STAR TREK'S CAPTAIN KIRK IS A SCI-FI HORATIO HORNBLOWER...

by David C. Hall – January 2001

In April of 1966, C. S. Forester died, leaving behind an unfinished manuscript for "Hornblower During the Crisis" and millions of readers who yearned for more stories about the indomitable naval hero.

A number of authors stepped onto the quarterdeck to fill the void, including Dudley Pope, V.A. Stuart, Alexander Kent and, of course, Patrick O'Brian.

One writer, inspired by Forester's novels, took a very unconventional approach. His captain walked a bridge, not a quarterdeck, and he commanded a starship, not a frigate.

Yes, Virginia, Captain Kirk is Horatio Hornblower.

Gene Roddenberry, the creator of the hugely successful "Star Trek" franchise, was, in the early 1960's, a struggling television writer. As a fan of C.S. Forester, Roddenberry considered Captain Horatio Hornblower to be "one of the all-time great adventure characters in fiction'.

As Roddenberry began to develop the concept for a science fiction television series, he borrowed from a number of literary genres. The young writer had cut his teeth writing scripts for television shows like "Have Gun will Travel" (a western), "Mr. District Attorney" and "Highway Patrol". He moved from these assignments to creating and producing a television series, "The Lieutenant", based in part on his experiences working for the Los Angeles Police Department in the early 1950's. When "The Lieutenant" did not garner sufficient television ratings in 1963 to be renewed for a second year, MGM asked the young producer to come up with an idea for a new show.

Roddenberry looked at the success television shows on the air in the early sixties and noted some similarities. The shows with mass audience appeal had a cast of familiar, continuing characters. Shows like the popular westerns "Bonanza" and "Gunsmoke". Also important was that the show feature familiar surroundings, a home "setting" like the ranch or the town saloon.

Explaining the concept of "Star Trek" to television executives by referring to it as a "Wagon Train to the Stars", Roddenberry's concept was rejected by a number of studios and networks before Desilu Studio gave him the okay to develop the concept for a pilot episode and, eventually, a series. "Star Trek" was born, and the rest, as they say, is history.

Gene Roddenberry had his "Wagon Train to the Stars"---now he needed a cast of familiar characters, people the audience would empathize with every week. "Gunsmoke" had Marshall Matt Dillon; "Star Trek" needed a ship's captain.

The show called for a "space-age Captain Horatio Hornblower", as Roddenberry himself put it. His original first draft described 'Captain Robert M. April' as a "colourfully complex personality, capable of action and decision which an verge on the heroic...his primary weakness is a predilection to action over administration, a temptation to take the greatest risks onto himself".

The name of the pivotal character changed twice as the concept for "Star Trek" evolved; first, from 'Captain April' to 'Captain Christopher Pike' for the original pilot episode, performed by actor Jeffrey Hunter. When the series went into production, it was with 'Captain James Tiberius Kirk', to be portrayed each week by Canadian Shakespearean actor William Shatner.

In the 1968 account of the series, "The Making of Star Trek" by Stephen E Whitfield and Gene Roddenberry, the character of the ship's captain is described:

> James T. Kirk is an idealist, rather sensitive, with a strong, complex personality. Constantly on trial within himself, he feels acutely the responsibility of his position and is therefore fully capable of letting the worry and the frustration lead him into error. Ignoring the fact that he is also capable of fatigue, Kirk is often inclined to push himself beyond human limits. When he must give in to fatigue, he then condemns himself because he is not superhuman. The crew respect him, some almost to the point of adoration. The young Captain is definitely a man of decision and decisive action.

The character of James T. Kirk is modeled after the Captain Horatio Hornblower of the first novel written by Forester, "The Happy Return" or "Beat to Quarters", as it was titled in the United States. The fifth in the series chronologically, Forester's Hornblower is 37 (by no coincidence, the author's age when he was writing the novel). Roddenberry's Kirk is 34.

Hornblower grew up in a small village; Kirk is from Riverside, Iowa, a tiny farming hamlet in the southeastern corner of that midwestern state.

The relationship Hornblower develops with Lady Barbara Wellesley during "The Happy Return" became a recurrent plot devise for "Star Trek", to the point where it became a running joke among the cast members. Many episodes featured a plot line which had the Captain becoming romantically interested in a female guest star, either on board the starship or on a visit to an alien planet.

