

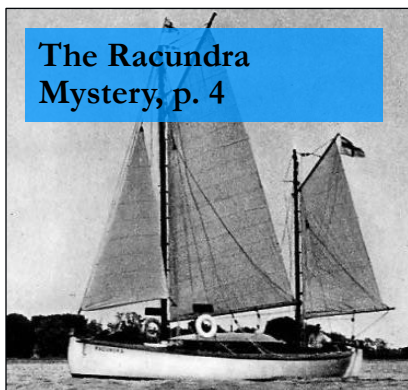


Signals from TARSUS & North Pole News

September 2024

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Ship's Papers — Important information for the Crew



A Note from the Editor

By Simon Horn, sjhorn@gmail.com

Here in Montreal, summer is drifting away as temperatures begin to drop, and a few trees even have had the gall to start their leaves turning.

Thanks as always to the contributors, but you readers may notice something: most authors' names are pretty familiar. We are putting a lot of weight on a

small number of people. I am very thankful for their ongoing work, but I wish a few more members would take out pen and paper, or some modern equivalent. The issue is a bit short, too!

In this issue

In *Dipping Our Hands*, **Martin Beech** looks into the name of Arthur Ransome's first ship in "Unraveling the *Racundra* Mystery". Where did the name come from? You won't find it in a dictionary.

Andrew Fisher continues his examination of the 12, asking "How Did Arthur Ransome Distribute his Characters?" How many books did the Billies appear in? One, two, more?

Next, in *Captain Flint's Trunk*, **Maida Follini** presents the history of the renowned Nova Scotia schooner *Bluenose*, from its launching in 1921 to its loss on a Haitian reef in 1946.

Alistair Bryden then takes us back to the Napoleonic Wars with "How Charcoal Burners Triggered a National Panic". It wasn't the Billies and it wasn't their fault.

In this issue *The Ship's Library* includes two reviews.

First **Ian Sacré** gives his comments on Herman Melville's *White Jacket*, the author's fictionalized account of

his 14 months before the mast on an American frigate in 1843-44. (Ian preferred to call it "comments" rather than a review since "the book has 400 pages and a proper review would take forever".)

Next **Maida Follini** presents her review of the Rudyard Kipling classic, *Captains Courageous, A Story of the Grand Banks*, among the best books of the sea "because it puts the reader right on the deck of a Gloucester fishing schooner".

In this issue's *Beckfoot Kitchen* **Molly McGinnis** gives us not one, but two recipes for summer pudding in "Better Than Mash: Summer Pudding Any Time".

Lastly I include another *Ship's Papers* section, an updated version of the newsletter "Author Index" since I started as editor, for February 2016 though January 2024.

The next issue is scheduled for January 2025. Please start thinking about your contribution now. The usual reminder will appear in your mailboxes about December 1.

Articles, book reviews, comments, questions, pictures, summer adventures. All are welcome.

All the best from me, to all of you.
Simon

Nautical words and un-seamanlike behaviour

Ian Sacré recently received from a friend an article about the hazards of editing nautical articles. A paragraph about difficulty of pleasing everyone seems appropriate:

"Then there are the nautical language police of course (no offense), who write to tell us it should really be gybe or jibe, leach or leech, balance lug or balanced lug, rope or line, and so on. I mean only a fool calls a marker a buoy. Recently we got a note objecting to our use of "fly bridge" — an abbreviated version of "flying bridge." Perhaps we need to stuff our abbreviations up in the forecabin. Actually we sort of enjoy these language critiques, as we really do aim for greater accuracy."



Excerpt and cartoon from "How Dare You! — Your chance to vent about nautical words and un-seamanlike behavior", from *Small Craft Advisor* (<https://smallcraftadvisor.com>)



Greetings from the North

By Ian Sacré, TARS Canada Coordinator

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Greetings Canadian TARS Members,

Sadly, summer is now winding down for most of us. I hope everyone enjoyed theirs and are now making

plans for the autumn and coming winter.

Perhaps you have books set aside for the reading or indoor projects waiting to be completed. I am sure everyone will be busy!

It has been a quiet summer in my role as Canadian TARS Coordinator. I have not heard from any members and all my TARS correspondence has either been with our editor Simon Horn or Krysia Clack, the UK Overseas Members representative on the Board.

Krysia advises that the TARS Annual Meeting took place recently in the Peak District and that the weekend went well. Although she also reported that two board members had en-route car troubles, forcing one to return home and the other to arrive a day late.

Rachel Chalmers is our new board chair, and the Midland Region has a new board member, Sara Samuels. Dermot Stanley has joined to represent "Sail Swallow and Amazon". Thank you all for stepping forward.

Recruiting members to perform TARS administrative roles or take on other tasks either in the UK or overseas is a thankless and difficult process. I sometimes wonder if members really understand that without our volunteering members the Society would cease to exist.

I am sure there are hundreds of untold stories and accounts out there just waiting to be told so please put pen to paper this winter and send your contributions to Simon. He is always on the lookout for new material.

Wishing everyone fair winds and calm seas.

Ian Sacré
Canadian TARS Coordinator

Ransome-Related Publications Still Available

Free copies of some Ransome-related books are still available for the cost of shipping alone. See the list below.

Books are noted as hardcover (HB) or paperback (PB).

Amazon Publications

#22, *Arthur Ransome's Long-Lost Study of Robert Louis Stevenson* (2011) - PB

#24, *Drawn at a Venture* (2014) - HB

#25, *Collecting our Thoughts* (2015) - PB

#27, *Twilight Years - Hill Top* (2017) - HB

By Ransome

Old Peter's Russian Tales (1974, Puffin Books) - small PB, illustrated

Racundra's First Cruise (1984, Century Publishing) - PB

The War of the Birds and the Beasts (1984, Jonathan Cape) - HB

Other

Arthur Ransome and Captain Flint's Trunk (1984, Christina

Hardyment, Jonathan Cape) - HB

Nancy Blackett: Under Sail with Arthur Ransome (1991, Roger Wardale, Jonathan Cape) - HB

Arthur Ransome (1991, Peter Hunt, Twayne Publishers) - HB

Arthur Ransome: A Bibliography (2000, Wayne Hammond, Oak Knoll Press) - HB

If you are interested, please contact me by email at sjhorn@gmail.com.

I will only find out the actual shipping cost when I wrap up a book (or books) to send, but anyone who requests a book will be told the cost before I send it, in case you think it is too much.

I will probably request reimbursement of the shipping cost using PayPal, but you do not need a PayPal account to send money to an individual. I will provide full details to anyone who requests a book or books.

— Simon

Dipping our Hands — Personal relationships with the books

Unraveling the *Racundra* Mystery

by Martin Beech (Courtenay, British Columbia)

Racundra was a ship of dreams (figure 1). It was imagined, planned, designed, and constructed in order to precipitate an escape to the sea. It was to be a freedom ship, purpose-built, to carry the owner and captain away from the world of Russian politics, war and revolution. It was to be a means to new adventure, a home, and an office. Indeed, as Ransome opens his (now classic) book *Racundra's First Cruise*, “houses are but badly built boats so firmly aground that you cannot think of moving them” [1].

For all this, perhaps the most important part of any boat is the name attached to it. The name has to ‘work’ for the master and crew. Indeed, the name of a boat must convey its spirit, and appropriately frame its owner’s hopes, and dreams. There is, in the case of *Racundra*, however, a mystery. It is a unique word that has no dictionary definition, and it belongs to no known language [2]. And yet, to his mother Edith, Ransome simply announced in a letter dated 29th March, 1922, that, “she is to be called *Racundra*” [3, p. 40]. No explanation is given for the name, and no indication as to its origin and meaning are articulated.

Indeed, Ransome never publicly said or wrote where the name came from. The closest we can approach its origin is found in a letter that Ransome sent to Adlard Coles on 25th June, 1925 where he comments that it was a, “name that I had carefully devised with the object of having a name in which no one else could have any sort of copyright” [3, p. 146]. The name was Ransome’s secret, and in some sense that is how we should leave it. But, of course, that won’t do.

Wherever there is a secret, there is a human impulse to know it, and to understand its origins. Problematically for the would-be investigator, however, is that, if there is one thing that we do know about Ransome, it is that he was a distinctly secretive person when it came to his personal life. Accordingly, we should bear in mind that Ransome didn’t invent the name *Racundra* as a problem for others to solve by logic and/or simple analytic investigation — rather it was a reasoned name anchored to his personal thoughts and experiences. Fortunately, many of Ransome’s works are infused with personal anecdotes, parallel-readings, and symbolist meanings [4, 5], and it is within these areas that we should search for the origins of *Racundra*. This being said, there has been much speculation on what *Racundra* might mean, and from where it was “derived”, but none are especially convincing, and in some sense, none are imaginative or deep enough, to explain Ransome’s reflective kind of thinking [2]. For all this, I shall offer what I think to be the origins of the word *Racundra*, and to do this, we must first investigate Ransome’s formative days, as a young bohemian and aspiring author, in London in the early 1900s.

