



# Furthest South

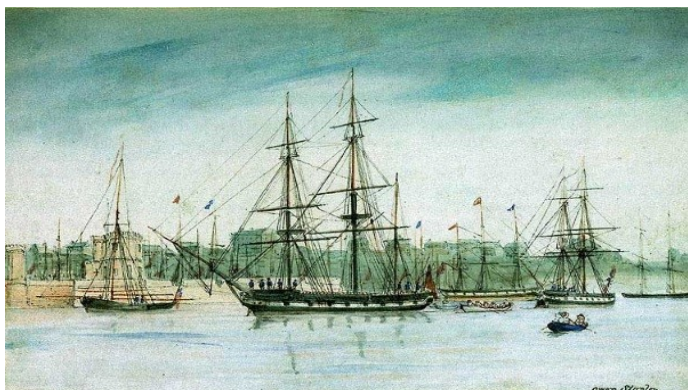


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Newsletter of the Arthur Ransome Society in Australia and New Zealand

## Three ship's naturalists, Australia and other Islands

Patrick Armstrong



HMS Beagle, probably in Sydney Harbour, 1841, during the third voyage; Owen Stanley.

The Arthur Ransome series is book-ended by two islands: *Swallows and Amazons* focuses on Wild Cat Island (aka Peel Island in Coniston Water) and the plot in *Great Northern?* hinges on an unnamed island in an unnamed small loch somewhere on the east coast of the Isle of Lewis, in the Outer Hebrides. Islands feature throughout the series: there are Crab Island in the Caribbean in *Peter Duck* and quite a number of other brief mentions. Wild Cat Island reappears as Spitsbergen (now usually referred to as Svalbard) in *Winter Holiday*. And, as Catherine Lamont showed in the June 2021 issue of *Furthest South*, all the way through there's the hovering, rather ghostly presence of Australia...

Dick, as he strives to document the breeding of the great northern divers for posterity, was compared, by Nancy, to the great Victorian naturalist (*Great Northern?*, chapter X, page 127 in my edition).

We were just cruising. This makes it a voyage of discovery. The cruise of the *Sea Bear* will go down in history. It'll be remembered for ever and ever, just because she had the Professor aboard. Good for the Ship's Naturalist. It's like the Voyage of the Beagle, Dick's a sort of Darwin.

Well, she was partly right: Charles Darwin has always been referred to as the ship's naturalist for his role during HMS *Beagle's* epoch-making voyage around the world, 1831–1836. But Darwin was always a supernumerary, who paid his own way and did not really have any official position. He was the guest of the Captain (Robert Fitzroy).

On naval vessels at the time it was often the ship's surgeon who was deputed to make scientific observations. For much of Darwin's *Beagle* voyage the Acting Surgeon was one Benjamin Bynoe, FRCS (1803–1865), who did indeed make some natural history observations during that voyage, including assisting Darwin in the Galapagos Islands.

Possibly he felt slightly eclipsed by Darwin's presence, however, for his collecting of specimens and scientific work only came into its own on the third voyage of the *Beagle* (1839–1843) when she explored the East Indies and Australia (without Darwin on board). Benjamin collected plant and animal specimens, from the Abrolhos, the Bass Strait Islands and elsewhere in Australia.

His specimens are now in the Hooker Collection at Kew, the London Natural History Museum Herbarium and several Australian botanical collections. And when the Captain of the *Beagle* on that third voyage, John Lort Stokes (1811–885), wrote an account of the voyage, *Discoveries in Australia...* (London, 1846), he included a number of papers by Bynoe. These included an account of the encounter with some Aboriginal people at Roebuck Bay, north-west Australia, a discussion of the climate, and a description of marsupials. Bynoe also spent time in Tasmania, later in life. Benjamin Bynoe's Australian credentials are probably better than those of Darwin, who spent only a little over five weeks in

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Australia (although the Big Red Land was quite important to him).

But to return to Darwin, and islands.

Charles Darwin visited nearly 40 islands on the voyage, of which the Galapagos, despite their place in popular imagination, were not the most important. He spent more time in the Falklands than in the Galapagos; and then there were Australia and (separately) Tasmania, New Zealand, Tahiti, the Cocos, Mauritius, the Azores and Cape Verdes, Ascension and St Helena, Tierra del Fuego and Chiloé. All had their part to play in the development of the theory of natural selection. Darwin was fortunate not only in the number of islands he visited and their variety – Atlantic, Pacific and Indian Oceans, coral, volcanic and continental – but also possibly the order in which he visited them, those with simpler ecology and geology before those that were more complex. At an early moment in his career Darwin declaimed: ‘The zoology of archipelagos will prove well worth examining’. He might have said botany, geology or indeed any branch of natural history, for he was also fascinated by the variety of the various branches of humanity. But he also knew how to compare islands: ‘The habit of comparison leads to generalisation’ he wrote as the voyage was almost complete. Darwin’s love of islands, and his ability to compare environments, were the secrets of his success.

The *Sea Bear*, in one of the last summers before World War II (an idyllic, or perhaps idealised time?), cruised, *Beagle*-like, from island to island. The route is not given to us, but we

know she visited Skye and several places in the Outer Hebrides. Stornoway is not named but is presumably the port at which they took on stores and fuel. Dick Callum, like Darwin, was interested in everything (he certainly examined plants and birds, and he did a bit of archaeology). So perhaps Nancy’s comparison of the ship’s naturalist of the *Sea Bear* with Darwin was appropriate!

## Reference

Stokes, John Lort (1846). *Discoveries in Australia: With an Account of the Coasts and Rivers Explored and Surveyed During the Voyage of HMS Beagle in the Years 1837-38-39-40-41-42-43. By Command of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty; Also a Narrative of Captain Owen Stanley's Visits to the Islands in the Arafura Sea*. London: T. & W. Boone. Volume 1, Volume 2.

## Declaration of Interest

Besides developing an interest in natural history (and islands) partly through reading Arthur Ransome, Patrick has spent part of the last four decades following in Charles Darwin’s footsteps, and in the *Beagle*’s wake, visiting many of the islands that Darwin visited, with photocopies of the great naturalist’s field notes in hand. Patrick has been trying to find the exact routes taken and to locate the sites from which Darwin collected specimens. His current total is about 27 of Darwin’s islands. Some of his explorations are documented in his book *Darwin’s Other Islands* (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2004).



Sketch, probably by Augustus Earle, of a scene on the quarterdeck of HMS Beagle in 1832. Benjamin Bynoe is said to be the figure in grey in the centre of the group, holding a plant. The rather formally dressed individual with the tall hat, to his right (in the image), may be Darwin.

# Fabulous & Familiar

John Parsloe

Although many of my true-life adventures have been in either the cold polar or the wet seafaring worlds I have also had one or two in the far removed dry literary world. Here is a tale of one of those adventures.

I was late. Very late. It had taken me much longer than I'd planned to get across London City on the Underground.

I was to meet Elizabeth Booth, the Warne Archivist at Penguin Books. She was to hand over to me a 'treasure chest' of Beatrix Potter items to take back to New Zealand, the first time Beatrix Potter archival material had ever been allowed to leave the United Kingdom. This project had indirectly started many years before when I worked on a research ship berthed in Wellington.

In the early 1970s the New Zealand Government purchased a small former German cargo ship and had it converted into an oceanographic research vessel for the N.Z. Oceanographic Research Institute. The vessel's home port was Wellington where the institute was based. They named her *Tangaroa* after the Maori sea god. I was fortunate enough to be selected among the initial crew and, apart from periods away on secondment, remained with the vessel until it was decommissioned in 1984.

Most scientific cruises began and ended in Wellington. Whenever *Tangaroa* was back in its home port I would try and create some spare time during the working week to visit the National Library of New Zealand. There I carried out my own research project on the illustrations in children's books. The pictures in children's books had always fascinated me. Why do some appeal more to a child than others? What made Arthur Ransome's simple drawings special to me as a child and help draw me into the tale Ransome was telling? And eventually into a seafaring career – did 'Captain John' of *Swallow* eventually follow that career path too?

One day in 1990 in Wellington, when relieving on a Ro-Ro vessel sailing between Lyttelton and Wellington, I again found I had some free hours to spare. So up to the National Library I went to continue with my research project. When lunchtime arrived I retired to the library's public café. On this occasion, at a nearby table, was a small group of library staff also having their lunch. They were discussing an exhibition that was being planned for the following year in the National Library's public gallery. There were few people in the café at the time and it was hard *not* to hear what the group was talking about. Their

plans were well advanced for the exhibition. However, they were very concerned about its likely success – would it bring the punters in, would the media be interested? Their success was based on how many members of the public visited the exhibition and how much publicity was reported in newspapers, magazines, TV and radio.

My mind began to buzz with ideas on how their concerns could be resolved – it all seemed very logical to me! But should I intrude? I recognised at least one member of the group as a librarian from the children's library section upstairs. I decided to be cheeky.

I coughed. 'Excuse me, I couldn't help but overhear some of your conversation. To get the public's attention', I said, 'you need to include in your exhibition a famous children's author that most grown-ups will know or have heard of, for example, Arthur

Ransome of *Swallows and Amazons* fame. For the media's attention you need controversy. I know just the book that could do that: Margaret Dunningham's book *Three Brown Bears and the Manpower Man*, illustrated by Anne McCahon, wife of artist Colin McCahon, a story about three bears travelling to work in Wellington during the War.'

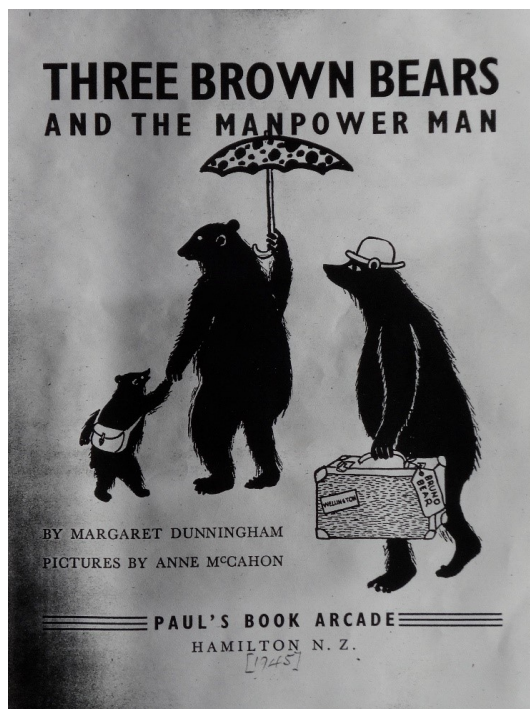
A deathly silence engulfed the literary table.

They had never heard of the *Three Brown Bears*, but they had all heard of Colin McCahon and of his wife Anne through her illustrations in the *School Journal*. And, they were probably thinking, who are you and how did you know of this New Zealand children's book they had no knowledge of?

So began a rewarding interlude in the literary world. A copy of the *Three Brown Bears* was found in the stack of the General Assembly Library at Parliament and transferred across to The National Library collection. Instead of Arthur Ransome, they chose Beatrix Potter for their Exhibition.