While Roddenberry never made comparisons between "Star Trek" and the Hornblower novels beyond the character of the Captain, it's easy for us to take the speculation a step or two further---Lt. Gerard, the gunnery officer, would be Lt. Sulu, the Enterprise weapons officer and navigator. The Venerable Lt. William Bush does not have a space age reincarnation, unless it is as Engineering Officer Montgomery Scott. The loyal Brown, a fixture in several of the Hornblower novels, does not show up in the "Star Trek' series as a continuing character---crew members with lines in individual episodes had a tendency to be killed off in the opening scenes of the TV show.

Mr. Spock is a wholly unique character, in no way derivative of the Hornblower novels beyond his close relationship with the Captain.

In February, 1966, NBC-TV made the decision to put "Star Trek" on the air in the fall, and the show went into production.

In April, as Hornblower's creator died, "Star Trek" was in the throes of pre-production and planning, with the first episode scheduled to be filmed in June.

On September 8, 1966, the first episode of the landmark television series aired on NBC.

Horatio Hornblower stepped into the 23rd century, to go "where no man has gone before."

THE CULT OF THE FIRST EDITION*

No 2 in an occasional series
by Colin Blogg – February 2001

I do not know who started the vogue for collecting first editions, but it seems to have existed since the original Gothenburg bibles in 1450. They are the ones first printed by moveable type. A fine example sits in splendid state in the same Harry Ransom building in Austin, Texas where the principal CSF archives are kept. It is beyond price – except in Texas.

One may speculate on the first edition being closer to the author's intended version than, perhaps, a fortieth impression. But in truth, many eagle-eyed proof readers, printers, editors and even the author himself, scrutinise every last diphthong. Very few mistakes reach the bookshelves to give the excitement and price-uplift that an imperforate sheet of postage stamps seems to excite in philatelists.

No! The thrill of a first edition lies in having an original, which, when sent out to the public had no track record. It was left to sink or swim on its own content and the readers' communal appreciation. By the time demand required a second printing or a second impression of the same typesetting, or even a revision of errors that called for a change of title to 'second edition,' the reputation had been made.

Why then collect modern first editions? It sounds like an oxymoron. How can they be both modern, *and* first editions? Modern is usually taken as belonging to this century, although some prefer post-war (WW1) and some even post war

(WW2). It all depends on what you want it to mean. As far as most people are concerned, it seems mainly to depend on what they have/haven't got and consequently enjoy or are looking for or are trying to acquire or sell. Luckily for us, CSF's writing career stretched from 1924 (*A Pawn Among Kings)* to 1964 (*The Hornblower*

Companion), although several books of short stories and his sanitised autobiography were published posthumously, and are clearly still 'modern'.

How do you recognise a first edition? It is unusual. You can expect it to be older, tattier, and unfamiliar since fewer were published. An extreme example is *The Ship* of which only the usual 5000 were originally released by Little, Brown in 1945, but shortly after a cheap version flooded the market as half a million copies were distributed to all Royal Navy personnel. These cheap editions can still be found in pristine condition and virtually worthless, whereas a Canadian first edition costs c. $40.00 US without a dust jacket.

How else do you know you have found a first edition? It may say so!

If it is being offered for sale by a reputable dealer (belongs to the Antiquarian Bookseller's Association of America in USA: In Britain, the Antiquarian Booksellers' Association is equivalent, you can trust their opinion or obtain a refund if proved wrong). 'First edition' may be pencilled inside the front end paper. Only a rogue would use ink. Next, check the date given on the copyright page and the date of publication. They should agree. If they do not, glance at the name of the publisher, as you are likely to find that it is not that of the usual well-known publisher usually chosen by your favoured author.

Book club editions cause confusion especially as many are identical to (and often are) the regular ordinary editions. The clues to look for are that the dust jacket will be printed with a book club name or reference and there is generally no price on the flap. Sometimes the paper is thinner and the binding is cheaper but you would have to have copies of both editions to notice. Book Clubs issue copies in vast quantities and so have little lasting value to collectors.

Why are different terms used to mean much the same thing, such as 'edition', 'impression', 'printing', 'issue'? An edition lasts as long as that typesetting is unchanged. A 'printing' means literally just that, it is a print run, until the press is stopped, and to make things easy, an 'impression' means the same thing. The ultimate then is to find a first edition, first impression/printing if you want to get closest to the very first on the street – rather like being the first to drink the rather unpalatable nouveau Beaujolais or scrunch the first grouse to arrive in London on 12th August.

