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Reflections

A Literary Supplement to the *CS Forester Society* Newsletter

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Two pictures, two portraits:-

- Christopher Smith on Scott at the death of Nelson
- Donald Hines on Hornblower and the *Téméraire*

Captains and Queens depart: Katharine Hepburn and Gregory Peck

Prefaces and endings - a storyteller in his prime; Origins of *The African Queen*

Hornblower receives another Letter; What became of Doughty? Lilliput goes to sea!

LETTERS: Vulgar tubes; A philosophy of reticence; Cover versions; BBC to the rescue!



A Queen from Connecticut David Stead

KATHARINE HOUGHTON HEPBURN, the regal, forthright and unconventional New England actress who so aptly took the part of Rose Sayer in the film of CS Forester's *The African Queen*, died at her Connecticut home on Sunday, 29 June 2003, just seven weeks after her 96th birthday. Biographer Christopher Andersen had dubbed her "the greatest star, the greatest actress, that Hollywood has ever produced" – a verdict which took full stock of a very long career. It had not been always so.

Hepburn's feminism was a legacy of her mother, also Katharine, sometime Chair of the Connecticut Women's Suffrage Association, later a prominent advocate of birth control. Young Katharine's childhood was Spartan, tomboyish, and sufficient unto itself. At the age of 12, she and her 15-year-old brother Thomas went to Broadway to watch *A Connecticut Yankee in New York*. One scene was of a hanging. And in the small hours, Tom hanged himself in his bedroom, for Katharine to find him at breakfast time. It was not the first suicide in the family. But it was a formative influence in Katharine's life. She determined to become the brilliant athlete, doctor and Yale graduate that Tom would have surely been. But she settled with following her mother to Bryn Mawr. There, she began to act and (so it was said) "picked up that unbelievable accent with its peculiar, long English vowels and the sense that one is being spoken to from a pinnacle of absolute high-Yankee condescension".¹

Hepburn made her film debut with *Bill of Divorcement* (1932), and next year won her first Oscar for *Morning Glory*, only her third film. But her career now entered the doldrums, with film moguls regarding her as a hussy and a financial liability, colleagues decrying her emotional range ("from A to B"). Actresses were expected to be aloof, immaculate and docile. She was regularly casual, fresh-faced and outspoken. And it went down badly.

¹ Zadie Smith, *The divine Ms H*, *The Guardian*, 01.07.2003.

Recovery came through her own production of *The Philadelphia Story* (1940). She began her 25-year on- and off-screen relationship with Spencer Tracy, with another Oscar, for *Guess who's coming to dinner?* (1967), weeks before his death. Public attention, of course, was held by a Great Love, and (Catholic) Tracy's dilemma. It may not have been that simple. After his death, she bloomed. More honours came – for *A Lion in Winter* (1968) and *On Golden Pond* (1981). She won 12 nominations, and four Oscars – till recently, a record.

Forester and Hepburn

After a short and unhappy experience of Hollywood in 1935, CS Forester had been heavily involved in projects to boost Anglo-American morale and the war effort from 1942 onwards.² In January 1951, with the plans for *The African Queen* settled, he took Hepburn out after a performance of *As You Like It* in San Francisco. Next day she went with him to see *Bitter Rice*. *Bitter Rice*, incidentally, was thrust to international success by star Sivia Mangana's body. The poster of the Anglo-Sicilian teenage model-turned-actress pouting by the Po sold "Italian neo-realism" to the world and was forever the definitive image of her [own] ambivalent career.³

Forester wrote scathingly, about the play, Hepburn and the film, to his confidante Frances Phillips. A year on, he wrote again in the same vein. With the *Queen* finished, Hepburn had suggested a sequel: she and Bogart would discover a diamond mine, he would be knighted.⁴ Forester was totally unimpressed. Yet Hepburn's idea was richly ironical. Her plot seems pure Rider Haggard. Similar stories were much in vogue during the 1930s and 40s, and have certainly hit the box-office jackpot in recent decades. Forester's recently published second African novel owed much to the *genre* in question. And romance and knighthood echoed *Flying Colours!*

The very making of *The African Queen* soon became a *cause célèbre*. Scriptwriter Peter Viertel, who was involved in the last stages, wrote a novel about a Hustonesque director filming a derivative version of *Heart of Darkness* instead of the Forester-James Agee screenplay. Clint Eastwood's filming of Viertel's book brought a new twist to the tale.⁵ And by now, the near-octogenarian Hepburn had produced her own account: *The Making of The African Queen – or How I went to Africa with Bogart, Bacall and Huston and almost lost my mind*. Really.

² John Forester, *Novelist and storyteller: the life of CS Forester* (2000), pages 269-306; 363; 402-403; 420-421.

³ David Thomson, *The pin-up of protest: the life and times of Silvana Mangano*, *The Guardian*, 28.03.2003.

⁴ John Forester, pages 652-655; citing CSF-FP 15.01.1951; 22.01.1952; cf. *Reflections* 1, pages 9-12.

⁵ Peter Viertel, *White Hunter, Black Heart*, Doubleday (1953); Penguin Books (1990); cf. *Novelists, scriptwriters – and storytellers*, *Reflections* 1, pages 13-15.

Filming *The African Queen*

The book is enigmatic. It was launched amid a fanfare of publicity: cover story and extract in *Newsweek*, adoption by the *Book of the Month Club*, a first run of 150,000. Knopf's press release, lifted *verbatim* from Hepburn's first page, promised a blow-by-blow account of the making of the film. Out of so many films, this was the one that Hepburn could "remember in vivid detail".

The subtitle hints at subtext. "Lost my mind" comes from a caption to a photograph. Was the book ghost-written - and ineptly? Was the ageing actress now really losing touch? Or was it one of her authentic voices? Hailing "an actress of substance whose intelligence and rootedness in true American values set her apart from other Hollywood icons, Ronald Bergen's obituary conceded that some of her films were "bad and inane". As for her book: "on that dangerous African location, she won the love and admiration of Huston, by hunting with him and generally roughing it. In return, years later, she described him as a pagan god."⁶ Not much (about the book) here. Zadie Smith, a fan of Hepburn from her teens, commented diplomatically (on the personnel): "The dynamic partnership with Bogart is the equal of anything she did with Tracy. In Bogart, she found the action-man dimension of her father that she loved, and he found a woman with similarchutzpah to his own wife, Bacall, who followed them to the difficult, insect-ridden location, reportedly a little nervous of how good a match her husband and his co-star looked on paper. She needn't have worried." Again, no more on a book about a film which was a landmark in cinematic history and in Hepburn's own life and about which she had promised to reveal every detail.

To the Source, therefore! As 1950 ended, Hepburn was in California, playing Rosalind. The phone rang. It was Sam Spiegel. He was going to do a picture with Huston. It was by CS Forester and it was called *The African Queen*. Had she read it? She had not. She did. It was fascinating. She was wary of Huston, his persistence, loquacity and studied old-Kentucky-colonel charm. She awaited a script, in vain. At last, in a fit of fury and indecision, she boarded the *Medea* (ironically-named!) for Liverpool. Eight days later, as snow fell on the Midland hills, she made the eight-hour trip to London by Rolls.

Huston and a script appeared, poor in parts. Hepburn wanted changes, Huston preferred to talk about hunting. He was raring to go, went without a goodbye, and she followed.... To Léopoldville, then Stanleyville, in the then Belgian Congo. She missed Huston by an hour. Thank God for Viertel. "Helpful - kind - and a damned good writer. He eventually wrote a fascinating book about two men, *White Hunter, Black Heart*, sort of inspired by this

experience." Viertel's two men were of course based on Huston and himself. Hepburn's impressions of Africa have much in common with Viertel's, though he at least saw a little more than mud and rain. His climax seems to echo Orwell's *Shooting an Elephant*. If this is by design, then it hints (with allusions to *Heart of Darkness*) at a certain elegance and feeling of movement.

Huston was at Biondo, 40 miles away on an insignificant tributary, awaiting the big shoot - of film and if permitted of elephant. Hepburn, Bogart and company duly joined him. They had drinks. She was not much of a drinker - at least not in the way she was a smoker. There was a monkey, named Romulus. He, too, by the way, has an important scene - in Viertel's book. And for the filming, there was the *African Queen*, "a thirty-foot metal hull with a thirty-year-old engine and a huge boiler and a fake steam pump".⁷ A cramped and unstable launch, a barge for the generator, and a 15-foot square pontoon-supported raft, with sections furnished and fitted like the *Queen*, for the shooting of close-ups. If a background of moving water was required, then the raft was towed by the *Queen* and the launch, and had several narrow escapes. But it was the *Queen* that eventually came to grief. Moored in calm water one night, the guard noticed a leak. What did he do? Get off! Retrieving the situation was a long, exhausting and dirty process, to be avoided in future. Some of the white-water scenes were shot in the wake of a stern-wheeler on the main river near Ponthierville - a busy though charming river port. Others involved half-size *African Queens*, made by the monks, to carry half-size Rosies and Charlies, made by the nuns. The boats were launched into the approaches to the falls above the town, guided by ropes until the last possible moment, when they tumbled over the edge.