While names are often changed, and details generalized, by far the best description we have of Ransome’s formative days are those contained in his first substantive book, *Bohemia*



Figure 1. *Racundra* under sail in the Baltic during her aborted second cruise of 1923. The Ancient Mariner (Carl Sehmel) can be seen at the helm.

in *London*, published in 1907. Here we learn that Ransome moved to London, and specifically the Chelsea area in 1901, in his late teens, and that there he soon fell-in with the literary and arts crowd, rubbing shoulders with writers, playwrights, poets, painters, sculptors, singers, actors, and sundry hangers-on. From the modern perspective the book is a romantic romp through the life and times of a young man finding, for the first time, the space and the freedom to do as he wished, and be his own boss. It was at this time that Ransome realized that all he wanted to be was a writer, although it was to be several decades before the actuality of this desire was to come about.

For us, the chapter of *Bohemia in London* describing “A Chelsea Evening” is the important one, and it describes a visit with friends to the home of Pamela (Pixie) Colman Smith. There was merry singing, music, poetry reading, and storytelling, and it is the latter that Ransome describes in some detail,

and with clear reverence. Indeed, it was the Anansi (also called/spelt Annancy, Nanzi, and Nancy) stories performed by Pixie Colman Smith that captured Ransome's heart and mind. In performing these stories, Smith would sit cross-legged on the floor, and animate her narrative with snippets of song, and little puppet figures [6, p. 64]. Ransome was clearly mesmerized, and he soon knew these stories word for word, and indeed, he was known to recite them, with great vim and vigor, throughout his life whenever an audience or circumstances allowed it.

Anansi stories are steeped in grief, folklore, and imagination. The grief is that of the originators, who were West African slaves transported to the Caribbean. The folklore is that of the traditional Akan people of Ghana, and the imagination concerns the exploits of Anansi the spider. Anansi is a trickster character, and by a combination of guile, cheek, and daring-do he (generally) wins victory and advantage over even the most formidable of foes. Part of the Anansi story tradition concerns the actions of the so-called obeah woman. This latter character is complex, but in folklore guise she is essentially a witch with potent spell casting powers. Ransome writes of this very character in chapter 18 of *Swallowdale*. This memorable chapter, recall, sees Titty make a wax figure of the Great Aunt, and to empower the supposed magic spell she recalls,

“the obeah woman who was the witch and had wrinkles deep as ditches on her brown face”.

Pixie Colman Smith learned the Anansi stories first hand during her formative years growing-up in Jamaica, and she used to recount them in a broad Caribbean patois. While the stories are based upon an oral tradition, Smith published an illustrated book of *Annancy Stories* in 1899 [7]. Ransome would, with little doubt, have had a copy of this book, and the illustrations are charmingly drawn and presented. Indeed, Smith was a well-known artist in her lifetime, and is famous even to this day for her drawings and illustration used on Rider-Waite Tarot Cards.

To bring our story back to Racundra, we need to look at one of Smith's stories concerning an obeah woman. The tale of interest is titled, “Why Toad Walk ‘Pon Four Leg””. Like many a folklore tale this one is concerned with marriage, subterfuge, and spells, and concludes with a moral. It is a short story, barely two pages in length, and begins, “In a long before time – before Queen Victoria come to reign over we”. After this opening, we are introduced to the three characters of importance: a prince, an obeah woman, and a toad, all of which live in a town called Four Paths.

In typical folktale fashion, it transpires that the obeah woman decides that she wants to marry the

prince, and accordingly she borrows some fine silk clothes, and a grand coach pulled by four horses. Having conspired to meet the prince while he is out riding, the obeah woman manages to win him over, and they agree to be wed. On the wedding day, however, toad, who initially walked upon two legs (figure 2), dressed in all his finery (a hat with feathers, a walking cane, and a two-tailed coat) calls in on the prince and tells him that his bride-to-be is really an obeah woman in disguise. The prince at first is not convinced, but eventually confronts his would-be partner, who then, with a screech, casts away her fine clothes, grabs her “chunky pipe” and her obeah stick, and runs from the prince's house. Bent on revenge, however, the obeah woman sets out to determine who it was that betrayed her to the prince. Eventually, she meets a cow, and asks if it betrayed her – no says the cow. Continuing on, she next encounters a sheep, and asks if it had betrayed her – no says the sheep. Then, further down the road, the obeah woman meets up with toad, and she discovers that it was he that betrayed her to the prince. Enraged, the obeah woman pulls all of the fancy clothes off toad's back, beats him to the ground, and casts a potent spell saying, “an' you mus' always walk ‘pon four legs from now”. The obeah woman then puts on the clothes she has taken from toad, and goes to another country. The hapless toad, however, is never to be a gentleman again, and because of the spell, must walk upon four legs to this very day.



Figure 2. Before drawing down the wrath of the obeah woman, “Toad was a buckra gentleman, an’ walk ‘pon two leg”. Drawing by Pixie Colman Smith (see the signature in the lower righthand corner – a P with a long tail crossed over by a narrow C and a winding S).

The actual story is more charming than my outline, but the important point is that toad knows the true name of the obeah woman, and it is this that he told to the prince. And that name? It is Recundadundadrumunday. Here, I conjecture, is the word from which Ransome constructed *Racundra*. It is evolved (or, as Ransome put it, “derived”) from *recunda*, the first part of the obeah woman’s name – the e being changed to an a, and an r being inserted between the d and a. These letter changes give *Racundra* a much more pleasant, rounded, even warmer sound than that of *recunda*, which seems a little harsh and abrupt in comparison. *Racundra*, Ransome’s mysterious boat name, was accordingly derived from the name of a potent, spell-casting witch with West African folklore lineage. As Ransome desired, it is a word that has no copyright attached to it, but more importantly, it is a word “derived” from a strong, magical, free-spirited character, with folklore origins (a topic close to Ransome’s heart), anchored within a set of stories that he dearly loved. Could Ransome have constructed any better name to suit his ship of dreams?

The moral appended to the “Why Toad Walk ‘Pon Four Leg” story is, “quattie buy trouble, hundred pound can’t cure it”, which basically encapsulates the idea that a small and innocent mistake can oftentimes be expensive and difficult to fix. This adage fits perfectly with Ransome’s situation upon commissioning *Racundra*, and he was to later write in his biography that in late 1921 he, “took a deep breath and signed the contract, determined one way or another to do enough writing to pay for it” [5, p. 304]. Indeed, Ransome had numerous problems in getting

Racundra built and ready for its first voyage in 1922 [1], and in early 1923 a house fire destroyed the boat’s ropes, rigging, sails, rudder, and lamps, which had been stored for wintering. There was a short, and eventually aborted *Racundra* cruise in late 1923, and a third cruise in 1924 – and that was it [8]. Ransome sold *Racundra*, insisting upon its name being changed, to Adlard Coles in 1925 [9].

One might attempt to draw many parallels between the obeah woman story, and its ending moral, with Ransome’s life in the early 1920’s. At that time, he was going through a difficult divorce with his first wife, Ivy Walker, he had effectively lost contact with his daughter Tabitha, his personal library and large book collection had been wrenched from him in the divorce settlement, he wanted to marry his then partner Evgenia Shelepina, he wanted to return to England, and he wanted to wind-up his time as a reporter on Russian politics. The commissioning and construction of *Racundra* was at the very core of the new life that Ransome wanted to begin, and indeed, for a few brief years, the plucky boat played to his dreams, and desires.

The new start that Ransome desired, however, was not intended to be that of a clean-slate renewal, but rather, a return to his origins. Not as a new (or old) bohemian, as such, but a return to his desire to be a storyteller and a writer of fiction. His divorce from Ivy eventually came through in 1924, he married Evgenia soon after, and then he returned to England in early 1925. Once back in England, he joined the staff of the *Manchester Guardian* newspaper, writing on foreign affairs, providing book reviews, and crafting a beloved

column on fishing.

In 1929, however, he finally resolved to chase his dream of becoming a full-time writer of fiction, starting, of course, with *Swallows and Amazons*. The rest is history. The 1920s were a magical, and transformative decade for Ransome, but as far as the naming of *Racundra* goes, it all began in the early 1900s with Recundadundadrumunday – the name of an old obeah woman, in an Anansi story collected in Jamaica by Pixie Colman Smith, and first heard by Ransome during the many, merry and memorable soirees he attended at Smith’s home in Chelsea.