The printers have a growing practice of printing a line of numerals in reverse order, under the words telling it is a first edition, thus: 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 and remove each in sequence as another printing is begun. It is the first edition of the first volume and first printing of the Harry Potter novels that commands respect with your bank manager, and has the whole 10 – 1 series intact.

A first edition becomes a 'second issue' when minor print setting changes are made during the first print run of the first edition, insufficient to alter the number printed in that run or to make major changes. If there has been significant revision, the next edition becomes the first revised edition, but only becomes a second edition when there has been a new setting of type. Each publishing house has its own methods of indicating first editions. Little, Brown always printed 'First Edition' on the title page and Michael Joseph indicate later printings on the copyright page.

Why are some editions described as 'first edition in book form'? Strictly many of CSF's books should be described in that way. From the beginning of the war onwards he adopted the practice of having his stories published first in episodes in various magazines and journals (principally *The Saturday Evening Post).* Like many before him, notably Dickens and Conan Doyle, he found that the pay was better and it was easier to write in episodic form for a pre-TV public, but it meant also that the magazine publication pre-dated the book form.

Finally, why collect first editions? If you are a collector, rather than a dealer or reader, because you cannot help it!

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The views expressed here are only those of an enthusiastic amateur based on experience and observation and should not be used as the sole source of information for making significant decisions.

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LYDIA
by Mark Corriston

I know some of you have just watched the 1951 Captain Horatio Hornblower movie on the History Channel. This movie introduced me to Hornblower many years ago. Back in '82 I wrote to the Warner Brothers Archives and asked about the Lydia, used in the movie. The following is a transcription of the original publicity release sent in reply:

> Warner Bros. Pictures, Inc.
> 321 West 44th Street
> New York 18, N.Y.

The problem of finding the right kind of ships, which Raoul Walsh required for the shooting of scenes on location for CAPTAIN HORATIO HORNBLOWER, was one of major importance. In fact, ships had to be found whose style, size and finish and the smallest details harmonized with the naval constructions undertaken at Dunham Studios.

Two ships were needed - one to represent the "Lydia", the other the "Witch of Endor". Warner Bros. technicians went out hunting. They discovered the "Marie-Annick" a Brittany coaster which had been built in 1919 in the shipyards of Paimpol, France. This boat, served for a time as a wine transport between the French capital and Algeria. In 1947 it made 6 trips to Israel carrying Jewish refugees.

In 1948, the ship was laid up and in January, 1950, Tom Morehan, art director for Captain Horatio Hornblower bought it for Warner Bros. and had it towed to the shipyards of Villefranche. Today, the "Marie-Annick" is no more - so to speak. It has been completely altered. The bridge has been entirely reconstructed, the masts and riggings have been changed and the hull has been specially beautified with a gold leaf paint. This is how the "Witch of Endor" was born.

With regard to the "Lydia" the problem was even greater, a much larger ship was required. Warner Bros. chose the "France", a 3-masted Newfoundlander, which was launched at Cancale in 1914. This ship had been a fishing boat at Newfoundland until 1939, when just before the declaration of war it was laid up at St. Malo. Requisitioned by the Germans soon after their arrival it was handed back in 1943 to its owner at Cancale as the Germans had not been able to find use for it. The owner of the ship, fearing that the Germans might change their minds and seize it once more, scuttled it. Until 1945, it remained on the bottom of the sea. In that year it was raised and transformed into a two-engine, 3-mast schooner. Taken to Sete, it was used for transporting wine between that town and Oran. In 1946, these trips no longer paid.... and the boat was laid up once more. Then, at the end of January, Warner Bros. Bought it and sent it to Villefranche. Designers made drawing after drawing studied plan after plan, comparing their sketches with the original "Lydia", Dunham Studios in London. At last, the transformation work began and now a sumptuous frigate of the early 19th century has arisen in the shipyards.

The big question for me is whatever happened to "Lydia" ex-France. I fear the worst. She was beautiful ship, and if still fit would suit the purposes of the series perfectly.

CHALLENGE:

The gauntlet has been thrown down: complete the ending of *Hornblower and the Crisis.*
Submitted endings will be featured in a future newsletter, bumper edition, if enough are received.