipt today of the inclosed Letter which has dashed the great spirits occasioned by your last communication—I hope that Mr Erskine will not give up an essay which from him & you combined must be so valuable in itself & so essentially servisable [*sic*] to the author, by placing his works upon their proper [245/245v] classical level. We are very anxious to open our next number with it—because we think it will be an article sui generis—Gifford who has just left me joins in trusting that you and Mr Erskine will yet be so kind as to muster time to favour us with an essay which we are so anxious about and have so completely depended upon. We look [43v/44] for the Killie-crankie article—which from the peculiar appetite excited by these novels will be most gratifying to the public. [...] [246/246v] [...] // By the way I send as in duty bound a Letter wch I

got yesterday from Mr Southey—in wch he speaks of the Tales—about which Messrs Hallam, Frere & S. Rose are discussing round my fire at this very hour. Frere's repeating with delight whole passages of the Scotch.

Source: E, MS 3888, fols 245–46. See Millgate #12290. [passage from 'By the way...' is also in Smiles, II, 7 with errors.]

Notes: Headed Tuesday; dated by contents. Scott replies on 9 Feb (see below), and the inclosed letter referred to here was likely a copy of Blackwood's letter of 1 Feb. This is, however, no longer preserved with the MS. S. Rose is William Stewart Rose, a friend of Scott's and an MP.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

7 Feb 1817.

Ballantyne has kept his word with the Tales. I enclose you his two letters on the subject. You will see another demand with regard to the Author's profit—but it is not of great consequence.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 2.

Letter from Walter Scott to John Murray II.

9 Feb 1817.

Give yourself no uneasiness about the Killiecrankie article. It is in great forwardness and [388/389] when I have done with it Erskine has promised to revise it and make such additions & corrections as maybe necessary.

Source: Grierson IV, 388–89.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

10 Feb 1817.

Ballantyne is to have some copies of the Tales ready for my people to begin to pack to night by 8 or 9 O'clock. I shall keep them at it most of the night so as to ship as many as they can get ready to morrow before the vessels sail. You wrote so strongly as to the certainty of still greater sales that I desired him to make the 4th Edition 3000. The demand seems to be slackening here.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 3.

Notes: Letter refers to transportation of the 3rd edn. This edition, like the two previous ones, was of 2,000 copies.

Letter from James Ballantyne to William Blackwood.

12 Feb 1817.

I inclose Mr Murray's balanced acct—for the 1st and 2d edition Tales of my Landlord, made out upon the belief that he does not object to take the £200. from the stock of John Ballantyne & Co which was left in doubt for some time. Shall I, or will you, write to him on the subject? // I enclose also the acct for the 3d edition; by which you will see that the balance due, for Author's profits, and for paper and printing, is £1151. 18. 4d—being £575. 19. 2d each, to you and Mr Murray.

Source: E, MS 4002, fol. 23.

Notes: The £575 19s 2d is broken down as: for paper and printing—£235 5s and, for Author's profits—£340 14s 2d. Total author's profit is, therefore, £681 8s 4d. Fol. 23v further breaks down these expenses for the 3rd edn of 2,000 copies.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

13 Feb 1817.

We have packed for you this afternoon 600 of the Tales which will be shipped tomorrow. Write me in course if I should send you any more next week. By the bye I discovered the other day that that strange person Johnny Ballantyne had sent some copies to London. He got 50 of the first edition from me, but he could make nothing of them except the pleasure of drawing the bill and using the cash.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 3.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

[15 Feb 1817].

The 600 Tales were shipped on board The Hope which sailed yesterday, and which I hope will have a good passage.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 3.

Notes: Dated from contents and letter of 13 Feb. Letter has 'Saturday ½ past 3'; 15 Feb was a Saturday in 1817.

Letter from John Murray II to William Blackwood.

15 Feb 1817.

I inclose the Bills for the Third Edition of Tales of My Landlord accepted & one added for the balance according to Ballantyne's wish. I fancy you had better select the books which we are yet to take & so settle this part of the account. As we are ordering a liberal quantity, 3000 of the fourth Edition, it might be as well to ask for 9 mos credit instead of 6 [...]. I have not the least doubt of its ready sale but the printing may proceed without rapidity, & the book will not be taken worse if made to look even neater. I think you ought to get better paper [...] I expect a capital article on the Tales to open my next number—& I rejoice that the contents of the forthcoming Ed. Rev. has not anticipated me [...] // McCrie's review of the Tales is very much read & much esteemed for its knowledge—what is your theory as to the author of Harold the Dauntless—I will believe till within an inch of my life that the author of the Tales of my Landlord is Thomas Scott. I am obliged by the pains you have taken to get the new edition out and shipped—I have not a single copy left & the demand is perfectly steady.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 3; also in Smiles I, 474 (with errors and omissions).

Letter from John Murray II to William Blackwood.

17 Feb 1817.

I am anxious to see the conclusion of Dr McCrie's article pray send me 6 or 8 Copies—it will bring your journal into Notice. I may tell you in very great confidence that our Article is likely to be all that you could wish. Lady Byron wrote to me yesterday to know who wrote the Article on Childe Harold & I told her—I always expect that the B[allantyne]'s will make new demands upon us—Is there any talk of a Continuation of the Tales. [...] You may send me as many of the Tales as you think you can spare for I tell you I never will give up until I sell 10000. It is every where the theme of conversation.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 3.

Notes: The reference is to Dr McCrie's article on *Tales*; Scott was the author of the review of *Childe Harold* Canto III, in the *Quarterly Review* 16 (1816), 172–208.

Letter from Walter Scott to John Murray II.

[?21 Feb 1817].

You will be alarmed at the intimation that there is a good deal more of the article on the Novels for I have taken it up in a historical point of view. But as all the quotations (almost) are from manuscripts and may be printed in the small type I trust the length will be no objection. Yet ten or twelve more pages of my hand will hardly complete it. Meantime I send what is ready. // [...] I have given up the gipsies and given my materials to some adventurers here who are trying a new magazine. I could not get some information that I wanted.

Source: Grierson, IV, 544. Subscribed 'Friday'; date give above as conjectured by Corson, rather than Grierson's '[1817]'. See Corson, 140. The earlier part of the above refers to the promised 'Killiecrankie' article on the *Tales*'; Scott's materials on the 'gipsies', originally also promised for the *Quarterly*, appeared in *Blackwood's Magazine* 1 (Apr 1817), 43–58.

Letter from Henry Mackenzie to William Blackwood.

21 Feb 1817.

I send you a Parcel cont[ainin]g the Criticism which I promised [...] I shall be glad if it can be useful to you and your London friends; but I shall not be in the least offended if it shall be corrected, altered [illeg.] or curtailed by some abler hand. I only stipulate for one thing, that it should not be known as mine.// One part of it, however it may be necessary for me to give some Acct of the introductory Narrative or abstract of the Stories. There are two Sets of Readers of reviews. One who have, and the other who have not read the Books of which they treat. For the last a pretty full acct of the Works is useful as well as interesting[?], as it often guides them in the perusal or purchase of [illeg] published Works. For this Class of Readers, my Abstracts are intended. That sort of Composition is rather difficult; because it must be intelligible without being tedious, & explicit without being clumsy & vulgar.

Source: MS letter (copy), Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 2.

Notes: The copy is in Blackwood's hand, and was sent to Murray.

Letter from John Murray II to William Blackwood.

22 Feb 1817.

You will be glad to know that the proportion of your attentive[?] supply of the Tales arrived on Thursday just as every individual Copy of the former edition was gone. I have kept them & may until Tuesday, in order that the demand may be wetted a bit by more delay—& then I will subscribe them--& will insure the sale of all I have got. I do not much regret that they were not in either of the Reviews [...]. There are some of the most extraordinary coincidences about Ld B both in the Black Dwarf & Old Mortality in the characters of the Dwarf—Claverhouse. I will tell you *in confidence* that Lady B has written to thank Mr S for the article. [...] You will observe that I advertise *Tales of My Landlord* by the simple Title because the two extracts I found induced people to think it Poetry [...] [postscript] _I have sold 493 of 3rd Edit. of Tales.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 3.