Back to the scene in London...

A high wrought-iron fence separated Penguin Books' Warne House from Wright's Lane. To get inside you needed to report to a gatehouse in the fence-line. I had been warned security was tight. The solid security guard rang the Warne Archivist,



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who was expecting me. She quickly appeared at the door at the top of the steep steps down to the yard. The guard let me in, to be greeted warmly by a worried-looking Elizabeth.

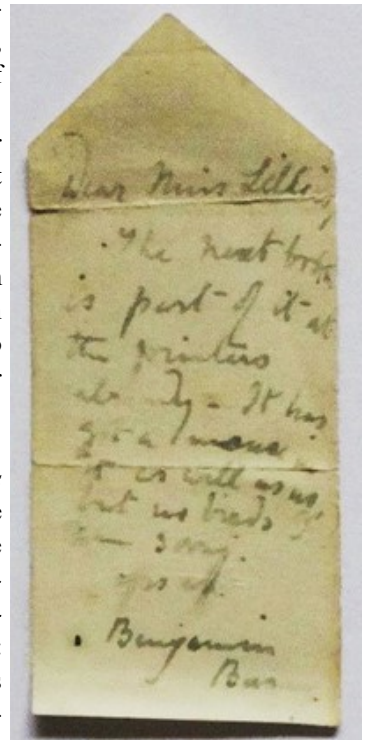
I should have been there an hour earlier so as to have plenty of time to be briefed and get to Gatwick Airport to catch my flight back to New Zealand. Elizabeth had arranged for a taxi to take me to Victoria Station to catch the Gatwick Express. It was already waiting outside the gate!

We ran through a cluttered rabbit warren of towering shelves full of files, cartons, books and 'stuff' until we arrived at a table laid out with all the items I was to take back to New Zealand, and the paperwork to go with them. They included a board game with counters, handmade by Beatrix Potter. Elizabeth repacked the works of art into a modified briefcase and handed it over to me, along with an important envelope and a pair of white gloves if I needed to remove any object for inspection by Customs.

No time for a cup of tea. Taxi, train, and in time to catch my flight at Gatwick Airport back to New Zealand. Air New Zealand was expecting me and my special hand luggage – and an empty seat had been arranged next to mine. Later that year, after the Exhibition was over, I did the reverse, returning the items to London and Warne House.

Some months later the National Librarian, Peter Scott, wrote to me. In his letter of appreciation he concluded: 'Without your very kind offer of assistance it would not have been possible to have had the Warne Archive material in the exhibition... much is owed to work that went on quietly behind the scenes to make it our most popular exhibition to date'.

Oh yes – *Three Brown Bears and the Manpower Man?* The Exhibition catalogue (*Fabulous & Familiar: children's reading in New Zealand, past and present*) said: 'The simple, bold drawings and classic, rhythmic, repetitive text of *The Three Brown Bears and the Manpower Man* (1945) comes as a breath of fresh air in the struggling world of early New Zealand picture book publishing.'



It sometimes pays to be a little cheeky!

## Quiz!

Test yourself on these Pigeon Post quiz questions

(Answers on page 24)

1. Mrs Blackett said that someone had been talking of gold in the fells ever since she was a little girl. Who was it?
2. Who said, 'No gold. Nothing. Coming home alone. Even his faithful armadillo sent ahead.'?
3. Who named the Ss, As and Ds Mining Company?
4. What is the miner's way of carrying a candle?
5. What did they have to buy in Rio for the camp on High Topps?
6. 'A pigeon a day ..... ..'
7. Who were the pioneers who searched for a campsite on the fells?
8. How did Roger find the cave with the gold?
9. What did the prospectors find in the gulch that proved Squashy Hat was close to their mine?
10. What did Peggy spirit away from Beckfoot (almost) without her mother knowing?
11. In what did the prospectors keep their gold dust?
12. Which person kept his/her head when the tunnel caved in behind them?
13. What did Titty and Peggy do for 'Timothy the armadillo'?
14. What was it that Peggy was first to find when they were combing High Topps?
15. What was Robin Tyson doing when they first saw him at the farm?
16. What did they all do before they packed up the garden camp at Beckfoot?
17. What stopped the furnace keepers continuing the job?
18. Which pigeon carried the vital message for help?
19. Who was last into the mine to escape the fire and why?
20. Who got the message off the pigeon's leg at Beckfoot when help was needed?

## Profile: Nancy Endersby-Harshman, VicTAR

### My Arthur Ransome Life

My first encounter with the works of Arthur Ransome was as a young child. It is clear in my mind. I had a lot of bronchial illness as a primary school child, due to a spontaneously collapsed lung, so I was at home from school quite a bit. I remember lying on the couch as I recovered, and my father handed me two books. One was called *Kangaroo Tales*\* and the other *Swallows and Amazons*. I put *Swallows and Amazons* to one side and focused on *Kangaroo Tales* which looked much more interesting. Well, that was wrong, wasn't it? I swapped over to *Swallows and Amazons* very quickly and never looked back.

Years later, on a holiday in England, I spent a few days in the Lake District. I knew nothing of where the real Arthur Ransome sites were and saw none of them, but there was no doubt that I was in the country of the books. Arthur Ransome's simple illustrations were true to life. I was excited to find some publications about Arthur Ransome while I was there, and inside one of them was a leaflet about the Arthur Ransome Society. How exciting! I joined as soon as I got home and then was surprised to receive a phone call from Jan Allen letting me know about AusTARS! This was just the beginning...

Some of what followed includes years of fun and friendship with our local group of VicTARS, corresponding with the AusTARS during my time as Secretary and finally meeting TARS from the UK, first by participating in the Literary Weekend in York where I gave a presentation on Arthur Ransome's time in Egypt and later by putting together a book on this presentation theme with Amazon Publications. I was well and truly fêted by VicTARS upon publication. Being a member of the Arthur Ransome Society has enriched my life due to the wonderful things I've done with other TARS members: steam train journeys, Arthur Ransome's birthday celebrations, literary days, Dogs' Home frivolities, quizzes, art with Mrs Barrable, and so much more. Jan is to thank for the impetus and organisation behind this varied list of activities.

My husband, Larry, and I have enjoyed hosting some Ransome-themed days at our home in Tecoma, often joined by AusTARS from interstate and some UK TARS who were passing through. TARS are always welcome! Over the years we've investigated Ransome's visits to China, Russia and Egypt. We've celebrated Ransome's honeymoon in Paris, fantasised with him in the South Seas and Caribees, marched in a lantern festival on his behalf and celebrated the Christmases he missed while overseas as a special correspondent. Ransome's fishing and birding interests have not been overlooked and we greatly enjoyed exploring the Viking links with his beloved Lake District. Ransome has provided all of us with a lifetime of topics to explore. Let's see what we can think of next!

\*on looking up *Kangaroo Tales* today, I can see that it was written by Rosemary Wighton and its full title is *Kangaroo Tales: A Collection of Australian Stories for Children* pub-



lished in 1963 and illustrated by Donald Friend. Hmmm, sounds interesting. Maybe I should try to find my old copy...

### My professional life

After being brought up in a Dick Callum type of household where natural history was of prime interest and importance, I studied biology and eventually became an entomologist. I worked on a horticultural pest of *Brassica* crops, the diamond-back moth (*Plutella xylostella*) for many years with the State Department of Agriculture, which culminated in a PhD on the subject of the moth's population genetics and insecticide resistance. I then moved on to working as a research fellow and laboratory manager at the University of Melbourne's Bio21 Institute as part of the Pest and Environmental Adaptation Research Group (PEARG), led by Professor Ary Hoffmann.

At PEARG, one of our main research projects is to do with the reduction of dengue, a viral disease transmitted by mosquitoes. We study the mosquito transmission aspect of the disease and continue to develop and refine an innovative method for preventing the mosquito from passing on the disease. We use a bacterium called *Wolbachia* which exists inside the cells of many insects in nature. The bacterium is injected into eggs of the main dengue vector mosquito, *Aedes aegypti*, where it does not occur naturally. The bacterium develops in the mosquito



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and is transmitted to the next generation of eggs via the female. Once a mosquito line contains the bacterium, mosquitoes can pick up the dengue virus when they feed on an infected person, but they cannot transmit the disease. After rearing tens of thousands of these *Wolbachia*-infected mosquitoes, we can release them in an area where wild dengue mosquitoes exist and they will fairly quickly replace the wild mosquito population. *Wolbachia* confers a mating advantage on the mosquitoes it infects. After the release, we are left with an area that still contains the same species of mosquito, but there is no dengue disease transmission. This method involves no insecticides or genetic modifications and *Wolbachia* has no effect on humans.

The release of *Wolbachia* mosquitoes occurred first in Cairns, Queensland where it has been completely effective at stopping dengue transmission. It has since been implemented in multiple countries throughout the tropical world where the dengue challenge is considerably higher than that in Queensland (endemic dengue, more mosquitoes and more people). Our group is involved with a release of *Wolbachia* mosquitoes in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia and it has been very gratifying to see that the dengue incidence in the release area has dropped by at least 60% due to the program. This release is set to increase as the Malaysian Department of Health implements the technique throughout the whole country.

Our next challenge is to establish *Wolbachia* mosquitoes in Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, a challenge of increased difficulty as we must work remotely with our colleagues at the moment. A large component of our entomological work is to make sure that our released mosquitoes can survive in the different environments where they are released. As you can imagine, the tropical climate of Malaysia is very different from the arid, high temperature environment in Saudi Arabia, so we test different strains of *Wolbachia* to understand which ones are heat tolerant, desiccation resistant, etc. My speciality is studying the insecticide resistance levels in the wild mosquitoes in



the potential release area and making sure those we rear in the laboratory have similar mechanisms to resist the chemicals they will encounter in their natural habitat. Although our management technique uses no insecticides, it is still possible that the released mosquitoes will be exposed to insecticides being used in other programs or by householders. We achieve the aim of surviving local insecticide exposure by crossing our laboratory mosquitoes with those in the field to bring across the field genetic background which will help to ensure local survival.

Highlights of the work for me have been seeing some burden of dengue being reduced due to our efforts and working with our collaborators in other countries. I had two exciting trips to the laboratory in KL (Institute for Medical Research) where I ran training workshops for the local scientists. I have also done the same thing in the new laboratory we have helped to establish in Jeddah (all pre-pandemic, of course) where it was mandatory to adopt the local dress. I also enjoy the challenge of running our biosecurity laboratory in Melbourne into which we import mosquitoes from our collaborating countries under strict quarantine. Each of these things, plus the endless fascination of working with an insect of great medical importance, keeps me going!

You can read more about our research program, and see some photos of me with my Malaysian colleagues, at

<https://blogs.unimelb.edu.au/pearg/#tab191> and <https://blogs.unimelb.edu.au/pearg/2020/08/28/the-resistance-advantage-a-field-genetic-background-is-important-for-survival-of-our-wolbachia-mosquitoes-in-malaysia-and-reduction-of-dengue/>



# Sir Basil Thomson's career in the Pacific – before his interview with Ransome

Cheryl Paget

In his autobiography Ransome recounts how in March 1919, on his return from Russia, he was taken from King's Cross station to Scotland Yard, where he was interviewed by Basil Thomson. Told to sit down in 'the famous chair', he was asked, 'Now I want to know just what your politics are.' Ransome replied, 'Fishing...'

