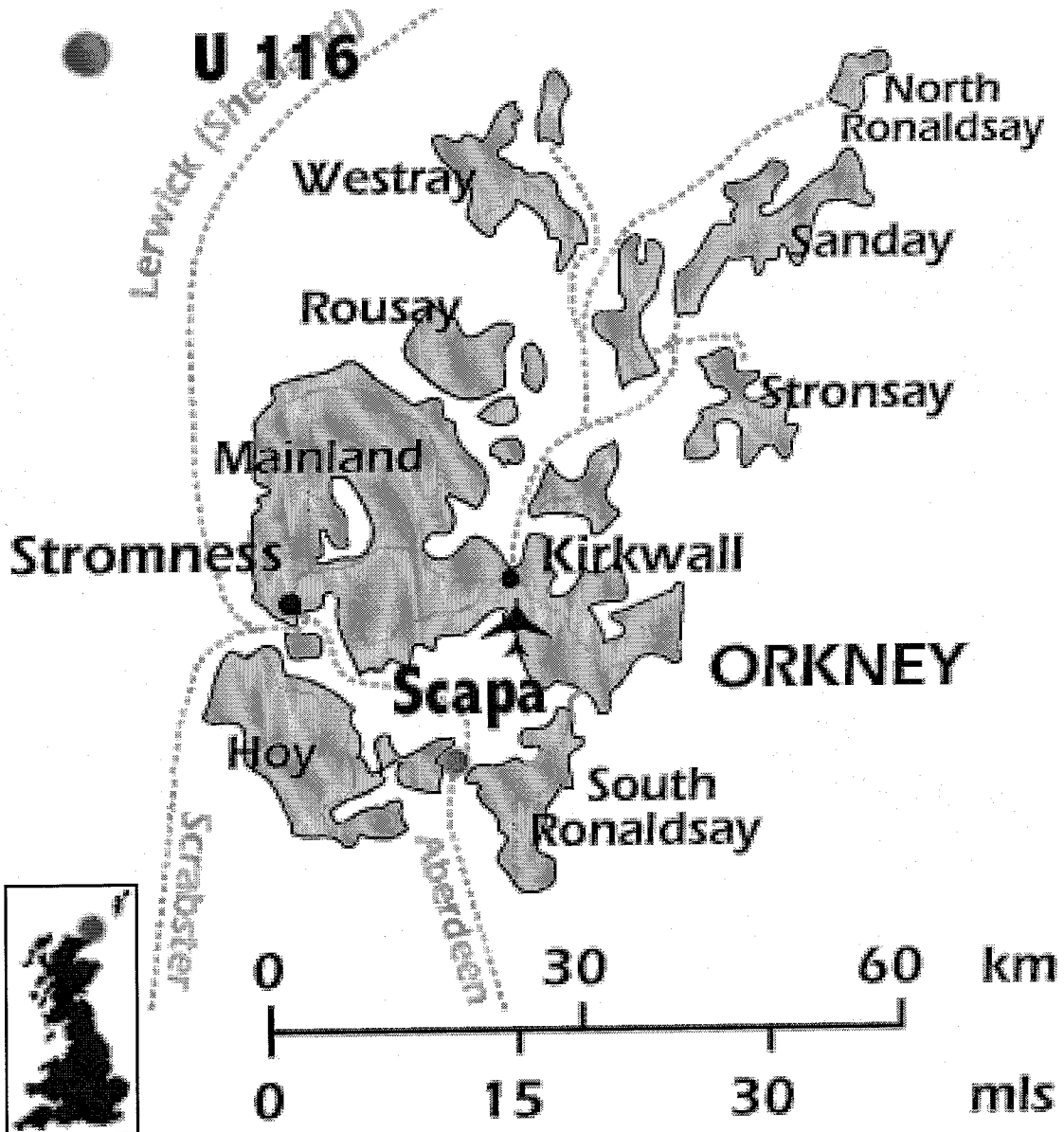


Reflections

A Literary Supplement to the Newsletter of the *CS Forester Society*

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ARTICLES: *A Submariner reads U97* - Walt Peterson

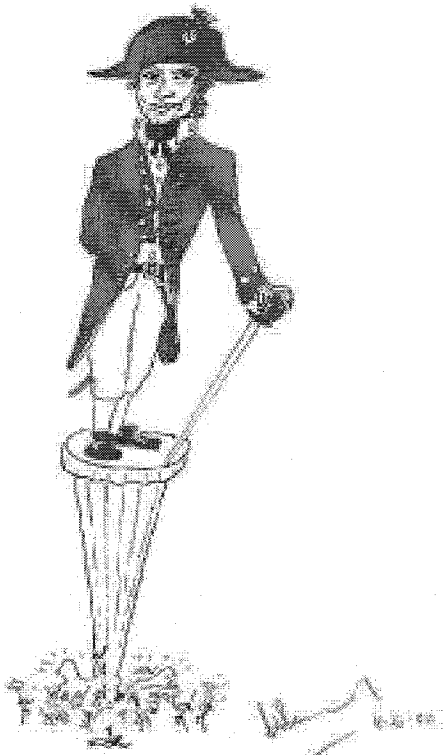
***Robin Jacques' Penguin covers* - Jetse Reijenga**

***Fanning the News* - Christopher Smith**

FICTION: *Hornblower and the Crisis* concluded! - Adrian Taylor

CORRESPONDENCE: *On the Triumph of Technology; Hornblower and Billy Budd; Randall and Lilliput; the Saturday Evening Post, editorial policy of Reflections.*

CORRESPONDENCE



At loggerheads on editorial policy!

Your magazine is greatly improved and must be a lot of hard work. Thank you. I'm sorry therefore to ask you to take my name off your subscription list, really because as I enjoy reading everything Forester wrote, I find myself completely out of sympathy with all the nit picking about historical accuracy. Give the man a break! He was writing novels to entertain, for goodness sake, not subjects for boring academic theses. I've enjoyed a few aperçus you've revealed from time to time, but I am much happier to go back to reading the canon.

Incidentally I find particularly distasteful John Forester's bitter, biased and spiteful recollections of his father. Even if true, who cares? The man was a wonderful writer. I also find incredibly grating the attempts by his admirers to copy his style and finish his work. You've only got to read a paragraph of their well-meaning efforts to realise why CSF was so outstanding and unique.

Sorry to be a pain, and I do understand and appreciate your efforts. I'm quite sure they will delight most of your readers. But these are my honest reactions. Thanks and good luck.

[Name withheld by Editor]

Thank you for your letter. As Editor, I find that readers tend to dislike one item or another, but never before an entire issue! It seems your disquiet extends to all three factual articles, both pieces of members' fiction and much of the correspondence column of Reflections 9. All reader's comments are welcome and you are fully entitled to your opinion – and a response.

I requested the article by Jetse Reijenga, which is on his web site, for its own content and because he was eager to become involved in editing, publishing and communications for the Society. I wrote the Hornblower and Literature article as an accompaniment to it, and to try to answer certain questions that had occurred to me. I am not and do not regard myself as an expert on 18th century literature. The article by Judith Evans arrived as I was working on the issue. Judith also now helps with editing, as well as regularly contributing to the magazine. As I wish more people did.

It does not seem to me that either of the contributors of Members' Fiction have been trying to copy Forester's style. Adrian Taylor's continuation of Hornblower and the Crisis was the fullest of several responses to a request from the Society for such piece, made some time ago. It is concluded in this issue. Richard Miller was inspired by Hornblower to write stories with a content and style of their own. One further piece by him will appear in the next issue.

The aim of the Society is to promote interest in and knowledge of the life and works of C S Forester. Another objective was to write a biography of C S Forester. This was before the appearance of John Forester's Novelist and Storyteller. What remains now, as it seems to me, is to verify, amend or extend its data to identify and answer remaining biographical questions. It seems to me that progress is being made, much of it from an ongoing constructive dialogue with John Forester.

CS Forester's greatest achievement was probably to revive the classic sea-story as a genre for the 20th-century. Nowadays, such historical novels are not highly regarded by British academics – with one somewhat odd exception. Forester is being specifically denigrated in certain quarters by those who believe he has been superseded by writing of a much more exalted order! Reflections is written and edited not merely to extend our knowledge of Forester but to pay him homage and to vindicate him.

David Stead.

New York TV, 1941 (?)

I recently obtained a first edition hardback copy of the *Sinking of the Bismarck*, and came across a reference to a TV presenter:-

*The TV commentator in New York was standing by his map again. "Well, ladies and gentleman, he said."*¹

Having checked my paperback version, I see that it refers to a radio presenter:- *The radio commentator in New York was standing by his mike again. "Well", he said....*²

Did TV come early to America, or was this a slip of the pen - given that the novel was published in 1959? It might have been the sub editor, of course.