Notes: Letter was inclosed in a separate sheet which served as the cover; the postscript is written on the inside of this sheet. The 'article' evidently refers to Scott's review of *Childe Harold*.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

24 Feb 1817.

I have at last got my respected friend Mr Mackenzie's article on the Tales. He has mentioned in a letter what he explained to me in conversation that if I chose I might send you a copy of it for your government. [...] My idea of the talent displayed in the Tales is so excessively high, that I am not a fair judge of any critique upon the work. In fact to satisfy me the Critic should be a person of equal genius with the wonderful Author. I am much pleased however on the whole with Mr Mackenzie's article, and I think it displays great taste and discrimination. [...] If the article which you write me you expected is so far advanced that you cannot make any use of this I will thank you to write me in course of post.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 3.

Notes: Dated from Belleville. Murray Archives also has a copy in another hand. The letter was sent with the copy of Mackenzie's letter to Blackwood of 21 Feb 1817.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

25 Feb 1817.

It was fortunate I shipped other 200 of the Tales for you on Friday as I daresay you will soon require them.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 3.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

26 Feb 1817.

James Ballantyne has assured me that there will not be any more demands made upon us—but we cannot assure ourselves of this. I have several times ask'd him with regard to the Continuation, but he always says there is no prospect of it for a considerable time. The paper of the third edition as you will see is no better than that of the second. After I received your letter I spoke to him about it, and desired him to speak to Cowan from whom it is got. He told me on Saturday he had done so, and Cowan had agreed to deduct 1/- pr ream. There were several sheets printed of the fourth edition before I heard from you, else I could have made him use a better paper though it should have been 1/- or 2/- higher in price. [...] I have just finished the correcting the copy of an article by Mr H Mackenzie on the Tales, and the writing of a Letter which I shall send along with it by tomorrow's Coach. [postscript, written above salutation] I thought it better not to send you this letter yesterday, as I thought it better for you not to take into view at all the probability of Mr M's article being of any use to me[?]. Indeed, I am not sure if it would, unless he were to allow us to give some more leaning in favour of the poor Covenanters.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 3. A partial copy, not in Blackwood's hand, is at E, MS 30001, fol. 42.

Notes: Blackwood considered using Mackenzie's notice of *Tales* for the first number of *Blackwood's Magazine*; in the end it was not printed.

Letter from John Murray II to Walter Scott.

[?3 Mar 1817].

I send a proof of the first portion of your valuable curious & interesting communication—as soon as I receive more of it, it shall be set up also & sent immediately in order that you may see the whole together. // I hope that you will omit nothing that you wish to insert. What is so interesting cannot be too long—& [256/256v] our conversation is still ever on this subject—for which everyone is seeking information.—Dr McCrie has completely lost himself in the continuation of his article in the Instructor—& Heaven only knows when he means to end it—the first part made some sensation here. // I am most truly obliged by kindness in devoting so much of your valuable [256v/257] time to us. // I have already sold no less than 500 more of this Number than any former one—8500 was the quantity printed of 29 & 30—of wch I have but 500 of each left—of No 31 I printed 10000 & have sold 8500—of No 32 I am printing 12000—which I do not believe the Ed. Rev. to equal. This upon my *honour*.

Source: E, MS 3888, fols 256–57. See Millgate #12295.

Notes: Letter headed Monday. It may date from earlier than the suggested date because it appears that Murray has received only part of Scott's article on *Tales*. It is possible, however, that the letter of 4 Mar, which is headed 'P.S.' and also treats of the proof of the article, was written as a postscript to this one. The 4 Mar letter leaves it unclear whether Scott has finished his part of the article; if so, he did make changes based on Murray's suggestions since the article as published reflects these (see notes for letter of 4 Mar). The last part refers to numbers of the *Quarterly Review* and shows the degree to which Murray increased the print run of number 32, vol. 16 in expectation of a heavy demand for the notice of *Tales*. The notice appeared in *Quarterly Review* 16 (1817), 430–80.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

3 Mar 1817.

I am happy indeed to hear that you have got a *capital* article. Mr M's article though very good had not the characteristics which ought to distinguish an article coming from the *fervida gens Scotinum*. I called immediately on receiving your letter upon the worthy old Gentleman. He most frankly told me to write you that if any part of his article should be of the smallest use to you you were most welcome to use it in any way that you pleased. Only that you must not mention his name to any one. [...] I had not the least doubt of your selling a great quantity of this Number and I think you

will have all the 10000 off immediately.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 3.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

4 Mar 1817.

I wrote you yesterday what my feelings were with regard to Mr M's article. And the more I think of it, the more I see the delicacy of my applying to him for permission to use it for *my own* purposes. If therefore you can make any use of it, I beg you would do so, and not consider my Magazine in the least. But if you find you cannot make any use of it, I would be obliged to you mention [*sic*] the article in the way it deserves in your next letter, with your thanks to my respected old friend for the trouble he has taken, and you being already engaged &c. This I would wish to read to him, and then I should ask his permission to give it to my Magazine.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 3.

Letter from John Murray II to Walter Scott.

4 Mar 1817.

[postscript] I did not receive the proof in time for post yesterday so I read it at night & have been much interested & delightfully instructed by the whole, but most particularly by the the first part because I fancy the illustrations of [illeg.] & character is uninterrupted by the analysis of the Story which[?] I fancy necessary when we come to the Tales. By the way you leave out the character of Meg Merrilies—but now that we are not to have the Gypsy article allow me to entreat that you insert all that relates to the illustration of her [43/43v] character with place in this article—everyone is mad about her—& such an omission will be a very great disappointment—You omit the Antiquary [...] // For my taste the Analysis of the Tales should be either longer or shorter—longer so as to contain [2 words illeg.] of the admirable passages if it be intended for those who have not got the book—& only so much of it as would do to hang your remarks & illustrations upon—if it be for those who have already got it & are anxious only to have their opinion [43v/44] directed or confirmed in it. // You don't give so much praise—by a 100th part—as my sanguine admiration of the work, makes me think it deserves. // I beg the favour of you to pardon the intrusion of such remarks from me.

Source: E, MS 3888, fols 43–44. See Millgate #12207.

Notes: Dated Tuesday 4 Mar, which establishes the year as 1817, confirmed by contents. The letter is headed 'p.s.' which suggests it is part of a longer letter to Murray, perhaps that recorded as of [?3 Mar]. Scott evidently took note of Murray's complaint about the omission of Meg Merrilies from the *Quarterly* notice of *Tales* because as published it does include a passage about Jean Gordon, claimed to be the original of the gipsy woman (pp. 439–41). The passage is virtually identical to that included in Scott's article about the gipsies in *Blackwood's Magazine*, pp. 54–55.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

7 Mar 1817.

What number may you have left of the Tales? I have 200 on hand. Let me know when you think I should desire Ballantyne to have the fourth edition ready.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 3.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

[10 Mar 1817].

Your letter which I recd this morning is exactly what I wished. I went instantly and read it to Mr Mackenzie who was much pleased with it. I then ventured to ask leave to insert it in my Magazine, which he in the kindest measure granted at once. In your next be so good as say you are glad of this arrangement.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 3.

Notes: Referring to Mackenzie's notice of *Tales*; Blackwood means that he asked permission to insert

Mackenzie's notice in his magazine since Murray was not going to use it for the *Quarterly*. In the end, it was never printed. The date is from the postmark.

Letter from John Murray II to William Blackwood.

13 Mar 1817.

We have 820 Tales on hand—but this Number need not prevent the new Edition from proceeding at a pace that will insure their better printing & the required corrections very much.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 3.

Letter from Walter Scott to Joanna Baillie.

7 Mar 1817.

I had occasion (this in strict confidence) to make some enquiries at a sure hand concerning the sale of the popular novels and I have this result from a sure hand.

Waverley managed by Constable 9000 copies

G. Mannering—Longman 5000

Antiquary—Constable 8000

Tales of my Landlord—(Murray) 8000

I cannot think there would have been this inferiority of sale in the case of Guy Mannering to all the others had the work been equally well husbanded.

Source: Grierson, IV, 412.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

[21 Mar 1817].