Outside the mission church of Ponthierville, Hepburn reflected. "What became of them later, during the massacres...? I am not in any sense a Catholic, but one couldn't help being moved by the dedication of these men and women." Then, eight lines on:-

"Off I went again, back toward town. I met John, also wandering. We got a bottle of wine and went to sit on a sort of high spot of land overlooking the jungle and the curving river. And as the sun went down we heard the drums begin. Then the answering drums from another direction, then another and another. A symphony of drums. It was thrilling. John talked. I don't even remember what he talked about but it was magic. "Wasn't I lucky to be here. Adventure."⁸

Huston probably talked about hunting again. They were off to Uganda, to finish the film. Then on the infamous elephant hunt. Hepburn claims to have shared Huston's bravado, but her account of it ends in anticlimax.

⁶ Ronald Bergen, *Obituaries: Katharine Hepburn*, *The Guardian*, 1.07.2003, page 23; ⁸ Zadie Smith, *The divine Ms H*, *G2*, pages 2-4.

⁷ Katharine Hepburn, pages 23; 49; cf. *Facts behind the fiction, Reflections* 1, page 16.

⁸ Katharine Hepburn, page 90.

Looking back

Hepburn's penultimate paragraph reads "thirty-five years have rushed by. Bogie has gone. Spiegel has gone. The Queen herself is still alive – so are John and Betty [Huston] and Peter [Viertel] and I". But if the book was published to anticipate the film of Viertel's book, then it does not say so. If it was to commemorate a key moment in the lives of its characters, or the history of the cinema, or of Africa, then it fails utterly. There is little or no real information on personalities or locations or plot. And a better account of the filming could have been composed from adequate captions to the 45 good-to-superb (but mostly uncaptioned) photographs. What we have is a sub-Viertelian tract for the Huston cult.

Novelists, scriptwriters and storytellers, which focussed upon Huston, subordinated his reputation to discussion of his work in the context of the history of the cinema. In the case of Hepburn and *The African Queen*, the data is almost all anecdotal! Better perhaps, therefore, to set anecdotes right aside – even when Hepburn's own – and let the film stand, or fall, on its own merits. And taken in context, some anecdotes really did not matter: In those days, roles became actors, not vice-versa. If Bogart couldn't speak Cockney, Charlie Allnutt had to become Canadian!

The African Queen had been a big risk from start to finish, as Huston and Spiegel had gone it alone after two big studios with established stars had cancelled their own projects. But the film defied expectations to become a huge and lasting success. Bogart's art and Hepburn's have been most deservedly praised.⁹ In a 1999 poll by the American Film Institute, the pair topped the chart of the *50 Greatest Screen Legends* in their roles as Forester's characters.

However, one of the last photos in Hepburn's memoir catches them unawares, on set, at a hilarious moment. Hepburn's last words would have been far better as a caption:-

"What do you suppose ever happened to Charlie and Rosie? Did they stay in Africa? I always thought they must have... And lived happily ever after... And every summer they take a trip in the old Queen – and laugh and laugh and laugh and laugh."

That can only be a garbled version of Forester's own last words; in the authentic text of *The African Queen*:-

"So they left the Lakes and began the long journey to Matadi and marriage. As to whether or not they lived happily ever after is not easily decided."

Oh dear!

⁹ Tim Dirks has posted an excellent online synopsis and review of the film at www.filmsite.org/afri3.html. The page may be found through the www.filmsite.org home page, or by entering "dirks"AND"african queen" into the search engine.



Hornblower did his homework!

GREGORY PECK, who was portrayed in *The Times'* obituary as "the romantic swoon of his day and one of Hollywood's indestructibles", died on 12 June, 2003. He was described as "an almost indecently handsome man, with the dark eyes and hair, the height and the strong bone structure which showed to advantage on film". His most distinguished role among his 49 films was as Atticus Finch in *To Kill a Mockingbird* (1962), for which he won an Oscar. But his career had begun to take off in the early 1950s and he played the first of a series of heroes in *The Gunfighter* (1950) and also the eponymous *Captain Horatio Hornblower* (1951).

Peck and his family moved to London for the making of the film and lived in a house in Gloucester Square. Princess Margaret visited him at Elstree Studios and "looked at him through fluttering Royal eyelashes, much as would any other young woman gazing face to face at Gregory Peck". "I think it's wonderful to see such an exceptionally good-looking man who is also such a fine actor", she told executives. "I think he is wonderful." According to his biographer, Peck learnt much from director Raoul Walsh, in particular how to equip his wardrobe extravagantly and appropriately. However, Peck prepared himself for the part by reading all the Hornblower novels.

Walsh chose Virginia Mayo to play opposite Peck as Lady Barbara (above). Peck preferred the gentle Margaret Leighton, young and beautiful at the time. But she failed to persuade Walsh to give her the part. "What's the matter with Margaret Leighton?" Peck demanded. "Simple," replied Walsh. "No tits."¹⁰

Part of the shooting was in the South of France where Peck describes a riotous party, culminating in game of indoor football. This was in marked contrast to his normal steady *persona* and may explain the omission of his part as Hornblower and the lack of any mention of the film in *The Times* obituary.

Colin Blogg

¹⁰ Michael Freedland, *Gregory Peck, a biography*, W.H. Allen (1980).

Beating to Quarters

Hornblower was originally the hero of a single book, ironically entitled *The Happy Return* (1937). Forester then turned to *The Pursued*, before going to report the Spanish Civil War. *A Ship of the Line* and *Flying Colours* were an afterthought. But the finished trilogy betrayed no sign of a change of plan. Plot and pace were credible, joins neat, and the trilogy reached haven smoothly. Many a novelist has tried the same with less success.

As with the film. It got a rapturous welcome, but Forester was ambivalent. Mayo was miscast, but she and the entire cast did well, especially Peck, who did "a very good job, really good". The film was "not too good", especially where it "diverged from CSF".¹¹ He adapted his story for the screen before scriptwriters Roberts, Gough and McKenzie got to work. It is hard to decisively distinguish his work from theirs, but the verdict is harsh. The way that the problems of taking story to screen are solved is not unimaginative, and some of the flaws that remain are explicable. For a much bigger star than Mayo came within an ace of being *horrendously* miscast.

The film's opening is that of *The Happy Return*. The *Lydia* is approaching the Central American coast, with provisions low. Readers have access to Hornblower's thoughts, as thoughts and text consist entirely of words. "It was not long after dawn that Captain Hornblower came up on the quarterdeck of the *Lydia*... During this first hour of the day the captain was not to be spoken to, nor his train of thought interrupted." That hour takes 5 pages, during which the reader's attention is held firm by Hornblower's racing thoughts. Viewers must be informed mostly by other methods. A narrative prologue evokes *The Hornblower Companion*, then speculation runs riot upon the as-yet taciturn captain. Wagers are made upon his competence and behaviour, including (a brilliant touch) his first response to sighting of land. The response, of course, is *Ha-hmm*, or more precisely, a *Harrumph* by which a French obituarist of Peck explained Forester's choice of the name Hornblower! But the film's hero is a rather *American* Hornblower. Like the approved version of Columbus, he keeps up morale by false reports. And he is no sceptical disciple of Gibbon - we can read the prayer he pens over his shoulder, and his piety is - as we expect - instantly rewarded! Some have even looked to Hornblower for the origins of *Star Trek*. Now, in these first 18 minutes, he is buttonholed by a doctor who combines the roles of Scottie and Bones - and if James T Kirk is clearly not ideal as a captain, Hornblower's qualifications also include those of the *Enterprise's* First Officer. As one of his own officers puts it: "Hornblower - he ain't human!"

¹¹ John Forester, pages 615-616, citing CSF-Frances Phillips, 16 April, 1951.



Peck, however, plainly is - so perhaps not the ideal Hornblower! The part had been intended for Errol Flynn, and the film retains several dire swashbuckling scenes. But in the last analysis, Peck is Peck - not in the way he boards the *Natividad*, which anticipates the cliff-climbing Malory in *The Guns of Navarone*, but in the way that he is able to portray a man alone, beset by danger and burdened with responsibility, like Malory and the series of Western heroes Peck also played.

Here, however, he is not exactly alone. He descends from his pedestal to muck in with the men, and of course he has Mayo. The first 70% of *Captain Horatio Hornblower* is *The Happy Return*, shorn of most of the action (one battle with *Natividad*, refitting, storm, St Helena) and recast as a love-story. Once more, the reader has privileged access to Hornblower's thoughts, the viewer must note stance and expressions. Mayo will spend less time nursing stricken sailors than Peck will spend nursing her, when (the surgeon having succumbed not to syphilis but to the enemy) she is suddenly stricken with what her Spanish maid takes for yellow fever, but what he trusts is malaria. We do not mind this interpolation, nor the way in which the captain's servant informs him of the Leighton factor. For after all, the lady talked to everyone on board. What jars is the way that, still thousands of miles from home, the two reach the brink, but step back. We at once jump several months in two minutes until, with England in sight, they embrace once more, and quarrel. Barbara goes to Leighton. We do not resent her premature exit, for we have 30 minutes for a new ending to a convincing and truly *happy Return*. Instead, we get a couple more leapfrogs and a mad gallop through a Flynn-type hamming-up of scenes from both *A Ship of the Line* and *Flying Colours*. But the right true end is surely apposite for Peck, Mayo and Forester.