References

- [1] A. Ransome. *Racundra’s First Cruise*. Brian Hammett (ed.), Arundel, Fernhurst Books, 2003.
- [2] M. Beech. “Why Racundra?” *Mixed Moss*, the Journal of the Arthur Ransome Society, 2023.
- [3] H. Brogan. *Signaling from Mars – the letters of Arthur Ransome*. London, Pimlico, 1997
- [4] Alan Kennedy, *A Thoroughly Mischievous Person – the other Arthur Ransome*. Cambridge, Lutterworth Press, 2021.
- [5] R. Hart-Davis (Ed.). *The Autobiography of Arthur Ransome*. London, Jonathan Cape, 1991.
- [6] A. Ransome. *Bohemia in London*. New York, Dodd, Mead & Co., 1907.
- [7] P. C. Smith. *Annancy Stories*. New York, R. H. Russell, 1899.
- [8] Arthur Ransome, *Racundra’s Third Cruise*. Brian Hammett (ed.), Arundel, Fernhurst Books, 2002.
- [9] K. Adlard Coles. *Close-Hauled*. London, Nautical Books, 1926.

How Did Arthur Ransome Distribute his Characters?

by Andrew Fisher (Evanston, Illinois)

I've always noticed that Arthur Ransome balances his characters well over the twelve books. The Swallows and the Amazons each appear in nine books, but the Ds are not far behind, appearing in six. Three books include all three groups: *Winter Holiday*, *Pigeon Post*, and *Great Northern*. This chart shows all the books and which groups are in them:

	Swallows	Amazons	Ds
<i>Swallows & Amazons</i>	x	x	
<i>Swallowdale</i>	x	x	
<i>Peter Duck</i>	x	x	
<i>Winter Holiday</i>	x	x	x
<i>Coot Club</i>			x
<i>Pigeon Post</i>	x	x	x
<i>We Didn't Mean to Go to Sea</i>	x		
<i>Secret Water</i>	x	x	
<i>The Big Six</i>			x
<i>Missee Lee</i>	x	x	
<i>The Picts and the Martyrs</i>		x	x
<i>Great Northern?</i>	x	x	x
Total	9	9	6

Alongside the Swallows, Amazons and Ds, several of Ransome's characters appear in more than one book.

First, Captain Flint (James Turner, Uncle Jim) appears in every title which has the Amazons, except *Secret Water* and *The Picts and the Martyrs*.



The Swallows' mother (Mary Walker, Mother) is in *Swallows & Amazon*, *Swallowdale*, *We Didn't Mean to Go to Sea*, and *Secret Water*.



The Swallows' young sister, Bridget, is in *Swallows & Amazon*, *Swallowdale*, *We Didn't Mean to Go to Sea*, and *Secret Water*.

The Swallow's father, Commander Walker (Ted) is seen in *We Didn't Mean to Go to Sea* and *Secret Water*.

The Amazons' mother (Molly Blackett) is in *Swallows & Amazons*, *Swallowdale*, *Winter Holiday* and *Pigeon Post*.

Holly Howe's Mr. Jackson appears in *Swallows & Amazons* and *Swallowdale*.

The Dixons, with their farm on the lake, are in *Swallows & Amazons*, *Swallowdale*, and *Winter Holiday*.

Cook (Mrs Braithwaite) at Beckfoot from *Swallowdale*, *Pigeon Post* and *The Picts and the Martyrs*.

Mary Swainson is in *Swallowdale* and *The Picts and the Martyrs*.

The boatbuilder at Rio from *Swallowdale* and *The Picts and the Martyrs*.

Of the charcoal burners, Young Billy is in both *Swallows & Amazons* and *Swallowdale*, while his father, Old Billy, is just in *Swallows & Amazons*.



Coot Club president, Tom Dudgeon, the "Death and Glories" (Joe, Bill and Pete), Mrs. Barribble, Tom's mother and his father, Dr. Dudgeon, the policeman (Mr. Tedder), Jim Woodall (skipper of the Sir Garnett) and Mr. Farland, the lawyer (Port and Starboard's father and Tom's "Uncle Frank") are all in both *Coot Club* and *The Big Six*.



Timothy Stedding or "Squashy Hat", Slater Bob, and Mrs. Tyson are in *Pigeon Post* & *The Picts and the Martyrs*.

The Amazons' Great Aunt, Maria Turner, is in *Swallowdale* and *The Picts and the Martyrs*.



Young farm boy Jacky Warriner is in *Swallowdale* & *The Picts and the Martyrs*.

Colonel Jolys, the volunteer fire-fighter who loves horns, is in *Pigeon Post* and *The Picts and the Martyrs*.

...and there are probably more I still have to remember.

As is my habit with Andrew's articles, I illustrated this one with selected pictures from the books.

I often had pictures in my head of some character as illustrated by Ransome, but then couldn't find them. Is this because Ransome's writing is so clear that I could see the characters, even if he didn't actually illustrate them? Or have I simply watched the 1974 movie or the *Swallows and Amazons Forever* movies too many times?

Simon

Captain Flint's Trunk — News from abroad and history

The Schooner *Bluenose*

by Maida Barton Follini (Halifax, Nova Scotia)

Boat races do not have a major place in the Swallows and Amazons series. At the end of *Swallowdale*, to celebrate the *Swallow's* repair, after the boat ran into a reef, the two crews hold a race before feasting at Beckfoot. Captain John uses the ploy once practiced by his father in a small-boat race: throwing all his weight on the lee-side to raise the keel, so that it would not strike the shallows as they cut their course near the land. And in *Coot Club*, Port and Starboard were willing to give up a week's cruise to help their father in his sail-boat races on the River Bure – until their father was called away on business and they were able to join the cruise with Dick and Dorothea after all. Exploring, piracy, bird preservation and boat salvage left little time for racing!

But off the East Coast of North America there was a race that thousands of people watched: the International Fishermen's Cup Race, between the fishing schooners of Nova Scotia and the fishing schooners of New England. The captains and crews who fished the Grand Banks for cod competed, with the winner declared the best boat and receiving a large silver trophy donated by the Halifax *Chronicle Herald* newspaper.

The International Fishermen's race was conceived to showcase the work-

ing boats of the fishing fleets, and the skills of the working sailors who crewed them. In contrast, the elite America's Cup Race was entered primarily by wealthy yacht owners who used vessels built specifically for racing, often at great cost.

The Fishermen's Cup race used the schooners that spent their fishing season on the Grand Banks off the southern coast of Newfoundland. There was great rivalry between the Canadian and the American fishermen as to which boat could fill their holds soonest and sail back to their home ports in Halifax, Boston, Gloucester, Lunenburg or other eastern ports. And those that arrived first, where the buyers awaited, could demand higher prices for their fish, before their competitors arrived.

The first Fishermen's Race was held in 1920. The rules required the vessels to have been employed fishing the Grand Banks for a season or more. Qualifying races for American fishing schooners would be held in the Boston area, and Canadian ones in the Halifax area. The two winning schooners qualified for the international competition which would consist of three races, the best two out of three gaining the cup. The 1920 cup race was held in Massachusetts Bay between Nahant and Cape Ann. The schooner *Esperanto* out of Gloucester, Massachusetts, won this first cup race, defeating the Lunenburg, Nova Scotia *Delawana*.

This loss motivated the Nova Scotians to form a company of sponsors to support the building of a vessel that could both fish and race – the *Bluenose*. The



Bluenose Schooner Company, Inc. was formed in Lunenburg, with local marine architect William J. Roué hired to design the vessel. The *Bluenose* was made of Nova Scotia oak, pine, birch and spruce with masts from Oregon pine. She was ready to sail for her qualifying fishing season on the Grand Banks on April 15, 1920. She was 143 feet in length; with a mainmast and topmast of 125 feet 10 inches, a main boom of 81 feet, a draught of 15 feet 10 inches, and sail area of 10,000 square feet.¹

Built in Lunenburg, the *Bluenose* was launched on March 26, 1921, and fished her first season on the Grand Banks that summer. Then, captained by Angus Walters, *Bluenose* represented Canada in the 2nd International Fishermen's Cup in October 1921, competing against the *Elsie* of Gloucester.²

These 1921 Cup races were held October 22 and 24 in the waters off Halifax, and large crowds gathered on shore to watch. They were rewarded, as the *Bluenose* won both races (making a third unnecessary) and allowing Captain Walters to bring the trophy to Canada. The *Bluenose* won the first bout by 13 minutes 9 seconds, and the second



The *Bluenose* launch, March 26, 1921 [photo: W.R. MacAskill, Nova Scotia Archives, 20040012]

bout by 11 minutes 1 second.