Simon Karner

Radio becomes TV, and the microphone a map! These certainly are striking textual variants, almost comparable with those accompanying the sinking of Droits de l'Homme. In the original version of chapter 22 of The Happy Return, Hornblower told Barbara how Pellew took his frigates into the very surf of the ironbound Biscay coast to sink the Droits-de-l'homme with two thousand men on board. But the type was destroyed by enemy action in April 1941, and the compositors replaced "sink" with "sing" in the new version! The error passed into the Penguin text. Returning to the Bismarck, I do not have a Michael Joseph text, but I have checked the Granada Publishing-Mayflower Books paperback against the first American edition. (The incidence of American spelling in the paperback suggests that it derives from this US edition.) The role of the mass media is an important motif in Forester's plot, and there is no doubt that the media are newspapers and radio. If someone at Michael Joseph thought that the first reference to the American commentator envisaged a TV commentator talking to a studio audience, then they certainly blundered:- The New York newspapers carried vast headlines.... And in a New York building a news commentator was explaining to his audience what had happened... The point is taken up in the final paragraph of the book:- In a hundred countries radio announcers hastened to repeat those words to their audiences. In a hundred languages, newspaper headlines proclaimed Bismarck SUNK to a thousand million readers...³

¹ CS Forester, *Hunting the Bismarck*, Michael Joseph First Edition (1959), page 70.

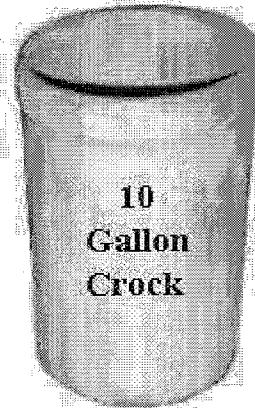
² CS Forester, *Hunting the Bismarck*, Granada Publishing (1974), page 74.

³ CS Forester, *The last nine days of the Bismarck*, Little, Brown and Co. (1959), pages 62; 138.

Potted meat...

Jetse Reijenga's article *Technical innovations in the Hornblower series* was very interesting. However, I must correct his attribution of an anachronism to CSF in *Hornblower and the Hotspur*, where he says the captain's stores contained "no potted meat", which is taken to mean the "high-temperature preserved canned food" introduced to England in 1810.⁴

"Potted meat" is *not* canned meat, and most cooks and housewives of Hornblower's time would have been able to prepare it (but perhaps not Mrs Mason - I suspect she wasn't a wonderful cook!). Briefly, it's cooked meat or fish covered in a layer of fat to preserve it. The meat or fish is cooked, seasoned, and chopped or minced. Then it's pressed into a heatproof container (originally made of pottery, hence "potted meat") which may be further heated by, for example, boiling in a pan of water for half an hour.



Then it's covered with a layer of hot fat (my grandmother used clarified butter) to stop the air, and hence mould spores and bacteria, reaching the meat or fish. It's obviously related to rillettes, meat paste (glass jars of which may be called "potted meat") and pate, and is a forerunner of the canning process. It would keep for about 6 weeks - long enough to make it worth taking to sea (but not nearly as long as canned food of course).⁵

I see that in the USA, canned meat is sometimes referred to as potted meat but I suspect this is because of the (slight!) resemblance of canned meat such as Spam to old-fashioned potted meat.⁶

Yours in defence of CSF,

Judith Edwards, Guildford, Surrey.

⁴ *Reflections* 9 (2005), page 4.

⁵ <http://waltonfeed.com/old/pot.html>

⁶ see <http://www.pottedmeatmuseum.com/>



...Steam tugs, ...

Jetse Reijenga's article on *Technical innovations in the Hornblower series* cites the steam tug seen by Hornblower in New Orleans at the start of a discussion about the development of steam power by the Royal Navy. The episode occurs in *St Elizabeth of Hungary*, the first chapter of *Hornblower in the West Indies*, set in the summer of 1821. The story hinges on the death of Napoleon - at St Helena on 5 May. But the discussion starts off on the wrong foot. "Evidently steam power had advanced further into daily life on the rivers and waters of the New World than it had in England, at least in the Navy."⁷

The Navy was actually keenly interested in steam – just like Hornblower. The Admiralty first experimented with a prototype steam vessel, the *Kent Ambinavigator*, in 1794, but it was not until 1815 that work continued. An Admiralty steam tug, *Congo*, was completed in 1816, but her engine and paddle wheels were too heavy for her hull, and she had to have her steam plant removed. She was completed as a three-masted schooner. In 1822, the first operational Admiralty steam paddle tug, *Comet* - built the year before – successfully towed the Royal Yacht *Royal George* down the Thames, on her way to Scotland for George IV's visit. On her return trip, the yacht was towed up the Thames by the merchant steam paddle tug, *James Watt*.

⁷ *Reflections* 9 (2005), page 3-5.

By 1837 there were 50 steam paddle tugs in the Royal Navy, including 26 taken over from the Post Office. All but one had side lever engines - a development of Watt's beam engine. The last had a steeple engine built by David Napier, a distant ancestor of mine. Further information on early steam can be found in Lyon and Winfield.⁸ But there can be no doubt at all that Hornblower would have become quite used to steam tugs, in the years after 1821!

Ken Napier, Chazarem, France.

Fascinating! I believe that the information in the second paragraph, about the Admiralty's extensive investment in steam power, is summarised here for the first time, from the specialist publication you cite. It is apparently as yet unavailable on the internet.

*A full list of early steam tugs is available, from Hans Busk's *Navies of the World* (1859).⁹ There is also quite a lot on David Napier (1790-1876), who designed the boiler for an earlier *Comet*, the famous *Clyde steamer* launched in 1812, before patenting his first engine in 1816, completely designing the paddle-wheeler *Rob Roy* in 1818 and developing the steeple engine from 1830.¹⁰*

... tin cans, frozen water – and literature!

Besides steam tugs, *Hornblower in the West Indies* refers to other recent technological developments. *Saint Elizabeth of Hungary* and *The Guns of Carabobo* both refer to the so-called "frozen water trade", and the luxuries available on board Carlos Ramsbottom's yacht included fresh food in tinned iron canisters.

Only the second of these is discussed in Jetse Reijenga's article, which cites the adaption – or infringement – of Peter Durand's patent by Brian *Donkin* and his partner John Hall. The pair owned the Dartford iron works, and by 1811 they had a factory in Bermondsey, conveniently close to Chatham and the Nore, making tin-lined iron canisters. Forester is thus quite right that such containers were available by 1821, and also right that they had to be opened by hammer and chisel, as they were welded together from three pieces of metal.

Hornblower's surprise at Ramsbottom's catering was perhaps polite rather than genuine. The navy had been quick to recognise the effect of the newfangled containers

⁸ David Lyon and Rif Winfield, *The Sail and Steam Navy List, 1815-1889*, Chatham Publishing.

⁹ http://thomo.coldie.net/hole.html/britain_1859.html

¹⁰ <http://www.gregormacgregor.com/Tod&Macgregor/>;

<http://www.sunnygovon.com/PLACES/Gal5/FamousScots/DavidNapier.html>

on the incidence of scurvy. The peacetime navy of 1820 used 20,000 2lb-cans a year, though they were still reserved for the sick, among the common seamen. They were very effective: a meal of roast veal and gravy, left from Captain Edward Parry's 1824 expedition to find the North West Passage, was still pristine when the can was prised open in 1939! But in 1813 a 1lb can cost about 3/-, 30% of the weekly wage of the man who made them, at a rate of 6 per hour. One reason why they were confined to the captain's table for so long, another being that the tin opener did not appear until the American Civil War!

The "frozen water trade" was well and truly active by 1821. Frederick Tudor of Boston had been shipping ice-blocks, sawn from the Massachusetts Lakes, to Martinique and the American South, to the Spanish in Havana and to the British in Kingston, since 1805. The business proceeded by fits and starts, as most ship-owners saw the ice only as a dubious kind of ballast, and the War of 1812 nearly brought disaster. Tudor had got his refined sister Delia married off to Charles Stewart, the foul-mouthed Irish captain of the USS *Constitution*, but his hopes that Stewart would invest prize-money in his business came to nothing. He avoided ruin by establishing a lucrative outlet in New Orleans in 1821, the year of Hornblower's visit. Within months, Tudor was preparing to return to Cuba with a new ship, the *Bearing*, well armed against the pirates who infested the route. Jetse Reijenga demonstrates how extensively Forester researched Napoleonic age technology in order to supply authentic background detail. It may be sheer coincidence that *Bearing* rhymes with *Daring*, the aptly named vessel commissioned by Cambronne to rescue Napoleon from St Helena! Be that as it may, the full tale of Tudor's tribulations and eventual triumph can be read in Gavin Weightman's book on *The Frozen Water Trade*.¹¹

David Stead compares *The Even Chance* with Gray's *Elegy written in a country churchyard*, a poem which he suggests is not only a detail in *The Even Chance* but one of its sources. Midshipman Hornblower, he suggests, exemplifies the virtues of the ideal Hampdens and Cromwells to whom Gray alludes.¹² The issue may be worth pursuing.

¹¹ Gavin Weightman, *The Frozen Water Trade: how ice from New England lakes kept the World cool*, Harper Collins (2002).

¹² *Reflections* 9 (2005), pages 15-16.

As an upright and competent officer, Hornblower is of course completely out of place aboard the *Justinian*, and has to be removed, and it is Captain Keene who contrives his transfer to the *Indefatigable*. This is not entirely dissonant with another classic of sea fiction, in which the young hero stands up to his persecutor – the posthumous *Billy Budd* (1924) by Herman Melville (1819-1891). Budd's fate is, of course, very different: he is hanged from the yardarm for striking his superior officer, the odious master-at-arms Claggart. But there are other striking similarities between *Billy Budd* and *The Even Chance*.

