

MANUSCRIPT RECORD

DATE REC'D

6/11/46

SERIAL NO.

J-552

AUTHOR

LANNES, Halldor

TITLE

SALKA VALKA (bound book publ by Houghton Mifflin in 1938)

NO. PAGES

429

TYPESCRIPT

PROOFS

SHEETS

BOOK

SUBMITTED BY Alan Collins  
Curtis Brown  
347 Madison Ave.  
NY 17, NY

NO. OF ILLUSTRATIONS AND ILLUSTRATOR

none

INSTRUCTIONS FOR RETURN

none

DISPOSED OF

1) HOW:

Shield

2) WHEN:

8/16/46

BY WHOM READ:

NAME

DATE SENT

DATE RETURNED

FEE

Wilson Follett

6/12/46

6/19/46

REMARKS OR RECOMMENDATIONS

(SEE OVER FOR REPORT)

REJECTED

BY WHOM

*Ch*

DATE

8/15

APPROVED

ACCEPTED

BY WHOM

DATE

APPROVED

I find this story of a sort of Antonia of a fishing village in northern Iceland a book as maddening as it is powerful. It is written in a vein of bitter mockery that sooner or later surrounds everything and everybody in the book except Salka Valka herself, with whom the author is in love and whom he treats with tender idolatry even in her follies. There can hardly be a pair of more repulsive masculine portraits in literature than those of (1) the individualist thug who is the paramour of Salka's loose-natured mother and who makes an unsuccessful drunken attempt to rape Salka herself when she is eleven, and (2) the young Communist egoist with a gift of gab/<sup>who</sup> makes her love him, exploits her, and leaves her. As for the economic and political struggle that fills the second half of the book, both the radical and the conservative sides of it are made ugly, foolish, and contemptible by turns, and the outcome or no-outcome leaves you hopelessly up in the air. There appears to be in the end no point but that a great woman is born to be the victim of blind male egoism, the cruelty of the universe, and her own generosity. The story has terrific power in many scenes and episodes, but as far as I am concerned it does not compose into anything but a mighty chaos of effects. We should probably have published it had it come our way before Independent People: after I. P., it seems crude, inchoate, and experimental. The translation is better than average but no masterpiece. I think you will have to seek other advice. I am afraid I am just congenitally repelled by imaginative literature that (like this and Feike Feikema) is all power and no balance.

WF 6/19/46