

Malcolm Saville Archive

Archivist: Dr Stephen Bigger

We seek to preserve and make available letters and papers by the children's author Malcolm Saville (1901-1982). Many have been donated or copied to us by the people who received them, and we are always pleased to receive copies of others.

Biographical note: Malcolm Leonard Saville, children's author.

Leonard Malcolm Saville, born in Hastings, published some 87 books for children alongside a full-time career in publishing. His books are collectable, but non-expensive editions are easily available and books are gradually being republished. His most famous stories are the Lone Pine series of 20 books (plus a short story), 1943-78, starting with *Mystery at Witchend* in which children form a secret club. All stories are set in real places which Saville encouraged readers to visit – Shropshire and Sussex being particularly favoured, but also Dartmoor, Southwold, Yorkshire and London.

Other series were the *Jillies* (6 books, 1948-53) starting in Norfolk with two families, the *Jillions* and *Standings* who meet on holiday in *Blakeney*, in *Redshanks Warning*. They meet up again in London, the *Pennines*, *Ely*, *Austria* and finally the home counties. In the *Buckingham's* series (6 books 1950–74 starting with *The Master of Maryknoll*), children befriend the son of a famous exiled Polish violinist. Venues range from *Ludlow*, *Shropshire*, to north *Yorkshire*, *Brighton*, *London*, *Italy*, *Amsterdam*.

In these series for older children, friendship and romance are never far away. For older teenagers, the *Marston Baines* thriller-romances (1962-1978) echo *James Bond*, a master spy whose university student friends get into some serious difficulties with terrorists, anti-semites, drug dealers, black magic and mafia. For younger children there were two series: *Mary and Michael* (1945-57) were Londoners who were sent to the country and get to *Cornwall*, *Dorset*, *Sussex*, and the *Grand Union Canal*. The first book, *Trouble at Townsend* (1945), of their life on a farm, became a film. The series on *Susan and Bill* featured children who moved to an unspecified new town: stories describe their settling in experiences as well as their holidays, including one in a railway camping coach. The *Nettleford* series are experiences of village and farm life for young children. Two books never resulted in series: *Treasure at the Mill* (1957); and *The Thin Grey Man* (1966).

Malcolm Saville also wrote non-fiction, generally on country themes (such as *Country Scrapbook*, *Open-Air Scrapbook*, and *Seaside Scrapbook* of the 1940s), encouraging post-war outdoor pursuits and holidays. There were two religious books, *King of Kings* (1958, a life of Jesus) and *Strange Story* (1967, the crucifixion seen through the eyes

of contemporary Roman children).

Further reading:

O'Hanlon, M. (1996) *The Complete Lone Pine*

O'Hanlon, M. (2000) *Beyond the Lone Pine*

Malcolm Saville Occasional Papers

These are being updated and made available on-line. Most started as articles in the Malcolm Saville Society Magazine *Acksherley!* For which see the Malcolm Saville Society webpage at www.witchend.com.

See also Stephen Bigger, *Malcolm Saville, Writer for Children: Collected Critical Studies* at <http://eprints.worc.ac.uk/800>.

General

Stephen Bigger 2007 [Sea Adventures: Peter Dawlish \(James Lennox Kerr\), a Writer Amongst Artists](http://eprints.worc.ac.uk/248). at <http://eprints.worc.ac.uk/248>.

Jimmy Kerr generally used the pseudonym Peter Dawlish for his children's writings, here fully described.

Stephen Bigger *David Unwin's Writings for Children*

David Unwin used the pseudonym David Severn for his children's writings, here fully described, at <http://eprints.worc.ac.uk/236>.