In October, 1922, the race was held off Massachusetts, with *Bluenose* competing with the *Henry Ford*. The *Henry Ford* won the first bout, beating the *Bluenose* by 2 minutes and 26 seconds. The second bout was won by the *Bluenose*, coming in ahead of the *Henry Ford* by 7 minutes and 23 seconds. The *Bluenose* took the third and deciding race, beating the *Henry Ford* by 8 minutes and 9 seconds.

In fall, 1923 another series of three International Fishermen's Cup races was held off Halifax, the *Bluenose* competing with the *Columbia*. The *Bluenose* won the first race by less than two minutes and the second one by 2 minutes 3 seconds. However, the *Bluenose* was disqualified by the judges for going around the wrong side of a race marker buoy. No winner was declared.

The next International Fishermen's race took place off Halifax, in October 1931, between the *Bluenose* and the *Gertrude L. Thebaud*. *Bluenose* came in 32 minutes and 3 seconds ahead in the first race and 12 minutes and 1 second ahead in the second bout.

In the third race, with light winds the *Thebaud* came to the finish a mile ahead of the *Bluenose*. However, the time limit had been exceeded, so the race was not counted as either a win or loss for either vessel.

The Great Depression of 1929-1939 caused a break in holding the races. Between the 1931 race and the final series of races in 1938, the *Bluenose* engaged in a number of visits to ports in Canada, the U.S., and even across the Atlantic to the British Isles. The *Bluenose* represented Canada in Chicago at the Century of Progress World's Fair in 1933. She



Captain Angus Walters and the International Fishermen's Cup

also was invited to join a race sponsored by the Mackinac Yacht Club, unofficially, as she was larger than the sloops who were the regular participants, and thus had an advantage. She passed the finish line first, winning a 300-pound cheese!

The *Bluenose* wintered over in Toronto, spent the summer of 1934 visiting ports along the Great Lake shores, and stopped at the summer 1934 Canadian National Exhibition. In 1935, the *Bluenose* represented Canada at King George V and Queen Mary's Silver Jubilee, sailing across the broad Atlantic. King George was too frail to go aboard the *Bluenose* but he praised her as "a vessel of considerable merit typical of the spirit of Nova Scotians".

The "Lunenburg Exhibitors Limited" company was formed in Lunenburg to use the *Bluenose* for day tourist cruises as well as longer charters. The *Bluenose* carried visitors along the southern and eastern shores of Nova Scotia, stopping off at some of the ports and fishing harbours.

The last International Fishermen's Cup Race was held in October, 1938 off Gloucester in light winds, between the *Bluenose* and the *Gertrude L. Thebaud*. Both were elderly, their wooden hulls having absorbed much

water over the decades. On October 9, the *Bluenose* lost its foretopmast, and the *Thebaud* crossed the finish line almost three minutes ahead. In the second race, the *Bluenose* lost a staysail but still won by twelve minutes. In the third race, in a dead calm. *Thebaud* came in a mile ahead of the *Bluenose* but both vessels exceeded the time limit so the race was declared void. *Bluenose* won the make-up race, six minutes ahead of the *Thebaud*. The *Thebaud* won the next race by five minutes and the *Bluenose* took the final race by two minutes. Of the five valid races, *Bluenose* won three, and kept the Fishermen's Cup.

The *Chronicle Herald* newspaper, Captain Angus Walters and many others who valued the *Bluenose* tried to convince the Canadian government to preserve it as a heritage ship, but with the Great Depression under way, the government had other problems to worry about. Captain Walters then bought the schooner he had captained and loved.

World War II was looming on the horizon and after Nazi Germany attacked Poland war began. With the Atlantic sea lanes in peril the East Coast fishery closed down. No longer could fishing schooners and their sailors make a profit. Captain Walters and his fellow owners were forced to sell the *Bluenose*. She was bought by the West Indian Trading Company in 1942, and used to carry goods between islands in the Caribbean. Four years later, in January 1946, she ran onto a coral reef near Île-à-Vache, Haiti, and sank.

¹"Bluenose: Canadian Icon": Nova Scotia Archives.

²The 1920's winner, the *Esperanto*, had previously hit a sunken vessel off Sable Island and sank. All her crew were rescued by the *Elsie*.

How Charcoal Burners Triggered a National Panic

by Alistair Bryden (Calgary, Albert)

The friendly charcoal burners, Old Billy and Young Billy, are much loved supporting characters in the books. The Billies are probably among the last active members of one of the oldest crafts in the world, once a massive industry vital to the production of iron and steel. Every blacksmith would rely on charcoal to fuel his forge. The charcoal burners in the books seem bucolic, living remotely in the forest. But just once some charcoal burners unwittingly triggered a national panic.



Charcoal burners' platform

(photo: Richard Webb / Charcoal burning platform / [CC BY-SA 2.0](#))

The story starts with the ancient beacon system. In *Swallowdale*, the Swallows and the Amazons famously climb Kanchenjunga, and in one of the delightful shifts from the imaginary world to the real world, the children survey the many real peaks visible across the Lake District. John uses his compass to point them out and names Scawfell, Skiddaw, Ill Bell and Helvellyn.

Titty asks, “Where’s Carlisle? It must be somewhere over there.”

“How do you know?” asked Nancy.

“And the red glare on Skiddaw

roused the burghers of Carlisle,” Titty responded.

Titty was quoting the famous last line of the epic poem “Armada”, by Thomas Babington Macauley (also recognized and partially memorized by Peggy and Nancy, which speaks volumes about the standard of education they received). The poem describes how in 1588, the whole country was roused to action to defend against the Spanish Armada by a system of beacons. Huge fires were set and maintained on hills and mountains across the country and when the Armada was spotted, the beacons were lit. One of the beacons was on Skiddaw. (Macauley may have taken some poetic licence as I understand

that Skiddaw isn’t visible from Carlisle.)

During the Napoleonic wars, once more there was a fear of invasion, this time from the French. The beacon idea was revived as a way to communicate rapidly across the country to alert militia, and beacons were again built and manned across England and Scotland.

A beacon was set at Hume Castle in Scotland and, in 1804, a sergeant of the Berwickshire Volunteers thought he saw one of the neighbouring beacons lit and so lit his own. This triggered the lighting of all the beacons to the west in the Scottish Borders and 3000 volunteers turned out to defend against a French invasion. However it was all a false alarm: the sergeant had seen charcoal burner fires and had mistaken them for a real invasion beacon.

The charcoal burners probably never knew they had inadvertently caused a national panic.



Napoleonic Wars beacon

(photo: Hywel Williams / Hill above Cuxton / [CC BY-SA 2.0](#))

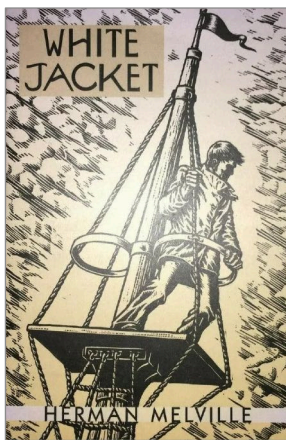
Ship's Library — Books (and movies) we've read and want to share

White Jacket, by Herman Melville

Comments by Ian Sacré (Royston, British Columbia)

I have always thought it curious how totally unconnected events in the distant past often effect our choices and actions in the here and now, and this in turn tends to make us ask ourselves, 'What if?'

This process is amply illustrated in the way earlier events would eventually lead Herman Melville to find himself with the material needed to write his book *White Jacket*.



In the early 1790s the fledgling United States was in need of ships to combat harassment and attacks by Barbary pirates off the Algerian coast on its merchant ships trading into the Mediterranean.

Under the Naval Act of 1794 Congress authorized the construction of six wooden heavy frigates. These frigates, designed by Joshua Humphreys, were larger and more heavily armed than most frigates of the day.

The funds for construction of the frigates had an escape clause attached to them such that, if a peace treaty with Algiers was signed while the ships were being built, the funds would be withdrawn and the work of construction would cease.