David Stead

Navigating dangerous waters - Katharine Hepburn (1907-2003) **Colin Blogg**

Within one week of the death of Gregory Peck, Katharine Hepburn, who had enhanced her reputation as Rose Sayer in CS Forester's *The African Queen*, died on 29 June 2003 at the age of 96. Thus, within one week, two actors who had played major parts in filmed versions of CS Forester novels were dead.

The Times's obituary tells of Hepburn's parents – her father was a noted urologist and her mother was a very active member of the campaigns for both women's rights to join organisations for women's emancipation and for the provision of birth control. Hepburn briefly considered following her father into medicine, but soon decided to become a professional actress.

After stormy times trying to get work on Broadway, she eventually landed a part in *The Warrior's Husband* (1932). Success in Hollywood followed. Her liaison with Spencer Tracy was an open secret, but was accepted by the potentially hostile press and lasted for 27 years, until Tracy's death. She cultivated a reputation for being headstrong, independent and arrogant, which intensified into the prickly, cranky old maid she eventually became.

The Times reports "a key film in the transition was John Huston's *The African Queen* (1951), in which she was a missionary, navigating dangerous waters with Humphrey Bogart as a hard-drinking captain of a disreputable motor launch".

The film was applauded by the press. Hepburn, Bogart, Huston (director) and James Agee (co-writer) were all nominated for Oscars, but Bogart alone was honoured. CSF graphically describes his first meeting with her when she gushed at him and would not be distracted from writing a pamphlet about the making of *The African Queen*. Despite the privations of filming in the Belgian Congo, Hepburn wanted to continue the story and proposed that she would write a sequel. CSF was horrified and arranged for the film cameras to be kept on time locks to prevent their use.

The African Queen was very successful as a film. The reception on the first night was rewarding. Hepburn put her memoirs to good use by preparing them for publication during intervals between takes. Then she continued to make movies whilst caring for the sickly Spencer Tracy.



She returned at times to perform on the stage. I well recall her riveting performance in *Dallas* in the late '70s when she totally dominated an obscure play, despite being confined to a wheelchair, thanks to a broken foot.¹²

For many fans of CS Forester, her performance in *The African Queen* was definitive. The force of the two highly-accomplished lead actors ensured that CSF's story reached a far bigger audience than would result from reading the novel alone. The various possible endings generally defer to the filmed version in which the *African Queen*, floating half-submerged, is struck by and sinks the *Empress Königin*. It was an important film in the 1950s for exhibiting the possibilities of a growing relationship between two social unequals – the "cockney" Charlie and the prim, proper – and unexpectedly passionate – Rosie, thus opening further the way to happiness for others caught in the trap of a social mismatch.

Katharine Hepburn won a record four Oscars from eleven nominations. Her individuality and steadfastness were genuine and resulted in her holding a dominant position on screen and stage for sixty years.

Katharine Hepburn, actress, was born on 12 May, 1907. She died on 29 June, 2003, aged 96.

¹² The play was called *A Matter of Gravity* and went on pre-Broadway tour of the USA and Canada in 1976. Web-searches and correspondence have to date yielded no more information, but any such information about this – or anything else in *Reflections* – will be most welcome. Editor.



Forgotten Hollywood star

Every Friday a ship leaves the Zambian port of Mpulungu on a regular service to Nigoma in Tanzania. The ship is 86 years old, has been sunk twice and has played a major supporting role in an Oscar-winning film, yet few people know of her existence.

Liemba started her maiden voyage 4,000 miles from her builders' yard. Originally named Graf Goetzen, she was the first of three passenger ships ordered from Jos L. Meyer by the German Imperial Colonies Office for service in East Africa. She was built at Papenburg, but then disassembled, transported by sea and rail to Lake Tanganyika, and reassembled on site by a team of shipbuilders at Nigoma.

The team employed mainly unskilled local labour to reassemble the ship, the German workers concentrating on the electrical systems and steam propulsion plant. Graf Goetzen, launched in August 1914, was 232ft (70.71m) long, powered by a single triple expansion steam engine driving a single propeller and displaced 1575 tons. War had spread to East Africa, and on

C.S. Forester's book *The African Queen*, based on events on Lake Tanganyika during World War I, was being made into a film so Liemba was rightly chosen to play the part of the largest German warship on the lake, reining her own past!

Now re-engined with a diesel powerplant and operated by the Tanzania Railways Corporation, Liemba maintains a regular service from Mpulungu in Zambia to Bujumbura in Burundi and on to Nigoma in Tanzania. Each round trip takes a week, and the ship, which can carry up to 500 passengers, is nearly always full to capacity.

Above: from the magazine *Ships Monthly*, August 2003

Prefaces and Endings - a storyteller in his prime John Forester

Around 1939, John asked his father about the reason for *The African Queen's* alternative endings - the shorter/tragic one (with the launch sunk) and the longer/comic one (with the victory of the British gunboats and the betrothal of Rose and Allnutt). CSF told him that he had written the longer version to gratify his American readers, who wanted a happy ending! This was contradicted by a Preface seemingly specially written for a 1963 edition which claimed to restore a cut by the publishers Little, Brown & Co. The problem was discussed in *Reflections* 1, which concluded that the cut was, rather oddly, made.

John sent a further comment which:-

- Sets out a range of alternative possibilities on the problem of the endings.
- Discusses *The Queen* in the broader context of CSF's best-known literary work of the time.
- Shows that the Preface of the 1963 American edition actually first appeared in print in 1940.

I am not a book collector, but I do have two copies of *The African Queen*. One is from the *Michael Joseph* collected edition that CSF hated and passed on to me (he rarely gave me copies of his works, and the only one he ever signed was the *Companion*, illegibly after his stroke), the other the *American Modern Library* edition whose acquisition I don't recall. The AML edition contains the Preface. It is marked *Copyright 1935 by Cecil Scott Forester, Copyright 1940 by Random House Inc., First Modern Library Edition 1940*, and no indications of later printings. I did not recall reading this Preface until looking it up just a moment ago. Had I recalled it when writing *Novelist and Storyteller*, I would have had to work out these thoughts then, for they contradict what I clearly recall about the conversation with my father.

In *Novelist and Storyteller* I wrote that I had commented on the different editions. So I had, but not, as I recall, from actually seeing the editions. There may have been an American copy about the house, but since I had already read the English one I didn't bother to examine the American one.

The substance of the conversation concerned writing, editing, publishing, and national differences. CSF introduced the *The African Queen* issue himself, and the point that he was making to me was to denigrate American taste by using the example of his being required to write a conclusion to *The African Queen* that he, himself, thought did not fit with his ironic view of "life". His criticism was clearly directed at the American publishers, because, as he told me quite clearly, Americans always wanted a happy ending. That is not the kind of remark that I would have misunderstood at the time or have transmogrified in memory. The main point of his discussion was his disinclination to create a happy ending, because that didn't fit his view of life, and he supported that point with the secondary illustrative point of putting the blame on those Americans. One can consider this parallel to the difference between the novel and the film endings of *Brown on Resolution*.

This all fits with so much of what I knew or thought I knew that I saw no reason to question what he had told me. So, what did happen? Your note states: "Isabelle Roblin (pages 3-5) and Colin Blogg (page 2) have established, quite independently, ... that the excision of this episode was discussed (CB) and indeed performed (IR) by *Little, Brown and Company*." I presume, from your words, that the information is definitive.

There are several possible scenarios. One is that CSF really preferred the shorter ending, but that someone required him to add the gunboats. Obviously, on the basis of the information to which you refer, that was not

Little, Brown. So it would have been either his English publisher or A. D. Peters, his literary agent. *Little, Brown*, having tastes that agreed with CSF's (whether or not they knew of the forced nature of the addition), decided the shorter ending was better, and published in that form. If this were so, the events would rankle CSF's emotions, to come out in the form in which he told me. So how do you explain the preface? Well, CSF could hardly declare that his main English publishers were wrong in forcing the gunboat ending on him, not since that had become the most popular ending. So he provided the story of his emotions as given in the preface, largely exonerating everyone.

The other scenario is that CSF really did prefer the gunboat ending. After all, it fits with his other historical novels, such as *Death to the French*, in which Dodd's efforts, admirable though they were, but pointless, were made pointless by Wellington's successful campaign out of the winter lines at Torres Vedras, or *The Gun*, which performed powerful but unrecognized feats in the defeat of Napoleon's Spanish strategy, or of the original Hornblower himself, who did to perfection exactly what his orders required, only to be hidden away because the orders had been changed in the meantime. The gunboat campaign on Lake Tanganyika was known to the public, for it was part of the Great War that still filled books and articles at the time, but being a side-show it was not well known. To remind the reader that the victory for which Rose and Charley strove was accomplished despite their failure had some value. After all, if the naval control of the Lake was not important, then Rose and Charley were fools. To justify Rose's determination, that control had to be important, and how better to show how important it was than by a quick description of the difficult but successful British campaign to gain it?