You may have read my piece in the recent issue of *Signals* (September–December 2021), which gives an account of this interview, as a result of which Thomson helped Ransome briefly return to Russia to fetch Evgenia.

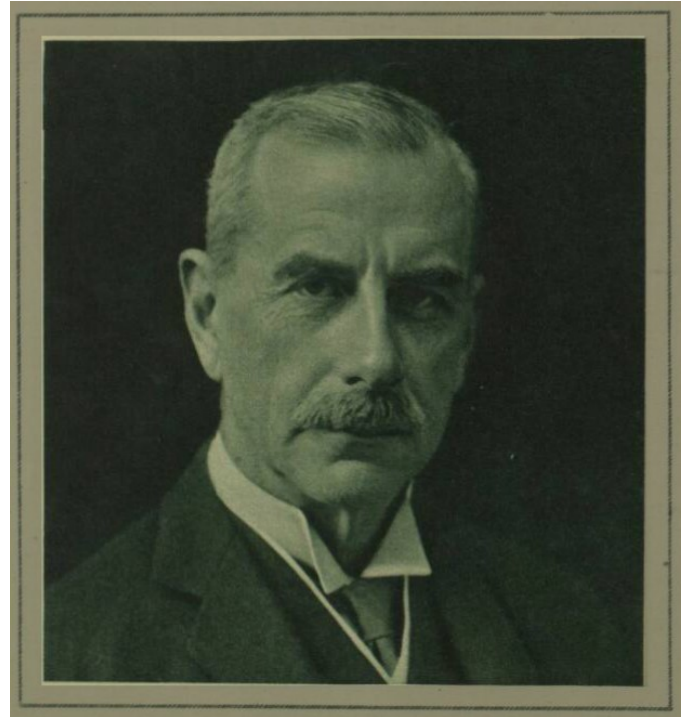
But long before Basil Thomson interviewed Arthur Ransome in 1919, he started his civil service career in the Pacific, an experience which was to have a profound influence on him, leading him to develop ideas on penal servitude and anthropology. These ideas were only to become more conservative as his career and world events developed, but the Pacific was the place where his interest in the human condition started.

Thomson was a prolific writer, not only about his time in the Pacific and his time working in Scotland Yard, but also as the author of a series of popular detective novels, the *Inspector Richardson* series. The only man to write about him, Noel Rutherford, clearly didn't think much of him. His entry about Thomson in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* is most often quoted when people write about Thomson, but it isn't a warm, illuminating entry. I will discuss why I think this happened.

His autobiography, *The Scene Changes*, was published just before his death in 1939. He was knighted in 1919 (just after he interviewed Ransome) for his services to the country through counter-espionage. He was well known for his role as head of CID at Scotland Yard, which became the enforcement arm of the War Office and the Admiralty in intelligence matters during the First World War. He was responsible for bringing to justice German spies and double agents. He only spent ten years in the Pacific, yet about half of his autobiography is taken up with his time there, so it clearly left an impression on him.

Basil Home Thomson was born on 21 April 1861 in Oxford. When he was two years old his father was made Archbishop of York. Basil was one of nine children, the third son. He left home at nine to go to school, Worsley's at Hendon, and from there he went to Eton, then to New College at Oxford, where one of his tutors was Dr Spooner (of Spoonerisms fame.)

He was 'unwell' at the end of his last term at Eton, and after two terms at Oxford he was 'unwell' again – shorthand for depression – and was advised to take 'a life in the open air, preferably abroad.' He felt that this made him a failure to his



father. At some point he formed an attachment to a young lady called Grace Indja Webber.

In the summer of 1880 he went off to Le Mans, Iowa, to learn how to herd cattle. He wired his family for money and tried his hand at land speculation, which alarmed his father, who didn't think it commensurate with his profession as an Archbishop. In 1883 he learned that Grace was contemplating marriage to another, which led to a relapse of his nervous condition, and he returned to England.

Having reached an understanding with Grace and her family that he would marry her as soon as he could acquire a firm financial footing, he secured a position offered by the Colonial Office in the Fijian civil service as a cadet. The cadetship was offered to those who had been to a public school (such as Eton) and could pass an examination in the native language and customs within two years. He sailed in December 1883.

Brought up a strict Anglican in a large family, his father had high aspirations for his sons which Basil clearly felt he had failed. Dogged and determined, he was going to prove himself to his father, to Grace (and to her father) before he even set sail. The episodes of depression don't seem to have affected him in later life, but one wonders if the fear of falling into depression drove him to work even harder as he never seemed to give himself permission to take time off.

He travelled via Italy, Egypt and Sydney, though he didn't think much of Circular Quay. 'In those days Sydney seemed a depressing place, with an air of suburban vulgarity about it

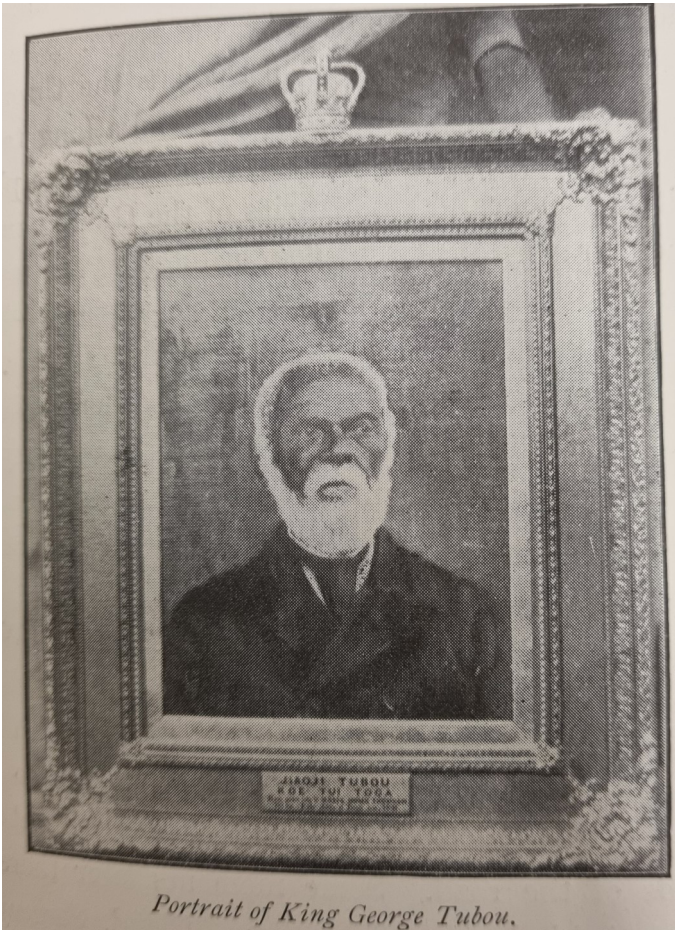
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that made me shiver' (Thomson, 1937, p. 22).

After a stop at Noumea in the French penal colony of New Caledonia he made this observation:

It is impossible not to contrast the French and the English way of starting a colony... The British aim at making their colonies pay, the French at making them habitable (Thomson, 1937, p. 25).

It wasn't long before the thought of the exam began to worry him. When he had been in Suva, Fiji, for five months, the new Governor, Sir John Thurston, advised him that he had been selected for the post of a new stipendiary magistrate in the province of Nandronga. He would have to build his own house, the courthouse and the police station, and enrol a new police force, with an allowance of £30. The governor allayed his fears of not having sufficient language skills by giving him an interpreter until he had learnt the language. However, he found that the interpreter was working against him so he sent him back to Suva on the advice of the chief, and in three months he was fluent in the language, and picked up the customs 'through the skin' (Thomson, 1937, p. 31). When he finally came to do the exam that had so worried him, he argued with the examiner over native inheritance laws until he was eventually proved right. It was the only exam, he said, that he passed with credit. He records his first kava party (yaqona in Fiji) but says he 'felt no stimulating effects' (Thomson, 1937, p. 32) – shades of Bill Clinton here?



Portrait of King George Tubou.

Interestingly (for the son of an Archbishop), he records the following story, which may explain why he became so interested in anthropology, and in recording native ways of life, and how old and new religious beliefs became integrated – or not. Near the northern end of Vatulele there was a cave which was filled with large red prawns called mbuta (boiled). His guides implored him not to go near there as the last to take prawns from the pool were shipwrecked, and the gods always avenged this way. Thomson tried to reason with them, knowing they had converted to Christianity. He caught and bottled three prawns and they headed off on the ship home, on a calm day with a fair wind – only to be shipwrecked on the way! 'It was not a sensational shipwreck... but it vindicated the gods of Vatulele' (Thomson, 1937, p. 35). The legend survives to this day.

Thomson spent twelve months in Nandronga, then time covering leave in Rewa, and a posting in Lau province. At the end of his time there he had three months' leave owing. Rather than spending it in Australia or New Zealand like everyone else, he decided to go to Tonga to learn the Tongan language. This was the first time he met the Reverend Shirley Baker, a controversial Wesleyan missionary who had much influence over King George Tupou I, so much so that he had been made Premier.

When Thomson returned to Fiji, he and another cadet conformed to the practice of wearing native dress, going around barefoot and wearing 'flannel shirts and *sulus* which were merely two yards of cotton cloth knotted round the waist and reaching to below the knee' (Thomson, 1937, p. 59), which suggest he was starting to relax a little into life in the colony, and perhaps acting less like a stiff colonial employee and imbibing more of the cultural ways of life.

He made a point of visiting every village in his province, with journeys taking up many weeks in the year. He notes, 'It is difficult to estimate how far the desire to please our immediate superiors and how far personal ambition drove us to do our job as well as it could be done' (Thomson, 1937, p. 66). It is easy to see that it is a bit of both driving him to do well (with a smattering of daddy issues thrown in for good measure).

After he had met his 'first reformed cannibal', and three months in Ba, he was recalled to Suva and another proposition was made to him.

In 1887 the administrator, William Macgregor, asked him to go with him as his private secretary to British New Guinea (Now Papua New Guinea). 'Much as I had come to love Fiji, I would have given years of my life to explore this wonderful unknown continent, which at that time was the embodiment of romance' (Thomson, 1937, p. 72).

For the first few months it was impossible for any administrator to do anything but be an explorer as nothing was known of the country except the coastline, and Thomson describes sev-



eral journeys into the interior. Gold was discovered on Sudest Island, where they had to manage unruly Australian miners, and he records the altercations they had with the natives – one of whom kept the heads of his enemies strung up outside his house.

He was almost killed when he and the party he was with were ambushed while pursuing a pirate tribe and trying to arrest a murder suspect to bring to trial. Thomson claimed that the man's death by hanging created a profound impression, and that there were no further attacks on Europeans for years to come, '...In fact Milne Bay became the safest part of the possession to land in, and a detailed anthropological study of the tribe became possible' (Thomson, 1937, p. 93). It may be here that his interest in penal servitude either developed, or deepened.