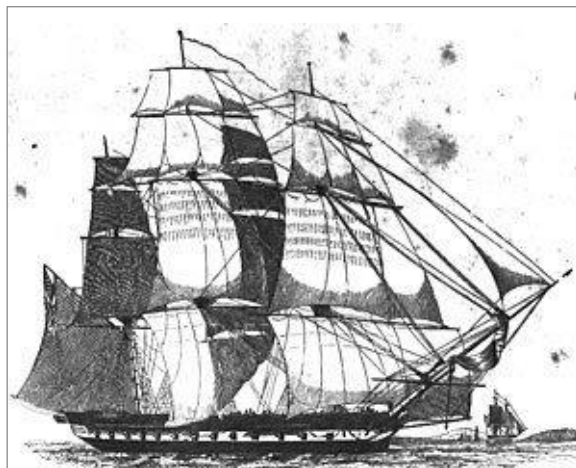
Alas for the builders, in 1796 a peace treaty with Algiers was signed and

construction stopped. Fortunately work was so far advanced on three of the frigates that the decision was taken to finish them. These ships were called the *USS United States*, the *USS Constellation* and the *USS Constitution*.

On the May 10, 1797 the *USS United States* was launched, becoming the first ship of the United States Navy. Her cost was \$299,336, tonnage 1,576 tons, length 312 feet bowsprit to spanker, beam 43 ft 6 in, draft 23 ft 6 in, speed 11 knots, complement 400-600 officers and men and 50 marines, and armament 32 x long 24 pounders plus 24 x 42 pounder cannonades.

Some years later, in August 1843, Herman Melville, after sailing in a number of whaling ships, found himself in Hawaii looking for a job. The *USS United States* was in port, and on August 10, 1843 Melville signed on board the now venerable frigate as an Ordinary Seaman (OS). Melville was twenty-four years old; the *USS United States* was forty-six. He served on the vessel for fourteen months, and was finally paid off the ship in Boston in October 1844.

A keen observer of human nature, Melville's service provided him with the material to write *White Jacket*, a narrative of his experiences



aboard a fictitiously named man-of-war he called *Neversink*.

Written in 1850, the book naturally reflects the language and literary style of the period. The version I recently read fortunately contained an excellent 'glossary of terms'. In Chapter one for instance, Melville made a 'Greco', which the glossary explained was a coarse jacket with a hood, much like a modern parka, I suspect.

The book has some 93 chapters, and in most cases each one presents a particular subject. The first chapter, titled *The Jacket*, describes how his ship was lying in Callao on the coast of Peru with orders to sail for Boston via Cape Horn. The ship had



Typical gun deck of a man-of-war

been away for three years and the purser's slop chest (stores) was depleted, with no warm clothing available to wear while rounding the Horn. So the author, the narrator, decides to make his own jacket (Greco) out of canvas duck. The more or less white canvas resulted in the narrator receiving the nick-name of "White Jacket".

I suspect that most if not all the various stories in the book are based on personal anecdotal material witnessed or seen by the author, extracted from his diary or journal.

Every chapter is given a title such as *Jack Chase on a Spanish Quarter Deck*, or *Breakfast, Dinner and Supper*, or *How They Sleep in a Man-of-war*.

In the book Melville is often very critical of the ship's officers and the manner in which they maintain discipline and good order and interact with the enlisted men. He relates how floggings were commonplace,

almost daily it seemed, and how the then US Articles of War stated that any violation of 15 of the more than 100 articles could result in a death sentence for the perpetrator! Many of the customs aboard the *USS United States* were derived from practices in Britain's Royal Navy but often were harsher. In some respects Melville seems to have admired Admiral Lord Collingwood of the Royal Navy — Collingwood took over command of the fleet after Nelson was killed at Trafalgar — and speaks of Collingwood's distaste for flogging and rare use of that form of punishment.

Melville also appears to have very little good to say about the competence of the medical treatment on board the *Neversink*. He vividly describes the 'hospital' on board the ship, located on the orlop deck, the lowest deck in a three-deck vessel. The space was dark, dirty, airless and unlit except for a couple of oil lamps. A place where injured or sick seamen

were sent, invariably to die.

Melville describes the treatment and surgery of a seaman shot in the leg just above the knee. The ship's surgeon, whom he renamed Cadwalader Cuticle, MD was a prima donna who boasted he could amputate a patient's limb in two minutes flat! In the case of the wounded seaman, he decided there was no point in probing for the musket ball but would amputate the leg high up near the groin. This he did with an audience of other ship's surgeons watching. The seaman died several days later, as expected, since this was apparently was par for the course in those days.

Obviously, the book will not be for everyone's choosing, but anyone wishing to learn more about life in a naval man-of-war in the 1840's will not be disappointed.

The book is available from Project Gutenberg: <https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/10712>

***Captains Courageous*, A Story of the Grand Banks**, by Rudyard Kipling

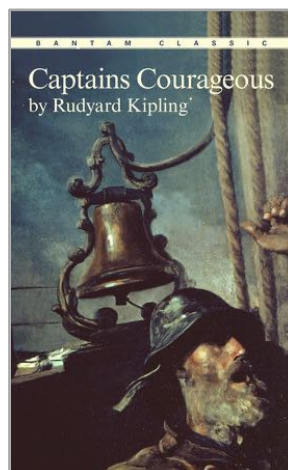
Review by Maida Barton Follini (Halifax, Nova Scotia)

Rudyard Kipling is mostly known for his *Jungle Books*, two volumes of stories for children about a boy brought up by wolves in India. Kipling also wrote a whole series of novels and short stories for adult readers about Anglo-English society in India, as well as poems and journalism. But he wrote one "American novel", set mostly in the fishing grounds of the Grand Banks south of Newfoundland, where the Gloucester fishermen of New England earned their living.

Kipling, born in 1865 in Bombay, India, of English parents, lived for four years in New England with his

American wife, Carrie Balestier. He bought a plot of land near Brattleboro, Vermont from Carrie's brother and had a home built. From here,

Kipling explored American culture in both the rural areas of New England and the urban centres of Boston, New York and San Francisco.



Kipling was an astute observer of working people and how they spoke. One reason his writing is so fascinating is that he puts the reader in touch with actual workers, their way of speaking, and the routines called for by their work. Although the fishery from schooners would soon be transformed by gasoline engine-propelled "Cape Islanders", Kipling in *Captains Courageous* records the lives of the nineteenth century East Coast fishermen in all their arcane language & details.

He was helped by a Vermont friend, Dr. James Conland, who had gone out with the fishing fleet when a

young man. Kipling dedicated his novel to Conland. Kipling and Conland went to Boston Harbour and “assisted hospitable tug-masters to help haul three and four-stick schooners... all around the harbour; we boarded every craft that looked as if she might be useful....Old tales, too, [Conland] dug up, and the lists of dead and gone schooners whom he had loved, and I revelled in profligate abundance of detail — for the joy of it. I wanted to see if I could catch and hold something of a rather beautiful localized American atmosphere that was already beginning to fade. Thanks to Conland I came near this.”¹

This is what makes *Captains Courageous* one of the best books of the sea. It puts the reader right on the deck of a Gloucester fishing schooner and into the small dories that row out from the schooner to scatter over the fishing grounds, and gives the reader the lines to handle that will pull the cod and halibut up from the deep.

Kipling uses the plot of a rich boy falling off an ocean liner into the sea, who is rescued by the crew of a fishing boat, to show us the intricate routines of the fishermen, as they steer their schooner, bait their lines, and salt the fish to bring them back to market. Much more than just throwing a line with a hook into the water. Harvey, the cosseted son of a wealthy family must work for his meals while on the schooner. We're Here, until the vessel and its crew return to home port — and that won't be until her holds are filled with fish. So Harvey must learn how to haul lines, reef sails, row dories, shovel



Gloucester fishing schooner *Elsie*

fish into the holds, and clean up the offal left behind.

Harvey learns about the culture of the crew, where the Captain is the autocrat, respected for steering the vessel to good fishing grounds. Where the older experienced crew have the first shift at the scheduled meals, while the younger ones, the “boys” wait till the second shift. Where everyone takes a watch at their appointed time, and keeps the night lanterns lit and the mooring anchor holding. The most expert work goes to the skilled and experienced while the crudest work, like washing fish-slime out of the dories, goes to the boys.

An experienced sailor takes Harvey around the deck, naming the rigging lines for him, so he will know to heave on the correct line.

“Now”, says his teacher,” How’d you reef the foresail, Harve?” And Harvey answers,

“Haul that in,” pointing.

“Fwhat? The North Atlantic?”

“Oh, its the reef-pennant. I’d hook the tackle on to the reef-pennant, and then let it down—“

“Lower the sail, child! Lower!” Says his mentor.

But most tasks Harvey learns by observing the crew and trying to copy them. The boys, Dan, the Captain’s son, and Harvey were tasked with baiting the trawl-line.