I thank you for your amusing[?] & interesting letter which I recd yesterday, and to my great joy the parcel p[e]r Mail with the M.S. arrived this morning. A thousand thanks for your attention in sending it off so early when your people must be so much occupied. It is a very extraordinary performance, and must run off like wild fire. I sent round the copies inclosed and likewise one to Mr Mackenzie with your Compts. which I hope you will approve of.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 3.

Notes: The MS referred to is evidently that of Scott's review of *Tales*. The MS of the review is currently held at the Murray Archives, so presumably either Blackwood returned it, or Murray had sent him a transcript of the original. Date is from postmark; letter is headed Friday 3 o'clock, which was 21 Mar.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

29 Mar 1817.

I sent Mr M's Article by my Brother who left this for London on Wednesday morning. He will send it to you so soon as he arrives on Monday. I hope it may be of some use to you. [postscript, written above salutation] I have a note from Ballantyne just now saying that the fourth edition of the Tales will be ready about the 12th or 15th April. I have nearly 150 remaining, and if you have 300 or 400 I think we should desire him to delay a short time, as he would be at us instantly for his bills.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 3.

Letter from John Ballantyne to John Murray II.

29 Mar 1817.

I shall be glad to have 100 of the present edition of Tales of My Landlord, at sale price 4 m[onth]s bill: I mention 4 m[onth]s as I shall not be in the Country at three, & the Bank of Scotland (of which I am a proprietor) will discount 4. If you choose this, please send me such orders as will obtain them on your account, as it is needless to give them two sea voyages. // I have bought a good many from Blackwood, but he charges subscription & I would rather pay sale.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Ballantyne Box.

Notes: Ballantyne is writing from his commercial premises on Hanover Street, Edinburgh.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

4 Apr 1817.

I declined giving [John Ballantyne] his copies of the Tales except at Subscrip. when I found he sent them to London to interfere with you. He got 12 about a fortnight ago, and 6 last week—he cannot make much by this.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 3.

Letter from James Ballantyne to William Blackwood.

7 Apr 1817.

The 4th edition 'Tales' was completed, except the working off of a very few sheets, before the receipt of your letter desiring it might be stopt. It is now, therefore, on the eve of being ready for delivery. I have forwarded your letter to the author, and shall of course be regulated by his instructions as to what is now to be done.

Source: E, MS 4002, fol. 27. Copy at Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 3; copy was enclosed in Blackwood to Murray letter of 7–8 Apr. Also in Oliphant, I, 80.

Letter from William Blackwood to James Ballantyne.

7 Apr 1817.

I am rather surprised in your thinking it necessary to send my letter to the Author of the Tales. Mr Murray & I expected it would have been wanted ere now, but have been mistaken, & I told you several weeks ago not to hurry. We had the strongest interest and surely must be the best judges when a new edition is necessary. We hope this will very soon be the case, but while we have 600 or 700 on hand it is not to be thought of. The only inconvenience that can result is with regard to the paper for a few weeks, and our friends Messrs Cowan are always leisurely[?] in this respect.

Source: E, MS 4002, fol. 28. Also in Oliphant, I, 81.

Notes: A reply to Ballantyne's of 7 April, this is written on the same sheet of paper as Blackwood's copy of the correspondence. Another copy is in Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 3, and was enclosed in Blackwood to Murray letter of 7–8 Apr.

Letter from James Ballantyne to William Blackwood.

7 Apr 1817.

I confess I do not see why you should be surprised at my sending an extract of your letter respecting the Tales to the Author. His interest is most materially concerned in knowing when editions are wanted; and at the time you ordered the 4th. to go to press, I informed him that you had done so. When you told me not to be in a hurry, I also acquainted him with this: and when you desired me to suspend the printing till further orders, I communicated this also. Surely this was all very natural and proper. // What I now have it in commission from the author to say is this; and I beg you to observe that I have no discretionary power in the matter. When you desired me not to be in a hurry with the 4th edition, I was of course obliged to use my own discretion as to the latitude conveyed by your instructions. The 3d edition having been printed in little more than five weeks, I believed that I should comply with the spirit of your letter, if I got the 4th done in nine; which was taking the work easily, neither hurrying or retarding it. The Author, who had an interest in knowing these [29/29v] matters, was of course informed by me, upon his inquiring about it, that the edition would be ready about the 12th or 15th of the present month: and as a very considerable sum was inigible [*sic*] by him upon the publication he made his pecuniary arrangements in a great measure depend upon that sum being paid him at the period when I told him the book would be ready. You must see, that the disappointment would have a more extensive influence than with regard to the paper merely. You will recollect, that, previously to the ordering of this edition, I wrote you that the Author had stipulated that the bills for his profits should be granted at 6 in place of 12 months, renewable, at your expence, for 6 months longer. Now, he is willing to agree to take bills at 9 in place of 6 months, in order to give full time for the sale of the remaining books on hand. This, you will observe, has the same effect as if I had taken 5 months to print the work, which assuredly would not have been

hurrying it. // As the Author's instructions to me are distinct and precise to the above effect, I shall hope to have the pleasure of hearing from you as soon as possible upon the subject.

Source: E, MS 4002, fol. 29. A copy is in Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 3, and was enclosed in Blackwood to Murray letter of 7–8 Apr. Also in Oliphant, I, 81–82 with error.

Letter from William Blackwood to James Ballantyne.

[8 Apr 1817].

I shall communicate to Mr Murray the contents of your letter of yesterday.[...] // In the mean time you will pardon me for remarking that your idea of not hurrying and mine differ some what. [...] I would also beg the favour of you to assure the Author that nothing could give me more pain (and I may say the same of Mr Murray) than putting him to any inconvenience. You have never had an hour to wait for a settlement, hitherto [...].

Source: E, MS 4002, fol. 30. Also in Oliphant, I, 82.

Notes: Written on the same sheet of paper as Ballantyne's letter of 7 Apr 1817, making Blackwood's copy of the correspondence. Blackwood inclosed copies of both letters in his letter of 7–8 Apr to Murray; these are at Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 3. Dated Tuesday: 8 April was a Tuesday.

Letter from James Ballantyne to William Blackwood.

8 Apr 1817.

I shall be most particular in conveying to the Author of Tales of my Landlord your anxiety not to put him to any inconvenience. [...] I confidently trust and believe that he will have no reason for complaint in your future transactions with him. The plan he has himself pointed out, I hope, will be satisfactory and convenient for both parties.

Source: E, MS 4002, fol. 31.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

7–8 Apr 1817.

I wrote Ballantyne on Friday when I recd your letter, and desired him to stop this edition till he heard from me. I recd no answer from him till this morning, when I got the note which I enclose you a copy of with my reply. I see evidently they wish to force us to settle instantly for the edition. [8 April:] I could not get the parcel sent off yesterday, and have therefore opened this to enclose you another epistle with my reply. It is really a heavy business this, and I hardly know what to do with such people. I fear however we will be obliged to grant the Author his bills, but certainly there can be no reason to grant bill for the paper & printing till it is perfectly convenient for us. I hope all the copies we have will be off before the three months which the credit is extended to. Write me fully what you think I should do. I declare it makes me perfectly sick when I encounter one of their special pleading letters.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 3.

Notes: Enclosed with the letter are copies in Blackwood's hand of 2 letters to Blackwood from Ballantyne, dated 7 Apr, and of Blackwood's replies, dated 7 & 8 Apr. Cover has 'to be del[ivered] soon' added above address.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

[9? Apr 1817].

I had a very pointed conversation with Mr James B last night, and showed him distinctly that I had not merely his verbal promise with regard to the new editions but *his letter* expressly stipulating the terms, and that therefore he had no more title to talk of being off from the bargain than he had to attempt to dispose of my copies of Cuvier which he has in his possession, as the fourth edition was as much my property as it was. I therefore told him it was not from the least fear of any thing he could do that I had resolved to accept the bills, but merely to avoid dispute which I hated, and that I was sure you would feel in the same way. It is a terrible business to have to do with such people. All that is made by this does not repay the anxiety & vexation.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 3.

Notes: Date from docket and contents; Blackwood has Wednesday 3 o'clock: 9 Apr was a Wednesday.

Letter from John Murray II to William Blackwood.

