

The Susannah Warren Correspondence

Autograph Letters & Manuscripts Baring-Gould (Sabine, 1834-1924, Divine And Author)

Important collection of four A:SS to Miss Susannah Warren, the first letter says that he is a "poor draughtsman for figures ... suggesting instead "a reproduction of the curious painting of a Pixy frolic we have , at Lew Trenchard, date William & Mary I fancy. Very quaint indeed ... quite an antiquarian curiosity ... ", discussing the problems of getting a good photograph which would show the colours properly and in a postscript describing it, "The painting contains hundreds of figures, rowing in egg-shells, lighting, corpse-candles, dancing in rings, playing Jack O'Lanterns & performing innumerable antics. It is the oldest painting I know ... ", the next letter tells her that she is "welcome to reproduce my account of the Wild Huntsman but it must not be without acknowledgement ... I never heard of the Gabriel hounds. I think the name must be a corruption of some mythological term. I believe that the howling of the wind suggested the idea of the dog or wolf in the myth of the Wild Huntsman, and the flare of lightening gave the notion of its breathing flames ... ", he continues by describing some Devonshire myths "from a rift in the crags leap forth black hounds with blazing eyes, & breathing fire ... followed by a tall black huntsman riding on a three legged horse. This is undoubtedly Odin ... On Holdsrreet ... runs nightly the black hound of Lady Howard ... When it has plucked all thee blades of grass its release will have come & Lady Howard's pardon will be sealed ... ", and he continues with other local stories, "I have any amount of material concerning the wild huntsman & his dogs & could fill a volume ... I am collecting Yorkshire folklore, household tales & ballads ... generally neglected, & I know no English collection. Halliwell's is miserably imperfect ..." and he explains the importance of these tales, which are found in different forms throughout the world but "only the leading features are unmistakably identical. The whole rests on a mythological foundation exhibiting the year in its spring tide abundance yielding gold & corn, whilst it is accompanied with thunderstorms ... I hope soon to have a good stock of West Riding myths The third letter is written on his return from a "little run on the Yorkshire moors ...", he says he will "be glad to see your MS at any time ... If I am to make some notes to your work I shall have to refer to them. But I send you Kelly's Indo European Folklore as a good resumé of two or three important Ysiman(?) works on the subject ..." and discussing Halliwell "I admire him amazingly for his contribution to English folklore, Archaeology etc ... All I meant when I said that his collection of household tales was sadly deficient, was that it was a very small contribution to a most valuable subject ..." He tells her in a postscript that he has just started "work on the Curiosities of Popular Superstitions viz ... Divination ... Men with tails, Pig faced women, Toads living in the stomach, Salamanders etc ...", the final letter returns her work "on Northumbrian folklore ... the amount of matter and the valuable nature of it has delighted me ..." promising to send some notes and "a few Sundry superstitions and customs gathered in various parts of England ... I see you have not given any household rhymes or riddles ... would they not be a good addition? What you you [sic] say to adding on to the book my collection of household tales, picked up in Devonshire & in Yorkshire ... The household tales of England are especially valuable as they have not yet been collected, & a [loud of - French tales such as Puss in Boots, Cinderella etc have taken their place ...", 11 sides 8vo., Horbury, Wakefield, 26th July to 27th November 1865,

together with two original photographs, one of a house, titled "Hazlewood. Where Miss Susanne Warren lived for 40 years. 6" x 4". and the other a photo of the old lady in black dress and white bonnet, writing, with the end of an ALS underneath "Always yr affte aunt Sus. Warren", 5 1/2" x 4". [SD4914] £475

BARING-GOULD (Sabine 1834-1924, Divine and Author)

Interesting pair of ALSs to his publisher about his novel "Kitty Alone" the first sending "the first 19 chapters" as he wanted the first part of his novel by July 1st, telling him that "there will be in all 54 or 55. I do hope it will commend itself to you. It is very difficult to know what will please ... in constructing a plot one has to take that which presents itself to the mind at the time. I have more written ... the last 3 chaps I send you will want a thorough looking through before given to the printer ...", the second sends the "1st vol of 'Kitty Alone' ... the rest shall follow in a few days when revised. I go to the S. of France on 23 Oct & if possible would like to correct the proof's ... before I go ...", each 1 side 8vo., Lew Trenchard, Devon, 24th June & 4th October 1893. [SD1S35] £195

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