Either way CSF's talk to me contains lies. If he preferred the disaster ending, as he told me, then he lied about how the gunboat ending came to be added, and went on to falsely denigrate American popular literary taste (out of which he had made large sums of money) while covering up the actions of his English publisher and/or agent. If he preferred the gunboat ending, then his preface remarks about being shocked by *Little, Brown's* deletions are accurate, but in that case his whole story to me was a string of lies from beginning to end.

I add that there is still another possibility. That is, CSF originally preferred the gunboat ending, but later came to prefer the disaster ending. That would reduce the inconsistencies in the tale of these events. Considering the whole of his works, I think that the disaster ending more nearly reflects his own basic taste, and, therefore, might well be what one might consider his mature opinion.

I have started to consider the date of this discussion. Originally, I thought it had to be before we came to America, when America and Americans were strangers to the family, and CSF had had only one or two contacts with America, the first of them acutely uncomfortable. But the context of the discussion appears to be too mature for such a date, I would be too young to understand it. I wish that I could remember the surrounding room, to place the date that way, but by now my "memory" of that is so overlaid with others that I cannot do that with certainty. The date would not have been 1963; it was far before that. I think that the likely date was in the middle 1940s, when he and I discussed such subjects.

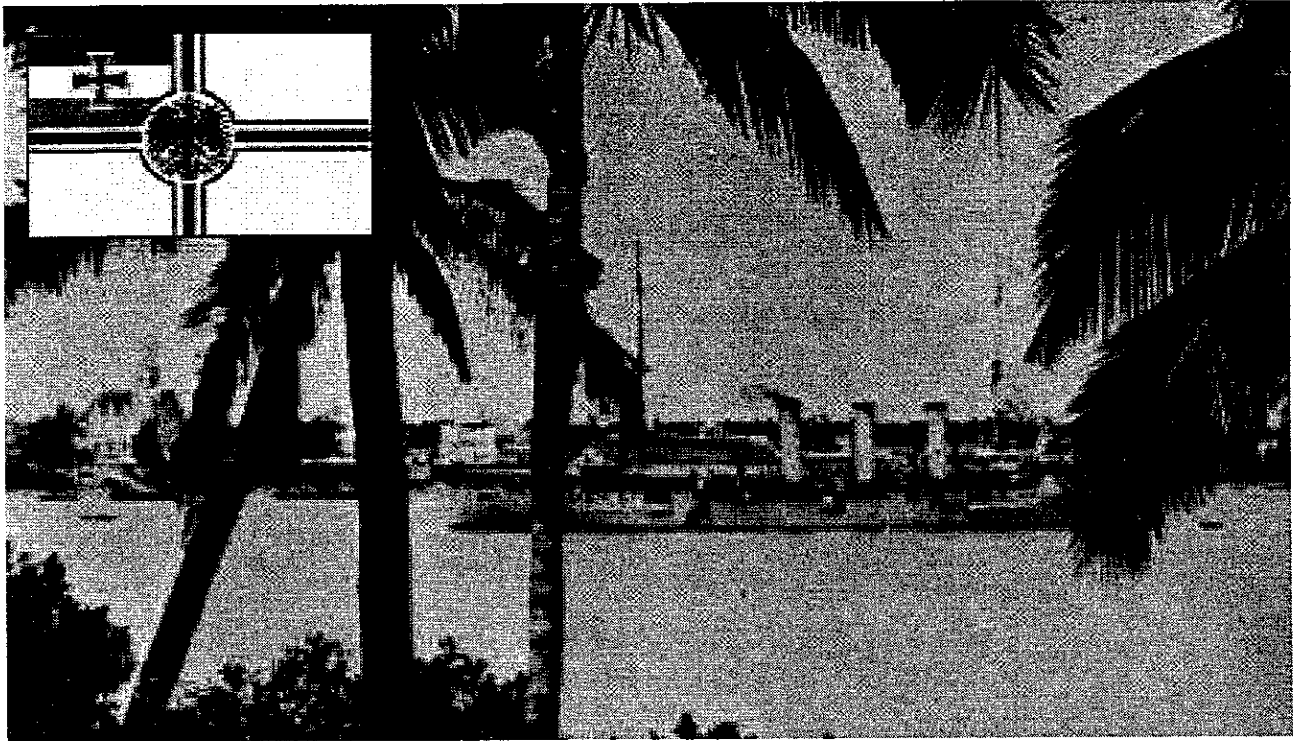
Unless one discredits my memory entirely, and whichever ending CSF preferred, he told me another mendacious story with the apparent intent, not of giving accurate history of the *The African Queen*, but of persuading me, again, to think highly of his taste and judgement (the Enlightenment character) by showing his recognition of the low level of American popular taste and of American publishers for pandering to it. Is this a tendentious argument to a foregone conclusion? I can't say that it is not, in some unplanned way, but it fits in with the other theories that I have about CSF.



Above: the wreckage of the cruiser *Königsberg* in the estuary of the Rufiji River, after attack by British monitors. Above right: the *Königsberg* at anchor in the delta, awaiting a sortie.

Stranger than fiction: the origins of *The African Queen*

David Stead



The problem

The African Queen (1935) is a story of how two English people, trapped in a German colony in Africa at the start of the First World War, travel down an uncharted river to the Rift Valley, to attack the German steamer that controls one of the Great Lakes. The book was the second novel published in the UK by Heinemann, for whom Forester had signed up after a long stint with John Lane. Before the next novel – *The General* – he would change publishers again. It is fairly clear that, at this period of his career, Forester just did not sell. His American publishers actually issued a truncated version of *The African Queen*, probably to simply save costs.

22 years later, now an internationally-acclaimed best-selling author, Forester wrote an account of the genesis of *The African Queen* for a magazine. His agent had found a proposal for a newspaper serial, but Forester had been reluctant, until his eye had been caught by travel poster promoting “the Dark Continent”. Whereupon he had immediately thought up a 5-part adventure story, and gone on to turn it into a novel.¹³

We can be sure that this story is untrue! Not because it sounds romantic. Nor because the *The African Queen* as published by the *News Chronicle* in July 1934 was very different from the book. No. We can show that *The African Queen* was several years in the making.

¹³ CS Forester, *Hornblower's London*, *John Bull* (18.05.57), page 18.

Königin Luise and *Königsberg*

The German steamer in the book of *The African Queen* is called *Königin Luise*. A real *Königin Luise* was the first sinking of the war. She was a ferry of the *Hamburg-Amerika* Line, requisitioned by the German Navy, disguised as a ship of the (British) Great Eastern Railway, and sent to mine the Thames Estuary, where she was identified and sunk by the cruiser *Amphion* on 5 August, 1914. There was a sequel, as we shall see.

Forester had already adapted the naval history of World War I in two novels. Cyril Leigh, his *alter ego* in *Two-and-Twenty* (1931), wrote poems on the Battles of Coronel and the Falklands. *Brown on Resolution* (1929) was a sideshow in the same 1914 Pacific Campaign, pitting a lone British sailor against the imaginary *Zeithen* in the Galapagos, while the real *Emden* was roaming the Indian Ocean! And the end of *The African Queen* book was based upon the sinking of the German gunboat *Kingani* on Lake Tanganyika by a British task force brought overland for the purpose. But the original *News Chronicle* version of *The African Queen* had described an attack on a German cruiser, the *Dortmund*, in an East African estuary! It had been surmised that Forester had learned about the Lake battle as he finished this first version, and rewritten the story in its familiar Central African setting.¹⁴ Further research now bears that out.

¹⁴ *Reflections* 1, pages 3-4; 16-19.

