



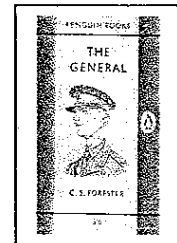
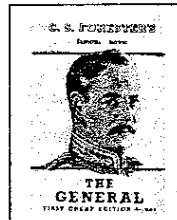
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Imperial War Museum Visit September 21st 2002

A select group met in the boardroom at the Museum. Numbers were small due to an executive failure by me to realise that the Notices of the meeting had been distributed based on an out-of-date address list. The countryside march due on the following day in central London dissuaded others from being in the capital on two consecutive days, or from journeying at all.

Pat Millard had been the major backroom force of the Society since its inception, running the membership list and doing most of the typing and layout of the *Newsletter*. She has decided that she can no longer help with the Society, and so we have a vacancy for Secretary. She will certainly be missed.

David Stead was congratulated on the high standards of production and content of the new style *Reflections*. Plans are already well advanced for the next two editions. Future meetings were discussed. It is unlikely that we could match the recent 3-day meeting based on O'Brian, but John Roberts and Don Beadle were optimistic about setting up a meeting in Portsmouth in the fall of 2003. Suggestions for the North East, eg. Whitby, or Bristol, were considered, but Greenwich found more immediate favour for a meeting in the spring of 2003.



Kay Wright entertained, informed and amused us with his analysis of *The General* and *Randall and the River of Time*. The situation in WW1 resembled common chaotic situations, as met in commerce and finance in which a small, critical change may have an enormous and unpredictable effect. Curzon's progress resulted from chaos.

The General was unique amongst CSF's novels in seeming to carry a 'message'. But, the message was so subtly written that it may not have had the desired effect. It differed, too, in having for its hero a character who rose to power virtually by accident, and by following his orders, blind to the consequence. CSF reveals the censorship, which prevented those in command from knowing what was happening in the field, and the politicians similarly had little factual knowledge. The population at home would not have tolerated the carnage of trench warfare in a modern environment, fuelled by live TV news.

Why did CSF write *The General*? Possibly, it was to set up an opening for writing propaganda in the US to bolster Britain's position to be allied to the USA. More likely, it was written to earn money at a time when his sales were disappointing.

At the time of writing, international media were again focusing on rising militarism. Hitler was now dictator in Germany. The League of Nations disarmament conference was going nowhere after fourteen years (it collapsed in May 1934) Japan had invaded Manchuria and further chaos was to come. A title "The General" with perhaps hints of lessons to be learned about World War One - still fairly fresh in most readers' minds - should have appeal. It is interesting that the book was serialised in the News Chronicle, then in its heyday as a liberal paper. The book was certainly a personal success in that it brought CSF to the notice of newspaper editors and, apparently, to the US Military. These contacts CSF built on well once in the USA. If he had a major interest in a message, it appears to have been sublimated when the new character, *Hornblower*, a total contrast to the blinkered Curzon, became successful two years later.

Randall and the River of Time contained excellent atmospheric descriptions of trench warfare but otherwise failed to win much support. The plot falls into two parts - the trials of an infantry subaltern and, with a change of pace, a novel about a murder trial. It is likely to remain one of CSF's lesser works.

We then had the opportunity to sample the trenches for ourselves by visiting the two Trench standing exhibits.

EDITORIAL

This is the second new-style *Newsletter*. The plan is to separate the publications so that the *Newsletter* could become a rapidly responding and up-to-date journal, with space for an active correspondence column. *The Literacy Supplement* has already reached a new high standard of presentation and content under the editorship of David Stead. Judging by the comments from members, the improvement is much appreciated. Other change relates to the secretarial/bookkeeping aspects of the Society. Pat Millard had already worked for many years as my Secretary in the NHS and spotting the gap, she took on all the chores. Pat initiated the style of organisation and having got the system into shape, can now take on other challenges, with our best wishes and thanks. Her sons ran the website too, and that will be taken over by Ray Wright, an erudite and energetic fellow-Oxonian.

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John Forester's Comments on The June Newsletter, 17th July 2002

"Peter de Loriol doesn't state his sources. I think that some of what he wrote must have come from my biography, because I think that nobody else has published that information about CSF's early life. For example, George Smith's profession, CSF's combined fear and hope that he was the product of an extramarital adventure by his mother. For the other information, I don't know the source.