In each case, the outcome is determined by the intervention of a key spectator, the captain of the ship. And if Hornblower is linked implicitly to the English Civil War, so too is Melville's Captain Edward Vere. At the end of Chapter 6 of *Billy Budd*, Vere is associated with his namesake - the wife of the Civil War general Sir Thomas Fairfax - through the poetry of Andrew Marvell (1621-1678). In 1650, Marvell became tutor to twelve-year-old Mary Fairfax, daughter of the retired Lord General of the parliamentary forces. The Yorkshire seat of the Fairfax family, Nun Appleton House, inspired Marvell's most profound poem, *Upon Appleton House*, from which Melville quotes.



One of the most striking motifs of *Billy Budd* is the use of symbolic names. The hero is impressed into the grim *Indomitable* from the decks of the merchant-brig *Rights of Man*; and when his Christ-like death has sanctified the *Indomitable*, she proceeds to victory:-
In the general re-christening under the Directory of the craft originally forming the navy of the French monarchy, the St. Louis line-of-battle ship was named the

Atheiste... the aptest name, if one consider it, ever given to a war-ship; far more so indeed than the Devastation, the Erebus (the Hell) and similar names bestowed upon fighting-ships. (Chapter 29).

The Even Chance, too, might contain an ironically significant name. The struggle between the latter-day Hampden and the lawless John Simpson is set aboard the *Justinian* – named after the Emperor of 527-565 whose crowning achievement was the codification, for all time, of - Roman Law!

Paul Ellison Hunter, Philadelphia.

Fascinating!

Randall and Lilliput

I greatly enjoyed reading *Reflections 9*. I found Richard Miller's story of *Will the coachman on the Portsmouth Road* both atmospheric and convincing.

In David Stead's article *Contrary imaginations: Hornblower and literature*, my attention was drawn to the work of Thomas Campbell and the hypothesis that his poem *The River of Life* might have influenced *Randall and the River of Time*. Unfortunately my own anthologies do not contain the work.

Some readers may be aware that the March 2005 edition of *The Book and Record Collector* carried an article about *Lilliput*, the small magazine to which CSF sometimes contributed:-

Lilliput ran for over twenty years from 1937 to 1960, saw 276 issues and is still avidly collected for all kinds of reasons – its cartoons (St Trinians was born here), its stories (names as diverse as John Steinbeck, CS Forester, Gerald Kersh, HE Bates), its artwork (names range from Mervyn Peake to Pauline Baynes), its features (from Patrick Campbell to Aleister Crowley) and, of course, those photographs... CS Forester had a short piece, The Eleventh Hour, in December 1944...

The Bedchamber Mystery appeared in the November-December 1952 issue and was illustrated by Edward Ardizzone. There was an illustration in the magazine of the first page of the story. Since Colin Blogg's article on this book, I have been keeping a particular eye out for a copy, but I must say that, in all my browsing in second-hand bookshops over the years I have never found it.¹³

Incidentally, I have recently read *Sharpe's Havoc* and *Sharpe's Escape* by Bernard Cornwell, and there is mention in them of one Matthew Dodd of the 95th Rifles. Perhaps Cornwell was having a little literary quip!

Adrian Taylor, Corpusty, Norfolk.

The Eleventh Hour raises yet another bibliographical query! I have been unable to locate the work. An internet search, however, has put Adrian in contact with a copy of the edition of Lilliput to which he refers. And The River of Life is even less hard to find.

¹³ *Collecting Lilliput, The Book and Magazine Collector*, March 2005; Colin Blogg, *My favourite CS Forester book: The Bedchamber Mystery, Reflections 8* (2004), page 2.

Thomas Campbell: The River of Life

The more we live, more brief appear
Our life's succeeding stages;
A day to childhood seems a year,
And years like passing ages.
The gladsome current of our youth,
Ere passion yet disorders,
Steals lingering like a river smooth
Along its grassy borders.
But as the careworn cheek grows wan,
And sorrow's shafts fly thicker,
Ye stars, that measure life to man,
Why seem your courses quicker?
When joys have lost their bloom and breath,
And life itself is vapid,
Why, as we reach the Falls of Death
Feel we its tide more rapid?
It may be strange—yet who would change
Time's course to slower speeding,
When one by one our friends have gone,
And left our bosoms bleeding?
Heaven gives our years of fading strength
Indemnifying fleetness;
And those of youth, a seeming length,
Proportion'd to their sweetness.

The Saturday Evening Post

Since new material on Hornblower and his times is constantly being created, I have often wondered if it were not possible to reach some sort of agreement with the late *Saturday Evening Post*, which published a number of Hornblower short stories and novellas.

By reading that magazine, I became a life long fan. As a result of the *Post's* Hornblower articles, I bought my first Hornblower book. I now have all eleven books, the Companion, Sanford Sternlicht's *Hornblower Saga*, and the C. Northcote Parkinson biography. I subscribe to your publications, and see the new TV films... As you see, a life long fan.

Keep up the excellent work.

Ivo Stern

Since writing this letter, Ivo has been pursuing the matter further. We hope for a successful outcome!

- *All letters from readers are welcome, policy being to publish as much and as soon as possible.*

A submariner reads *U97*- Walt Peterson

Context and critical evaluation

U97, published in 1931, is one of only two Forester plays and his only book-length work with a submarine setting. Published only in the United Kingdom, copies today are very hard to find. Criticism is equally rare. The two pieces that can be found present opposite evaluations of the handling of the play's technical detail. Dr. Christopher Smith states: "Forester displays a real capacity for presenting stirring events with persuasive historical-and technical-detail..." However, John Forester says: "...I must remark on this, the underwater scene suffers from considerable technical inaccuracy."¹⁴ A review of World War I era technical documentation and both German and British submariners' memoirs shows that CSF's depiction of submarine operation is, in fact, highly accurate.

Set in the late stages of the war while communist inspired mutinies swept through and paralyzed the German High Seas Fleet, there seems to be no argument about the play's historical origins. Smith identifies the basis for *U97* as the last voyage of UB-116, a voyage that CSF fictionalised. Briefly, in October, 1918, UB-116, supposedly manned by an all officer volunteer crew, sailed from Germany "...bent on a gallant attempt to penetrate into Scapa Flow and there sink the British flagship."¹⁵ Like CSF's *U-97*, UB-116 fell victim to a mine and today lies on the bottom in the approaches to Scapa Flow as a curiosity for scuba divers.

John Forester cites two general areas where he believes CSF erred in describing submarines: firstly, the boat's internal arrangement and outfitting and secondly, general concepts of submarine buoyancy and submerged ship control. In my view the latter is more significant and will be addressed first, after a brief review of World War I submarines and submerged hydrodynamics.

¹⁴ Christopher Smith, *C S Forester's Play U97 (1931)*, *C S Forester Society Newsletter*, no. 3 (March 2000), page 8; John Forester, *Novelist & Storyteller: The Life of C. S. Forester* (Lemon Grove, CA: John Forester, 2000), page 226.

¹⁵ R. H. Gibson and Maurice Prendergast, *The German Submarine War, 1914-1918* (London: Constable and Co., 1931), page 327.

Enduring the submariner's life

Although variations exist among the several classes of German submarines in service during the war, the actual *U-97* is roughly representative, and is also comparable to contemporaneous British submarines. It was about 235 feet in length and on the surface displaced just over 830 tons of water. While submerged it displaced 1000 tons. Twin 1200 horsepower diesel engines could drive it at almost 17 knots on the surface and when submerged two 600 horsepower electric motors could propel it at 5 knots for about 50 nautical miles. The boat could dive to 200 feet and was nominally manned by a crew of 36.

By way of comparison, the 'E' class was the most prevalent British submarine and saw extensive service in the treacherous Dardanelles, North Sea, and Baltic. They were shorter at 178 feet, had somewhat less powerful diesel engines, and displaced about 200 fewer tons of water. The E boats had four torpedo tubes (while *U-97* had six) and were similarly manned by nominally 30-35 personnel. Their depth capability was about 150 feet but several were known to have gone deeper without ill effects.

Sensors aboard both German and British submarines were primitive. Each had two retractable periscopes, electric gyroscopes, and a rudimentary underwater log to measure speed through the water. Radio was new and just replacing carrier pigeons as the war started. Still unheard of were sonars, fathometers, and other electronic navigation aids, so much part and parcel of modern submarines.

Living conditions aboard these boats were simply abysmal. Air purification devices were crude; for example, the British frequently used mice as indicators of unsafe internal atmospheric conditions. After 12 hours submerged, matches would not light and ships frequently needed to exchange the stale, internal air with fresh air from the outside for several minutes before the diesel engines had sufficient oxygen to even start. There were not enough individual bunks for the entire crew. Multiple crewmen serially shared the few available, or more often, slept on the torpedoes or simply on the floor, or deck. On E boats the Captain did have his own bunk but sometimes

this was actually just a long drawer under the chart table. Toilets, or heads, were also inadequate; the British C class had none. Frightful contraptions, requiring intricate valve manipulation in order to 'flush,' they weren't used deeper than about 30 feet of depth to preserve the compressed air necessary to expel the contents overboard. Waste was allowed to accumulate in the bowls to minimize the total amount of air ultimately used. As often as not, crewmen would relieve themselves while standing on the superstructure (casing) when on the surface. Bathing was out of the question altogether. The boat just could not carry enough fresh water to accommodate this amenity. Little wonder, then, that Lt. Johannes Spiess, second officer aboard the U-9, noted shortly after reporting aboard his first submarine: "I understood why the officer I had relieved recommended the use of opium before all cruises which were to last over twelve hours."¹⁶ Richard Compton-Hall's book *Submarines and the War at Sea 1914-18* (London: MacMillan London Ltd., 1991) is a rich source for understanding the technical details of these submarines and the human endurance required to survive aboard.