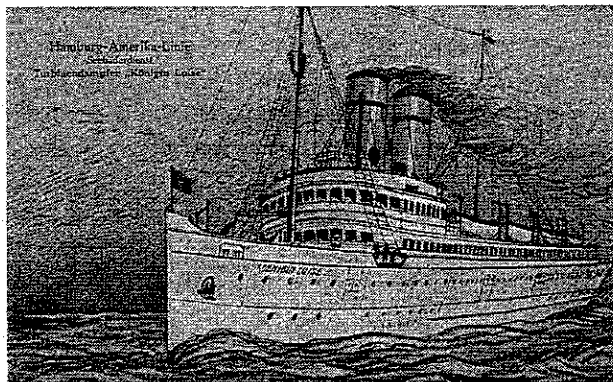
First, Peter Shankland's *The Phantom Flotilla* – an account of the Lakes Campaign based upon the reminiscences of a participant, Dr HM Hanshell, - added a detail. The Germans had supplemented their ordnance and personnel from a cruiser named *Königsberg*, sunk by British monitors in the Rufiji estuary!¹⁵ The sound of the name immediately invoked the *Königin Luise*. But an internet search revealed its true history, as chronicled by Kevin Patience, a former resident in Kenya and a historian of East Africa. The *Königsberg* was a light cruiser (3650 tons, 10X4.1" guns), sister-ship to the famous *Emden*, based at Dar-es-Salaam from 1913. She thus presented a serious threat to Indian Ocean trade. As the war clouds gathered, both *Emden* and *Königsberg* vanished on to the high seas in readiness to harass allied commerce. Off the coast of South Yemen, *Königsberg* sank the steamer *City of Winchester* – the first British merchantman lost in the war. But shortage of fuel and chronic mechanical problems cut short her cruise and forced her to lie up for repairs in the Rufiji delta. Good intelligence enabled a surprise sortie against the obsolete light cruiser *Pegasus* off Zanzibar. *Pegasus* struck her flag to *Königsberg* – a fact that was concealed for years, with official histories and heroic paintings testifying that marines had brandished an ensign in their hands to the very end, after the flagpole was shot away! But the *Königsberg* was soon blockaded once more, by a modern cruiser squadron.

A real-life Man of Action now appeared! Hannes Pretorius, farmer-turned-white-hunter after expropriation by the Germans, gave the British real help by reporting on the *Königsberg's* shifts of anchorage. The British first attacked with obsolete and feebly-armed seaplanes. After this ludicrous failure, Pretorius compiled a reliable chart of the delta as two flat-bottomed gunboats, built for Brazil to police the Amazon but commandeered for the Gallipoli campaign, were redeployed to East Africa. On 6 July 1915, and again the following day, the monitors assailed the *Königsberg* from a parallel channel, with aircraft reporting the fall of shot. On the first day, the Germans were better served by an observation post on land and sank one of the monitors. But when the British eliminated the post, their gunnery – though poor – was decisive. *Königsberg* was scuttled – and for decades afterwards, provided a major tourist site in the post-war British colony.¹⁶

The parallels between the *Königsberg* story and the *News-Chronicle* version of *The African Queen* will be obvious. But light may also be shed upon *Brown on Resolution*. The strategic problem posed therein by *Emden* and *Ziethen* parallels that actually posed in 1914 by *Emden* and *Königsberg*. There never was a *Ziethen*

cruiser– but a *Zieten* steamer appears in the *Königsberg* saga, and an *experimental torpedo vessel* of that name had been the first command of the future Grossadmiral Tirpitz! And a novelist's imagination might make another link. When war began, the cruiser *Leipzig* had withdrawn from western Mexico to the remote *Galapagos Islands*, before joining Von Spee for Coronel and the Falklands. Finally, history records that the lost *Königsberg* was replaced: the first of two 5.9" cruisers of that name was handed over to France in 1918, the second sunk in the invasion of Norway in 1940. In the meantime, she had apparently appeared at the Spithead review of 1934, just as Forester was composing his version events in the Rufiji for the *News Chronicle*.

Despite all the detail, the case is as yet circumstantial. For the last, conclusive piece in the jigsaw, we must turn to the final, book version of *The African Queen*. Forester compares his heroine to *the captain of a raiding cruiser!* "Rose had in fact been really fortunate in finding the *African Queen* ready to her hand. The steam launch with all its defects possessed a self-contained mobility denied to any other method of transport. No gang of carriers in the forest could compare with her. Had she been fitted with an internal combustion engine she could not have carried sufficient liquid fuel for two days' running. As it was, taking her water supply from over-side and sure of finding sufficient combustibles on shore she was free of the two overwhelming difficulties which at that very moment were hampering the *Emden* in the Indian Ocean and were holding the *Königsberg* useless and quiescent in the Rufiji delta."¹⁷



Twists in the tail!

A sequel to the tale of the sinking of the real *Königin Luise* (above) was promised. Within hours, the victorious *Amphion* struck a mine laid by her recent victim and sank in the Thames Estuary with 151 dead, of whom 19 were German survivors. *Amphion* thus became the first warship lost in the war. If her fate evokes the ending to the film of *The African Queen*, then truth may well be sometimes stranger than fiction!

¹⁵ Peter Shankland, *The Phantom Flotilla: the story of the naval Africa Expedition, 1915-1916*, Mayflower (1969), page 111.

¹⁶ Kevin Patience, *Königsberg: a German East African raider*, Zanzibar Publications (2001).

¹⁷ CS Forester, *The African Queen*, Penguin (1956), page 76.

A Clergyman at Sea and on Land

Christopher Smith

All who have an interest in the Royal Navy in Nelson's day or its reflections in C. S. Forester's *Hornblower* novels will find a lot in this photographic reprint of *Recollections of the Life of the Rev. A. J. Scott D.D.*, unless, of course, they are fortunate enough to possess the original edition of 1842.¹⁸ Scott is assured his place in history as he was serving as chaplain in *Victory* at the time of Trafalgar, and comforted the dying admiral. He is shown rubbing his chest in a last effort to alleviate his agony in the celebrated picture by Arthur Devis.

There was, however, more to the man whom Nelson called Dr Scott, to distinguish him from John Scott, his secretary, who was among the first casualties on 21 October 1805. The *Recollections* of the clergyman's life were prepared for publication by his daughter and her husband, the Rev. Alfred Gatty, vicar of the Yorkshire village of Ecclesfield. The couple provided quite a full account and evidently had at their disposal a mass of personal papers, from which they quoted freely. It is, however, a weakness in their work that they made rather too much of Scott's connection with Nelson when the account has wider interests. The reprint appears now under the additional title *Nelson's Spy?* If that means better sales, well and good. But focusing on one dubious aspect does not really do justice to the book, and the two-page introduction by "H.J.P." is disappointing.

A great deal about society under George III and the Regency, as well about naval matters, is revealed by the life and career of Alexander Scott. He was born in Rotherhithe, just across the Thames from Greenwich, in 1768. His father, a retired naval lieutenant, died only two years later. Perhaps it was as well that the toddler bore his uncle's name, for he was to be dependent on him for the next thirty years and would have to repay his grudging favours with cringing deference.

Commander Alexander Scott first took his young nephew to the Leeward Islands, where he was brought up in the residence of the governor, Sir Ralph Payne. Thanks to his good office, young Alexander was granted a scholarship to Charterhouse, and in 1786 he went up

¹⁸ *Nelson's Spy? The Life of Alexander Scott*, introduction by H.J.P. (Bridgnorth: Meriden, 2003), pp. iv + 302: ISBN 0954349504 – a photo-reprint of the *Recollections of the life of the Rev. A.J. Scott, D.D., Lord Nelson's Chaplain* (London, Saunders & Otley, 1842).



Left. Margaret Scott, who with her husband Alfred Gatty edited her father A.J. Scott's memoirs.

Below. The Church of St Mary, Ecclesfield, where Gatty was vicar. Scott is buried on the north side of the tower, out of this view from the south-west.



to St. John's College, Cambridge, as a "sizar". A year later William Wordsworth arrived - also as a "sizar", which meant that the costs of studying were kept down. Like the future poet, Scott did not find the pronounced mathematical bias of the honours degree programme at all to his taste. Instead, both of them took advantage of a new development. With their German connections, the Hanoverian kings saw a need for men trained for diplomatic duties in Europe. Accordingly they set up Chairs of Modern History at Oxford and Cambridge, and among the duties of the professors was overseeing tuition in modern languages.

The Universities did not respond very warmly to the innovation, and students likely to achieve honours were encouraged to concentrate on mathematics and classics. Others, who were less single-minded, saw their opportunity. That is how Wordsworth came to learn Italian from Agostino Isola. Scott too probably studied Italian (and possibly Spanish) with this refugee from Milan who was reckoned an inspiring teacher. But unlike Wordsworth, who on graduating resolutely refused to take Holy Orders, Scott lost no time in going on to

ordination, as deacon in 1791 and as priest a year later. He could not afford to be idle or spend years as a country curate with vague hopes of a larger stipend some day in the future.

As his uncle was unwilling to provide further financial support, Scott soon decided that his best course was to turn his naval connections to advantage. In February 1793 he became chaplain in *Berwick*. Her captain was Sir John Collins, an old friend of his father's, which is further testimony to the importance of patronage. To chart twelve years of service across the oceans in a period of wide-ranging historic conflict would take too much space. A few salient points, however, can be brought out. Scott did not neglect his religious duties, though he does not say much about them. He generally preached a sermon on Sundays, except when the weather was too severe or when, as once or twice occurred, he felt that he could not fittingly do so because his "canonicals" had been left behind somewhere else. As chaplain, he was obliged to be present to witness punishment, and hated having to do so.

While doing what was required of a chaplain, Scott also made it his business to improve his languages. He worked up his Italian and Spanish, learned Danish and German and neglected no opportunity of extending his expertise even further as opportunity offered. His education had given him a sound grasp of grammatical structures, and he knew how to make good use both of textbooks and reading material of every sort. Commanding officers came to value him as a translator and interpreter, and he gave real service both in the Baltic and the Mediterranean.