They would take offal from the cod as the men took knives and cleaned the fish of their insides, making them ready to salt. “The tubs

were full of neatly coiled line carrying a big hook each few feet; and the testing and baiting of every single hook, with the stowage of the baited line so that it should run clear when shot from the dory, was a scientific business. Dan managed it in the dark without looking, while Harvey caught his fingers on the barbs and bewailed his fate. But the hooks flew through Dan’s fingers like tatting on an old maid’s lap. “I helped bait up trawl ashore ‘fore I could well walk, he said.”

In this way, Harvey the “new boy” on the vessel, learned how to pitch fish into the hold, how to row a dinghy, how to haul a dinghy aboard and nest it with other dinghies, how to cast lines and trawls into the sea (and haul them out, loaded with fish) and how to do the work required of sailing a vessel.

As he became more skilled, he learned to whirl the lead-line around his head, then toss it into the sea, letting out the line quickly, till the lead-weight found bottom — then haul it in, read the depth from the markers, and show the mud or sand or seaweed material to the Captain for his interpretation. And finally, his interest in the Captain’s use of the quadrant induced the Captain to show

him how he “shot the sun” to determine the schooner’s position on the globe. While directions for using the navigational tool would have been too long and technical to include in the novel, Kipling’s mention of ‘shooting the sun’ along with his description of finding the bottom with the lead will point the reader to these methods of determining one’s position at sea, in sunshine or in fog.

Kipling includes much more than practical fishing information in the novel. He describes both the rivalry between schooner captains, each trying to locate the best place to anchor and fish, and the cooperative feelings between crews of different vessels, even ones with hostility towards each other, when a schooner was sinking or in danger. He describes the times of sadness when a boat is lost in a storm and all are not rescued. And off-duty times of bringing out the instruments — fiddle, accordion, harmonica, and singing of old songs, telling of old tales. The fishing community is portrayed as a society in itself, with its heroes who endanger themselves to rescue others, its wise

men, the elders who are followed because they know best, the skilled cleaners of fish, the best cooks in the galleys, the best tellers of tales.

Fishing was a dangerous occupation, even when the most careful precautions were taken by experienced sailors. Gear sometimes failed, hazards sometimes breached the hulls of boats, and steamships without good lookouts could run a schooner down. But wind and weather were the most persistent dangers, the wind whipping the seas into giant adversaries. Waves could swamp a schooner or even larger vessels. Rarely did a fishing fleet return to shore without a tale of loss — in the nineteenth century and in modern times as well. Fishing the oceans is still one of the most dangerous trades to follow.

But in spite of the danger, something calls a sailor back to the sea. Poet Masefield wrote:

I must go down to the seas again, to
the lonely sea and the sky,

And all I ask is a tall ship and a star
to steer her by.²

And Kipling included a stanza by Longfellow in his novel’s dedication:

I ploughed the land with horses,
But my heart was ill at ease,
For the old seafaring men
Came to me now and then,
With their sagas of the seas³

Captains Courageous was serialized in McClure’s Magazine in 1896, first printed by Doubleday Doran in 1897, and reprinted by Charles Scribner’s Sons in 1898, with illustrations by John Lockwood Kipling (Kipling’s artist father) with photos of ceramic bas-reliefs.

It is available from Project Gutenberg: <https://www.gutenberg.org/e-books/2186>

¹ Wikipedia: “Captains Courageous”

² From “Sea Fever”, John Masefield.

³ From “The Discoverer of the North Cape” by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Beckfoot Kitchen — Eating with the Swallows and Amazons

Better Than Mash: Summer Pudding Any Time

by Molly McGinnis (Manteca, California)

First off, let’s get one thing straight. If a Briton says “and, for pudding?” they want to know what’s for dessert. In late summer when raspberries, currants, blackberries, cherries, and sometimes even small tasty strawberries are plentiful, “pudding” might look like this:

The photographer/recipe author ([Caroline’s Cooking](http://www.carolinescooking.com/summer-pudding/); <http://www.carolinescooking.com/summer-pudding/>) has thoughtfully arranged raw fruits on this picture of her summer pudding so that we can see what’s inside: the same fruits, cooked with sugar and a little water and heated just enough to soften the fruits and release juices. The slice of bread outside holds it all together (you hope).

Even this version, formed in a bowl and turned out whole onto the serving dish, is so easy Susan could have

made it. The crews could have foraged all these fruits if they were in the right place at the right time (though they might have had to forage in nearby farms’ gardens for some).



(Or, skip to the end and make your — and, I’m sure, Susan’s — *Summer Pudding the Even Easier Way!*)

You'll need a pudding bowl — any kind of deep roundish bowl that will hold your fruit, a saucer small enough to fit inside the pudding bowl, and a smallish jar of jam or water to weight down the saucer lightly.

You'll heat the fruit in the oven, in any glass or ceramic bakeware that will hold it.

1. Collect enough “soft fruits:” — traditionally, red kinds: raspberries, red currants, cherries — to fill the bowl you'll line with bread (they'll shrink). Blackberries are a very good addition and tiny wild blueberries are good too. (I buy these frozen, harvested along the US/Canada border.) But do include at least a few cherries — cherry juice keeps the bread crisp. So says British master chef and author Georgina Horley, correctly, in her 1969 *Good Food On A Budget*.

2. Clean the fruits. Pit cherries, stem berries. If you're lucky enough to find currants, use a fork to take the stems off. (Photo: [Blog from Floyd, Virginia](https://eatingfloyd.blogspot.com/2011/07/preserving-floyd-red-currant-jelly-and.html): <https://eatingfloyd.blogspot.com/2011/07/preserving-floyd-red-currant-jelly-and.html>)



3. Put the fruits in a heat-proof bowl and sprinkle with enough sugar to coat them well. Mix and heat in a low (250 – 300° F) oven while you get the shell ready. The idea is to soften the fruit enough to release juice without really stewing them. Take the fruits out and let them cool before adding to the lined pudding bowl. Some mixtures

Summer Pudding the Even Easier Way

1. Get a package of frozen fruit out of the freezer. The mix I like best is called “Cherry Berry” and there are several brands. Put as much as you think you'll need — one package will make four or five generous servings-- into a roomy bowl and sprinkle with enough sugar to coat the fruit. Stir it now and then while the oven heats and you break and toast the bread. Don't worry about breaking the fruit, it helps release juice.

2. Break bread into small bite size pieces, spread onto an oven tray, and dry and even toast the bread bits a little at about 250-300°F. No need to preheat.

I've used French bread, leftover dinner rolls, homemade whole wheat bread, pita bread... and I forget what else. Only hard-baked French bread really needs the crusts cut off.

3. Toss the crisped bread bits (including crumbs) with the fruit, which should be more or less thawed by now. I

will need a little water or fruit juice (cherry, pomegranate or...?) to make enough juice to moisten the top.

4. (or perhaps this should be #1) Any kind of bread is fine. Cut the crusts off your bread, slice if not already sliced, and arrange as closely together as possible on a cutting board. For the top, turn the pudding bowl upside down and cut a circle around the rim, Cut a smaller circle for the bottom of the bowl. Cut strips of bread for lining the sides of the bowl. Slightly dried out is better than fresh — you can dry the bread in a low (200- 250°F) oven while you prepare the fruit. (Modern tip: line the bowl with plastic wrap to make the pudding turn out smoothly.)

5. Line the bowl with the bread. Some cooks like to overlap a bit, some don't mind a bit of a gap at the bottom end of the bowl. When the fruit-sugar mixture is cool, pour carefully into the lined bowl, saving some juice for the top. Cover the top with pieces of bread, spoon the saved juice over them, top with the saucer and weight, cover with plastic wrap, and chill for 24 hours, or more. It's wise to put the bowl on a plate to catch overflow.

If the pudding stays in one piece, cut wedges. If it falls apart when turned out, pretend you meant it and spoon out servings. A dribble of cream might be useful camouflage here.

Note: The light fresh taste of a well-made summer pudding is dulled by cream or custard, though a pitcher of light cream on the table might serve to suit other tastes.

like a big fruit bite and a small bread bite on my spoon. Taste as you go along and adjust.

Add some fruit juice to moisten the bread, if needed. Spoon into serving cups or small bowls when the bread is all fruit-colored and serve while it's still cold.



Susan could have dried her stale bread out in the dry frying pan if she'd wanted to, master of campfire cooking that she was. (This would have been a good idea for the Fried Cannonball bread too.) And of course, blackberries and sugar alone would have made a fine summer pudding.

This 'n That

Seen on the Bay

Contributed by Ian Sacré (Royston, British Columbia)

Reading over the index of articles contributed by everyone, I came across the piece I'd written for the May 2023 issue, "The Consequence of Keeping a Poor Anchor Watch".