Submarine principles and practice

In order to better appreciate CSF's attention to technical detail it is important to understand how a submarine works. It submerges (dives) by allowing its large, external main ballast tanks, empty when surfaced, to fill with seawater. Opening valves at the tanks' tops releases trapped air and the tanks fill naturally as seawater floods through openings in their bottoms. As they fill, the boat sinks below the surface. The shipbuilder's design includes sufficient fixed lead ballast within the ship so that, ideally, it is virtually neutrally buoyant when the main ballast tanks are filled with seawater—the condition where the ship 'weighs' the same as the weight of the water it displaces. Smaller tanks allow the crew to adjust the final ballast condition for variables such as number of personnel, number of torpedoes, amount of fuel and food, etc, actually on board. After diving, the boat can accommodate ballast imbalances by using a combination

¹⁶ Johannes Spiess, *Sechs Jahre U-Bootfahrten* (Berlin: Reimar Hobbing, 1925), page 14. It is not clear if this book was published in an English language translation. The Library of Congress (Washington, DC) only holds this German edition. The U. S. Naval Academy (Annapolis, MD) holds a French language edition in addition to the German. The British Library's (London, UK) electronic catalog lists only a later German edition and a Portuguese language edition. The Royal Navy Submarine Museum (RNSM) in Gosport, UK, does, however, hold a typescript translation into English prepared by the (U. S.) Office of Naval Intelligence in 1926.

of external control surfaces, the ship's overall inclination angle, and speed to create more or less hydrodynamic 'lift.' When properly compensated, it is 'in trim.' At least for the particular set of environmental conditions existing at the moment.

Environmental conditions can dramatically alter a submarine's state of trim, even a depth change of only a few feet can require immediate action to avoid grave consequences. Seawater temperature and salinity significantly affect the water's density leading directly to changes in the submarine's buoyancy.

To appreciate the buoyancy changes induced by temperature changes, consider a change from 5° to 10°C (41° to 50°F). The seawater's density decreases from 1.02770 to 1.02697 units. This is a change of .7 parts per thousand, or .07%. If U-97 were to experience such a temperature change while ascending to periscope depth she would need to pump .58 tons of water out of her variable ballast tanks to remain in trim, otherwise she would be too 'heavy' for the conditions and needlessly expend precious battery capacity increasing speed to attain and maintain periscope depth. A five-degree temperature change is not particularly remarkable and the ship's pumping capacity could easily handle 1100 pounds of water. Of course descending again from periscope depth, the ship would experience the reverse effect and need to flood 1100 pounds back into its variable ballast tanks to remain in trim.

The other environmental factor, salinity, can have a more profound effect upon a submarine's trim than temperature changes, although salinity variations are more rarely encountered. The Skagerrak and Kattegat, linking the Baltic with the North Sea, and the Dardanelles both saw submarine action during the war and are two areas where current layers of marked salinity differentials make operating a submarine truly challenging. During his return from the Sea of Marmara to the Aegean through the Dardanelles, the distinguished commanding officer of HMS E-11, then Lieutenant Commander Martin Nasmith, RN, reported: "Immediately after passing Kilid Bahr the trim of the boat became quite abnormal, necessitating the admittance of eight tons of water to get her down to 70 feet [from periscope depth]."¹⁷ This neutral buoyancy shift was caused by the .0123 unit difference in densities between an essentially fresh layer of water from the Black Sea flowing over a deeper, highly saline layer flowing in the opposite direction from the Aegean Sea.

¹⁷ *Report of Proceedings of Submarine E. 11 From 19th May to 7th June 1915*, Public Records Office, Adm 137/2077, page 9.



An observation by one of the best-known American submariners from the second half of the 20th Century, the late Captain Edward L. Beach, USN, author of *Run Silent, Run Deep*, should dispel any notions that these environmental effects are, perhaps, only valid within some obscure or theoretical context. In 1960, Capt. Beach commanded the *USS Triton* during its historic circumnavigation of the world. Following Magellan's track, *Triton* remained submerged for the entire voyage. In his book *Around the World Submerged: The Voyage of the Triton*, Beach recalls the passage through Lombok Strait in the Malay Archipelago by the U. S. Navy's then most powerful nuclear submarine:-

*About this time the Diving Officer was having difficulty maintaining periscope depth at 1/3 speed. 2/3 speed was ordered to give him a little more control. In spite of this, and with a slight up angle, the ship slowly drifted downward. We thought all of this would shortly stop, when suddenly the depth gauges began to spin; depth increased to 125 feet in the space of 40 seconds. Standard speed was ordered to pull out of the involuntary dive, and we steadied out at 125 feet, shortly thereafter regaining periscope depth with an entirely new set of trim readings.*¹⁸

¹⁸ Edward L. Beach, *Around the World Submerged: The Voyage of the Triton* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1962), pages 230-231

Wave action associated with high sea states is the final complication for maintaining a submerged submarine in trim. As a submarine approaches periscope depth from a deeper depth, the sinusoidal nature of the surface wave pattern creates a situation where water velocity above the ship is greater than the velocity beneath. Akin to the Bernoulli effect that creates lift on an aircraft's wing, on a submarine the result is also 'lift.' The boat acts 'light' requiring the addition of water into the variable ballast tanks to maintain neutral buoyancy. Instructional material to train British submarine officers in 1918 advised that: "...as the roughness of the sea increases it is necessary to speed up, in proportion, to control a boat near the surface", in order to prevent losing depth control while making requisite ballast adjustments.¹⁹

A final technical point should be noted before examining the details that form the basis of John Forester's critique of *U97*. Settling a submarine on the seafloor, or bottoming, was routine practice for WWI submarines. If the boat was not otherwise required to transit from one place to another, bottoming provided an opportunity to effect repairs and allow the crew to rest while at the same time conserving limited battery capacity. The tactic could also be an effective ploy to elude a pursuing enemy.

Bottoming and unbottoming a submarine is as much about buoyancy control as about seamanship. In his memoir, Lt. Spiess described the process used by German submarines: "The boat is brought down by the horizontal rudders until contact is slowly made and then after stopping the engines the regulating tanks [variable ballast tanks] are flooded until the boat is heavy by several tons and remains anchored of its own weight."²⁰ His memoir does not include the unbottoming procedure; however, the instructional material for British submarine officers includes procedures for both bottoming and unbottoming. The British bottoming procedure not surprisingly mirrors the German and since both are actually only dealing with physical laws, there is no reason to believe that there would be any substantive difference between the two unbottoming procedures.

The British procedure is clear:

To come to the surface from the bottom, particularly in enemy waters, it is advisable to approach it slowly, in trim in case of the presence of undetected craft.

¹⁹ Lieut.-Commander Edward R. Lewes, R.N., and Lieutenant Eric D. Hobson, R.N., *Notes on Submarines for the Use of Officers Under Instruction, RNSM, Gosport, UK.* TS proof, date stamped Nov. 26, 1918.

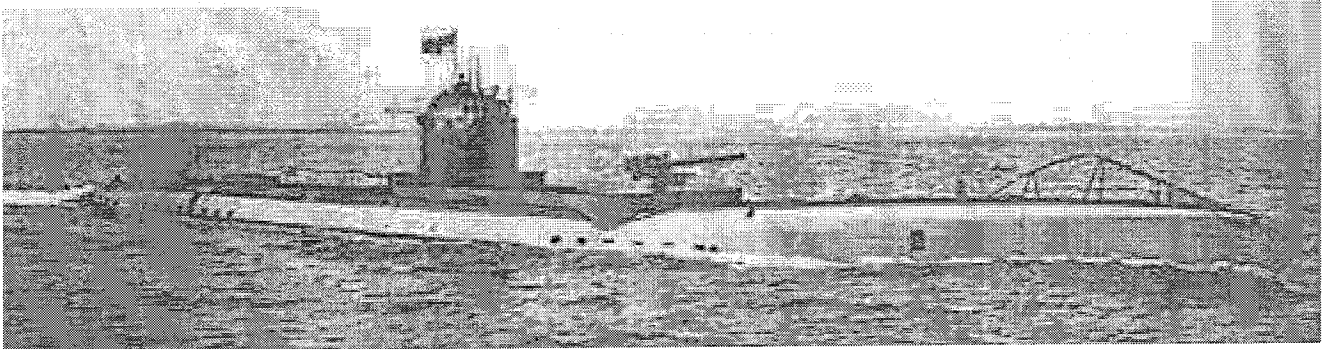
²⁰ Spiess, 16.

Thus before attempting to come up:

- Listen on the hydrophones.
- Pump out all bilges.
- Pump out the internal tanks used for anchoring the boat, and go ahead when she becomes lively, trimming as necessary at 40-60 feet.