His time in British New Guinea came to an end after several bouts of malaria, and he was shipped home. This time back in England, however, enabled him to marry his long-time love Grace at the end of October, 1889, and he took his new bride back to Fiji where Sir John Thurston had created a new role for him as Commissioner for Native Lands. This role was essentially to sort out who owned the land, using his knowledge of local culture to good effect.

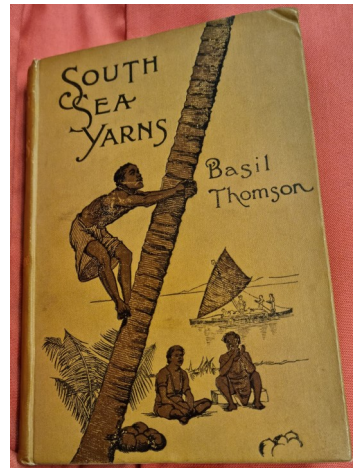
Shirley Baker, meanwhile, had been causing too many issues in Tonga, and Sir John Thurston had him removed, and sent Thomson, aged 29, with his wife to Tonga to act as Prime Minister in his place.

I was to go there without any authority at my back but that which the king might choose to give me, and if I failed I alone must take the blame. The blame of failing in such a service would probably dog me for the rest of my official career. On the other hand, I might have the luck to succeed, and the experience was certain to be amusing. On the whole it seemed worth the risk (Thomson, 1894, pp. 26-27):

Thomson describes his time in Tonga in more detail in his book, *The Diversions of a Prime Minister*, published in 1894. This book starts with the 'fall' of Baker and takes quite a gleeful tone.

It had been Mr Baker's policy to complicate the administrative machinery so as to imbue his colleagues with conviction that the simplest matter was beyond their power without his help; and he thus gradually acquired control, not only of the law courts but also of the treasury (Thomson, 1894, p. 22).

This tone continues throughout the book, and, of course, Thomson was successful in his endeavours, and he left in 1891 after only eleven months in the job, 'with a strong popular government, and every promise of prosperity' (Thomson, 1894, p. 287), with the country free from debt and balance in the Treasury. The government passed the code of law that



Thomson also wrote. He and his wife took six months' leave in Auckland at the end of his posting in Tonga, where their daughter was born. He returned to Fiji as Acting Native Commissioner, and went to Lau to preside at the annual council of chiefs, mainly, he said, to keep the peace.

When he returned to Suva, he was one of a Commission of three to enquire on the question of heavy infant mortality. Whilst the Commission was irreverently called the 'Keep 'em alive Commission', Thomson was deeply interested in what he called anthropology, and wanted to understand more about the effects of colonialism on native societies. He explored this in more detail in his books, *South Sea Yarns* (1894), *The Indiscretions of Lady Asenath* (1894), *Savage Island* (1902) and *The Fijians* (1908).

'I had flattered myself that I knew something about native life before we began [the commission]... I found, as our enquiry went on, that I had known less than nothing. It was the most complete education in one branch of anthropology that a man can have' (Thomson, 1894, p. 164).

The most important witness was Andi Asenatha or 'Lady Asenath', a chief woman from Nandi. She described the old customs of family life and childbirth, and the changes brought in by the missionaries, which contributed to the high mortality rate. This shocked the Commission.

Early in 1893 he returned to England with his family, as his wife found the climate too much for her health, and he left the colonial service. He accepted a position acting in loco parentis to two Siamese princes who were in England, and also tried to make a living as a writer. At the same time, he entered the Inner Temple and read for Bar examinations. Instead of becoming a barrister, he accepted the position of Deputy Governor at HM Prison Liverpool in 1896, and so began the illustrious career that led him to meeting Arthur Ransome in 1919.

In 1900, while he was Governor of Northampton Prison, the Colonial Office borrowed him to send him back to the Pacific. Thomson was granted full power to make a treaty with the King of Tonga to put himself under British protection, and he was sent to Samoa in connection with a new treaty with Germany, whereby ultimately the country was carved up between Germany and the US, with one of the pay-offs being German influence reduced in Tonga.

There is an interesting difference between his early and later writings about his time in the Pacific. His early books, *The Diversions of a Prime Minister* (1894) and *South Sea Yarns*

(1894), were written to make money, and aimed at a particular audience who had not travelled there and probably had little idea of what the Pacific 'native' is likely to be, so in many ways he played up to this.

*The Diversions* is definitely aimed at showing his life as a colonial officer, and how humorously he was triumphant over the mismanagement, narcissism and corruption of the Reverend Shirley Baker. The biographer and would-be redeemer of Baker, Noel Rutherford, is also the only person to have written biographically (formally) about Thomson, so it is no wonder that his writing of Thomson is less than warm, preferring to make Baker less of the villain than Thomson makes out.



KING TONGIA

Over time, when he does not have to make money from his writing, and he wants to get out a serious and sympathetic message about colonialism and its effects, his tone begins to change. *Savage Island* (1902), about his time in Nuie, describes King Tongia in his 'petticoats' and 'soldier's helmets with cock's plume...his majesty was unsexed by the garments that had been chosen for him' (Thomson, 1902, pp. 26-27), and conveys a slightly frustrated feeling that important people and ceremonies were being hampered by an overlaid sense of what was expected by the trappings of colonialism, rather than was needed to expedite an occasion.

*The Fijians* (1908) was written after his trip to Samoa and Tonga, and after he had left the Colonial Service; this had perhaps prompted him to revisit his thoughts of his time in Fiji. This book is a study of the decline of native customs. 'No race now exists which is not in some degree touched by the influences of Western civilization, the present decade may be said to be a fresh starting-point in the history of mankind' (Thomson, 1908, p. viii).

The book is an attempt to record the customs of the Fijian people, and the introduction discusses what happens when Europeans meet other races. He concludes, 'History teaches us that there can be no middle course. Either race antipathy and race contempt must disappear, or one breed of men must dominate the other' (Thomson, 1902, p. xvii).

It is easy to dismiss Thomson, in much of his writing, as a typical English bureaucrat, pompous and condescending, but in this statement alone, his is strikingly ahead of his time. By the time he comes to write his autobiography, *The Scene Changes* (1937), published before his death in 1939, much of his stance has softened, compared to *The Diversions*. He clearly still believes Shirley Baker a rogue, but is rather less condescending towards him. His fondness for the Pacific is strong, and his desire to protect native culture and people from the harm that Europeans bring with their ideas and disease is very different from other prevalent ideas at the time. However, he was a product of the Colonial Office, and he was there partly to set up ways and means of penal reform, and it was those ideas that he took back to England; it appears, with gusto.

The Pacific was a place of great influence on Basil Thomson, and could be said to have been the making of him. Whether it can be said to be for the better is hard to say. It appears to have cured him of his depression, but may have led him to drive himself to hard work. The Pacific certainly made him think about man's effect on man, but did that have any bearing on his conversation with Ransome in 1919, and the subsequent outcome of helping AR get back to Russia? It certainly made him become tough on prison inmates, foreign spies, suffragettes and trade unions. He had no compunction in the use of what would now be considered methods of torture, and he didn't flinch at hangings. On these subjects, in his Pacific books, he is not as detailed as he is on anthropology, where he shows some compassion. He was, it appears, a man of contradictions.

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## The Pigeons' Posts

-  After a lengthy bout of a mysterious and unpleasant illness, which involved her in some emergency hospital stays, **Elizabeth Stamp** is now recovering well, which is great news. Unfortunately, Elizabeth had to miss the VicTARS *Big Six* June gathering. She now leaves the medical profession with the interesting challenge of finding the exact cause of her ailment.
-  **Paul Rodwell**, stalwart FS contributor, has, over recent years, made us envious with his descriptive tales of building and sailing/motoring on his lake near Ravenshoe in Queensland. Now Paul has relocated to Cornwall, in the UK, to be near family members. Paul tells us that his boats have new owners and continue to be sailed on the lake. Although AusTARS now have one member fewer, TARS UK have gained a good one. He will be keeping in touch with us by continuing to receive *Furthest South*. We thank him for his valued contributions to FS and for his support of AusTARS and we wish him well in this next phase of his life.
-  **Trans-Tasman Zooms:** August was our Literary Conference Zoom (see report elsewhere) and our October one will be a Quiz session. Brush up on the Twelve – you have been warned! In December we will round off our year with a Parley for members to have a final catch-up with each other for 2021. Details appear with the Events Calendar.
-  As autumn gave way to an early and cold winter, southern Victoria experienced some extremely wild weather. Over a widespread area, trees were uprooted and roads were made impassable, with many people losing their homes and vehicles to the storm damage. Whilst feeling lucky to be safe, **Jan and Stuart Allen** brought their Tarry camping and survival skills to bear to keep warm and fed as they remained without power for more than a week. Susan's influence was certainly useful. It was a shame the semaphore signals could not be seen from such a distance during the several days they were also without phone or internet communications, but then they could also channel Titty and Crusoe in their solitude. And with no TV, for entertainment on the long, dark evenings, AR could be read by lamplight. Being a TAR always brings an upside to any situation!
-  **David Batho** has sent a link from a British model railway scale society e-group that he belongs to. The video runs for about 11 – 12 minutes. The layout it depicts has a number of references to Swallows and Amazons! The link is below; or just search Lakebank. We have tried to incorporate some history behind the project as well as operating the layout.
- The layout itself now has a new home in North Wales and it is hoped that it will have some outings in the future, see <https://youtu.be/yCLkIXqtQLw>
-  And for some more enjoyable viewing: **David Bamford** has alerted us to *My Classic Boat*, a YouTube channel where owners and skippers talk about and sail their classic boats on camera. The link is <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDzgEpfq5UCYJOaJYXWHbbQ/about>
- David has also sent direct links to some of the videos. One is about Ransome's boat *Peter Duck*, now owned by Julia Jones, author of the 'Strong Winds' series of children's books based on AR books. The link to this video, *My Classic Boat Laurent Giles Peter Duck 1946*, is [https://youtu.be/n81WgssWeJY\\_](https://youtu.be/n81WgssWeJY_). It's about 15 minutes long. The second is about Nancy Blackett, a fantastic 1931 David Hillyard, known to TARS from *We Didn't Mean to Go to Sea*, and other books by and about AR. It features Peter Willis, President of the Nancy Blackett Trust. The link to this one is [https://youtu.be/ti\\_07P00bis](https://youtu.be/ti_07P00bis) . .
-  **Current Membership Responsibility:** if you haven't already responded to the email or letter from Diana Wright, TARS UK Membership Secretary, regarding giving TARS UK permission for them to store your membership details in the cloud, you need to do so, or you may miss out on future TARS publications. From next year, it looks as though all members will become individually responsible for ensuring their contact and membership type details are correct and up-to-date on the TARS database, which will be maintained digitally. We will tell you more about this in due course; meanwhile, watch your *Signals* for information.

# The intriguing White/Yellow-billed Diver, or Yellow-Billed Loon

Garry Wood



A Yellow-billed Loon nesting on the arctic north tundra slope of Alaska.