11 Apr 1817.

It is really the most painful thing in business that ever I met with to have transactions with persons who have not the slightest regard to any circumstances but the greedy devouring of other peoples' money. [...] [fol. 26] The sale has much slackened certainly—but it must be revived by the Reviewers—and for [illeg.] it must go on as that of any established classic.

Source: E, MS 4002, fols 25–26.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

14 Apr 1817.

The view you have taken of B[allantyne]'s conduct is most accurate just and quite to the point. [...] I had a great deal of conversation [ie. with Ballantyne] which it is needless to trouble you with, as you have the sum and substance of it in a note on the other side which he has just sent.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 3.

Notes: The copy of the letter of 14 Apr in James Ballantyne's hand from Ballantyne to Walter Scott (whose name does not appear on the letter), and the note also of 14 Apr from Ballantyne to Blackwood, are on the recto of the second page (beginning 'I send you the').

Letter from James Ballantyne to Walter Scott.

14 Apr 1817.

I have just had a conversation with Mr Blackwood. He says that as upwards of 600 copies remain on hand, it is to be regretted that the new edition had been so soon ready; but, that as it is ready, Mr Murray and he are willing to take it. As they think it questionable, however, whether what remains of the edition may be sold for several months, perhaps not till November, they trust you will consent to take 12 months bills, in place of 9 months, the former being as easily convertible into cash as the latter.

Source: MS copy, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 3.

Notes: Headed 'Extract of a Letter to Author of Tales of my Landlord.' Scott's name does not appear on the letter. The date is inferred from contents and context.

Letter from James Ballantyne to William Blackwood.

14 Apr 1817.

I send you the above extract. When you spoke of arranging with Mr Cowan about the paper, it quite escaped me to tell you, *that I have already accepted to him for the whole amount.*

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 3.

Notes: Written below extract of letter of same date from Ballantyne to Scott.

Letter from Walter Scott to James Ballantyne.

16 Apr 1817.

I am sick of the encroachments of these gentlemen and will not give up an inch beyond what you proposed, that is nine months bills. They seem to have totally forgot that the credit was extended for no reason whatever to 12 months from six months upon the first three payments. There is no end of this—Were they to refuse the offer you have made I have no doubt but the edition might be sold to Constable & Longman upon very advantageous [430/431] terms although under the condition that they were to wait till those gentlemen's 600 were off; or else to buy them. Indeed were Constable to engage in the transaction I would probably give him four volumes more by next season on proper conditions and John might have such a share in the transaction as he could manage safely for himself. I would expect either a good lift of stock or something very handsome for 6000 of the new

Jedidiah. I could not engage with any other person except Constable to write the continuation this summer because it would postpone his history. [...] I am really tired of being supposed to receive favours when I am in fact conferring them & besides Mr. Blackwood in holding the door of his puritanical magazine open to all sorts of abuse on Mr Jedidiah has no particular title to expect a continuance of his favours. I wish you had written to Murray but it now seems [too] late. I never saw the sense or propriety of considering Blackwood as his organ. I hope you will remember to pay my bills the day before due to prevent bankers clerks calling in Castle Street—Your not speaking to Blackwood for some days will have a good effect every way.

Source: Grierson, IV, 430–31.

Letter from Walter Scott to John Ballantyne.

[Apr 1817].

I have a good subject for a work of fiction in petto. [...] I do not mean a continuation of Jedidiah because there might be some delicacy in putting that by the original publishers.

Source: Grierson, I, 514.

Notes: Dated Monday. The work of fiction referred to became *Rob Roy* (1818: 55).

Letter from James Ballantyne to William Blackwood.

1 Apr 1817.

I inclose the Statement of the 4th edition Tales of my Landlord, which I hope you will find correct. If you do, may I hope that you will say so as soon as you can, in order that I may draw the bills, and send[?] them for acceptance. I would have called over myself, as usual; but I really find that my working almost 18 hours in the day is not sufficient to enable me to keep both the Newspaper & book work forward [...].

Source: E, MS 4002, fol. 33.

Notes: Sent with the bill of the same date. Ballantyne had become proprietor of a newspaper, the *Edinburgh Weekly Journal* in Apr 1817.

Bill from James Ballantyne to William Blackwood.

21 Apr 1817.

To printing Tales of my Landlord, 4th Edn. 3000 copies 59 sh[heets] 8 p[ages]	
Sheets, @ 71/- per sheet	£210.12.
To 405 Rms paper, @ 21/-	<u>425.5.</u>
	£635.17.
Deduct standing 6 sh[heets] @ 23/-	<u>6.18.</u>
Balance	£628.19.
[148/148v]	
3000 copies @ 18/4d is	£2750.
Deduct paper & printing	<u>628.</u>
	<u>£2121.1.</u>

Author's half of profits	£1060.10.6
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Mr Blackwood	£530.5.3}9 months bills
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Mr Murray	£530.5.3 1060.10.6
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Amt of paper & printing	£628.19
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Mr Blackwood	£314.9.6}12 months bills
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Mr Murray	£314.9.6 628.19.
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Source: E, MS 30001, fol. 148.

Letter from James Ballantyne to William Blackwood.

22 Apr 1817.

My positive orders are, *and I dare not disobey them*, to agree to no farther delay. Believe me that I have no alternative. I *must* do as I am instructed to do. And, if you do not enable me to close the transaction by agreeing to accept the bills this day or tomorrow, I say, with deep reluctance, that the bargain must be off. // If you do me justice, you will believe that it is very painful to me to be thus peremptory. But I cannot help it.

Source: E, MS 4002, fol. 35.

Letter from William Blackwood to James Ballantyne.

[22 Apr 1817].

Before I can answer your Letters of yesterday I must communicate with Mr Murray. I shall write him by this day's post and you may depend upon hearing from me on Monday morning.

Source: E, MS 4002, fol. 34 (copy).

Notes: This copy is not in Blackwood's hand. Written as Blackwood's copy of the correspondence, on the same sheet of paper as Ballantyne's letter of 21 Apr 1817. Dated Tuesday morning; Tuesday was the 22nd. The mention of 'last night' in Blackwood's letter of Wednesday morning suggests that the Tuesday letter was actually written or sent in the evening.

Letter from William Blackwood to James Ballantyne.

[23 Apr 1817].

I forgot to remind you last night of the deduction which Mr Cowan agreed to make on the paper of the two former editions of the Tales. This had better be deducted from the present Acct as it will keep every thing clear & distinct.

Source: E, MS 4002, fol. 34 (copy).

Notes: Written below the copy of the letter dated Tuesday morning, but in Blackwood's hand. Dated Wednesday morning. Letters docketed 21 and 22 April 1817.

Letter from James Ballantyne to William Blackwood.

23 Apr 1817.

I have preferred drawing the bills as I had entered the transaction in my books, and shall pay you Cowan's deduction in cash. I now inclose them, and shall thank you to send of Mr Murray's by to-day's post.

Source: E, MS 4002, fol. 37.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

28 Apr 1817.

I would give any thing for a sight of the Review of the Tales, and I hope it will not be many days before you can send me a copy.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 3.

Letter from James Ballantyne to William Blackwood.

19 May 1817.

As the stock of John Ballantyne & Co is likely to be soon lessened, I request you will, as early as you find convenient, select from it the £200 worth of stock yet remaining to be delivered upon the bargain respecting the Tales of my Landlord. // You would see an adv of a Novel by the Author of Waverley in to-day's Courant. I never heard the work was in existence, or even in contemplation, till about ten days ago, so snug was the transaction kept from me as well as all others. In fact, the bargain was completed before I knew of the existence of the work.

Source: E, MS 4002, fol. 40.

Notes: The new novel was *Rob Roy* (1818:55), announced as 'In the Press, and speedily will be published' in the *Edinburgh Evening Courant* on 19 May 1817.

Letter from John Murray II to Walter Scott.

27 May 1817.

Our Article on Tales of My Landlord has made a great noise here & is thought very good interesting and curious—I hope we shall be able to stimulate all Mr Erskines powers to an article on Rob Roy.