Then approach the surface. —Should the pumps fail to heave on the tanks, due to the depth of water, back them up by putting a safe pressure of air on those tanks²¹.

The procedural emphasis is on *pumping* extra ballast out of the ship as opposed to *blowing* it out of the ship. This is because pumping, although slower, provides the operators with quantitative indications of how much water has been deballasted; whereas, blowing is not metered and might result in bringing the ship to the surface in the midst of a hostile tactical situation. The procedure also addresses the eventuality that the ship may be at a deeper depth than optimum for its pumps.



CSF's technical accuracy

John Forester's comments can now be evaluated within the context of basic principles and actual World War I submarine practices. The most serious technical deficiency he cites is that CSF's U-97 changes its ballast condition as it changes depth. John Forester writes:-

*No. Once the boat is trimmed for dive, it displaces the same amount of water as its weight, and floats with zero buoyancy at any depth.*²²

The various physical laws that affect a submarine's buoyancy detailed above, including temperature and salinity variations, clearly show that U-97's ballast alterations to and from periscope depth are perfectly normal. In this author's more than 20 years of submarine experience, including thousands of excursions to periscope depth, ballast changes are the norm and an excursion without any change required is singular and remarkable in its rarity.

²¹ *Notes on Submarines*, 32.

²² John Forester, page 227

Regarding U-97's unbottoming, John Forester says that:-

*...when on the bottom, but trying to rise, the crew doesn't blow all ballast tanks, which would be the appropriate action, but starts the pumps instead, and the laboring noise of the pumps signals that they can't pump out enough water to make the boat rise.*²³

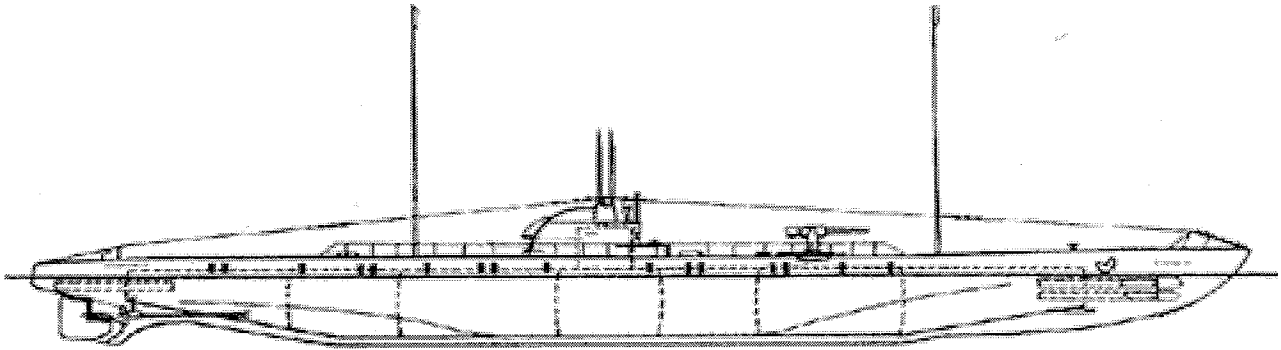
From the procedures outlined above it is obvious that, in fact, the fictional crew was scrupulously following actual established submarine practice. Interestingly, CSF's U-97 is on the bottom at 55 meters and experiences less than full pumping capacity, a possibility described in the British procedures. Blowing all of the ballast tanks as John Forester suggests could have resulted in the ship surfacing uncontrollably inside Scapa Flow's confined entrance channel in the midst of what turned out to be the sortie of the British Grand Fleet. That is, of course, if the external main ballast tanks had not been ruptured by the exploding mine, in which case the compressed air to blow

the tanks would merely have escaped, effectively marking the boat's location to observers on the surface. Naturally this last eventuality is hypothetical, since soon after the failed attempt to pump off the bottom, the play ends with the crew overcome by toxic chlorine gas. Chlorine gas is produced when seawater contacts sulfuric acid in the battery cells. It was actually a contributing factor in the loss of several submarines during the war.

John Forester further claims that U-97's *...periscope does not move up and down, but is merely obtruded above the surface by changing the depth of the boat, a very significant error that surely would not be missed by the audience.*²⁴ Correcting this inaccurate assertion yields an even greater appreciation for CSF's technical accuracy in *U97* that would not otherwise be guessed. On the one hand it could suffice to point out that standard submarine practice is currently, and has been from earliest times, to raise the periscope before the boat is at periscope depth, and consequently, it is 'obtruded' by the boat. This is a

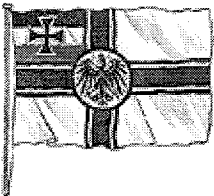
²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ *Ibid.*



matter of safety-of-ship, it allows the periscope operator to possibly see, while the periscope is still underwater, an object or ship that it was otherwise not aware and take timely action to avoid collision. But to John Forester's specific comment, he evidently missed or simply did not understand the significance of U-97's conning officer's direction to an unnamed periscope assistant: "Periscope in. Twenty meters."²⁵ The order directs that the periscope be lowered and the ship's depth be increased to 20 meters in order to avoid a collision with the ships the conning officer, a Commander Spiegel, had just seen. For whatever reason, CSF does not repeat this particular dialogue in other instances during the play when the ship either comes to periscope depth or returns deep afterwards. Nevertheless, what is clear is that CSF understands the periscope is movable; not fixed.

A careful reading of Spiess' memoir reveals an even deeper level of CSF's technical accuracy. Contemporaneous British terminology for ordering periscope operation typically uses the phrases 'Up periscope' or conversely, 'Down periscope.' In all of the several instances that Spiess recounts dialogue relating to periscope operation, the German text uses the imperative *Gehrohr einfahren* (or *ausfahren*), translated as 'Periscope in (or out).' This is precisely the terminology used by CSF as opposed to that used by British submariners. The British usage is pervasive and continues in use today.



²⁵ C. S. Forester, *U97* (London: John Lane The Bodley Head Limited, 1931), page 81

From *Annie Marble* to *U97*

CSF's mimetic (rather than idiomatic) accuracy, in this case, raises an interesting question concerning his source(s) for *U97*. Had they been strictly British, it seems unlikely that he would have chosen the uniquely German command 'Periscope in.'

Sanford Sternlicht has suggested in his study of CSF's work that CSF's 1929 vacation spent cruising along German inland rivers described in the book *The Annie Marble in Germany* provided background information later useful in writing *The General*, *Randall and the River of Time*, and even possibly *Hunting the Bismarck*²⁶. Perhaps, *U97*, published shortly later in 1931, also had origins aboard the *Annie Marble*.

Only CSF's second work of fiction with a naval motif, *U97* shares many characteristics with his later and vastly more popular nautical classics. It is firmly based upon accurate historical fact with a believable plot driven by well-defined characters all presented within a technically well-founded venue.

Note on illustrations

The plan of the U Boat comes from the 'Times History of the War' a 22 vol publication with the last volume published in 1921. The map of Scapa Flow on the cover and the photograph of UB116 (the historical original of U97) come from WWW.coussell.net/page11.html, dated 29/04/2002. The page also contains detailed information about the loss of UB116. The other images are from www.uboat.net, an excellent site with comprehensive documentation of the naval struggles in two World Wars. We have tried to establish contact with these two sites, without success.

²⁶ Sanford Sternlicht, *C. S. Forester* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1981), page 72.



The dénouement

Adrian Taylor ends his continuation of Hornblower and the Crisis

Further happenings at the hostelry

Horatio Hornblower had been standing outside the small room at *The Saracen's Head* in which he had discovered the note from William Wilson to Nicholas Shaver, for some five minutes. He had been passing down the corridor to his own room after a substantial breakfast, when he saw that the door to Shaver's room was ajar and there were voices to be heard from within. As he listened, Hornblower regretted that he hadn't with him a notebook and pencil with which to note down any pertinent statements. He recognized Shaver's voice which had something of a grating tone to it, while his companion's had about it a touch of a French accent. And so he listened to the conversation with bated breath, his heart beating away so furiously that he thought it would surely give him away.

'You delivered the letter, Shaver?'

That was the plum-voiced one of the pair – the French accent was quite noticeable.

'I've told you three times at least, Mr Wilson.'

Ah so, thought Hornblower, the fog of mystery seeming to clear.

'We'll have to try some other means of deflecting that man Hornblower.' Wilson cleared his throat sepulchrally. 'I won't report to Claudius on this occasion.'

Once more the fog of obfuscation descended. Claudius, the Doctor of Divinity and renowned forger? Surely not! Hornblower shook his head in perplexity. These were deep waters indeed in which he was embroiled, whether he wanted to be or not, it seemed.

Now there came the chink of coinage.

'There, Shaver,' said Wilson.

C.S. Forester
HORNBLOWER
and the Crisis



Hornblower imagined the avaricious look upon Shaver's face as he accepted the payment.

'That should recompense you for your trouble. But Claudius will be more pleased with our progress if we can actually put this Hornblower off the scent.'

'Thank you, Mr Wilson,' but Shaver sounded rather grudging.