In the Diver postscript of my article in *Furthest South*, ‘These people are furious about something’ (Wood, 2019), I described how a fourth species of the Diver bird had been found to occur in Scottish waters (Scott and Shaw, 2008). This was the White/yellow-billed Diver, *Gavia adamsii*. A few vague descriptions of this bird had been noted from the more isolated areas of Britain as far back as the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Then in the early 1920s the ornithologist H. F. Witherby, who had edited the *Practical Handbook of British Birds*, decided to settle some confusion between this bird and the Great Northern Diver, *Gavia immer*.

To this end he asked bird observers to send him side-on photographs showing the bills of any such birds that they had. Of the five photographs he received, three he identified as Great Northern Divers. The other two he thought were a different Diver species which he called the White-billed Northern Diver (Witherby, 1923). Subsequent to this, not far from the time Arthur Ransome was writing *Great Northern?*, Fitter and Richardson (1952), in their *Pocket Guide to British Birds*, also listed it as a White-billed Northern Diver in their ‘List of rare birds’. AR does not mention this Diver in his novel, but he may have been unaware of its existence.

In more recent years, and known now as the White/yellow-billed Diver, birds of this species visiting Britain seem to have increased in numbers, or perhaps bird watchers have become more adept at identifying them and reporting their presence. More is known about the species in the North Pacific as it occurs there in greater numbers, and is known as the Yellow-billed Loon. There is a fifth and smallest species of Diver, the Pacific Loon, *Gavia pacifica*, which is confined to the Northern Pacific.

The taxonomy of the White/yellow-billed Diver is complicated. Armstrong (2019) noted that in several published articles

hybridisation in Diver species may have occurred. Roselaar et al. (2005) evaluated the evidence for hybridisation in Gaviiformes and concluded that ‘hybridisation has been suspected in four of the five species, though documentation is limited. If this high incidence could be confirmed, it would rank among the highest of any avian order’. In Wikipedia (Anon., 2018) it is noted that both the White/yellow-billed, and Great Northern Diver may have evolved separately from a population of Black-throated Divers, *Gavia arctica*. Red-throated Divers, *Gavia stellata*, were not mentioned as being involved. But however the White/yellow-billed species did evolve, we look at some present-day data on this intriguing bird.

When observed from a distance, both Great Northern and White/yellow-billed can appear similar, but Fedlu et al. (2012), who in North America studied the two extensively, showed that there are indeed differences between them. The White/yellow-billed is the largest of the Diver species and is more heavily built than the Great Northern. The forehead has a visible bump, not seen in the Great Northern. The neck is the thickest of all the five Diver species. Their heads and bills usually remain tilted upwards. The bill is much larger in size and varies in colour from ivory-white to yellow. In contrast, the bills of the Great Northern are shorter, and of a blackish-grey colour. The eyes of both species are red, but those of the White/yellow-billed are smaller than those of the Great Northern. The neck lines of white on the White/yellow-billed are wider, as are the white spots on the back, sides and lower rear. The white spots form sharply defined squares or oblongs against the black background.

Their legs are attached to the very rear end of the bird’s body, making walking difficult. Their broad webbed feet, however, enable them to dive after fish in the deep waters they prefer, and are also used on the surface to help gain speed for flying.

*Continued on page 13*

Their habitat is in the open sea, and they do not commonly mingle with the Great Northerns, probably because of the Great Northern's preference for more sheltered waters.

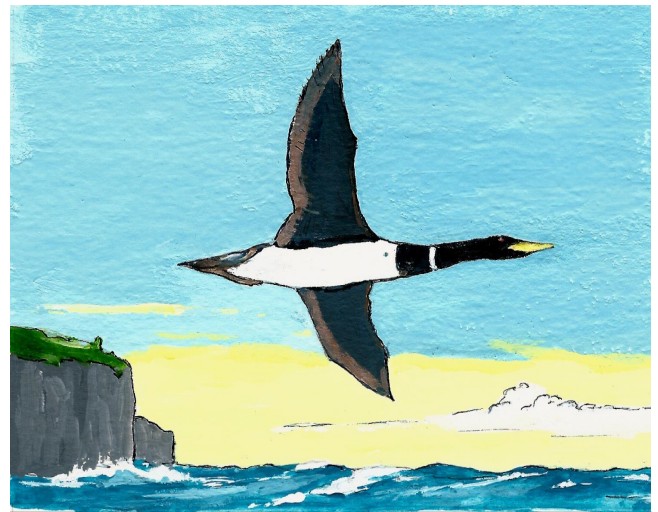
The western European White/Yellow-billed birds nest on the northern arctic coast of Russia, possibly on the island of Novaya Zemlya. As winter approaches, they begin a migration southward down the western coast of Norway. From there they cross the Norwegian Sea to the northern coast of Scotland, remaining there to moult before departing on a return migration in April or May. Some, however, press on to the Outer Hebrides, in particular to the northeast coast of Lewis (Campbell, 2018), moulting at a similar time. After losing their black and white plumage, they replace it with light-brown-coloured feathers.

Intensive searches of the Outer Hebrides by ornithologists from 2003 to 2007 showed the birds most frequently occurred off Skigersta (near the Butt of Lewis), Tolsta Head, and Tiumpan Head (Scott and Shaw, 2008). There they seem to show an affinity for tidal streams under high cliffs. Curiously, this is the area of the Outer Hebrides where it is thought that AR's *Great Northern?* could have been sited (Wardale, 2000). As spring approaches the return migration of the birds to Russia occurs. The track they follow is the reverse of the one that they arrived on.

As a contrast, Great Northern Divers follow a quite different track from the Outer Hebrides and mainland Scotland, crossing the North Atlantic Ocean to their breeding areas in Iceland and Greenland. In *Great Northern?*, Dick Callum knew from a book he had that they were winter visitors from Iceland, and normally did not nest further south than that country.

The main nesting locations of the Yellow-billed Loon (White/yellow-billed Diver) of the Northern Pacific are on the Alaskan Coast, on the region surrounding Kotzebue Sound, primarily on the northern Seward Peninsula. They also nest on the north tundra slope of Alaska, to the east of the township of Wainwright, where there are many thawed, shallow lakes in the short northern summer. The Yellow-billed Loons prefer lakes or rivers with plentiful fish for feeding while nesting, and build their nests on raised areas near shore lines (Swem, 2014). Two brownish-coloured eggs with dark spots are usually laid, and when hatched the chicks are cared for by both parents. After about five weeks the chicks become independent of their parents (Fedlu et al., 2012).

In Canada they nest on islands in the Arctic Ocean and northern mainland between the McKenzie Delta and Hudson Bay. In eastern Russia, nesting is on a narrow strip of land from the Taymyr Peninsula in the west to the Chukotka Peninsula in the east. Winter migration from all these areas occurs to the southern Alaskan coastal areas, to the Aleutian Islands, and as far down the coast of Northern America as Puget Sound. Some-



*In contrast to its rather stocky appearance on land, the White/yellow-billed Diver looks quite streamlined when in full flight.*

times also to Korea and Japan. There have also been sightings of the birds on large lakes and reservoirs in many of the mid-western, and western coastal States of USA, and even as far south as Mexico. Their eerie, wailing call is of a lower pitch than the Great Northern (Anon. 2018).

The White/yellow-billed Diver in west European countries is very much a bird of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Although isolated birds have been recorded as far back as the 19<sup>th</sup> century, they were regarded as vagrants or wind-blown waifs from Asia. Oddly, their presence in the Scottish Outer Hebrides was revealed when surveys for possible wind-farm sites for electricity generation were being made there. Subsequently, migration tracks of the birds to and from Russia were gradually worked out. This was helped by bird-watchers equipped with optical instruments and sited high above the sea on prominent headlands, so they could identify the species and observe their flight paths. Similar tracks were found for the Yellow-billed Loons in the North Pacific.

For admirers, the prominent spangled black and white plumage of breeding adults and their butter-coloured bills, together with their red eyes, make them the most attractive, alluring and enigmatic of the Diver species (Campbell, 2018). In Scottish waters, their preference for the deep water of the open seas and the rough and tumble of the waves there makes them difficult both to observe and to photograph. Similarly, their fast speed when airborne makes it hard to obtain good photographs. However, as the 21<sup>st</sup> century progresses more and more information is being gathered on this once remote and mysterious bird.

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## TARS day at Emerald and our adventures with the Coot Club

Dawn Ciechomski

After enduring lockdown no. 4, it was great to be able to get together again. The day began with a delicious morning tea and much conversation about the devastating storm that had wreaked havoc in many areas. Given the destruction that had taken place in Emerald, we were all relieved to hear that Jan and Stuart had survived relatively unscathed. The risk of falling trees was brought home as both Nancy, Larry and the Spicers had to make a detour around a recently fallen tree at Belgrave.

After morning tea, Jan set to work with a series of challenges designed to sharpen our powers of observation and deduction. This included deducing which people were associated with objects or other people. That started the brain cells working! Our second challenge involved observation; we were given the task of associating people with the hats they wore. Some were fairly easy but... we were scratching our heads over who wore a billycock hat and there were a couple of suspects who wore a turban or flat caps. We also had to try piecing information together. In this case finding three snippets from a book to form one passage. The challenge was, there were twenty-odd snippets!

Lunch time rolled around and we put our detective work on hold while we enjoyed a most delicious meal that included cannon balls, prepared by Jan from the recipe in Mate Susan's cookbook and beautifully cooked by David on the camp stove. In the proper manner, our lunch was finished off with bunloaf that Jan had cooked for us. This also came from Mate Susan's cookbook. Everyone agreed that the cannon balls and bunloaf were excellent grub and copies of the recipes were distributed so we could try them at home.

After lunch we got down to the serious business of solving the crime and laying the villains by their heels. We were given a

series of clues that we had to decipher to obtain evidence. Then we had to give our reason as to what the evidence indicated and why it pointed to the guilty parties. This had the little grey cells working and we were all very pleased to be able to access a copy of the page on semaphore signals from Dick's notebook. On the whole we think we did The Big Six proud.

A great day was enjoyed by all and our most sincere thanks to Jan and Stuart for making their lovely warm home available to us in the middle of a very cold winter. I'm sure everyone was delighted with the chance to get together with good fun and great company.



Jan's delicious bunloaf

# Why the S&A books are interesting: AR's use of ingenuity and technology, with a little fantasy

Hedley Thomson

## Introduction

In compiling my recent article about the ways in the Twelve that Ransome refers to and uses engines (*Furthest South* June 2021), my investigations led me to wonder about AR's views on the value of technology in general. From my research for that article I had concluded that Ransome was not keen on engines, especially of the motor vehicle variety, and therefore, by loose association, I surmised that he was probably not keen on technology as a whole – especially modern technology. So I thought I'd do some more research to determine Ransome's position as regards the latter topic.

Researching the Twelve again, my analysis revealed that my initial assumption was rather wrong. And on the way through, I realised that not only was Ransome in favour of the use of technology *per se*, but that he was very much in favour of people using their ingenuity – ah, sorry, that should be 'ingenuity' – to deal with tricky situations in conjunction with the use of whatever technology happened to be at hand, no matter of what era. I also recognised the links with his use of fantasy, often used to help generate a solution to a difficult situation or to explain a situation, even if in a modern context (I regard Ransome's writings as being inherently 'modern'). In fact, I found that ingenuity, technology and fantasy are often used together to complete the particular tale.