The statement that CSF was 6 foot 5 inches in height is clearly inaccurate. I was never quite 5 foot 9 inches in height at my tallest, and I could wear his clothes after taking only about an inch from the trousers. (Dorothy passed on to me his clothes after his death. I once went to a fancy clothes ball with a London theme wearing his old Saville Row suit and patent-leather dancing pumps, my Alleyn's Old Boys' tie, white shirt with gold cuff links. I was probably the only person there wearing real clothes, yet people asked me why I was not in costume!)

Did he apply to join the Army in 1917? Not likely. He was being prepared to be drafted, like all the others. Loriol's description that CSF and siblings "played pirates with large cardboard boxes littering the floors" doesn't square with what CSF told me, or with what Geoffrey Foster-Smith wrote (as I recall). The initial impetus came from a cardboard cutout

model of a Nelsonic warship, which stimulated the playing of war games based on the Napoleonic wars.

Loriol's implication that Alleyn's School did not have a dress code and standards of behaviour, while Dulwich College did, I also think is inaccurate. Alleyn's in my time, the 1930s, had school uniform, and I have never heard that this was a new system. From all that I have read, school uniforms were the norm for such schools from Victorian days on. When the "Alleyn's Foundation" schools were reformed in 1857 to become Dulwich College, Alleyn's School for Boys, and James Alleyn's School for Girls, it is likely that uniforms were established then, although modified through the years to suit the fashions of the time. As for the standards of behaviour in Dulwich, CSF wrote in his autobiography that he had never before seen such systematic bullying and bigotry. I see no reason to question that statement."

Correspondence from S.K.W., Hilton Head, S. Carolina, USA

Does the Society have any means of obtaining Forester books for members?

Not directly - but you can try amazon.com via our website (and have 10% donated to our funds) but it has not been tested lately. We have lists of friendly booksellers and about once a year publish a list of books in print. Join up to the Society for these! We will also advertise books for sale or wanted.

NEW! Update on HH3 production Sent by Lawrie Brewer from AandE website

"Dear Hornblower Fans,

Greeting and good wishes from the production of HH3. First off, a news update on some additional casting:

We are very pleased to be able to confirm at last that Robert Lindsay will return as SIR EDWARD PELLEW. We are also delighted that Julia Sawalha (AB FAB) will be playing the role of MARIA. I know many of you thought she would be perfect - and we thought so too. Christian Coulson, who plays Tom Riddle in the upcoming HARRY POTTER AND THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS, has signed on as young Midshipman HAMMOND. Distinguished veteran actor Tony Haygarth has joined the crew as PROWSE. Lorcan Cranitch, who voyaged on the Endurance in our mini-series SHACKLETON earlier this year as Frank Wild, returns to the high seas as WOLFE. Greg Wise (SENSE AND SENSIBILITY) is playing COTARD. Ian McElhinney returns as HAMMOND, and Jonathan Forbes plays Midshipman ORROCK. Barbara Flynn, whom many of you will remember from our series CRACKER and from LORNA DOONE, is playing Maria's mother, MRS MASON. This is a truly outstanding cast, and we are proud to have them all with us.

On Wednesday, May 23rd, the cast assembled in London with Andrew Benson and Grieve, and our key

production team, to read through the first two hours of the script. For the veterans of our cast and crew, it was a reunion...everyone was really happy to be back at it...happy to be seeing each other...and somewhat relieved and pleased that the series is still going strong. David Warner, Terrence Corrigan and Jamie Bamber were all missed, but the new cast members were welcomed enthusiastically and began to fit right in.

Ioan had already gotten into Horatio-mode with his queue. Tony (Prowse) and Paul (Bush) were already at full throttle vocally, as they made the room ring roaring commands. Paul (Matthews) and Sean (Styles) had us all laughing, of course. It was a really grand day.

Filming began off the coast of Cornwall the next week, near Falmouth, with the Earl of Pembroke playing the Hotspur. The weather had been very dodgy the week before, so we were concerned as to whether we would be able to get out to sea at all on schedule. Happily, all has gone well.....and happily, none of the cast has had problems with seasickness. We were all laughing over the phenomenon of sea legs back on land - funny how many of us experienced the phenomenon for the first time while standing still brushing our teeth - and

suddenly terra firma would start pitching and rolling.