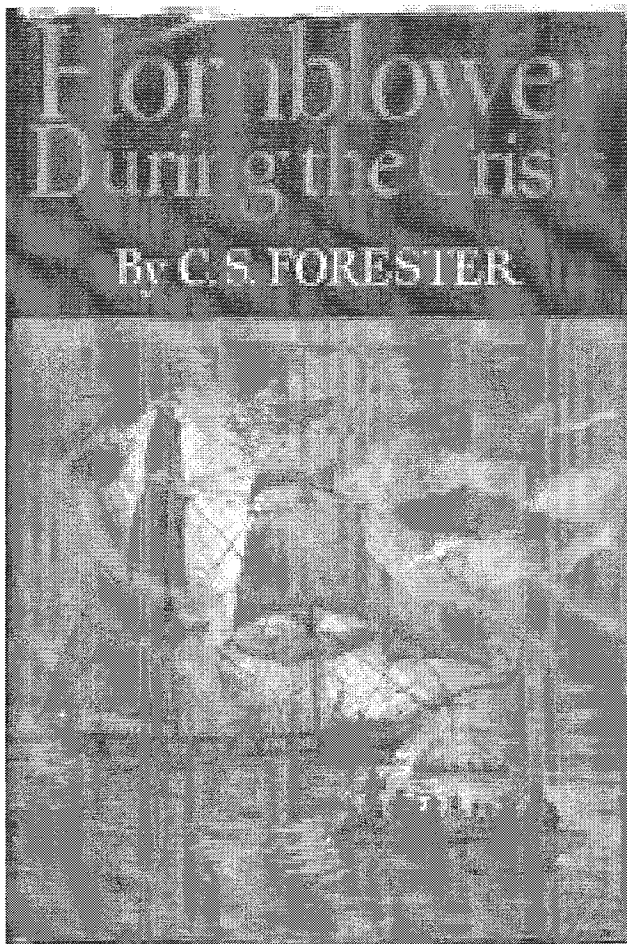
At those words Hornblower decided to retreat to his room, lest he was discovered in his eavesdropping. As he sat at his desk, he reflected upon this seeming nest of conspirators which he had uncovered in *The Saracen's Head* and its catacomb of rooms. To his curious mind it seemed decidedly odd that he had happened across that note from Wilson to Shaver lying on the desk in the latter's room for all the world to see if it so desired. There had been no attempt at secrecy whatsoever, for the door was unlocked as if in open invitation; it was indeed almost as if they had wanted him to find this supposed evidence of underhand meddling in his personal affairs. And not fifteen minutes ago he had found that same door ajar during what one may have assumed to be a confidential conversation between those two confederates Wilson and Shaver. And

where did the seemingly double-dealing Doctor of Divinity fit into this puzzling business? One might have thought that Dr Claudius would have been loathe to dabble in nefarious dealings after his hairs' breadth escape from the gallows. Perhaps, thought Hornblower, he should now write that letter to his long-suffering wife as he had long promised himself to do; perhaps it would assist him in clarifying his mind to compose such a missive. And so he reached out for his pen and dipped it into the pot of ink which stood on the desk. There was already a clean sheet of writing paper before him. He began to write.

After the usual 'My dear Maria' – there was a pang of guilt at that, as ever – there were mere everyday, prosaic details which he outlined in the letter. He decided that it would not be politic to allude to the present complications – so much for clarifying his mind, he thought vaguely as he wrote – and he merely passed over the whole business, both official and unofficial, with the bland sentence 'All goes well at the Admiralty'. He hoped then that the weather in Plymouth had cooled somewhat and that Mrs Mason was well. He signed off with the usual 'Your dearest Horatio', then he sat back with a feeling of relief. There should be no more guilt for a while regarding his wife. She would of course be inordinately pleased at receiving a letter from her husband, notwithstanding the commonplaces expressed in it. Hornblower suspected that she read his letters to her mother – she was as incontinent as ever, in other words – and that was one very good reason why he was reticent regarding any allusion at all to matters of state, apart from the single noncommittal sentence.

He folded the letter and placed it to one side. He had done his duty by his doting wife. Now he could apply himself to more important matters. That morning he was going to the Admiralty again. He must inform Marsden of all these developments at the hostelry. Perhaps he could shed some light upon matters which seemed to Hornblower confusing in the extreme. And he really ought to warn Marsden about Dr Claudius being a possible double agent; it was indeed urgent that he should do so – far more so than writing a letter to his wife. Hornblower almost swore at himself for his tardiness. He arose from his desk and quitted his room with some dispatch.

It was not very long before he was sitting in the bows of the boat as it rocked from one shore of the Thames to the other. As he pulled his boat cloak more firmly about him in the stiff breeze, he cursed himself for having so wasted his time in writing to Maria. It is possible that if the burly wherryman had enquired at that time about his progress regarding the war with Bonaparte, he would not have been answerable for his actions.



Shaver tells his tale

Horatio Hornblower was making his way from the dining room at *The Saracen's Head* back to his room after a breakfast which would surely have been sufficient for a foursome of midshipmen; there had been rashers of bacon aplenty, fried eggs equally plentiful, sausages sufficient to please the most famished of sailors, and toast and marmalade in excess. The coffee was freshly made and Hornblower treated himself to four cups of it; it was steaming hot and delicious, a delightful welcome to the day.

He had nearly reached the door of his room – it was a wonder that he was able to clamber up the narrow stairs at all after so large a meal – when the door to Shaver's room – that discreet little enclave which he had happened upon for the first time only the other day – was opened and the young occupant stepped out. He looked up at Hornblower with a look of enquiry upon his pale face – in the subdued light of the corridor the scar upon it was not so obvious – and then he spoke in almost a whisper, as if he feared he would be overheard:

'You're Mr Hornblower, sir, I believe?'

'Indeed I am,' replied Hornblower. He overlooked the fact that he should more properly have been granted his title 'Captain'. 'And you are Mr Shaver?'

At that, the young man seemed to cower back into the darkness. The two of them stood and looked at one another for what seemed some little time, although it must have been merely the briefest of minutes. Then Hornblower took the plunge. He threw out his right hand and shook that of his interlocutor, which was as limp as a dead fish and damp with perspiration.

'Pleased to meet you, Mr Shaver.' Then he took another plunge. 'I wouldn't mind a word with you. Perhaps you'll come with me to the privacy of my own room.'

At that, Shaver gave the glimmer of a smile.

'If you want, sir.'

It was a very meek Nicholas Shaver who followed Hornblower to his room.

Soon Hornblower had installed Shaver in the only chair in the room, while he himself perched on the edge of his bed. There were questions to ask and Hornblower was determined to ask them.

'First of all, Mr Shaver, how do you come to know Mr William Wilson, and what game of subterfuge is it that you and he and Dr Claudius are playing?' Better to speak plainly and not to beat about the bush.

Nicholas Shaver shifted on his seat. Then he spoke in his soft voice; once again it was as if he feared some eavesdropper.

'You won't tell Mr Wilson or Dr Claudius, will you?'

Hornblower could see that his hands were actually shaking and that his face was paler than ever.

'Better to speak out, young Shaver,' said Hornblower stoutly.

And then it was that the flood gates opened. It was a long and rambling exposition, which at times Hornblower found some difficulty in following. There was an allusion to the scar on his face – there had been a duel with an English Count, amazingly enough. There was a mention of Dr Claudius's francophilic associations – hence his determination to put a spanner in the works of the British scheme to forge fake orders for Admiral Villeneuve. It transpired that William Wilson was actually a Frenchman – Hornblower had suspected as much, for the accent had seemed wholly convincing, and indeed the Reverend Clive had outlined such a possibility in his letter. And then, most amazingly of all, Shaver informed Hornblower that Dorsey, of the Admiralty, was a French agent. And then, as if it were the sugar icing on the cake, Mr Nicholas Shaver, the merest, the tiniest cog in this underworld of subterfuge, told his listener that Admiral Villeneuve had quitted Ferrol and was now sitting with his fleet at Cadiz. And Hornblower cursed himself for a fool for not having read

his *Morning Post* with sufficient attention these last few days.

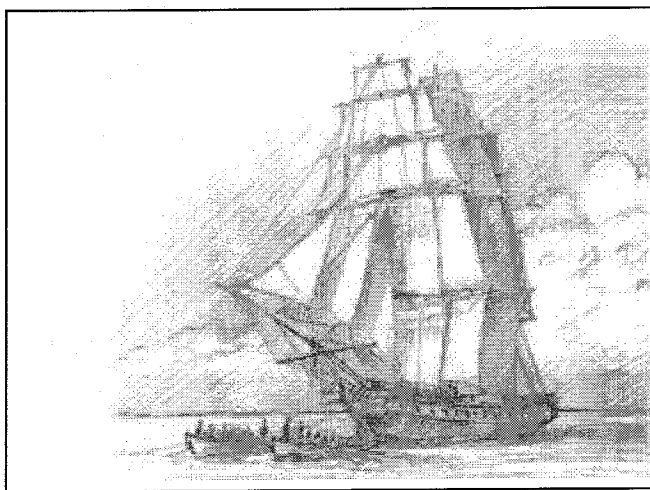
Near the end of his exposition, Shaver alluded once again to that English Count and he gave vent to a filthy word indeed. But, notwithstanding the rambling nature of his discourse, Hornblower grasped the main message that lay within that jumble of words. Gradually, inevitably, Shaver's energy seemed to wane, until he sat back in his chair in his exhaustion.

