In 1952, Stanley C. Arthur published Jean Laffite, Gentleman Rover (Harmonson), based on "family records," and Madeline Kent wrote The Corsair (Doubleday), said to be based on the diary of Jean Laffite. We contacted Doubleday, who were said to have bought the diary. They reported they had not bought any such diary, had never seen any such diary and if such existed Madeline Kent must have it or at least have seen it. Madeline Kent, when we contacted her, refused to comment on the matter. We told Lafflin we questioned much of the supposition in Arthur's book and believed the Kent book to be entirely fictitious. His reply was "all will be answered in my book." And here is what he wrote us about Arthur's and Kent's books:

...the book by Stanley C. Arthur 'Jean Laffite Gentleman Rover' is a book of facts released by me with only a few letters (emphasis added) to Mr. Arthur. Stanley C. Arthur never had seen the journal book...the Corsair book is fiction. I had no control over Madeline Kent who insisted on a biographical novel...adding romantic spice about Laffite.

John Lafflin had told Arthur that Doubleday was having the journals translated by "a scholar." He wrote us that he personally had the journals translated and edited by six different translators in Kansas City and Omaha in 1957. Why six translators in two separate states -- unless he did not want one translator to see all six of those journals? Why wait 15 years to have them translated when many people had offered to have them translated for him in the period from 1942 on?

In 1958 he published The Journal of Jean Laffite: The Privateer-Patriot's Own Story (Vantage Press). In our opinion this book is a complete hoax, much of it a condensed version of The Corsair. Lafflin undoubtedly had family journals written by someone posing as Jean Laffite, and the Mortimore family records are traceable, but they do not prove the John Lafflin who married Emma Mortimer was Jean Laffite. We believe the great grandson, John Lafflin, excerpted from that family journal those portions he wanted to use -- but inserted throughout his own interpretation of events. Having known John Lafflin so well over the years it is possible to pick out, page by page, what might have come from a family journal and what was inserted by Lafflin.

In 1960, John Lafflin asked us to write a book based on the "diary" which he had published in 1958. We invited him to visit us, bring with him the material, and we would work out some arrangement. By now he was claiming to have visited the archives in Spain, Mexico and Cuba and had much new material to show us.
A neat trick since he neither spoke, wrote nor understood Spanish or French. Even neater considering that he had previously written us that he could not afford to travel about anymore because he no longer had access to "free railroad passes."

We were even more suspicious, knowing that on a second trip to Texas he had spent much time examining Stanley Faye's translations of Laffite letters from the Archivo General de Indias, Papeles de Cuba. But we were still intrigued enough to pursue the matter further. Again we got only verbal stories -- again he was evasive about showing the "original journals"; yet wanting us to write a book based on his 1958 book! We agreed to think it over since we were still hoping he did have a genuine Laffite diary.

In every meeting with him throughout the years, we and many others whom he met tried to impress upon him the importance and value of the genuine Laffite diary -- urged him to deposit it with the Library of Congress, a university or put it in a bank vault for safe keeping. Why, if he was so certain his Laffite diary and documents were genuine, did he continue to carelessly carry them around the country? Why, if they were genuine, was he so fearful of having anyone actually see them?

In January 1962, he again asked us to collaborate on a book. This time we insisted upon seeing the "original Laffite journal" if we were to consider writing a book about his material, especially in view of the fact that we did not think the bible inscription and letters [he had shown us during previous visits] were in Jean Laffite's handwriting. We told him we must see the originals, or at least photostats, so the handwriting could be authenticated.

On 4 February 1962 he answered us from Pacolet, South Carolina, telling us that the Rosenberg Library [Galveston, Texas] did not have one authentic word written by Laffite...that the [George Mason] Graham papers were so much fiction...that Tulane University had no authentic records. "They have nothing," he wrote, "that is authentic." Then he added, "all that is needed is for the journal to be dramatized by a good writer. If interested beg to you you advise." And he advised us that all of his papers including the journals had been burned when his home was destroyed by fire. Checking this out, we learned his home had indeed burned and that subsequently the family bible had been destroyed in another fire, at WSPA-TV in Columbia, where he had left it, together with "alleged photostatic copies" of his records. We do know, following his trail throughout the years, that he photostated many documents and material from various libraries in his continuous travels around the country -- and undoubtedly had collected a lot of photostats of library and university material.