In between takes, on different days, everyone was fascinated and entertained by the marine life around us...dolphins one day, playing to the safety crew following us...huge schools of huge jellyfish, evidently blown offshore from France in the big storms, trying to make their way home again...and of course, always the seagulls. The other craft and ships around us could be entertaining too. One day, a small sailboat skimmed along (well within range, actually) at one stage looking as if she might be swooping perilously close to us. We all noted her French tricolor flag, and the wisecracks began.....capped by director Andrew Grieve yelling loudly as she passed, "REMEMBER TRAFALGAR!"

Later in the week, Phoenix joined us to play the Retribution. While we were out filming, there was considerable pleasure as we first spied her on the horizon, sailing down from Charlestown to join us. And it was great fun to come down to the dock later the next day, to see her dressed, the fold paint still gleaming on her new name. I made the mistake of making small talk on the dock, saying something along the lines of "And this was the Phoenix?" One of her regular crew overheard me and growled, "She still IS!"

Filming at sea is very rigorous for the cast and for the crew. Days

begin well before 6am, as everyone is transported to the dockside for hair and makeup. Each day, we sailed at 8am sharp, and usually didn't come back in until 7pm. The weather is always very changeable, sometimes really cold (one morning, the rain was mixed with sleet), and of course, always windy. One afternoon, the ship's owner advised me that we were doing about 5 knots, just on her spars - no sails were set. The sky and the light change constantly. Most of us wore sunblock on our noses, and for the crew, lots of layers to peel on and off as the day changed. By the end of day, everyone would be exhausted, with that good kind of tired feeling that comes from hard work, lots of fresh air, and trying to keep those extraordinary hats on in a gale force wind.

The production office has been including a "Naval Word of the Day" on each day's call sheet. The following day's sheet provides the definition, and a new word to joke about. Some of the ones used so far are butterbox...ragabash...spanker...cat's paw...Saturday night at sea...and futtock.

When I had to leave them to return to reality, everyone was tired but in great spirits. I think we all, both cast and crew, feel really lucky to be a part of something as unusual and as special as HORNBLOWER. We hope you will enjoy these new adventures.

Sincerely,
Delia Fine, Executive Producer

**NEXT MEETING - PROVISIONAL ARRANGEMENTS
AT NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM, GREENWICH
ON SUNDAY 2nd MARCH OR SUNDAY 23rd MARCH 2003.**

Each of these would follow NNM Study Days: Saturday 1st March,
'The private Nelson', £28.00, or Friday 21st and Saturday 22nd March,
'The nineteenth-century Navy, £45.00. Further details to follow.

The Radio Adventurers, Radio 4, 1st October 2002

In a new series, *The Radio Adventurers*, Professor Jeffrey Richards explores how some great fictional adventurers have enjoyed careers on radio. In the programme on Tuesday 1st October at 11.30 a.m. Hornblower was described as a boy's hero, performing fantastic feats of daring-do. He was the best-known sailor after Horatio Nelson. He fitted in between Captain Kirk and Roy of the Rovers. Despite his physical imperfections and gaucheness he was an 'absolute Superstar'. He had come from a period in history when Britain, thanks to the Navy, ruled the waves and death was just round the corner.

How historically accurate was CSF?

CSF's accuracy varied. Technically he was very good, and his social and military history was accurate from a mid-20th century point of view. O'Brian, and others, writing later, had a different view and greater access to such as the details of Georgian living and the true results of the events of that time.

Attitudes changed during and since the 30 years of Forester's writing about Hornblower; people no longer died heroically; they died horribly; people never got girls into trouble unless they married them; people no longer got in, or out, of love affairs or political intrigues if they were the good guys, for the best possible reasons or for the worst possible reasons if they are the bad guys. Forester imposed a rather middle-class, 1930s, sense of moral values. The television versions lately, which have been re-jigged, have been a lot more popular than the books - perhaps because they are more contemporary.

What are the continuing themes of the Hornblower stories?

The theme is in the man. They are good, solid adventure yarns, based on a good solid personality Hornblower shares with historical figures such as Drake, Nelson, Jervis, even Fisher, a certain legendary quality, as with all Captains, and all figures of history, that loneliness of command. Being a Captain is one of those things which never changes.