Although my original idea had been to produce another article analysing the Twelve, I discovered so many examples of the use of ingenuity, technology and fantasy in each of the books that I decided to limit this piece to a discussion of *Swallowdale*, the title which – from my analysis – revealed the most extensive use of these three components of Ransome's writing.

Carrying out this research really reinforced for me why AR is such an interesting, engaging and lively writer. He provides so many examples of how one might go about living both a creative and an exciting life, even if in a rather domestic context. As perfectly summarised by Eric Linklater in *The Observer*, many moons ago, Ransome 'makes a tale to adventure, a handbook to adventure.'

## **Swallowdale: a veritable 'how to' when it comes to using ingenuity, technology and fantasy**

### ***Fantasy in the real world: a Ransome feature***

Right from the opening, as the Swallows approach Wild Cat Island, the story-telling and make-believe are on again, balanced with the awareness of reality: "You oughtn't to say its name yet," said Titty, the able-seaman. "You ought to say 'Land, Land,' and lick your parched lips, and then afterwards we'd find out what land it was when we got a bit nearer. We might have been sailing about looking for it for weeks." "But

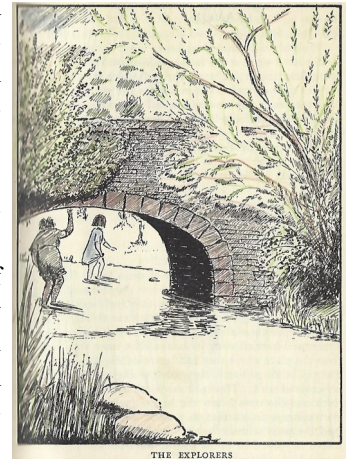
we know already," said [Roger] the lookout. "And anyway there's land all round us," (p. 17 of the Cape edition).

In Chapter 4, 'The Able Seaman and the Boy Explore', Ransome makes copious use of this technique. We see Titty and Roger going under the road to avoid the 'natives – with trumpets and tom toms travelling along the 'causeway' through the 'jungle': "What's that noise?" said the ship's boy suddenly. It was the noise of a motor horn. They both knew what it was, but it was far too good a noise to waste.' (p. 57).

Then there's the naming of the prominent peak rising above the moorland once they've left the lake-fringing woods: "We must have one of them for Kanchenjunga," said Titty. "Which one?" "The biggest", (p. 62). And, of course, discovering Swallowdale, including our being introduced to Peter Duck (p. 64): '... she had only to think of him, when there he was, ready for any adventure in which he might be wanted – and discovering of his cave (via the presence of a beautiful butterfly, nature being another one of Ransome's interests and one that he likes to use to inform his readers about some of the better components of life) (p. 66).

But of course combining fantasy with reality can have its awkward moments, as when Captain Flint arrives at Horseshoe Cove to find the shipwrecked Swallows sorting out what to do: "[The parrot's] quite all right," said Titty. "He's looking after the island. He doesn't know about *Swallow*." "And you've left old Peter Duck behind?" Titty looked at him and for a moment was not very pleased. But, after all, everybody knew all about Peter Duck. "You know he's only for a story," she said. "I know," said Captain Flint...' (p. 97).

Later, in Chapter 16, 'Surprise Attack', fantasy becomes reality as the Swallows and Amazons engage in warfare – or rather, intended warfare. The Amazons choose to cross the moorland in the hope of making a surprise attack on Swallowdale, only to be outwitted by the Swallows who spot Nancy and Peggy from the 'Watchtower Rock' and use the device of hiding the camp in 'Peter Duck's' – the adopted secret name for the cave – to make it look as if Swallowdale has been abandoned. Here we see fantasy combined not only with reality but with ingenuity in the naming and use of 'Watchtower Rock', the use of the cave to hide the camp and the use of a secret name for the cave so as not to give its presence away to 'enemies'.



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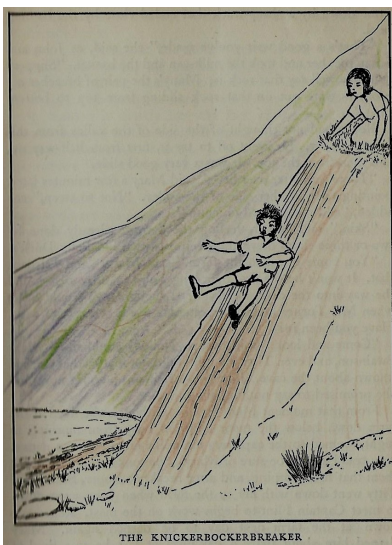
### Technology with ingenuity

The story contains all manner of ingenious ways for using various materials to solve problems or provide the means for needed repairs. These include the Amazons using the parrot's feathers to fletch their arrows (p. 70), John throwing the anchor (p. 78) to facilitate the rescuing of *Swallow* (Chapter 6, 'Salvage') and the use of an old ground sheet to patch the hole in *Swallow*'s bows (Chapter 7, 'Captain Flint: Ship's Carpenter').

Susan's sheer practicality deserves a mention too: getting things ship-shape after the wreck; drying clothes over a fire, using a spare rope as a clothesline (p. 82). This is an attribute for which Susan receives a particular accolade later in the story, where Ransome appears to be giving specific instruction to readers (young or otherwise) about how to conduct oneself (female or otherwise) when common sense (that most elusive of virtues) is required: 'That was Susan's strong point. She never allowed excitements such as sleeping in the open half-way up a mountain, or a naval battle, or a dangerous bit of exploring, to interfere with the things that really matter, such as seeing that water is really boiling before making tea with it, having breakfast at the proper time, washing as usual, and drying anything that may be damp. Really, if it had not been for Susan, half of the Swallows' adventures would have been impossible...' (p. 325).

And then there's Captain Flint's summing up of the situation, post-wreck: "'There is only one sensible thing to do,'" he said at last. "You *are* shipwrecked. Why not *be* shipwrecked?" (p. 99). This results in a whole change in mindset and a reconnection with fantasy: enabling the Swallows to imagine themselves being many miles from Wild Cat Island and having no association with it for the foreseeable future, a situation brought to practical fruition in the discussion around the camp fire in Swallowdale (pp. 182-3).

In Chapter 14, 'Settling In', in establishing the camp in Swallowdale, local materials in the form of rocks and stones come



THE KNICKERBOCKERBREAKER

in handy for the building of the dam across the stream that runs through the little valley and for the construction by John of the stone pillar that supports the parrot's cage, through to the use of heather and a stout stick for the making of Susan's broom.

In Chapter 15, 'Life in Swallowdale', an unusual piece of natural infrastructure in the form of the Knickerbockerbreak-

er' is identified, viz. the sheer slope on the side of the little valley that proves perfect as a slide, but fatal to the seat of the pants, resulting in Roger's knickerbockers needing to be darned by Mary Swainson until he tires of the use of the facility (p. 194). More seriously, Captain Flint teaches John how to use the specialised tools required to shape the new mast for *Swallow* from a mere rough-shaped pole or 'tree' (p. 193).

The intervening chapters deal with the arrangements for, and the conduct of, the trek across the moorland to the Amazon River with the elements of fantasy involved, before a return to the practicalities of dealing with decisions to be made whilst being caught in fog and the tactics required to win a sailing race.

In Chapter 26, 'Fog on the Moor', Titty and Roger learn how not to use a compass, eventually realising that they are heading in the opposite direction from that required and later learning the value of being aware of contours, specifically changing from one watershed to another (p. 410), in being able to determine whether they were heading in the correct direction. I wonder how many readers today understand the meaning and relevance of 'watersheds' (maybe 'catchments'?). More lessons in the practical from AR. The ease with which one can get caught out when using a compass if due care is not taken is reinforced in Chapter 32, 'Fog on the Lake', when *Amazon* is found to be sailing in a circle around an island on the Lake

More ingenuity, in making use of the available resources, is demonstrated in Chapter 34, 'Stretcher Party', when Nancy makes a 'cat's cradle' to form a stretcher out of some surplus rope and the poles that had been used to carry baggage to Swallowdale, (p. 408). Then there's Roger's crutch, fettle by Young Billy from available surplus timber (p. 411).

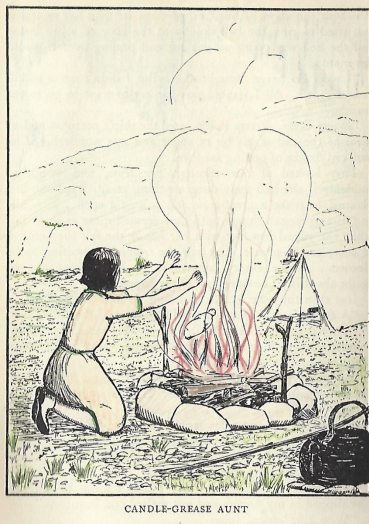
Chapter 35, 'The Race', takes a completely different tack (ha, ha! Had to get a pun in...), with the tactics of sailing and the taking of opportunities when they arise to gain advantage, even with a degree of calculated risk, taking centre stage.

### Technology with ingenuity and elements of fantasy

There are many examples where Ransome brings his three components to bear at critical moments in the development of the *Swallowdale* narrative. Interestingly enough, the first of these moments occurs midway through the narrative, at what can be viewed as the most critical point in the story: when Titty decides that something must be done about the Great Aunt if the holiday, and especially, Mrs Blackett's well-being, are to be salvaged.

In dramatic form, in Chapter 18, 'Candle Grease', AR describes with intimacy Titty's experience through her innocently mistaken attempt at black magic via the creation of the candle grease aunt (in the absence of proper wax; one of the many examples of Ransome's use of 'make do' ingenuity). Titty garners from her knowledge of past tales the idea of using a





CANDLE-GREASE AUNT

waxen image to put a spell on the Great Aunt to make her feel slightly unwell, in the hope that this will be enough to make the GA to decide return to her home in Harrogate. When the hot candle grease doll slips from Titty's hands into the camp fire, she is horrified, believing that she has thus killed the GA. Various commentators have noted that Titty appears to be Ransome's favourite character; with the attention he gives her in this chapter,

with its varying emotions and the vivid detail of the description of events, I think I agree with them.

Much more prosaically but in their own, ways equally inventive, Chapter 20, 'Welcome Arrow', and Chapter 21, 'Showing the Parrot his Feathers', have their own sense of drama. They too centre on the created fantasy of devising ways to outwit the Great Aunt, that enemy of the holidaying Swallows and Amazons. The secretive shooting of the arrow from the Beckfoot launch by Nancy demonstrates the lengths to which Nancy in particular can turn an otherwise mundane situation into a potential adventure. She knows that it will be spotted by John or whoever else will be at Horseshoe Cove, and ingeniously hides the message within the arrow, to only be found if the parrot is actually shown his feathers concealed in the arrow. Fantastic ingenuity indeed.