The subject was beautifully illustrated this past week right in front of my house here on the shore of Comox Bay. We had a particularly stormy day, and on Monday night a 50-odd-foot ketch anchored in front of my house dragged her anchor; she came ashore on the silty shoals that border the bay. She was towed off the following day an hour and twenty minutes before high water. No one had appeared to be on board for a couple of weeks before the incident.

Always lots to see on the Bay.



Signals from TARSUS/North Pole News is a joint publication of TARSUS (The Arthur Ransome Society USA) and TARS Canada.

The position of TARSUS coordinator is open; if you are interested, [please volunteer...](#)

The TARS Canada coordinator is Ian Sacré, gallivanterthree@shaw.ca

The editor is Simon Horn, sjhorn@gmail.com

Please send contributions, questions and suggestions for the newsletter to the editor.

Signals from TARSUS/North Pole News. Index by Author. February 2016 - January 2024

Compiled by Simon Horn

Here is an updated index to newsletter articles that have appeared since I have been editor, from 2016 through the January 2024 issue. The list is sorted by the author's first name and then by issue and includes the title, the section, the subject and the issue date. I have not included the regular Ship's Papers sections from the coordinators and myself, since they appear every time. Please send in any comments or suggestions for improvements. Remember, too, that your PDF reader can enlarge the type if you find it too small.

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"Another Country"	The Ship's Library	Review	Sept. 2016
Swallows and Armenians	The Ship's Library	Review	Jan. 2020
My Favourite Book	Dipping Our Hands	Me and Arthur Ransome	May 2023
Gordon Proudfoot			
Arthur Ransome in my Life	Dipping Our Hands	Me and Arthur Ransome	June 2016
Ian Sacré			
The Tent Maker's Tale	Kanchenjunga's Cairn	Camping	Feb. 2016
Nautical Reading	The Ship's Library	Review	June 2016
Grog!	Kanchenjunga's Cairn	History	Sept. 2016
The Bucket List Sand Yacht Saga	The Prof's Laboratory	Voyaging & adventures	Feb. 2017
More Nautical Reading	The Ship's Library	Review	June 2017
Swallows and Amazons and Pemmican	Beckfoot Kitchen	Recipe	June 2017
Cruise of the Lydia	Kanchenjunga's Cairn	Sailing & cruising	Oct 2017
Cruise of the Sandhawk	Kanchenjunga's Cairn	Sailing & cruising	Jan. 2018
So What about that Wind in the Willows?	The Prof's Laboratory	Sailing & cruising	May 2018
"Racundra's Third Cruise"	The Ship's Library	Review	Sept. 2018
In Search of the Great Northern Diver's Range	Kanchenjunga's Cairn	Voyaging & adventures	Jan. 2019
Swallowdale & the Salvage of Swallow	The Prof's Laboratory	Sailing & cruising	May 2019
Polar Region Sledging Rations & Recipes	Kanchenjunga's Cairn	Camping	Sept. 2019
The 'Beast' Goes East!	Kanchenjunga's Cairn	Voyaging & adventures	Jan. 2020
"Boxing the Compass"	Pieces of Eight	Sailing & cruising	Jan. 2021
Favorite Seafaring Writings Remembered	The Ship's Library	Sailing & cruising	May 2021
Swallow's Brown Sail and More	The Prof's Laboratory	Sailing & cruising	Sept. 2021
On The Spur of The Moment	Kanchenjunga's Cairn	Sailing & cruising	Jan. 2022
On The Spur of The Moment (continued)	Kanchenjunga's Cairn	Sailing & cruising	May 2022
Moving On with the Circle of Time	Kanchenjunga's Cairn	Voyaging & adventures	Sept. 2022
It All Hinged On A Folding Boat!	The Prof's Laboratory	Behind the books	Jan. 2023
The Consequence of a Poor Anchor Watch	The Prof's Laboratory	Behind the books	May 2023
A Dinghy Mast	The Prof's Laboratory	Sailing & cruising	Sept. 2023
The Wager: Shipwreck, Mutiny and Murder	The Ship's Library	Review	Jan. 2024
Janet Shirley			
On "Ransome's Illustrations"	Dipping Our Hands	Me and Arthur Ransome	Sept. 2019
Jill Blair			
A Road and River Odyssey	Kanchenjunga's Cairn	Voyaging & adventures	May 2020

A Road and River Odyssey - 2	Kanchenjunga's Cairn	Voyaging & adventures	Sept. 2020
John Pappas			
Some Pictures from the Lakes	Kanchenjunga's Cairn	Voyaging & adventures	Sept. 2023
Jules Blue			
Bagging the Monroes	Kanchenjunga's Cairn	Voyaging & adventures	Jan. 2021
Voyaging on a Tall Ship	Kanchenjunga's Cairn	Sailing & cruising	May 2022
Kate Crosby			
Who Before Me?	The Ship's Library	Reading & Collecting	Jan. 2021
Conch Shell	Dipping Our Hands	Me and Arthur Ransome	Jan. 2023
Lorne Brown			
Thomas, Ransome and Adlestrop	Dipping our Hands	Behind the books	Sept. 2018
"Those Snake Island Kids"	The Ship's Library	Review	Sept. 2018
Louis Springsteen			
Swallows and Amazons Continued	Dot's Latest Story	Stories	Sept. 2016
Maida Barton Follini			
Before the Spray	Captain Flint's Trunk	Sailing & cruising	June 2016
Skimming Over the Ice	Dipping Our Hands	Me and Arthur Ransome	Jan. 2018
Sailing Around the Horn to the Goldfields	Dipping our Hands	Me and Arthur Ransome	Sept. 2018
Pirates, Explorers, Indians & Imaginary Roles	Dipping Our Hands	Me and Arthur Ransome	May 2020
The Amazons and Other Pirates	Captain Flint's Trunk	History	Jan. 2022
Animal Characters: Participants, Rescued and Rescuers	Dipping Our Hands	Behind the books	May 2022
Whales Up Close	Kanchenjunga's Cairn	Voyaging & adventures	Sept. 2022
Adventures and Misadventures in the High Sierra	Kanchenjunga's Cairn	Voyaging & adventures	Jan. 2023
Snakes Rehabilitated	Pieces of Eight	Voyaging & adventures	Jan. 2023
Birds in the Ransome Books	The Prof's Laboratory	Behind the books	May 2023
Mountain Walking, East and West	Kanchenjunga's Cairn	Voyaging & adventures	Sept. 2023
Setting Up Camp	Kanchenjunga's Cairn	Camping	Jan. 2024
Marilyn Steele			
Arthur Ransome, Helene Carter & my introduction to S&A	Dipping Our Hands	Me and Arthur Ransome	Sept. 2016
A Clay Medallion, circa 1954	Mrs Barrable's Gallery	Me and Arthur Ransome	May 2018
A Letter from AR to Helene Carter	Dipping our Hands	Behind the books	Sept. 2018
A Letter from Ransome, December 1931	Dipping Our Hands	Behind the books	Sept. 2020
Another Letter from Ransome, Feb. 1932	Dipping Our Hands	Behind the books	Jan. 2021
Another Letter from Ransome, June 1932	Dipping Our Hands	Behind the books	May 2021
Another Letter from Ransome, Nov. 1932	Dipping Our Hands	Behind the books	Sept. 2021
Martha Blue			
"The Marvels" by Brian Selznick	Pieces of Eight	Review	Jan. 2019
My Gritstone Trail	Pieces of Eight	Voyaging & adventures	May 2019
A Puzzling Situation	Pieces of Eight	Puzzle/quiz	May 2020
"Written"	Pieces of Eight	Stories	Jan. 2021
Martin Beech			
Literary licence, error of fact & story imperative	The Prof's Laboratory	Behind the books	May 2021
Did the Swallows and Amazons Visit Vancouver?	Dipping Our Hands	Behind the books	Jan. 2023
Molly McGinnis			
Banana Blossom Salad	Beckfoot Kitchen	Recipe	June 2016
Bananas Everywhere!	Pieces of Eight	Ransome's work	June 2016
Fried Cannonballs	Beckfoot Kitchen	Recipe	Oct 2017
A Winter's Feast	Beckfoot Kitchen	Recipe	Jan. 2018
Susan Learns to Make Hot-pot	Beckfoot Kitchen	Recipe	Jan. 2018
Dot and Dick in California	Dot's Latest Story	Stories	May 2018
Miss Beckwith's Bunloaf	Dot's Latest Story	Recipe	May 2018