Source: E, MS 866, fol. 145.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

1 July 1817.

[postscript] At your convenience I should thank you to desire any of your Clerks to say how you stand with the Tales as I think we might now with effect advertise the fourth edition.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 3. Copy also at E, MS 30301, p. 345.

Notes: Blackwood began advertising the 4th edn in the Edinburgh papers on 1 Jan 1818, and some copies have 1817 on the title page, while others have 1818.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

8 July 1817.

When do you think we will be able to publish the fourth Edition of the Tales?

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 3.

Letter from William Blackwood to Baldwin & Co.

14 July 1817.

I was much gratified by this of the British [illeg.]. It is beginning to be more noticed here [...]. I beg you would notice my respectful comm[?] to the author of the Critiques on the Tales which is very well done indeed. The liberal view he has taken of that dark period of Scottish History is very creditable to his information, and forms a striking contrast to the bigotted and miserable attack upon the Covenanters which is given in the British Critic. I shall send you next week a copy a copy [*sic*] of the 3d edition and likewise the two nos. of the Christian Instructor containing my friend Dr McCries critique on the Tales which you will be so good to present to your author with my respects.

Source: E, MS 30301, p. 426 (copy).

Notes: Review being referred to has not been identified. It seems unlikely to have been one actually published by Baldwin & Co.; more likely they merely knew the author. It could have been the review published in *British Review* 9 (Feb 1817), 184–204, since this was indeed favourable both to the tales and to the handling of the historical aspects.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

22 July 1817.

It is an old story here that Mr & Mrs Thos Scott are the Authors of all these Novels. I however still think as Mr Croker said to me in one of his letters that if they are not by Mr Walter Scott, the only alternative is to give them to the Devil as by one or other they must be written.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 3.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

18 Aug 1817.

I should have answered your letter of 16 July with regard to the Tales long ago, but I was so much confounded by its contents [...] // I had not the least conception that you would have 50 of the Tales remaining instead of 550, as I expected that any which might be remaining would be carried off at once by the two Reviews. This is a terrible disappointment to me, but we must do the best we can. I have not the smallest fear as to the ultimate sale of the whole we have on hand, but the inconvenience to me will be considerable of so much dead stock. I do not blame you for urging on the printing of this last edition, as you acted according to the best of your judgment. I am obliged to you for your offer of taking it off at cost, but as the Book must and will sell in a certain time, it surely

would not be adviseable for me to give up the whole profit it ought to afford. When you consider this, I daresay you will be of the same opinion, and perhaps you may assist me by taking a certain quantity of my share at a liberal discount from sale price. I could have no objections to you having the whole, but I would certainly expect some profit.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 3.

Notes: It is likely that Blackwood has transposed his figures and that Murray has 550 left instead of 50.

Copy of contract with Constable & Co for *Tales of My Landlord* series 2.

2 Oct 1817.

[item 6:] The Author proposes to give the next edition of the original *Tales of My Landlord*, say Four Thousand Copies upon the same terms and to be divided in the same manner as the present.

Source: E, MS 21001, fol. 257.

Letter from Walter Scott to John Ballantyne.

28 Oct 1817.

[about arrangements with Longmans regarding edns of *Guy Mannering* and *Waverley*] You may further hint that probably as Agent both for the authors of these novels & of the *Tales* you may chuse to have only one London house engaged in these matters so that it may be subject of consideration whether these shares of W[averley] & G.M. with that of the *Antiqy.* which must soon fall in will not follow the fate of the *Tales of my Landld.* & depend on their resolution respecting them. [...] [1/2] Observe in writing to Longmans not to admit the identity of the author of the *Tales* & of the novels but speak of them in the plural number as *twa fold*. They know the contrary of course but you need not admit anything.

Source: Grierson, V, 1–2.

Letter from John Murray II's clerk to William Blackwood.

6 Nov 1817.

Mr Murray will thank you soon as you conveniently can make it out a general statment of the Acct. of *Tales of my Landlord* No 6000. The Number received from you 4500 is correct. The items we debit you as under // Here followed Sundry debits 369.6.6 See Copies Ledgr 38.

Source: MS copy, Murray Archives, Letter Book (Mar 1803–Sep 1823), p. 396.

Notes: The letter is signed by 'H. S.'. Ledger 38 refers to Murray's Ledger Book B, which contains accounts for *Tales of My Landlord* on fols 37 and 38.

Letter from John Murray II to William Blackwood.

8 Mar 1818.

I think I sold 750 *Tales of my Landlord* at my Sale, and as soon as the New ones appear, it shall be again stoutly advertised—though as, I fear, from rumour only, that Constable has obtained the Copyright of these, after our lease is out, as well as of their [180/180v] continuation, we need not much increase expences upon their sale as they may be allowed to float down on the tide of public approbation. I shall be glad however to learn what you *know*, upon this subject, for I know nothing—but, as I have said, from *rumour* only.

Source: E, MS 4003, fol. 180.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

12 Mar 1818.

I am glad to hear you sold so many of the *Tales* at your sale. They go off steadily and regularly here, and I think I have sold of this edition 80 copies. I never heard such a rumour as that Constable had got the copyright of our Book along with the continuation. Indeed from the tenor of Ballantyne's letter to me on occasion of one of the settlements, I hardly think it could be taken away from us. But one cannot say. I think you should have advertised in January when I did so here, which had a good

effect. I still think you ought to do so, as it will be some time before we get off this edition.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 3.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

29 June 1818.

With regard to our Accts certainly things might easily have been settled in a few minutes some months ago, but you will recollect that in fact they may be considered as settled, as you received every material, statements, &c. from me at the usual time. The only thing to be adjusted is the stock[?] acct of the Tales, and I thought after this thing being delayed so many months it would be better to settle this year's acct along with the last at once. My people are already begun to take the acct of your stock, and I pledge myself that every thing will be settled & adjusted so far as depends on me within a fortnight after I receive your materials.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 3.

Letter from Robert Cadell to James Ballantyne.

23 Nov 1818.

Your foreman sent this morning for a copy of the *second series* of the Tales for the new edition—I wrote a note to your brother under the supposition that that there was some mistake about it, and that it must be the *first* Tales—of which I think only 9000 have been printed [...].

Source: E, MS 790, p. 299.

Notes: Relates to the inception of the 5th edn, to be published by Constable & Co. Cadell is writing as a partner in the firm.

Letter from Robert Cadell to James Ballantyne.

[24 Nov 1818].

It affords me great pleasure to send with this the volumes of the Tales *first series*.—I have just waited on the great Author, who entirely concurs in the view of the matter as I wrote you yesterday—and you can proceed with them at your leisure; only I may state *to you* the wish of the Author that it should not be mentioned that you are at press, in case of keeping up of the few that must be on hand, be resorted to, if it were known.

Source: E, MS 790, p. 487.

Notes: Quoted in Cadell's letter to Ballantyne of 11 May 1819. In introducing the letter, Cadell asserts that 'Before I parted with the Author 2000 was mentioned as the impression'.

Letter from Walter Scott to John Ballantyne.

26 Nov 1818.

I think on consideration the Edit. of 1st. Tales had better be 3000 because I have partly calculated upon it to take out some bills in January—because it will divide better among the partners—and because if it is found to hang heavy [sic] we can easily give our friends at the Cross [i.e. Constable & Co.] a turn in the way of renewal.

Source: Grierson, V, 233.

Letter from James Ballantyne to Robert Cadell.

[28 Nov 1818].

You order me to print 2000 first series, but a line from the author says 'after much discussion it has been resolved to print 3000, so you will proceed accordingly and push on' what No. am I to print? The work is at press & *according to orders* which I never attempt to qualify, I am pushing on.

Source: E, MS 790, p. 487.

Notes: As quoted in Cadell's letter to Ballantyne of 11 May 1819.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

16 Dec 1818.

I have always forgot to say that the accts as now stated by your Clerk appear to be right, and if you will send me the notes I shall return them accepted [words effaced by seal] distressing for me even to think of old subjects gone by, [words effaced by seal] was in hopes that if you had time to have looked at this acct yourself, you would perhaps have put it on the same footing that it was previous to its commencement in 1816. I was also in hopes from what I said to you when here that you would have eased the balance a little by taking a quantity of the Tales from my share.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 3.