Titty is more literal with her fantasy in Chapter 22, 'Before the March', in explaining outwardly to the parrot and internally to Peter Duck what will be required of them whilst the Swallows are on the march to the Amazon River: "Peter Duck'll look after [the ship's papers and the barometer]," said Titty. "He knows how important they are. He'll watch and watch with the ship's parrot." ... Titty had explained to him carefully how much they were trusting to him, and that he was to be on guard too, so that Peter Duck could take a rest now and then. There was a good deal she would have liked to say to Peter Duck himself, if only he hadn't happened to be out at the time. So she made things very clear to the parrot' (p. 276).

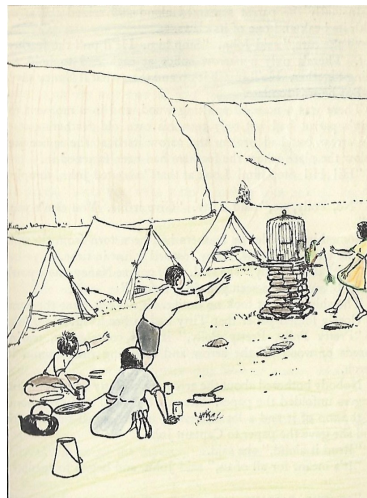
In Chapter 23, 'Overland to the Amazon', there is a practicality in ensuring they will make the trip across the moor safely, in particular with the correct use of John's compass (p. 279), an important technology. At the same time there is a strong element of fantasy associated with the exploration, including

the laying of the pine cone paterans – a type of technology in themselves (p. 280); not being seen by the natives *en route* – especially when it came to crossing the main road (p. 288) – and the discovery of the Amazon River and the Blacketts' rowing boat – a good technological substitute for a fantastical 'war canoe' (p. 289).

To me there is a special relish evident in the way AR approached the writing of Chapter 24, 'The Noon-tide Owl': his 'special effect', the owl call in the middle of the day (p. 294), even brings in some tongue-in-cheek humour when the Great Aunt wants to report the incident to the Natural History Museum (p. 297). Meanwhile, the exploration fantasy continues: 'For the last time Captain John read carefully through the message from the Amazons. Then he gave it to the mate. "I might be captured," he said, "and it would be a pity to have to swallow it"' (p. 293). No doubt AR had some native technological solution in mind had John been called on to do so...

AR is much more straightforward in Chapter 25, 'Up River', in terms of getting the Beckfoot rowing boat through the bridge on the journey up the Amazon River towards Kanchenjunga: all hands scraping the stonework to haul the boat through against the flow (p. 304).

Of course the explorers would never use the well-formed 'native' path up the mountain (Chapter 26, 'The Half Way Camp'); to continue the fantasy, the Swallows and Amazons conscientiously ignore it, behaving like true explorers and climbing straight up (p. 316).



Camping without the tents is part of the exploration fantasy as well as being a transparent reality and a practical response to not having to carry too much gear. It is also a technology-averse response, to enable the explorers to get the most out of the experience (p. 320). The significance of the open-air camp-out in all of its aspects is individually described for each of the four Swallows, thereby revealing the importance that Ransome places on the experience, not just in

terms of the story but also, I venture to suggest, in terms of describing the sorts of experiences that Ransome believed that young people should have; the experience of something new and exciting; the increasing of their consciousness of what's happening around them through being a part of it and taking it all in (p. 322). (I have my own such experience, one that I remember vividly to this day: 1971 – sleeping outdoors on top of Mount Hotham (before the ski-lifts etc...); the stars, the peace...).

For the climb to the summit, Chapter 27, 'The Summit of Kanchenjunga', AR continues with his mix of ingenuity, technology and fantasy: the making of a proper climbing rope

with loops for each climber, but no ice axes, which Titty thought might have been appropriate (p. 329) and, again, no following of the path: “‘We shan’t go by the path,” said Nancy. “When we come to a rock, we’ll go over it.”” (p. 329). The rope proves its worth when Roger falls as he cries out ‘Wild goats!’ (p. 332). Once at the summit, the group fantasises

August the 2nd. 1901.  
We climbed the Matterhorn.  
Molly Turner.  
J. Turner.  
Bob Blackett.

about how the cairn on top of Kanchenjunga might have been built (p. 337). The box found within the cairn also offers a touch of fantasy in the naming of the mountain:

The Swallows and Amazons leave a similar note in the cairn, naming the mountain Kanchenjunga instead of the Matterhorn, and noting that they climbed it in 1931 (p. 339).

Chapter 30, ‘Medicine Man’, takes us back in time, even further than to 1901. Roger’s twisted foot is treated with a brack-

en poultice (p. 369) and Titty travels high on the big log being carried by the wagon pulled by two mighty draughthorses (p. 372). Chapter 31, ‘Wigwam Night’, continues the theme of a different world; one that will not last much longer but which Ransome highlights due to its simplicity.

## A Summing Up

In 1931 the world is already changing at speed, very much due to the modern technology of engines and electronics, and Ransome, as he acknowledges in his other books, can see both the benefits and the disbenefits of these changes. His realistic and prescient view is one that we would do well to make use of today as our modern technology takes us away from reality into a world of fantasy that we are yet to understand... Oh, for mandatory nights sleeping in the open, for a touch of true reality with a touch of fantasy whilst gazing at the stars...

As ever, Ransome leads us in that direction.

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## The Swallows and Amazons, the folk and the fairies forever?

Cheryl Paget

Last year on a trans-Tasman Zoom meet-up, members discussed the following:

*Albert Einstein apparently said ‘If you want your children to be intelligent, read them fairy tales. If you want them to be more intelligent, read them more fairy tales.’ Do you think this statement is accurate and can you see the influence of fairy tales in Ransome’s work?*

Ransome had a deep interest in folk and fairy tales, including the Anansi tales, which came from the Caribbean (via West Africa), and Russian fairy tales. He said of his Bohemian days listening to Pamela Colman Smith (Pixie) reciting Anansi tales on the floor of her studio, ‘I think I learned more of the art of narrative from those simple folk-tales than ever from any book’ (*Autobiography*, p. 88).

The terms ‘folk tales’ and ‘fairy tales’ are used fairly interchangeably. As a general rule, a folk tale is about everyday people – the ‘folk’ (who are typically quite rude) – where usually the most disadvantaged (children, women, the poor, the disabled) prevail against the establishment. Fairy tales have an element of other-worldliness, such as fairies and magic. However, in both tales, rich people are often unlucky, helpless or somehow afflicted, while the poor hero is healthy, enterprising and fortunate.

European folk and fairy tales were passed orally from mother to daughter over generations (Perrault’s ‘old wives’ (Lurie, 1991, p. 36), and were enjoyed by audiences of adults and children alike. Women and girls could be just as competent

and resourceful as their male counterparts, or have active agency in roles of help (fairy godmother) or trouble (wicked stepmother). However, the versions we know today were written down and collected by men, and became tales for children – Charles Perrault in the seventeenth century (1697, *Tales of Mother Goose*) and the Grimm brothers in the nineteenth (1812, *Children’s and Household Tales*). Hans Christian Andersen (first published 1835) and Madame d’Aulnoy (writing 1690-1720) wrote new fairy tales.

Once folk and fairy tales came into print, the role of women in fairy tales became diminished in the re-telling or editing. Outrage at their immorality began – they show ambition (acting above one’s station) and a love of wealth, alongside passion, violence, envy and jealousy.

We are still drawn to folk and fairy tales: the narrative construct still haunts Hollywood (such as movies where the little guy triumphs, or a rom-com with a happy ending).

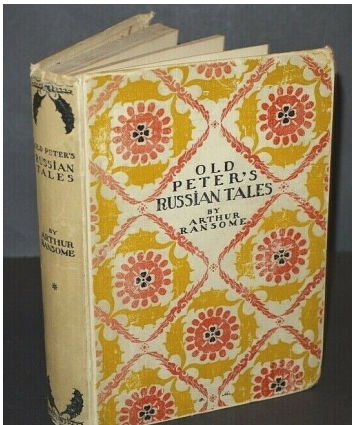


Madame d’Aulnoy

Echoing the quote attributed to Einstein, the psychoanalyst Bruno Bettelheim believed that to deprive a child of the belief in magic would lead to overcompensating in late adolescence

with drugs, astrology or some other form of escape from reality. To Bettelheim, as to Einstein, reading fairy tales is an essential part of childhood (Lurie, 1991, pp. 39-40). Students of folk and fairy tales have to consider what we have lost, not just in the weakening of women's voices in the scribing by male authors and the sanitising of the tales for a child audience, but also in meaning or symbolism of certain recurring elements that are now lost to us over the passage of time.

Take, for example, the forest. When a forest is present, the hero will almost always venture forth, or be enticed within, to encounter a challenge and/or the magical. For 'the folk', since pre-Christian times, forests and trees are homes to supernatural beings and should be avoided (how many of us still touch wood for luck?). A forest is also away from home, and therefore a place where you can get lost; and, particularly in the medieval period, it was a place of actual danger, where those outside the law lived. Unlike the castle, the tower or the hut in the woods which are the other common settings in folk or fairy tales, the forest is not man-made; it is the natural realm, and anything could happen.



A tale set in a forest is often a cautionary tale: if you wander from the path something unfortunate might happen. Audiences listening to the tales long ago would know instinctively what it would mean to the hero if he/she strayed from the path into the woods. It's rather like today when you watch a film, and the change in the music alerts you that something bad is about to happen and puts you on the edge of your seat. In the S&A books, of course, Titty and John are sensible: they make blazes and leave paterans to stop the Swallows from straying from the path when they go to visit the charcoal burners.

Alison Lurie, in *Not in Front of the Grown-Ups*, defines folktales as 'among the most subversive texts in children's literature' (Lurie, 1991, p. 32), and there was enough of the Bohemian left in Ransome to draw him to study them further. He said that when he was 29 and still hankering after writing stories:

...I wanted to write narrative of a particular kind and had made lots of unsuccessful experiments in writing fairy stories. In the London library I had come across Ralston's *Russian Folk Tales* and, while disliking what seemed to me the unsuitable 'literary' prose in which they were written, saw what rich material was there, differing from the Scandinavian folklore to which I had been introduced by Collingwood, and also from Grimm and the folklore of Brittany, Wales and the Highlands. I had made up my mind to learn enough Russian to be able to read Russian folklore in the original and to tell

those stories in the simple language that they seemed to need (*Autobiography*, 157).



Charles Perrault

He was well-read, therefore, when it came not only to differing types of folk and fairy tales from varying countries, but also to the narrative style necessary to this form to keep readers or listeners interested. With his knowledge of the Anansi stories and experience of relating them over again to his friends and their children, he felt he knew the method of telling stories that could be applied to this material. In May 1913 he left England for Russia with the aim of using Russian folklore as material for a book of stories. He taught himself Russian by making friends with Russian children and using children's first reading books (and pressing everybody he met into teaching him) until 'I was able at the end of a very few weeks to begin filling notebooks with rough translations of stories from the Russian' (*Autobiography*, 162).