Blackberry Pudding	Beckfoot Kitchen	Recipe	Sept. 2018
Dot and Dick in California	Dot's Latest Story	Stories	Sept. 2018
"Western Reptiles & Amphibians"	The Ship's Library	Review	Sept. 2018
No Moss on Uncle Jim!	Pieces of Eight	Behind the books	Jan. 2019
"Those Sugar-Barge Kids"	The Ship's Library	Review	Jan. 2019
"Extraordinary Birds"	The Ship's Library	Review	May 2019
First Fish	Dipping Our Hands	Me and Arthur Ransome	May 2019
No Moss on Uncle Jim! Part 2	Pieces of Eight	Behind the books	May 2019
American Summer Pudding	Beckfoot Kitchen	Recipe	Sept. 2019
The Beginning of it All	Captain Flint's Trunk	Behind the books	Sept. 2019
Food for Invalids: Mumps Food, Flu Food	Beckfoot Kitchen	Recipe	Jan. 2020
Cole Slaw	Beckfoot Kitchen	Recipe	May 2020
Dick's First Catch	Beckfoot Kitchen	Recipe	May 2020
Dot and Dick in California - Nighthawks	Dot's Latest Story	Stories	May 2020
Dot and Dick in California - Shore Trip	Dot's Latest Story	Stories	May 2020
Baked Beans	Beckfoot Kitchen	Recipe	Sept. 2020
Dot and Dick in California - A Featherboard	Dot's Latest Story	Stories	Sept. 2020
Who Is Sleeping in the Fram?	Beckfoot Kitchen	Recipe	Jan. 2021
Sweet Tea for Summer	Beckfoot Kitchen	Recipe	May 2021
Tea, the Drink	Beckfoot Kitchen	History	May 2021
Boats Full of Blackberries – Now What?	Beckfoot Kitchen	Recipe	Sept. 2021
Foraging in Fall	Beckfoot Kitchen	Recipe	Sept. 2021
When You Can't Sail... or don't want to...	Kanchenjunga's Cairn	Sailing & cruising	Sept. 2021
Snowy Winter	Pieces of Eight	History	Jan. 2022
Bringing Home the Catch	Beckfoot Kitchen	Recipe	May 2022
Go Fish!	Pieces of Eight	Voyaging & adventures	May 2022
Great-Aunt Cookery	Beckfoot Kitchen	Recipe	Sept. 2022
Real Recipes from Imaginary Stories: Missee Lee	Beckfoot Kitchen	Recipe	Jan. 2023
Alarm Bells From Far Rockaway to Beckfoot	The Prof's Laboratory	Behind the books	May 2023
Squashed Flies, Anyone?	Beckfoot Kitchen	Recipe	May 2023
Separated by a Common Language	Beckfoot Kitchen	Recipe	Sept. 2023
Dinner with the Great Aunt	Beckfoot Kitchen	Recipe	Jan. 2024
Nikki McLure			
Arthur Ransome's Birthday Corroborree	Pieces of Eight	Camping	June 2017
Getting Ready for the Wooden Boat Festival	Captain Flint's Trunk	Sailing & cruising	June 2017
Paul Nelson			
Gators and Pythons and Pirate Boys! Oh, My!	Kanchenjunga's Cairn	Voyaging & adventures	Jan. 2018
Pirates attack a US Coast Guard Gunship	Kanchenjunga's Cairn	Me and Arthur Ransome	Sept. 2019
Biking, Hand Grenades, and Sailing	Kanchenjunga's Cairn	Sailing & cruising	Jan. 2020
Churchill, Ransome, and Me	Dipping Our Hands	Me and Arthur Ransome	May 2020
"The Curve of Time"	Pieces of Eight	Review	Sept. 2020
The Great, Epic, Magnificent Andele Adventure	Kanchenjunga's Cairn	Voyaging & adventures	Jan. 2021
The Boy, Me and the Cat	The Ship's Library	Review	May 2021
Snake vs Cat: Who Would Win?	Dot's Latest Story	Stories	May 2022
Peter Calamai			
Ransome's Winter	Dipping Our Hands	Me and Arthur Ransome	Feb. 2017
Our Private Films	Dipping Our Hands	Me and Arthur Ransome	Jan. 2018
Petr Krist			
Winter Holiday Hike	Pieces of Eight	Puzzle/quiz	Sept. 2016
Crab Island Quiz	Pieces of Eight	Puzzle/quiz	Feb. 2017
Richard G. Mills			
AR Taught Me!	Dipping Our Hands	Me and Arthur Ransome	May 2018
Today's Sixth Graders: The Big Six: "Booor-ing"!	Dipping our Hands	Me and Arthur Ransome	Jan. 2019

Robert Dilley			
Bacon and Eggs!	Beckfoot Kitchen	Recipe	Jan. 2018
A View of Tallinn	Kanchenjunga's Cairn	Ransome country	Jan. 2019
Secret Water from Above	Captain Flint's Trunk	Ransome country	May 2019
Mummy, Mother, Mum?	Captain Flint's Trunk	Behind the books	Jan. 2022
Ross Cossar			
On Reading Ransome while Sailing Sea Bear	Dipping Our Hands	Sailing & cruising	Jan. 2021
Under the Stars Aboard Sea Bear	Kanchenjunga's Cairn	Sailing & cruising	Sept. 2022
RYA Magazine			
When Swallows and Amazons meets James Bond	Captain Flint's Trunk	Review	Feb. 2017
Simon Horn			
Which Book? What's Happening?	Pieces of Eight	Puzzle/quiz	Feb. 2016
Ransome Country	Captain Flint's Trunk	Ransome country	Sept. 2016
Confessions of an Armchair Sailor	Dipping Our Hands	Me and Arthur Ransome	Feb. 2017
My Children and Arthur Ransome	Dipping Our Hands	Me and Arthur Ransome	June 2017
Try a LitWits Kit	Pieces of Eight	Review	June 2017
A Book Maze	Pieces of Eight	Puzzle/quiz	Oct 2017
The 2016 Swallows and Amazons Movie	The Ship's Library	Review	Oct 2017
"The Twilight Years - Hill Top"	The Ship's Library	Review	Oct 2017
"The Boat in the Bay"	The Ship's Library	Review	May 2018
Tent for Two Wraps Up	Kanchenjunga's Cairn	Voyaging & adventures	Sept. 2018
Ransome's Illustrations	Mrs Barrable's Gallery	Ransome's work	Jan. 2019
"The Twilight Years - London"	The Ship's Library	Review	Jan. 2019
All the animals were out searching...	Pieces of Eight	Puzzle/quiz	Sept. 2019
The Mariner's Library	The Ship's Library	Review	Sept. 2019
The Other Railway to Windermere	Kanchenjunga's Cairn	Voyaging & adventures	Sept. 2019
Can you connect the characters & the books?	Pieces of Eight	Puzzle/quiz	Jan. 2020
"Sunlight and Shadows"	The Ship's Library	Review	Jan. 2021
Looking for AR Maps?	Pieces of Eight	Ransome country	May 2021
On "My reading Ransome's books in French"	The Ship's Library	Ransome's work	Sept. 2021
Try out the Arthur Ransome Trust "Home Activities Resource Kit"	Pieces of Eight	Puzzle/quiz	Sept. 2021
Swallows and Amazons in Bermuda (NOT!)	Dot's Latest Story	Stories	Jan. 2022
Why Peter Duck and Missee Lee Are Not Just "Fantasies"	Dipping Our Hands	Ransome's work	May 2022
Inspiration for Ransome's Characters	Pieces of Eight	Behind the books	Sept. 2022
No Holds Barred – Really?	The Ship's Library	Review	Sept. 2022
NEEDED: a New Hand for the U.S. Helm	Administrative	Administrative	Jan. 2023
The 2023 N. American TARS Member Survey	Administrative	Administrative	Jan. 2023
Is the Coordinator's Role Changing?	Administrative	Administrative	May 2023
Ransome Broadside (2005 Amazon publication)	The Ship's Library	Review	May 2023
2023 North American Member Survey Results	Administrative	Administrative	May 2023
Can North Americans Start Getting Together... In Person or Virtually?	Administrative	Administrative	Sept. 2023
Drawn at a Venture (2014 Amazon publication)	The Ship's Library	Review	Sept. 2023
Ransome on Blue Water Sailing (1999 Amazon publication)	The Ship's Library	Review	Jan. 2024
Steve Crouch			
Sailing Woo Hoo Across the Generations	Kanchenjunga's Cairn	Sailing & cruising	June 2017
The Blue Family			
Our Climb of Kinder Scout	Pieces of Eight	Voyaging & adventures	May 2018
A TARS pilgrimage to Norfolk	Pieces of Eight	Voyaging & adventures	Sept. 2018