Letter from Archibald Constable & Co to Hurst, Robinson & Co.

17 Apr 1819.

[...] we can supply you with copies of the *first* Tales [...].

Source: MS 790, p. 459.

Notes: Refers to the 5th edn, delivered in January 1819. The advertisement for it was, however, held back until the announcement of the 3rd series of *Tales* (1819: 61) early in May 1819.

Letter from Archibald Constable & Co to Longman & Co.

30 Apr 1819.

We are anxious to know how many Copies of the 1st series of Tales of My Landlord were sold at Murrays last sale—perhaps Mr Rees could inform us as to this.

Source: E, MS 790, p. 476.

Letter from William Blackwood to James Ballantyne.

6 May 1819.

I was so completely surprised and I must say indignant yesterday when I saw in your paper an advertisement announcing the publication of a new edition of the first series of the tales of my landlord that had I written you at the moment I might have given way to feelings that would not have been pleasant to either of us. My opinion of the matter is not now one whit altered but I trust I shall be able to state it more carefully than I cd have done yesterday. // In the first place then I beg to say that I have upwards of 1200 copies here, and as I believe Mr Murray has also some hundreds of the fourth edition on hand, a new edition was quite uncalled [150/150v] for and unnecessary, and you besides were not entitled to put another edition to press without having first consulted us and ascertained that our stock was nearly exhausted. // In the next place I beg to say that even had another edition been required, Mr Murray and I were both by Courtesy and right entitled to the first offer of it. [...] Lest you forget what the author [...] desired you to state to me, I extract the following passage from one of your letters dated 29 January 1817. 'The Author by the bye stipulated that for the 4th and *all succeeding editions* he shall receive bills at 6 Mos renewable for 6 more[...] [150v/151] [...] // [...] I [...] return to the first point the state of the fourth edition. From this you must see the necessity of instantly repairing the injury that has been done Mr Murray & me by allowing this advertisement to appear, or any copies of a fifth edition to be sold while we have such a heavy stock on hand even waiving any claim we may have upon a fifth edition when it is wanted.

Source: E, MS 30001, fols 150–51 (copy). Also in Oliphant, I, 83–84 with error; letter is there misdated 1817.

Notes: Another copy at E, MS 30001, fol. 156.

Letter from James Ballantyne to William Blackwood.

6 May 1819.

You state, in the first place, that, the fourth edition not being exhausted, 'a new edition was quite uncalled for and unnecessary, and that I was not entitled to put another edition to press without having first consulted you and ascertained that your stock was nearly exhausted'. // To this I answer that *I* did not put this edition to press; that is in the sense in which you use these words. As a

printer I obeyed the orders of the booksellers to whom the edition has been sold and was not called upon to consult any body. [refutes other claims by Blackwood in similar manner] [fol. 12v] In regard to the passage which you quote from one of my letters, and from which you infer that the Author had bound himself to offer you all succeeding editions, I firmly believe that no neutral person would sanction your inference. The plain meaning [12v/13] of the passage is that in the event of succeeding editions being published by you, such and such stipulations would be made by the author. [...] As I am the only person with whom you can transact in this matter, I shall lose not a moment in transmitting either your present Letter or a more formal claim on your part (as you think best) to the Author nothing will give me more [13/13v] pleasure, nor is there anything which I can consider as more a duty than that I should give you every aid in my power to arrange this matter as to prevent you from being losers by the edition which you purchased.

Source: E, MS 4004, fols 12–13. Copy at 30001, fols 152–53.

Letter from William Blackwood to James Ballantyne.

6 May 1819.

As to your interpretation of your letter of 29 Janry you may rest assured I do not assent to it, and I do not think that any neutral person will do so. I quoted it as completely corroboration [*sic*] of the repeated verbal assurances you had given me of the Authors future intentions and to bring them to your recollection. [...] I admit most freely that if you stayed in the capacity of a mere Printer, it was your business to execute the orders [...] [154/154v] The present case however is very different. We entered into a transaction relying upon each other as men of business and character who would honourable and fairly fulfill our mutual engagements. The Author might change his agents as often as he pleased, but he had no right to do the smallest act which might interfere with engagements which you had contracted in his name and by his authority. I need hardly repeat what you seem to be sensible of, that the publication of this fifth Edition (at all events in present circumstances) is in direct violation of our bargain, therefore as you are the only person I have to look to for reparation, the author will instantly do you justice by extricating you from this very awkward situation, in which he has placed you. [...] I have no formal proposal to make it is for the Author to do so through you [...].

Source: E, MS 30001, fols 154–55 (copy). Another copy at E, MS 30001, fol. 157.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

6 May 1819.

The enclosed correspondence will show what a business and what a set of people I have to battle with at present. [...] I think the drift of it is that we should make them an offer of our books at a certain price and [356/357] that they laid their account with being able to settle the business in this way else the [*sic*] would not have ventured to publish this edition. [...] // I entreat you to give the whole matter your earnest consideration, and write me if possible by return of post. I do not feel very confident of our legal right to future editions, but I have shewn I think sufficiently that with men of honour there could not be two opinions upon the subject. Our business however at present is with the Stock on hand, and though they are not bound down by us not to print other editions till the copies we have be sold off, yet surely common law and common sense and the usages of the trade will entitle us legally to protect our property. B[allantyne] in his letter admits this. [postscript] 1339 Tales in hand.

Source: E, MS 30301, pp. 356–57 (copy).

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

7 May 1819.

Since last I wrote you Mr Ellis wrote Mr Ballantyne demanding £2000 to be paid by bills at 3 & 6 Mos. and since he refused to give us the authors name, that the Bills shold be drawn on the new publishers to whom we would deliver 1550 Copies of the Book. To this letter Mr Ellis received an answer from Mr B's brother in law Mr Hoggarth [*sic*] W. S. refusing our offer, but proposing to pay

subscription price for the books and to settle the sum by Ballantynes own bills at 3 & 6 Mos. This offer Mr Ellis of course declined and wrote Mr H that he did so both from the inadequacy [358/359] of the compensation and the security, and that therefore as his former letter contained our ultimatum [*sic*] he had nothing left but to proceed according to the advice of our counsel with the action. Not having any thing farther from Mr H, on Saturday the summons was executed claiming £3000 of damages. Our Counsel are quite confident of success, but they do not think that the action will be allowed to come into court and not only will the whole transaction tell so much against Mr Ballantyne but likewise against the Author, and the new publishers who have not appeared very creditably in former activities.

Source: E, MS 30301, pp. 358–59 (copy).

Notes: William Ellis was counsel for Blackwood. George Hogarth, Ballantyne's brother-in-law, was counsel for Ballantyne.

Letter from Walter Scott to James Ballantyne.

[?10] May 1819.

Respecting Blackwoods epistles I cannot see that I have the least thing to do with them. Certainly the Editors would not have been changed unless you had experienced trouble in setting with them & if the sale in their hands had proved as satisfactory as elsewhere but this was quite optional to myself. Concerning Mr. Constables right of publishing a new edition of these tales before the old one is out I am neither a judge or a party. But I suppose the utmost they can demand is to have what remains of the edition taken off their hands. // The answer therefore to be returned is that the Author for any right Mr. B claims to publish a new edition refers him to the terms of his bargain. Concerning the time when Mr. Blackwoods right determines & Mr. Constable begins it is a question in which the author cannot interfere having neither the power to compell Mr. Blackwood to sell his books or Mr. Constable from printing another edition. Thus far is certain that Mr. Constable having bought only the Authors right in these tales can do nothing the author himself could not have done since the rights of third parties could not be affected by the transaction. Perhaps the matter had best lie over till I come to town & consult with Mr. Constable.

Source: Grierson V, 380.

Notes: Dated 10 May by Corson from internal evidence. See Corson, 162.

Letter from John Murray II to William Blackwood.