Scott had a gift for loyalty. Towards the end of his seagoing career he came under the spell of the charismatic Nelson, who was naturally at ease with a man of the cloth. No less interesting in the *Recollections* is the very sympathetic portrait of Sir Hyde Parker, who usually cuts a poor figure in any comparison with Nelson. Scott, however, had a great deal of respect for him and would do nothing to wound. Perhaps he was adhering to the principle of staying close to a useful patron, but his words do not ring hollow. One detail refers to a famous episode. Scott was present at the Battle of Copenhagen, sailing in the *London*, which was held in reserve. Far from there being any disagreement between Parker and his energetic subordinate, it had, says Scott, been agreed that "should it appear that the ships that were engaged were suffering too severely, the signal for retreat should be made to give Lord Nelson the option of retiring if he thought fit".

After a few years on land in which his plans to secure his future were frustrated, Scott embarked with Nelson on the Trafalgar campaign, and his linguistic skills were again put to good use. His account of the great battle was laconic: "it was like a butcher's shambles". He was equally tight-lipped about the death of the man he recognised as a hero. As a man and as a clergyman he knew that some things should not be talked about.

After Trafalgar, Scott retired from the sea. The admiral's newly ennobled brother seems to have gone out of his way to snub him, whether over the arrangements for the state funeral or his quest for ecclesiastical preferment. Though Scott married, his happiness was brief, for his wife died young, leaving him with a family to be provided for. Cambridge University made him a Doctor of Divinity, obtaining a royal warrant to bend the rules, and he obtained Church of England livings. In 1803 Charterhouse presented him to the vicarage of Southminster, in Essex, and fifteen years later he was given the crown living of Catterick, N. Yorkshire. But problems always seemed to crop up to prevent him from fully enjoying the advantages of the favours shown to him. Besides, after being struck by lightning on a voyage home from the West Indies, his health was never very certain, though he lived on until 1840. In old age he was still able to find consolation in his books.

Scott's last days were spent at Ecclesfield, where he was cared for by his daughter, Margaret, and she and her husband the Rev. Alfred Gatty compiled the *Recollections of the Life* of her father. The couple continued to write for publication. Margaret in particular became famous as a children's author and exponent of natural theology, finding proofs of divine providence in the works of creation. The inscription on Scott's gravestone at Ecclesfield deserves quotation:-

"Waiting for the adoption – the redemption of our body."

Here lie buried Alexander John Scott, D.D. Vicar of Catterick and Southminster, and Chaplain to Admiral Lord Nelson on board H.M.S. Victory at Trafalgar. He died July 24 1840, aged 72. Also his daughter Margaret the beloved wife of Alfred Gatty, D.D. Vicar of Ecclesfield. She died October 4 1873 aged 64. Also her infant sons Alfred Alexander Gatty, who died March 22, 1844, and Horatio Nelson Gatty, who died October 2, 1855. Here also rests the body of Alfred Gatty D.D., Born 18 April 1813, Died 20 January 1903. Vicar of Ecclesfield for 63 years, and Sub Dean of York.

"Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy House, and the Place where Thine Honour dwelleth."

Scott saw service, in more than one sense of the word, and his links with Nelson gave him an importance that he would not otherwise have had. But as well as the personal side to his *Recollections* there is the image of a society governed by position and privilege, where merit was no guarantee of advancement unless you had the right connections, and where, not to put it bluntly, money was always tight unless you had an inheritance or a windfall. The *Recollections* show Britain in a harsh light, so harsh that it is a wonder that seamen and soldiers fought with such heroism to defend it in the years of the French Revolution.



THE NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM, LONDON

Hornblower, Turner and *The Fighting Téméraire* Donald Hines

Every generation, in one way or another, has to adjust to change. Some changes are small in significance, while others shake the society in which they occur to its very foundations. Imagine the impact on Europe of Johannes Gutenberg's invention of printing from moveable type in 1454 and then compare that to the invention of the Internet in our own generation. The only difference is the acceleration with which change has occurred in the past hundred years compared to previous centuries.

For Hornblower, and for all those of his generation who had spent their lives under sail, the major adjustment had to do with the advent of steam. Hornblower was born into, and spent most of his adult life in, a society which was dictated by the seasons of the year. For Hornblower, the reading of the seas as an indication of the forces of nature was as essential as any other knowledge he might acquire. After steam, society moved from an agrarian-based orientation to an industrialised mindset. Steam made people less dependent on nature, and was viewed as a way of controlling nature. Steam freed man to function during all seasons. Of course, there were many who viewed steam as dehumanising, and an affront to the very nature of man.

C. Northcote Parkinson, in his biography *The Life and Times of Horatio Hornblower*¹⁹, continuously portrays Hornblower as a man ahead of his time. Hornblower not only saw the movement to steam-propelled ships as inevitable, but could visualise the practicality that steam provided over sail. In this article the use of the name *Téméraire* as the name of two vessels – one sail and the other steam – will be used as a connecting link.

¹⁹ C. Northcote Parkinson, *The Life and Times of Horatio Hornblower*, Boston: Little, Brown & Co. (1970); new edition Sutton Publishing (2000).

Horatio Hornblower was Admiral in command of the British Navy in the West Indies from May 1821 to October 1823: a period of thirty months. The information to follow was gleaned from C.S. Forester's *Admiral Hornblower in the West Indies*. It was while Hornblower was making an official visit to New Orleans in H.M. Schooner *Crab* in 1821 that he had the opportunity to experience the advantages of steam over sail. In a conversation with Mr Cloudesley Sharpe, Consul-General in New Orleans, Hornblower expressed his professional admiration for the steam tug which had brought them to the port.:-

"Your Lordship made use of the services of a steam tug?" Sharpe asked.

"Yes, by George!" exclaimed Hornblower.

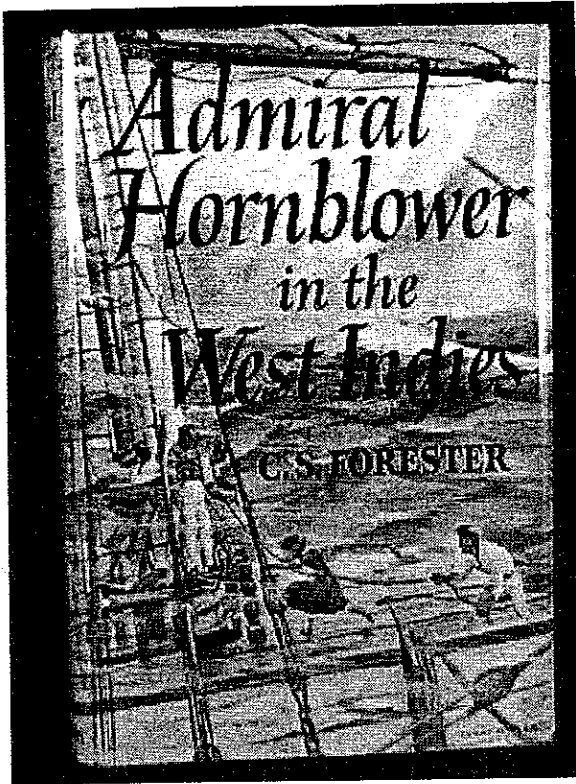
"A remarkable experience for Your Lordship, apparently?"

"Indeed yes," said Hornblower...

A steam tug had brought *Crab* against the hundred miles of current from the sea to New Orleans between dawn and dusk, arriving at the very minute the tug captain had predicted. And here was New Orleans, crowded not merely with ocean-going sailing ships, but also with a fleet of long narrow steamers, manoeuvring out into the stream and against piers with a facility (thanks to their two paddle wheels) that even *Crab* with her handy fore-and-aft rig could not attempt to emulate. And with a thrash of those paddle wheels they would go flying upstream with a rapidity almost unbelievable.

"Steam has laid open a continent, My Lord," said Sharpe, echoing Hornblower's thoughts.

CSF goes on to explain how Hornblower had seen that the idea of steam-driven vessels was mocked by the



seamen of his day. Steam was viewed as the ruin of good seamanship.²⁰

It was when Hornblower was making a hasty exit from New Orleans that the connection with *Téméraire* arose. "It was indeed noon before Crab cast off and was taken in tow by the tug *Téméraire*; it was significant of Hornblower's state of mind that he never gave a thought to the implication of that glorious name." The schooner's captain did not share in Hornblower's appreciation of how the tug assisted them in reaching open water, for he disliked the smoke and sparks belching from her funnels. "He had the hands at work pumping up water from overside, continuously soaking deck and rigging." In a final word about the tug *Téméraire*, CSF sums up Hornblower's feelings for the benefits of steam in this way.-

*"This fantastic method of progression, for instance – Crab was going through the water at a good five knots, and there was the current as well. Quite a breeze was blowing past him in consequence; it was extraordinary to be going ahead with the wind dead foul, without a heel or a pitch, with the standing rigging uttering a faint note and yet not a creak from the running rigging."*²¹

²⁰ CS Forester, *Admiral Hornblower in the West Indies*, Boston: Little, Brown & Co. (1957), pages 5-6.

