

## Dating & Notes on the Howard Letter

“Ahatou Price noyon!” – Used by Howard in a letter to Tevis Clyde Smith dated “sometime after mid-1932,” when he wrote, “Ahatou noyon, Fear Finn” (TCL2: 426). Lends support for a mid-1932 letter date.

“I sent Saladin this morning” – This one threw me, so I had to consult Rob on this one. He wrote, “Regarding Saladin”: I’m guessing REH loaned Price his copy of *Saladin; and the Fall of the Kingdom of Jerusalem* by Stanley Lane-Poole. He cited Rusty Burke’s REH Bookshelf as potential evidence.

“I was enchanted with your line concerning ‘the uncounted domes and minarets of prodigious Atlanaat.’” – E. Hoffmann Price was likely making a reference to his two stories published in *Weird Tales*: “The Dreamer of Atlanaat” (July 1926) and “A Jest and a Vengeance” (September 1929).

“I feel highly complimented that Lovecraft should speak so well of my erudition” – The earliest extant letter regarding Howard’s erudition that I can find is a July 19, 1933, letter to E. Hoffmann Price in which H.P. Lovecraft writes, “I’ve just had a tremendously interesting letter of 19 closely typed pages from our friend Two-Gun Bob of Cross Plains . . . a most remarkable character” (Letters to E. Hoffmann Price, Schultz and Joshi, 2021, p. 86; note: the letter referred to is the one dated June 15, 1933).

“in my boyhood I burglarized the school-libraries” – He shared this story with Lovecraft in a letter dated July 1933 (TCL 386-87). “I notice a company advertised Ameen Rihani’s ‘Arabian Peak and Dester’” – Ameen Rihani published *Arabian Peak and Desert: Travels in Al-Yaman* in 1930 (London: Constable & Co LTD).

“I’m sure Ismeddin’s quite true to life” – Howard wrote a letter to *The Magic Carpet Magazine* regarding E. Hoffmann Price’s story “Ismeddin and the Holy Carpet,” which had published in the January 1933 issue. Howard wrote, “As usual, Price turned in a find job with *Ismeddin and the Holy Carpet*. Ismeddin is my favorite Oriental character, worthy to take his place beside Sinbad and the Kalif Haroun” (April 1933 issue, p. 427). Ismeddin first appeared in “The Rajah’s Gift” in *Weird Tales* (January 1925) and he continued to publish the character’s tales through the 1930s.

“I was intensely interested in your sketches of Lovecraft and Mashburn” – In a letter to Tevis Clyde Smith dated August 1932, Howard writes, “[Price] said Kirk Mashburn is a tall blond youth, whose most highly prized possession is a Toledo sword he carried while an officer in the Mexican marines. The old idea that a literary man is necessarily a sissy is refuted day by day. He also said Lovecraft was a bear-cat at gorging chili con carne, which relieves me. I was afraid H.P.L. was as abstemious in eating as in drinking” (TCL2:339). Howard’s first letter to Kirk Mashburn is dated March 1932, in which he writes, “I’ve been intending writing you for some time, anyway. Mr. Price mentions you often in his letters” (TCL2:258).

“I’m inclined to agree with the Tatar theory” – In the same letter dated August 1932 that was addressed to Tevis Clyde Smith, Howard writes, “More correspondence from various *Weird Tales*. I find that E.H. Price is German, Welsh, and a strain of Tatar. That gives him his slant eyes, which I noticed in the pictures he sent me” (TCL2:339).

“In fact, the instant I saw your photograph” – In the August 1932 letter quoted above, Howard mentions receiving pictures of Price. This letter was likely written shortly after receiving these photos and the “sketches” of Lovecraft and Mashburn. That would then place the date of the letter as: ca. August 1932.

(Written by Will Oliver for REHupa)