10 May 1819.

I have this moment received your parcel containing the surreptitious Edition of the Tales of My Landlord, with Copies of your Letters to Mr James Ballantyne and his prevaricating and disingenuous answer. I perfectly agree in the propriety of your application to that Man for an explanation of his violation of our contract with him, and of his nefarious attempts to injure our property. It is my opinion that you should instantly move the Court for an injunction against the Sale and further advertisement of this piratical invasion of our property--and I trust that your council [*sic*] will not fail to enter into a thorough exposition of that derilection [*sic*] of all principal [*sic*] and of honour as a man of business which could have conceived so base a transaction. As to the point about saving from _loss_—he knows pretty well that it is not to avoid loss but to receive remuneration that man engage [*sic*] in trade—for the rest I do not know what may be the law of our case but I am certain that in equity & the understood custom of such transactions we are fully entitled to proceed with future editions of this work, when required, upon the same terms as we commenced. // If I might recommend it should be to lose no time in useless negotiations with a person so confessedly devoid of integrity, but that you instantly move for an injunction // Keep this to yourself as my confidential opinion & concurrence with yours—it is really base behaviour mingled with insolence.[postscript] I have less than 300 Tales on hand // *listen* to nothing but the most ample compensation—let B's letters be read in Court must I get an injunction *here* [...]. [postscript] some time ago Constable wanted me to sell them some Tales of My Landlord, but I declined on account of our not interfering with each other let your Council [*sic*] know this as it may

be alledged [*sic*] by his representative that we stop the sale.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Murray Papers Box M4A, Business Correspondence.

Notes: This is the original letter, not a copy.

Letter from Robert Cadell to James Ballantyne.

11 May 1819.

[long account recalling the process whereby the 5th edn had been put to press, and complaining about the present overload of 3000 copies] In fact we never would have thought for one moment of reprinting these Books [487/488] till we heard the answer 'out of print' given to our collecting boys. The case is shortly and simply one where the great Author was the sole and only mover The Books were received by us in January. And since that period till within a few days, we have announced them in no way whatever.—And during that space of time, we have often wanted you and your Brother to get a state of the Stock on hand of the first publisher, and with your arrangement with them, we have never had any knowledge; and certainly never could have supposed that 3000 of a new Edition would have been put to press, while fully half that number (as I at present suppose) remained unsold, and must have not long ago gone from your printing warehouse.

Source: E, MS 790, pp. 487–89.

Letter from James Ballantyne to William Ellis.

19 May 1819.

I have recd your letter, of the 18th, this forenoon. I have made such propositions to Mr Blackwood, as may probably prevent the necessity of your taking any steps to procure for him and Mr Murray the indemnification you talk of; and in the meanwhile I beg leave to decline complying with your requisition to communicate to you, either immediately or hereafter, the name of the author of the Tales of my Landlord.

Source: E, MS 4004, fol. 14.

Letter from James Ballantyne to William Ellis.

22 May 1819.

I am this moment favoured with your letter of the 21st; the import of which is, that, [...] you decline the terms proposed in my letter of the 19th. // Since this is the case, I trust it is not too much to request, that these gentlemen will instruct you to state *what it is they ask*; for with all the disposition in the world, on the part of the author, to do ample and liberal justice to your Clients, it can hardly be considered in his power to do so, while he is kept in ignorance of what they desire or expect.

Source: E, MS 4004, fol. 18.

Letter from John Murray II to William Blackwood.

22 May 1819.

Your Lawers [*sic*] should know best how to proceed, but they are not taking what appears to me to be the proper course. Prima facie—this new edition is a piracy upon our property—& I should simply have moved for an injunction—just as if Constable had printed an edition of Domestic Cookery—this injunction obtained it follows that it is served upon every other bookseller—so that you would effectively shut his edition out of the market—which is the greatest punishment, with the disgrace of the transaction, w[hic]h we shall find we have power to inflict. As to any damages as other compensation you can get none—least I do not expect it. [...] I confess I am surprised that Constable should have committed an act so notoriously unjust—to the whole trade [...] I have just received a packet of Letters amongst which is *yours* of the 19th. I perfectly agree with you in not only thinking but determining not to take the offer of 10 pr ct below Sale no man has a right to interfere with us in this way, the sale of such a work is of importance to our own business—they might upon proper application have ascertained the Number of Copies of the work yet on our hands & consequently it is not our fault that they have incurred an outlay of capital of which they must therefore suffer the inconvenience & loss—Is it their Copies or ours that are to be kept out of the

market? [...] Let them make it worth our while [...] Let them give us *Acceptances* for I do not like Mr Ballantyne's Notes—at 3 Months at Subscription price for every Copy we have—adding boarding & binding—or as I say boldly sue for an *_injunction_*—wh[ic]h will keep their work out of the market for 18 Mos at least. [...] The *_disagreeable discussions_*—from what did they arise—but from the same *want of principles* in who negotiated with us which is the source of the present equally *_disagreeable discussions_*—a Thief may perhaps think *Hanging* a very disagreeable treatment.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Murray Papers Box M4A, Business Correspondence.

Notes: *Domestic Cookery* was a best-selling work in Murray's backlist.

Letter from John Murray II to William Blackwood.

28 May 1819.

I saw Mr Davies when I came to town on Tuesday & finding that he was packing Copies of Tales of My Landlord, & writing to you, I begged him to tell you that I should also pack up what Copies I had & send them which we are now doing to the Amount of 210 Copies. I can not think but that you overrate Mr Ballantyne's estimate of Character when you think that would outweigh the sum of £500—but you are right to make the most of it and I wish you success.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Murray Papers Box M4A, Business Correspondence.

Notes: This is the original letter, not a copy.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

May 1819.

Our cause against Ballantyne was to have been called on Saturday, but as the court rises on Saturday next, it would not have been entered on but have been merely transferred to next session in Nov or perhaps after the Xmas vacation. I had a conversation with my Lawyers on Friday, and [...] they advised me to write the letter of which you have a copy on the other side. [decided to settle out of court] Had it gone on it would have made a compleat breach with Mr— which would have been more hurtful than the loss of the difference of our claim. [...] I therefore wrote Ballantyne, and [360/361] I hope you will think I did right. [...] I hope you will think with me that we have on the whole made a very good transaction of these tales, and that the two editions will be rather a heavy handfull [*sic*] to Constable & Co. // Mr B's second letter I recd late last night You will see by it still the same system of lying for he of course wrote Mr S on Saturday as he got my letter in the morning, and yesterday he would receive Mr S answer. I shall send my Clerk to him to day to deliver the Books and get the bills.

Source: E, MS 30301, pp. 360–61 (copy).

Notes: Letter referred to not included with copy. Mr— is Scott.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

7 June 1819.

Since I last wrote you Mr Ellis wrote Mr Ballantyne demanding £2000 to be paid by bills at 3 & 6 Mo. and since he refused to give us the Author's name, that the Bills should be drawn on the new Publishers to whom we would deliver 1550 copies of the Book. To this letter Mr Ellis recd an answer from Mr B's Brother in law Mr Hogarth W.S. refusing our offer, but proposing to pay subscription price for the Book, and to settle the sum by Ballantyne's own bills at 3 & 6 Mo. This offer Mr Ellis of course declined and wrote Mr. H that he did so both for the inadequacy of the compensation and the security, and that therefore as his former letter contained our ultimatum he had nothing left but to proceed according to the advice of our counsel with the action. Not hearing any thing father from Mr Hogarth, on Saturday the Summons was executed claiming £3000 of damages. Our Counsel are quite confident of our success, but they do not think that the action will be allowed to come into Court, as not only will the whole transaction tell so much against Mr Ballantyne but likewise against the Author, and his new Publishers, who have not appeared very creditably in former actions.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 3.

Letter from William Blackwood to James Ballantyne.

3 July 1819.

I beg to inform you that I have desired my Agent Mr Ellis to delay for this day the calling in court of the action against you. In doing this I have been regulated by the strong feeling I have with regard to 'the Author'. To avoid therefore the *disagreeables* to which such a litigation would necessarily give rise, I shall rather waive my claim for further compensation, and to close amicably this unfortunate business. I shall accept of the terms proposed by Mr Hogarth in his letter to Mr Ellis of the 2d of June. With regard to the bills also, I shall require no other names upon them but your own from accepting for behoof of the Author.

Source: E, MS 30001, fol. 158 (copy).

Letter from James Ballantyne to William Blackwood.