He soon realised that a direct translation wasn't going to work:

The Russian peasant storytellers, telling stories to each other, could count on a wide range of knowledge that their listeners, no matter how young, shared with them. Young English listeners knew nothing of the world that in Russia listeners and storytellers alike were able to take for granted. Continual explanation would have been destructive of the tales as an endless series of asides. The storyteller, if he were to tell the tales as they should be told, had to stand between two worlds and never allow himself to feel that he was showing one world to the other. In the end I used to read as many variants of a folk-story as I could find and then lay them aside while writing the story for myself (*Autobiography*, p. 162).

Sensitive to the cultural differences inherent in folk tales, and by reading several versions of the same tale, he was able to rewrite them in a way his audience would understand. He must have read very many Russian folk tales in their original language in order to produce *Old Peter's Russian Tales* in 1916.

In 1928, Vladimir Propp published his analysis of basic plot components of Russian folk talks to deduce simple narrative elements, structures, themes and story sequences, in *The Morphology of the Folk Tale*. Propp was not known to English-speaking scholars until 1958, when this work was translated. It still provides a useful reference point in understanding narratology.

He devised thirty-one specific story units which occur in every tale, and seven spheres of action corresponding with the seven performers needed in a folk tale: villain (the evil antagonist), donor (the provider of the magical agent), helper, princess (a sought-after person), dispatcher, hero and a false hero.

These thirty-one functions always appear in the same order, but some functions may be omitted. The functions logically join together into the seven spheres which correspond to their respective performers. The sphere of action can correspond to a character, one character can be involved in several spheres of action (e.g. a character that acts in double roles such as a donor and helper), and a single sphere of action can be divided among several characters.

If you apply Propp's *Morphology* to *Swallows and Amazons*, the story does fall broadly into the functions, with these exceptions: a magical agent (*Swallow*) is received and the departure of the hero (in this case two heroes, John and Titty) takes place much earlier in the story than the *Morphology* would predict, and the interdiction is violated much later. Also, there is no false hero (someone who steps forward to claim they are the hero – rather like George Owdon in *The Big Six*). Appendices 1 and 2 to this article (see page 21 ff.) set out the thirty-one functions and their application.

Ransome, knowing Russian folk tales in depth, consciously applied the Russian folk tale format to his seminal children's story written in 1929. In doing so, he has provided us with a story imbued with the familiar folk tale narrative form.

However, as he did with *Old Peter's Russian Tales*, he has written the folk story for himself. In *Swallows and Amazons* there are two villains (the Amazons and Captain Flint) and there are two heroes and two 'princesses' – actually sought-after items rather than a person (in this case the island and the parrot). Female characters are front and centre. There are two magical agents enabling the heroes to succeed (*Swallow* and the marked harbour/leading lights).

This leads to a dual narrative – that of the Swallows and Amazons' treaty of offence and defence, leading to Titty taking possession of *Amazon*, and the second storyline, the complex emotional story of John being called a liar by the other villain, Captain Flint, attacking the integrity of the hero. These are discussed in more detail in the appendices. In addition, there are the parallel narratives of adults and children – the world of play and the adults who may or may not take part in it. Given that in folk or fairy tales things usually happen in threes, it is striking that here, there are many things happening in twos, suggesting that Ransome was consciously trying to subvert the traditional form.

As JRR Tolkien wrote in 1938 (in 'On Fairy Stories'):

Fairy-stories have... been relegated to the 'nursery', as shabby or old-fashioned furniture is relegated to the play-room, primarily because the adults do not want it, and do not mind if it is misused... Fairy-stories banished in this way... would in the end be ruined... If fairy story as a kind is

worth reading at all it is worthy to be written for and read by adults. They will of course put in more and get more out than children can.

Perhaps this explains why we, as adults, still enjoy reading Ransome – after all, who doesn't enjoy a good fairy tale?

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## Appendix 1: Propp's spheres of influence

<b>Villain</b> (the evil antagonist)	Captain Flint	Captain Flint is a villain for calling John a liar, and accusing the Swallows of burglary
	Amazons	Amazons are short-lived villains, as they become allies once they parley
<b>Donor</b> (the provider of the magical agent)	Mother/ Father	Mother/Father allow use of <i>Swallow</i>
	Nancy	Nancy shows John how the harbour is marked – which enables him to use leading lights and win the war (via Titty)
<b>Helper*</b>		
a. Universal helper	—	—
b. Partial helper	Mother	Mother helps John feel better after meeting with Captain Flint; she helps Titty overcome loneliness when she is left on the island
c. Specific helper	Captain Flint	Captain Flint helps the Swallows and Amazons fulfil their desire for a war by agreeing to let them attack the houseboat and adopting the role of a retired pirate
	Nancy	Nancy helps by getting rid of the policeman
	Dixons, Jacksons	Provide basic functions for the camp, come to their aid after the storm
<b>Princess</b> (a sought-after person, exists as a goal)	Wild Cat Island	Desire to go to the island triggers the telegram from Daddy starting the adventure  'Ownership' of the island is the reason for the initially unfriendly encounter between the Swallows and the Amazons
	Polly	Titty covets the parrot, continually talks about it and is given it by Captain Flint
<b>Dispatcher</b>	Mother	Mother ultimately allows them to go and waves them off
<b>Hero</b>	John	Captain John ('It's he who has to see that you are not duffers') is in charge of the expedition and has the direct relationship with Captain Flint. He is called a liar and this storyline is resolved with an apology.
	Titty	Titty wins the war for the Swallows and recovers the stolen trunk for Captain Flint
False hero	—	—

\* Functions are the spatial transference of the hero; liquidation of misfortune or lack; rescue from pursuit; solution of difficult tasks; transfiguration of the hero.

## Appendix 2 Propp's Morphology's thirty-one functions applied to *Swallows and Amazons*

No	Definition	Example	Narrative 1: <i>Swallows and Amazons</i> meet/war	Narrative 2: John and Captain Flint
1.	Absentation	A family member absents himself from home	The Walkers are on holiday; father is away at sea	
2.	Interdiction	A command/edict is addressed to the hero	Better drowned than duffers...	
3.	Violation	The interdiction is violated	Night sailing (occurs in the narrative after no. 18)	John tries to speak
4.	Reconnaissance	Villain makes an attempt at reconnaissance	Amazons approach island and hoist their flag	Captain Flint leaves note in camp
5.	Delivery	Villain receives information about victim		
6.	Trickery	Villain attempts to deceive victim to take possession	Amazons invade the camp on island; hide <i>Swallow</i>	
7.	Complicity	Victim submits to deception; unwillingly helps enemy	They leave <i>Swallow</i> at the landing place, not the harbour	
8.	Villainy	Villain causes harm to family member		Captain Flint calls John a liar
8a.	A Lack	A family member lacks/ desires something	Titty desires a parrot	
9.	Mediation	Misfortune or lack is made know; hero approached for help; allowed/ ordered to go		
10.	Beginning	Counteraction. The hero agrees to or decides upon counteraction	Swallows and Amazons sign alliance, agree to declare war on Captain Flint	
11.	Departure	Hero leaves home	Swallows leave for the island (takes place after 2)	
12.	First function of the Donor	Hero is tested, attacked, interrogated, etc., which paves way for receiving a magical agent or helper		Policeman visits camp; Nancy tips Captain Flint the black spot
13.	Hero's reaction	Hero reacts to actions of future Donor		John walks away as Captain Flint tries to land on island
14.	Provision of a magical agent	Hero acquires the use of a magical agent	Mother allows use of <i>Swallow</i> after telegram arrives (after 2) John shown how harbour is marked—leading lights (a magical agent that moves plot forward and allows hero, Titty, to succeed)	
15.	Guidance	Hero is shown whereabouts of an object of search	Nancy explains way to Amazon River	

No.	Definition	Example	Narrative 1: Swallows and Amazons meet/war	Narrative 2: John and Captain Flint
16.	Struggle	Hero and villain join in direct combat	Swallows and Amazons attempt to steal each other's boats	Captain Flint apologises—John has an ‘unpleasant lump’ in his throat (emotional struggle)
17	Branding	Hero is branded		
18	Victory	Villain is defeated	Titty captures <i>Amazon</i>	John accepts apology; shakes hands
19	Liquidation of Lack	Initial misfortune or lack is liquidated		
20	Return	Hero returns	Swallows return to island next morning	
21	Pursuit	Hero is pursued		
22	Rescue	Rescue of hero from pursuit		
23	Unrecognised arrival	Unrecognised, he arrives home or in another country	John admonished for sailing at night; mother doesn't understand he has won the war  Titty's claim about burglars disbelieved	
24	Unfounded claims	A false hero presents unfounded claims		
25	Difficult task	A difficult task is proposed to hero	Policeman visits camp, suggesting they (John) know something about burglary  Titty resolves to look on Cormorant Island again; others try to persuade her to fish	
26	Solution	Task is resolved	Nancy sends policeman away  Nancy tips Captain Flint the black spot, he apologises to John	
27	Recognised	Hero is recognised	Titty and Roger find stolen trunk; Titty is given Polly by Captain Flint (liquidating lack at 19)	
28	Exposure	False hero or villain is exposed		
29	Transfiguration	Hero is given a new appearance		
30	Punishment	Villain is punished	John is Commodore and leads fleet to attack Houseboat	Captain Flint made to walk plank, agrees not to be in league with natives again
31	Wedding	Hero is married and ascends the throne	Promise to come again next year	

## What's on?

The AusTARS Events Program is currently suspended, due to the pandemic. Members will be notified if it is possible for our program to resume later in the year.

HOWEVER, our trans-Tasman member Zoom sessions will continue as previously advertised, with our next one coming up on **Sunday, October 10th**, featuring QUIZZES. If you would like to devise a quiz for members to tackle at this session, please contact Phoebe Palmieri, [phoebe.palmieri@gmail.com](mailto:phoebe.palmieri@gmail.com)

Zoom Session Times:

WA	2.00 pm
QLD	4.00 pm
Eastern States	5.00 pm
NZ	7.00 pm

The link to join the Zoom is, as always, <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7937863995> The password (if you are asked for one) is TARS.

### Answers to Pigeon Post Quiz

1. Slater Bob.
2. Dot about Captain Flint.
3. Nancy.
4. Palm up, in fingers.
5. Goggles, hammers, torches (also string, thermos).
6. ... keeps the natives away'.
7. Susan, John, Nancy.
8. He fell down the gulch/ravine trying not to be seen by the others after stalking them.
9. A matchbox.
10. The bellows.
11. A cocoa tin.
12. Dick - he said there must be a way out forward.
13. They made him a forest glade of greenery.
14. A mine working.
15. Adding a firebroom to the stack in the yard.
16. They had a swim in the river.
17. The bellows bursting - too tired then.
18. Sappho.
19. John - 'It's not your mine'.
20. Dick.

*How did you score?*

### WANTED! Articles for the next issue of Furthest South

Tell us what you did in lockdown—or how you rejoiced if you weren't locked down! (And of course on any other TARRY subject too.)

Send your articles to

Jan Allen ([jp8fillyjonk@bigpond.com](mailto:jp8fillyjonk@bigpond.com)) (Australia) by **5 November**, please.

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Editing: Jan Allen and Phoebe Palmieri

Desktop publishing: Phoebe Palmieri