Hornblower too was thoroughly tired after that half hour or so of the necessary concentration required for sifting of the wheat from the chaff of all the detail. All he could say after it all was a straightforward 'Thank you, Mr Shaver.'

The two of them sat in silence for some minutes. There came from the street below the high-pitched shout of some vendor against the general hubbub. Then Nicholas Shaver said,

'You won't tell Mr Wilson, will you, Mr Hornblower?'

'You can rest assured, Mr Shaver, that your eventual honesty will serve you well.' That was the very least he could say to this wan-faced pawn in this sordid game of espionage.



Yet another letter

Horatio Hornblower sat at the desk in his room at *The Saracen's Head*. He was writing another letter to his wife. He had already written 'My dear Maria' and had made a beginning by describing his walk through the streets of London which had led him back to this hostelry from the Admiralty. He must have carried out this walk on half a dozen occasions at least, and was now quite knowledgeable regarding the little short cuts that may be taken along doubtful alleyways and passages.

Now he placed his pen on the desk and wondered whether he should tell his wife about that day's seminal meeting with Dr Claudius at the Admiralty. Should he, for reasons of national security, sketch out the affair only in the very

vague terms? Perhaps two or three pithy sentences would be quite sufficient? The meeting had become quite heated at times, and now Hornblower recalled that even the seemingly unflappable Marsden had had recourse to his pocket handkerchief on occasion, dabbing his forehead with it and then holding it in his hand as if he were some emotional young lady, such was the turn that events had taken.

After a brief minute of reflection he came to a decision. He drew a blank sheet of paper to him and began to draft a possible addition to his letter. He was still uncertain as to whether he should use any of the material which he was about to sketch out. And so he wrote in his very neatest handwriting:-

Today Dr Claudius was summoned to the Admiralty. Marsden showed him the "Maria" letters. Claudius swore most filthily. I took exception to such language and, mainly because of my meeting with Shaver the other day, I there and then denounced the man and indeed, throwing caution to the four winds, did likewise regarding Wilson and Shaver – although the latter is a mere pawn in some wider game compared with the others – and I told all in that room that the trio were agents of the Antichrist Napoleon Bonaparte. It may be pointed out that I shall move Heaven and Earth to assist Shaver, for the young man deserves his freedom for his assistance. And then it was that the evil Dr Claudius played his trump card, and for once Marsden seemed decidedly flustered. Claudius denounced Dorsey as an agent of the French – he had kept that information from the others as a tactical ploy – and that it was he who had informed Wilson about the proposed forging of orders for Admiral Villeneuve. The room seemed very warm, and Barrow went to open a window. I noticed the perspiration on Dr Claudius's brow. The man looked cowed and indeed beaten by this turn of events, and Dorsey was in no better shape – Marsden and Barrow looked at him with dropped jaws as he slumped in his chair. One might have expected the man to have shown more fight when his back was to the wall, but it was not so. It was then – and I don't really know what made me say it; perhaps it was merely idle curiosity – that I asked Dr Claudius how young Shaver had sustained the lengthy scar which ran down his face. And now it became evident that the devilish doctor of Divinity had not lost all of his fight. He dabbed at his perspiring forehead – there was plentiful recourse to handkerchiefs in that stifling room with its pent-up atmosphere – and launched into what transpired to be a lengthy diatribe against Shaver. As far as I can judge, there were some most unjust accusations. But I fancy that the story about the scar which Claudius told may have held some truth: that it was the result of an injury sustained in the course of a duel with an officer of

our own Royal Navy, and so there we may have an explanation of Shaver's being a Francophile. The tale about the English Count seems to be yet another shaft of dishonesty in this affair; very likely Mr Nicholas Shaver was thereby attempting to absolve himself from too much involvement in all the subterfuge. No doubt the case, when it comes to court, will shed further light in all these dark corners. Dr Claudius was permitted to continue until he fell silent. Perhaps he had at last realised that the game was up. And then of a sudden there came the sharp yapping of a dog...

Hornblower put down his pen. As if to mirror the words which he had just written, there came the bark of a dog from the street below his window. Hornblower yawned cavernously. It had been a thoroughly exhausting day. And it was then that he realised that he must tell his wife none of these details which he had just so painstakingly written down. Without ado he crumpled up the piece of paper and placed it into one of his jacket pockets. He had decided that he would dispose of it in the fire which always seemed to be burning in the grate in the hostelry dining room. And so now he could turn to the letter which he had been composing to his wife and write:

Your ever-loving Horatio.

Postscript

Dr Claudius, the infamous forger and supposed Doctor of Divinity, was found guilty of high treason and hanged as a traitor. Mr Charles Dorsey, a Clerk at the Admiralty of forty years' service, met with the same fate. Mr William Wilson was sentenced similarly and duly hanged. It is said that as he was led from the court by the firm hand of the law he shouted to the public gallery, 'May that Hornblower rot in a French jail! *Vive l'Empereur!*' (Little did he realise how near that wish would come to reality in future years). Mr Nicholas Shaver, of no fixed abode and c/o *The Saracen's Head*, was acquitted of all charges, partly on the evidence given by Captain Horatio Hornblower.²⁷

²⁷ **The Hornblower Tavern.**

At 3, Old Market Place, Ripon, North Yorkshire HG4 1EQ, tel: 01765 605889. Previously *The Star Inn*, now "popular with the younger crowd". Ripon also had a *Lord Nelson* pub. Still in Allhallowgate, with real ale, bare boards, real fires, billiards, but no children, music, food, or jukeboxes, tel: 01765 607704 – but now called *The One-Eyed Rat!* From: Nidderdale Pub Net, www.nidderdale.fsife.co.uk/riponcity.html

Christopher Smith - Fanning the News

The era that C.S.Forester allows Hornblower to share with Nelson was an age of elegance as well as violence, and in many a scene both heroes had to respond to the pernicky requirements of the polite world in drawing rooms as well as to the harsh necessities of conflict by land and sea. A delightful small exhibition at the Fan Museum in Greenwich, just a few steps away from the large, more obvious attractions of the Maritime Museum, focuses on just one aspect of this.²⁸

At an elegant soiree at the time a fan was an essential accoutrement for a lady. Ostensibly, to be sure, it was what nowadays might be called her personal air conditioner, but, even in over-heated gathering, keeping cool was a mark of good breeding. Handling a fan was an art in itself, attracting attention and even setting hearts a-flutter or else discreetly indicating that further advances would be unwelcome. Fans, it is hardly too much to say, symbolized female suzerainty in society, all the more effectively because, unlike gentlemen's swords they appeared so fragile.

So it is all the more interesting to see how fans reflected the great events of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. Manufacturers were not content just to go on producing ever-prettier designs. Instead they responded, for instance, to the rise of interest in Naples and happenings at its remarkable court by decorating fans with colour pictures of the Bay, with a plume of smoke rising from Vesuvius to contrast with the placid blue waters. A few years later there evidently started to be some demand for more dramatic scenes. The hero of the Nile, along with his companions, was being depicted, either more or less fancifully in battle or else in apotheosis with a wealth of proud heraldic devices. Lists of ships and their captains must have helped make their names familiar.

An additional dimension is added by examples of French fans. They show Napoleon's plans for invasion in graphic, if imaginative detail. With a very Gallic mingling of the mythic with the real, both very well drawn, they also set out his claims that seas should be freely open to commerce. It cannot, of course, be supposed that fans, whether British or French, were really primary sources of information about contemporary affairs. All the same, they do suggest that issues were taken to heart and that ladies even at leisure were caught up in the currents of great events at this time when many a fan told a naval story.

²⁸ The Fan Museum is at 12 Crooms Hill, Greenwich, London. The exhibition 'Nelson's "Fans"' runs until 6 November.



Robin Jacques' covers for *Penguin Foresters* Jetse Reijenga

"Illustration is something other than superlative drawing or a display of technical know-how. Unlike painting and sculpture, an illustration has a direct function... Illustration can never be a private exercise in graphic experiment unrelated to a specific purpose. Where it becomes this, it may be in itself enormously interesting but it will, by definition, no longer be illustration." - Robin Jacques.

My early fascination for the works of C.S. Forester, especially for the Hornblower series, was induced by my father around 1960, at a time when I did not yet read English novels (I started doing so at secondary school). What I do remember is that this fascination was also fed by the mysteriously historical looking cover illustrations of several of the *Penguin* editions in my father's library. One has to consider that my generation (I was born in 1951) grew up with comic strips and in all naivety I assumed that a cover illustration of a novel was by definition a correct pictorial representation of the storyline of the book. I was soon to discover that this was exception rather than rule. But *Penguin*, in the paperback market since 1935, has taken a more serious, at times even innovative approach to cover design and illustration.²⁹ The purpose of the present essay is to highlight the superb quality and significance of the cover illustrations made by Robin Jacques for a number of *Penguin* editions of Forester's books between 1956 and 1971.

Who was Robin Jacques?