3 July 1819.

I have recd your letter, informing me, that, 'you have desired your agent Mr Ellis to delay for this day the calling in court the action against me; and that in doing this you have been regulated entirely by the strong feelings you have with regard to "the Author"; and that to avoid the *disagreeables* to which such a litigation would necessarily give rise, you would rather waive any claim for further compensation; and, to close amicably this unfortunate business, you would accept of the terms proposed by Mr Hogarth in his letter to Mr Ellis 2d June'. &c. // In answer, I shall communicate your letter to the Author, and shall apprise you of his intentions when I receive them.

Source: E, MS 4004, fol. 20.

Letter from Walter Scott to James Ballantyne.

[4 July 1819].

I wonder you could be so soft as to correspond with Blackwood respecting the author whom he has no title to know anything of, or to make any appeal to. I would rather go on with twenty law suits than have an usurious exaction converted forsooth into a favour to be acknowledged as such.

Source: Grierson, VI, 5.

Notes: Grierson's date of [November? 1819] is amended by Corson to 4 July. See Corson, 168.

Letter from Walter Scott to Archibald Constable.

4 July 1819.

Blackwood and Murray have given in and accepted the terms which they declined before. The former had [403/404] the assurance to say that *his taking this full advantage was merely out of respect for the author*. I have taken care it shall not stand on that footing. But it is as well the business is closed though at some loss [...].

Source: Grierson, V, 403–04.

Letter from James Ballantyne to William Blackwood.

5 July 1819.

On reconsidering your letter of the 3d current, I see no reason to wait for any instructions in addition to those which I received some time since upon the subject of it, and which were communicated to Mr Ellis by Mr Hogarth in his letter of the 2d ultimo. // I therefore hereby adhere to the terms offered in that letter, and agreed to by you in yours of the 3d, and am ready to close the transaction accordingly.

Source: E, MS 4004, fol. 22.

Letter from Walter Scott to James Ballantyne.

10 July 1819.

I observe Blackwoods business is closed & as I suppose (though you do not say) for Murray as well as himself. Neither do you say the number of copies sent in. But attend to what follows. You must let Messrs. Constable know that you have got these books their number and amount. By the bargain of

Ivanhoe they are to accept for them at 12 mos. credit. It will not be advisable to ask them to grant these acceptances just now because we have enough of their paper both on their account & ours. But you will request them to verify the amount of the stock and either remove it or you will warehouse it for them *at their risque*. In short let it be taken off your hands. We will not ask them for acceptances until your bills to Blackwood are near due & then the time current between the delivery of the stock and date of the acceptances say three or six months or whatever it is will be [412/413] [deducted] from the date of the bills & they will be more easily discounted to meet yours to Blackwood. The difference between sale price & subscription as well as the difference of credit will be loss in the transaction. A tight and formal settlement with Constable is indispensable to prevent greater loss.

Source: Grierson, V, 412–13.

Notes: Grierson has '[deducted]'.

Letter from Walter Scott to James Ballantyne.

14 July 1819.

I shall be glad to hear the matter with Constable about the copies 1st. Series is tightly settled also to have notes of the bills granted to Blackwood.

Source: Grierson, V, 415.

Letter from Walter Scott to John Ballantyne.

12 Aug 1819.

You have forgot that the only reason why Ivan[hoe] was given on half profits was to get rid of Blackwoods copies to the amount of £1500. I intend to make no such bargain on a novel *clear of stock*.

Source: Grierson, V, 454.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

1 Sep 1819.

[Blackwood is coming to London and hopes to see Murray to conduct general business and settle some accounts.] I have not sent my statement of the Tales, as you said you wished it to come into next year's acct—indeed it was the middle of July before I got Ballantyne to settle the business, so that the [whole] were on hand 30 June.

Source: MS letter, Murray Archives, Blackwood Box 3.

Letter from Bernard Barton to John Murray II.

n.d.

[...] heard that James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, was the author of 'Tales of my Landlord,' and [473/474] that [he] had had intimation from himself to that effect.

Source: Smiles, I, 473–74.

Letter from Archibald Constable to Robert Cadell.

31 Oct 1819.

[under heading '*Tales of My Landlord*':] I consider the state of the stock of this work particularly of the first series as one of the most vexatious of our concerns. [...] we have as many as will serve the regular trade demands for ten years. If we bring copies into the market at an under value or price—we ruin the great speculation of the copyrights & bring much discredit *instantly* on all the authors prose writings [...]. [remainder of letter speculates on the possibility of selling the stock as sets with inserted engravings].

Source: E, MS 319, fol. 199.

Letter from Robert Cadell to John Ballantyne.

14 Jan 1820.

[...] your allusion to the terms for the 1st Series comes to us with a very heavy sigh. I am amazed that you make it when *you know* what we *endured* regarding the very Books every Copy of which are still on hand 3000!! We were forced to agree to print 2000. 3000 were however laid on. We received them in February, and did not announce them until May when 1600 were found to exist and our Stock groans at this moment with [...] 4170 Copies.

Source: E, MS 790, p. 747.

Bill from William Blackwood to John Murray.

13 Mar 1820

[Bill for final settlement of the fourth edition of *Tales of My Landlord*. Shows Murray with 709 copies on hand, of which he sold 307 at a coffeehouse sale for 17s each, and 194 for 18s 4d each. 208 copies he then returned to Blackwood, who had 1341 copies on hand. With the addition of Murray's copies, this left 1549 copies, which were disposed of to Constable for 18s 4d.]

Source: E, MS 30301, pp. 371–72.

Letter from William Blackwood to John Murray II.

Mar 1820.

Being anxious that our accts should be closed forthwith, I was in hopes that they could have been settled at once without trouble as I passed over many things which might have caused disputation. In answer to yours of the 6th I have only to say that having had the whole risk and trouble of the sale of the remainder of the Tales of my Landlord, I consider myself entitled to the commission, the sale actually being mine and besides the trifling commission is not adequate to what I ought to have charged otherwise for my trouble. Moreover it was surely not worth any mans while to have noticed such a trifling matter when he himself had had the benefit of selling 5679 copies, while my whole sales amount to 3286 copies.

Source: E, MS 30301, p. 377.

Letter from Hurst, Robinson & Co. to Archibald Constable & Co.

13 Jan 1822.

[359 copies on their hands.]

Source: E, MS 326, fol. 109.

Letter from John Galt to George Boyd.

24 Feb 1823.

I have two or three times intended to suggest to you, but it has hitherto escaped me that I wish you would try *quietly* to buy back from Blackwood the Annals of the Parish and the Provost.[...] You are perhaps aware that an arrangment of this kind took place with the first series of the Tales of My Landlord. I do not however wish to be seen in the business.

Source: E, Acc 5000/188 (Oliver & Boyd papers, Galt folder).

Notes: Galt is writing from London.

Letter from Archibald Constable & Co to Hurst, Robinson & Co.

15 Dec 1824.

[43 copies on their hands.]

Source: E, MS 792, p. 376.

ADDENDUM

John Murray Archives have ledger books with entries for *Tales of My Landlord*. One of these, the ledger for publications undertaken jointly by Murray with other publishers, usefully summarises information for all four edns. This shows:

For the 1st edn of 2,000 copies at 18s 4d, the author's half share of profits amounted to £638 18s 4d; Blackwood and Murray each owed £597 4s 2d for their half share of the costs including author's profits.

For the 2nd edn of 2,000 copies at 18s 4d, the author's half share of profits amounted to £683 14s 7d; Blackwood and Murray each owed £574 16s for their half share of costs.

For the 3rd edn of 2,000 copies at 18s 4d, the author's half share of profit amounted to £681 8s 4d; Blackwood and Murray each owed £575 19s 2d for their half share of costs.

For the 4th edn of 3,000 copies at 18s 4d, the author's half share of profit amounted to £1,060 10s 6d; Blackwood and Murray each owed £530 5s 3d for their half share of costs.

The amounts vary in part because of fluctuations in the printing costs due, for example, to differences in the price of paper and the use of standing sheets to make up copies of the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th edns. Accounting for the 4th edn is particularly complicated because Murray sold a large number of copies at his Coffee House sales before the remainder was disposed of as part of the settlement with Constable for the 5th edn.

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