²¹ CS Forester, *Admiral Hornblower in the West Indies*, Boston: Little, Brown & Co. (1957), pages 36; 37; 40.

In 1839, JMW Turner executed his famous painting *The Fighting Téméraire* tugged to her last berth to be broken up. This had occurred in 1838. The painting is often cited as a melancholy symbol of the transition from sail to steam. The time is sunset, and the muted browns and reds that Turner uses convey an impression of events coming to an end. Others have viewed this as not so much an ending but rather the start of a new day: an era when the old is discarded to make way for the new. The *Téméraire*, a ship-of-the-line, was famous for her role at the battle of Trafalgar in 1805.

The novelist WM Thackeray described the painting thus:-

"If you are particularly anxious to know what is the best picture in the room, not the biggest (Sir David Wilkie's is the biggest, and exactly contrary to the best), I must request you to turn your attention to a noble river-piece by J. W. M. Turner, Esquire, R.A., "The Fighting Téméraire" - as grand a painting as ever figured on the walls of any Academy, or came from the easel of any painter.

"The old Téméraire is dragged to her last home by a little, spiteful, diabolical steamer. A mighty red sun, amidst a host of flaring clouds, sinks to rest on one side of the picture, and illumines a river that seems interminable, and a countless navy that fades away into such a wonderful distance as never was painted before.

*"The little demon of a steamer is belching out a volume ... of foul, lurid, red-hot, malignant smoke, paddling furiously, and lashing up the water round about it; while behind it (a cold grey moon looking down on it), slow, sad, and majestic, follows the brave old ship, with death, as it were, written on her."*²²

While change cannot be stopped or even slowed down, it can be adapted to fit into a new way of viewing events. Hornblower not only embraced change, but was excited by the opportunities that it presented. Turner also, it would appear, acknowledges the inevitability of change, but does not flinch from looking to the past for the virtues that gave man a heroic stature.

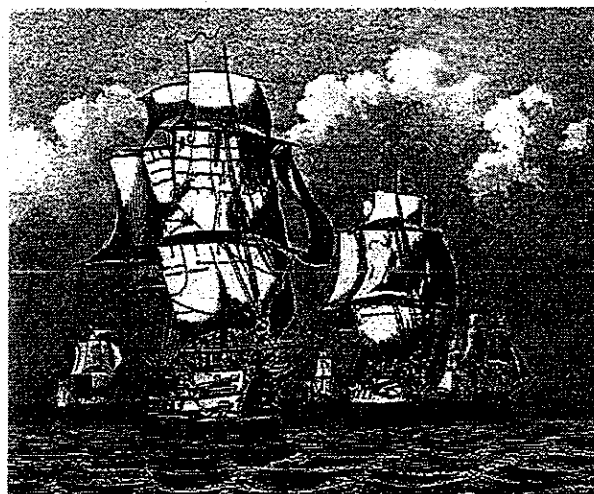
²² John Walker, *Joseph Mallard William Turner*, New York: Harry N Abrams (1976), page 130; quoting William Makepeace Thackeray, *A second lecture on the Fine Arts*, by Michel Angelo Titmarsh, Esquire. To view *The Fighting Téméraire* and a selection of Turner's best on line, go to www.tate.org.uk/britain/turner/gallery. Editor.

Hornblower receives another Letter

The latest chapter in a continuation of
Hornblower and the Crisis by

Adrian Taylor

Horatio Hornblower was lying on his bed in his attic room at *The Saracen's Head*. Late that afternoon he had returned from another meeting with Marsden at the Admiralty. It had been a seminal occasion indeed as he had informed the stolid First Secretary of his decision to become a spy in the service of His Britannic Majesty after a full week of vacillation and deliberation. There were, of course, many arrangements to be made now and the slow-moving cogs of subterfuge encouraged into motion. There was this Miranda character, for instance, about whom he had recently heard more to supplement the few details with which he had been furnished at an earlier meeting; yet still the Spaniard remained a shadowy figure as if from a dream. This last meeting with Marsden – oddly there was no sign of Barrow, the Second Secretary, and even Dorsey appeared just the once to lay some papers on his senior's desk with a self-deprecatory bow – lasted for perhaps only three-quarters of an hour. Although a further appointment was made for two days' time. And then Hornblower could return to his lodgings to the south of the river. The same wherryman rowed him across as on the previous occasions and as the boat rocked over the choppy water Hornblower wondered what was in the mind of Bonaparte, in what way he might influence Villeneuve who was embayed at Ferrol with his fleet of some twenty ships of the line. Then his mind drifted to the action – or, rather, inaction, he found himself reflecting critically – of Admiral Calder at the Battle of Cape Finisterre.



How would he, Hornblower, have led the British fleet had he been in the same situation? He had come to no serious conclusion – though it was, of course, a pity that Lord Nelson had found himself in the wake of the French admiral, out on a limb, as it were, in the West Indies – and then the boat had reached the south bank of the river and he was tipping the wherryman who duly knuckled his forehead. And now he had. Just ten minutes ago, returned to his room after finishing a hefty meal of roast beef and Yorkshire pudding and the trimmings which were washed down with a pint of ale. The well-beamed dining room was delightfully cool after the heat of the day and although the landlord was even more reticent about the present war with the French than he had been he did make some offhand remark about there being no garlic in his cooking which Hornblower found amusing in its irrelevance. There was some desultory talk about the weather, while the landlord took sips from his own tankard of ale and Hornblower made valiant attempts to do justice to the meal – he found the heat that still reigned without was not conducive to his eating it all – and when the guest laid his knife and fork down with a sigh the landlord offered him a drink “on the house” but the abstemious Hornblower declined, for what he had already eaten and drunk lay like wet snow on a tarpaulin inside him.

As Hornblower lay on the bed he felt a little light-headed even after that single pint of ale. He had small toleration for alcohol and he sometimes rued this fact as he thought it did not become a naval officer to have such an intolerance. It seemed as inappropriate as his landlubberly tendency to seasickness. He turned over on to his side and looked out through the diamond-paned leaded lights of his room. It was still just light and the eaves of the house opposite were visible in the gathering gloom. From the street below there came the bark of a dog and an admonitory shout. There were swifts, swallows and martins diving and soaring against the haze of the late evening sky. Indeed, the hirundines seemed to be particularly numerous this year. But despite the hypnotic sight he wondered whether he should draw the curtains. And then, his mind undisciplined in its post-prandial sleepiness, like an open boat drifting in a freaky wind, he found himself thinking about Maria, his long-suffering wife. Tomorrow he must write her a letter. He had not had much time to do so over the last few hectic days – there had been other meetings to attend at the Admiralty apart from the ones with Marsden – and he hadn't found the energy, or indeed the inclination, to put pen to paper in the few odd moments he had had to himself at *The Saracen's Head*. And now he found his eyes closing in tiredness.

Of a sudden there came a knock on his door. Hornblower groaned. Surely it was not that wretched idiot son come to disturb him for no reason at all once again; last night he had come barging into the room with a full bedpan in his hands; the horrible liquid had splashed on to the floor and Hornblower had briskly ushered the clumsy fool whence he had come. He had mentioned this intrusion to the landlord that morning and he had been granted a shrug which was quite Gallic in its eloquence. Now, with a deep sigh, Hornblower arose from his bed and went to see who it was disturbing him on this occasion. It was one of the maids and she handed him a letter; he accepted it with a friendly smile. He noted that the young woman was decidedly puffy about the eyes and there was an unhealthy whiteness in her complexion; it was as if she had spent the best part of the day in convivial pursuit. Hornblower wondered yet again at the hedonistic lifestyles of some members of the servant class. He closed the door and went to sit on the edge of his bed. The superscription of the letter told him that it was from his wife. He opened it with perhaps less eagerness than a husband might be expected to show. And so he read by the light of the single candle that burned on the bedside table.

My dearest Horry (he read with a degree of distaste), *I trust that my dearest is well. Today my mother and I went to the market...* There followed the expected commonplaces of domesticity. There were also some remarks about the hot weather which they were having in Plymouth. Mrs Mason had made some lemonade and this seemed to please the letter-writer to an inordinate extent. Finally, after two pages of somewhat rambling news in the writer's cramped and spidery handwriting the letter ended with *Your Ever-loving Maria*.

Hornblower placed the letter next to the candle on the bedside table and lay down once more on the bed. Why was it that he didn't feel more loneliness than he did in this wifeless state? Then his eyes widened and he raised his body from the counterpane, much as a puppet might have done if it is pulled by a string attached to its head.

Mrs Mason was alive and well and making iced lemonade! Then who was it who had sent that letter, supposedly from Maria, of a week or so ago which had told so sadly of his mother-in-law's demise? And who had been the silent emissary who had delivered it? Hornblower's thoughts were as a veritable hive of bees in their seething puzzlement. For some reason he remembered the stalwart Lieutenant Bush; although the unimaginative officer would be little help in this present impasse it somehow gave him comfort to think of his steadying influence.