Robin Jacques was born 27 March 1920 in London. Orphaned as a child, he taught himself to be an artist and began working in an advertising agency in his teens. Although he had no formal art training, he enjoyed drawing and used anatomy books, objects in the Victoria and Albert Museum, and his surroundings for his instruction. Jacques was a prolific illustrator, and his beautiful line art graced the pages of over a hundred novels and children's books from the 1940's through the 1980's. Jacques served as art editor for *Strand* magazine and was art director for the Central Office of Information. He began teaching at the Harrow College of Art in 1973 and at the Canterbury Art College and Wimbledon Art College in 1975. Robin Jacques died on 18 March 1995.³⁰

²⁹ *Books with Looks*, *The Guardian Weekend* April 30, 2005, pages 34-39; Phil Baines, *Penguin by Design - a Cover Story 1935-2005*, Allen Lane.

³⁰ <http://www.glassgrapes.com/jacques.html>

His expressive characters and breath-taking stippling are the pinnacle of illustration. Few artists have been able to equal his grace, restraint and near-perfection of line and detail. In addition to his magazine illustrations, he was active as a book illustrator in many different genres, such as *The Penguin Book of Limericks*.³¹ In the late 1940's he illustrated the US editions of science fiction novels by John Keir Cross, e.g. *The man in the Moonlight*. Cross also wrote *Blackadder, a tale of the days of Nelson and Trafalgar*, which Jacques illustrated.³² This may have aroused Jacques' interest in the Napoleonic period.

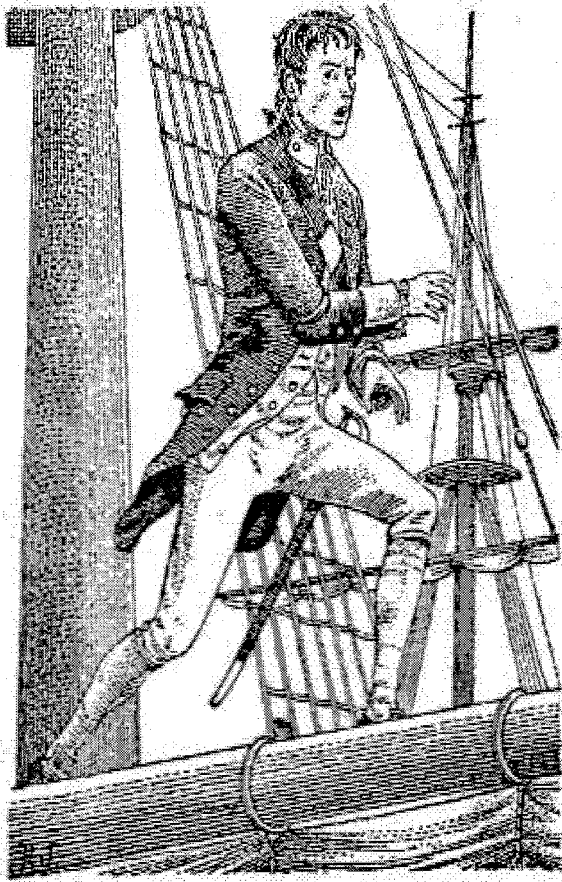


Jacques illustrated *A Guide to African History*, a 1962 resissue of *Kim* and several editions of *The Dubliners*. Most of his illustrations however were for children's books. A typical example is *Gulliver's Travels* (above) where he proves a true master of imagination, and sometimes original perspective. Jacques was the logical choice for a series of children's books by Ruth Manning-Sanders. Next to his magazine illustrations, fantasy and children's books constitute the large majority of Jacques' work.³³

³¹ *A golden age of British illustration, Artists of Radio Times, Exhibition*, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, June - September 2002. The exhibition was dedicated to the memory of Robin Jacques (1920-1995) who contributed some of the finest drawings to the magazine for over forty years.

³² John Keir Cross, *The Man in Moonlight*; Westhouse (1947); *Blackadder, a Tale of the Days of Nelson and Trafalgar*, 1947

³³ James Joyce, *The Dubliners*, Cape, London (1954); Rudyard Kipling, *Kim*, Limited Editions Club, New York (1962); Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*, Oxford (1955); Ruth Manning-Sanders, *A Book of Dragons*, Dutton (1964).



The *Hornblower* covers

Interestingly, except for Cross, the cover illustrations for C.S. Forester's novels seem the only major excursion by Jacques outside the fantasy and children's book area. This can only mean that the authentic historic atmosphere of the novels must have appealed to him. Most of the *Hornblower Penguin* editions in the 1950's and 1960's but also a number of others have especially drawn Jacques covers. I particularly appreciate their timeless, high artistic quality. It is also clear that Jacques has not only read but in most cases also studied the novel concerned, before beginning on the illustration.

Mr. Midshipman Hornblower for example (top left), bears a cover illustration of a skinny and insecure youngster, standing on a yardarm in obviously fair weather, but equally for obviously for the first time and without the security of a safety rope. By contrast, the illustration for *Flying Colours* shows a much more self-assured Hornblower, every inch an officer of the Royal Navy. With fierce determination, he is on the verge of smashing the thick, fat head of a French pilot into pulp with a belaying pin. The only weak point in the drawing is that the belaying pin looks more like the end of a broomstick! The illustration for *The Happy Return* (top right) depicts the agony of the second battle against the



Natividad, in sharp contrast with the title. Only an illustrator who had read the book, and understood the discrepancy, would have made this choice. The illustration does not show heroism by commissioned officers, it rather depicts the misery experienced by the lower deck: one cannot even ascertain whether the human head in front is still attached to a body. The reverse side of glory.....³⁴

The cover illustration for *Lord Hornblower* (next column) is again different. It depicts our hero in full dress, ribbon and star in front of a couple of mutineers, who took a vessel in the channel. Hornblower is chosen to solve the problem in a diplomatic way, and does so with a combination of clever tactics, bold action and more than a trace of understanding for the mutineers as victims of unjust treatment by a tyrannical captain. In the end Hornblower doesn't hesitate to shoot the escaping rebel leader in cold blood, no doubt the man with the broad moustache on the front cover. The cover for *The Commodore* shows the command ship for Hornblower's Baltic fleet. *A Ship of the Line* has a typical Jacques composition of a boarding party.³⁵

³⁴ C.S. Forester, *Mr. Midshipman Hornblower*, Penguin 1115 (1959); *Flying Colours*, Penguin 1113 (1961); *The Happy Return*, Penguin 835 (1956).

³⁵ C.S. Forester, *Lord Hornblower*, Penguin 1536 (1964); *The Commodore*, Penguin 1116 (1962); *A Ship of the Line*, Penguin 1114 (1956).



Other Forester novels

Several other Forester books issued in the 1950's and 60's (not specifically situated in the Napoleonic wars), also bear Robin Jacques' cover illustrations.

I have always regarded *The Ship* and *The General* as a complementary set of war documents: *The Ship* described as a well organized, living organism of destruction, *The General* as a mechanical killing robot. At the same time, Forester succeeds in describing *Artemis* in technical, mechanical detail, and Curzon as a human being. Jacques made two versions of *The General*: the first for a classic orange-striped *Penguin*, the other for a later edition.³⁶



³⁶ C.S. Forester, *The General*, Penguin (1956; 1968).



Forester's tales of the Peninsular War also bear Jacques' illustrations. Rifleman Matthew Dodd (last column, top) pays tribute to British infantry of the war. His backpack and uniform bear no traces of battle however, so he rather resembles a leader of boy scouts during a weekend outing! But it does look genuinely 1810 and so does *The Gun*.³⁷

The covers of *The African Queen* and *Brown on Resolution* (next column) were also illustrated by Jacques.³⁸ With respect to the latter, the silhouette of the ship seems to suggest a very low position of our hero, whereas I seem to remember that the story indicates a much higher vantage-point. The cover illustration for *The Earthly Paradise* is in fact a scene of nature, with a human element added. The subject is in fact the forest, not the person. The same can be said of *The African Queen*: the vessel is secondary to the African forest.

Conclusions

Robin Jacques' style is unique. It does justice to the time period of the text concerned, whether it is the age of Columbus or that of Napoleon, World War I or II, or any

³⁷ C.S. Forester, *Death to the French*, Penguin 1119 (1956); *The Gun*, Penguin 229 (1956).

³⁸ C.S. Forester, *The African Queen*, Penguin (1971); *Brown on Resolution* (n.d.); *The Earthly Paradise*, Penguin 1816 (1962).



Robin Jacques



Robin Jacques

kind of timeless fairytale. Jacques does not need grey scales, let alone colour: he is a master at authentic line drawing. Some of his drawings are slightly pointillist in character, for example *The Ship*.

As for composition: the illustrations are never portrait poses, they are frozen scenes of action. One of the aspects I regard as typically Robin Jacques, is the way many human heads are often drawn as if the viewer is sitting on the hero's shoulder, with reader and hero watching the scene of action, as a preparation for involving him in the story line.

It has been stated time and again, that the power of Forester's novels is their ability to attract new audiences from every generation, during most of the previous century, and that they will likely do so in the present century and the next. But the degree of authenticity of the novels, in my view has also been augmented by the cover art discussed above. I do wonder whether a good novel needs the image of a temporary hero like Gregory Peck, Humphrey Bogart or Ioan Gruffudd as a selling asset. Personally I prefer the craftsmanship of Robin Jacques.

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A fuller version of this article appears on Jetse's web-page!³⁹

³⁹ <http://www.dse.nl/~jetse/jacques.htm>