A snippet of the 1952 Radio Luxembourg version of The Commodore followed with the weirdest sound effects and astonishingly naff script. Hornblower (played by Sir Michael Redgrave) is giving orders, when an obvious stage pistol shot rings out. "What's that?" (a strange lapse of perception by Hornblower who must have heard thousands of shots). "He's shot himself." Hornblower launches into a crescendo of anger while refusing to hang a dying traitor, but stops when he converses with the ship's surgeon (whose accent would outshine even that of such luminaries as Kenneth Williams at his best).

In 1951 Warner Brothers brought out a film, starring Gregory Peck as Captain Horatio Hornblower R.N. - a lavish Technicolor version of the first three novels. The director was Roual Walsh and co-starred Virginia Mayo. They re-created their roles for soap-for-radio (sponsored by Lux) broadcast in 1952. Peck is sepulchral - obviously gearing up for his part as Captain Ahab. A typical line? "I seized an axe and joined the party" (quite a party; they were about to surrender off Rosas).

In 1968 the BBC decided to broadcast the whole Hornblower series, titled "The Hornblower Story", dramatised by Val Gielgud. There were 20 half-hour episodes, produced by Trevor Hill and starred John Westbrook.

Another version was broadcast in 1979, again produced by Trevor Hill, beginning on October 23rd, for which better sound effects were added in stereo, but the original script was used. Nigel Anthony played Hornblower, taking over after a younger-voiced actor played the young Hornblower for the first five episodes. He recalls that it was done in Manchester and was 'great fun'. The excerpt then broadcast was light years better in terms of authentic sound with waves and shots passing all the way from right to left and back with the convincing stereo sound.

Hornblower: Is he alive or dead?

Another matelot: 'E don't move, Sir.

Later, a cry breaks into their watchful silence.

Sailor: That's a woman, Sir.

Hornblower: I don't care if that's the Devil, get those axes and smash in the door

.....: Tell her to keep quiet.

.....: Find something to cover up this woman. The clothes from the bed will do. I don't want any nonsense about the ill treatment of a woman by licentious sailors.

Wonderful stirring stuff, but is it Forester?

The cast were asked to do some publicity. Nigel Anthony said that it was OK to take his picture, but he didn't really care for the fashion, just starting, of dressing up actors for RADIO plays in costume! It is a practice which still goes on today. The fifth floor is filled with distinguished actors dressed up as characters from Dickens and so on. He argued that he sounded OK, but didn't really look the part and he had a beard. So he got into the uniform, complete with powdered wig (which did not match his beard). Hornblower, of course, was meant to be clean-shaven. "Soon there were photos everywhere and cardboard cutouts in the front of Broadcasting House and in Manchester, and photos in the Radio Times." As Nigel Anthony recalls, he was rather cross, but could do nothing about it. Visuals could destroy the effect produced by radio drama. "The finest seaman and the greatest man as ever set foot on a deck. You can throw him in a dungeon, if you like. You can batten him down for a lifetime, but England will never forget him. As long as a flag of England flies, the spirit of Captain Hornblower will live."

THE END, to stirring music.

For more radio drama, I hope you did not miss listening to Radio 2 on Friday evenings at 2115 hours for the serialisation of *The African Queen*, read by Josie Lawrence, with the English ending.

Colin Blogg, 1st October 2002

Correspondence from L.S.

How did Forester know so much about sailing?

I don't know. He did not sail boats and was the first major author of sea stories not to have come from a nautical background. He did travel extensively in the 1930s in a large camping punt in England and on the continent (see *The Voyage of the Annie Marble* and *The Annie Marble in Germany*). Like his other skills, most of it depended upon voracious reading and a phenomenal memory. He had little need of outside advisors and only occasionally slipped up.

Correspondence from N.G. - The Fate of Brown

I am coming to the end of reading the whole Hornblower series and am wondering what happened to Brown. At the end of "Lord Hornblower" it was mentioned that he might open a hotel but nothing more was said in "Hornblower and the West Indies".

Do not worry. Brown reappears in *The Last Encounter* in which he, in 1848, is butler to Viscount Hornblower. He admits Napoleon Bonaparte III to the house when his train journey is blocked. You will find more information in C. Northcote Parkinson's *The Life and Times of Horatio Hornblower*.