Whatever happened to Doughty? Richard Miller

James Doughty, the sometime steward to Horatio Hornblower, had an eventful, exciting and interesting life.

Following the self-inflicted death of John Grimes, Doughty had been sent to Hornblower as a replacement by Captain Pellew. He certainly knew his job, having been steward to Captain Stevens of HMS *Magnificent*; in other words, a perfect Gentleman's Gentleman. He lavished care and attention upon Hornblower, mending his clothes, tucking him snugly into his bad-weather gear, conjuring delicious meals from next to nothing and making sure that he was cosy by putting a hot water bottle in his cot.

Doughty served the navy well – not by knotting, slicing or serving a gun, but by loyally serving the officers to whom he ministered. Whilst taking stores on board, and ordered by Mayne, Bosun's Mate, to perform work which would sully his hands, ready to serve Hornblower's dinner, he had demurred and been struck by Mayne's starter. Reacting violently, Doughty had struck Mayne and drawn blood, thus making himself liable to Court Martial and consequent execution. Hornblower was in a quandary. Doughty was loyal and good, Mayne was a bully; but discipline must be upheld.

Entering Cadiz, a solution became possible. Hornblower cunningly contrived that Doughty would escape. This he did by swimming to the American frigate *Constitution*, thus ending his place in Hornblower's life. On board the American ship it did not take long to discover his sterling qualities. A superb servant, excellent chef, assiduous valet – all of this was bestowed upon the American Captain.

Months passed. The *Constitution* was visited by many dignitaries who eyed the capable steward enviously ... and thus it came about that James Doughty held sway as butler and general factotum to a wealthy plantation owner. He married happily and basked in his fortunate and rewarding employment. Strange to relate, the plantation owner had leanings towards England, and his second son had gone to England and entered the Royal Navy. Knowing this, many a night Doughty had regaled his master with tales of the sea, not all of them being lies...

It was whilst serving in the *President* that the most dangerous encounter of Doughty's life occurred. For HMS *Endymion* brought her to action and so energetic were the British ship's efforts that she was soon in a pathetic plight. Called from his pantry, Doughty helped carry shot to the *President's* guns, inwardly bewailing the necessity that made him fight against former shipmates.

After finally hauling down his flag, Commodore Decatur and some of the *President's* crew were taken on board *Endymion*. Coming up the frigate's side, Doughty's jaw dropped as a face he well recalled gazed down. Cargill, former Master's Mate of HM Sloop *Hotspur*, but now resplendent in a lieutenant's uniform, was Officer of the Watch. Doughty pulled his neckcloth so as to almost cover his face and smeared some blood from the deck about his throat.

Cargill looked keenly, winked and looked quickly away. Assuredly he had learned the art of diplomacy from Hornblower! Doughty relaxed, overjoyed that Cargill had proved himself a real, caring gentleman.

Next morning, *Endymion* buried her dead. One name rekindled sore memories for Doughty, for it was that of Mayne, now marked D.D. ("discharged, dead") in the ship's books...

During their nightly talks, however, Doughty never spoke of the time that a King's Officer had contrived the means of a felon escaping the noose.



Lilliput goes to Sea!

Hornblower's navy is recreated in miniature by

Richard Miller

HMS Euryalus, the 36-gun, Buckler's Hard-built frigate slashed her way into a rising gale, threw dollops of spray aft and vigorously patrolled off Cadiz.

Admittedly, she is *not* off Cadiz but, in reality, in my dining room, in a little case sailing on a foam-flecked sea. I have built her from a superb metal kit made by Skytrex of Loughborough and her graceful hull, towering spars and air of reality give me intense pleasure. I have painted her very carefully even to the glimpse of copper showing as she heels to starboard.

Alongside her case, a squadron under the command of *HMS Indefatigable* sails off the Eddystone – *Endymion*, *Diana* and *Pallas*, all frigates, the brig *Columbine* and the bomb vessel *Vesuvius*. Ship's boats carrying redcoated Royal Marines sail between the ships. These too are constructed in super detail from Skytrex kits with the aid of a kindly dentist's tweezers.

A large diorama features seamen and marines, some in a ship's launch, others advancing ashore. A section of ship's deck gives a nice background to a 32-pounder carronade and an 18-pounder cannon with gun crews, including powder monkeys, a grim lieutenant and musket-firing marines.

A section of deck shows Nelson arriving on board. A detachment of Royal Marines with drummer, a party of seamen, a gun crew firing a cannon in salute, whilst the Master, Midshipman and Bosun's Mate look on. One can almost imagine the Bosun's pipe is shrilling. A ship's boat, marine escort and oarsmen, is about to come alongside.

Another case shows the press gang coming alongside a jetty. An officer scales the piling, a tough gunner surveys the scene and seamen and midshipmen commence their foray. And there is another landing party, of *Hinton Hunt* seamen and Royal Marines, advancing with a fluttering White Ensign.

A bomb ketch of the type commanded by Lieutenant Mound is another of my treasures, as well as another *HMS Euryalus* model. These are not toys but articles from which I derive immense pleasure.

I have trawled the British Isles to find good Napoleonic War models of seamen, officers and Royal Marines: *Under Two Flags*, *Dorset Soldiers*, *Redoubt Models*, the Royal Naval Museum, the National Army Museum, *Minifigs* and whosoever I can trace.

The written word seems to put life into my ships and figures. The crackling gunfire, shrilling rigging, twittering pipe and curt commands add sauce to the written word, albeit in imagination. I do so hope this glimpse into my collection will encourage others to travel down the nostalgic path to our great Royal Navy heritage.

CORRESPONDENCE

Errors and omissions

Thanks for the fine newsletter (*Reflections* 4). A particularly interesting issue. One small caveat. I wish that when writers refer to my work, they or the editors, would spell my name correctly. Also, my book should be mentioned with the quote. It's professional. Still, I am happy to be referred to.

Sanford Sternlicht, Department of English,
Syracuse University, Syracuse NY 13244

Colin Blogg has forwarded your Email to me, and indeed the error is mine.

My normal editor's experience is to open a printed copy and immediately see a cluster of errors which have eluded several proof readings. On this occasion, I had simply failed to notice that two spellings of your name were on offer, both of them wrong! I won't make excuses.

As for citations, I did not go through all the articles and footnote them from their sources, being pressed to get the issue finished during my half term. I had hoped my own citation of your title might suffice. Had I looked at the cover of your book again, or even your signature on the title page, I too might have avoided error if my own article on The Captain from Connecticut.

Apologies and best wishes,

David Stead, Editor.

Vulgar tubes

The editorial comment on Lt-Cdr Napier's amusing letter concerning the difficulty of relieving oneself on board one of a warship mentions *that the topic of military defecation appears to have been largely neglected by authors from modern times back to the Iliad (Reflections 4, page 6).*

This is broadly true, but for those wishing to reconstruct this aspect of the Hornblower or Aubrey experience will find a helpful guide in Joe J. Simmons III, *Those Vulgar Tubes: External Sanitary Accommodations aboard European Ships of the Fifteenth through Seventeenth Centuries* (London, 1998: ISBN 1-86176-043-4). I found a copy in my stepfather's library when I inherited it: he took care to be accurate about such delicate matters.

Nikolai Tolstoy

The book was published by Chatham Press in the UK and by Texas A&M University, as first in a projected series on Nautical Archaeology. Second-hand copies of this (and most other books) can be obtained through the www.abebooks.co.uk or www.abebooks.com pages. It is a pity, perhaps, that the coverage does not

extend to the Great Age of Fighting Sail – and that no more letters on this topic, however ingeniously linked to the prime concerns of this bulletin, will be published.

Bismarck – BBC to the rescue!

I was delighted to see that the BBC was clearly aware of our discussion about the film *Sink The Bismarck* and which book it was based on (*Reflections* 4, page 17). They very kindly put the film on TV for us today (Sunday 6 July 2003) and I was able to see clearly, at the beginning of the film it states categorically that *the film is based on the book by CSF*. It is such a long time since I saw the film that I remembered little about it apart from the main role of Captain Shepard played by Kenneth Moore who does not appear in CSF's book. Anyway I have drafted this *Letter to the Editor* to put the record straight and I am very grateful to the BBC for so kindly responding to CSF Society and decisively resolving the matter for us.

John Roberts

A philosophy of reticence

It seems likely that the final words CS Forester wrote in a prolific career were those which end Chapter 9 of *Hornblower and the Crisis*. Hornblower had just succumbed to the bribe of Marsden, the First Secretary of the Admiralty, who offered to make him a captain if he becomes a spy. To quote:

"They were pleased that their bribe had been effective, and he was about to burst out in an indignant denial that the offer had had any weight with him. Then he shut his mouth again, remembering the philosopher who said that he had often regretted having spoken but had never regretted remaining silent."

It is interesting to note that in Chapter 6 of *The Earthly Paradise* there appears:

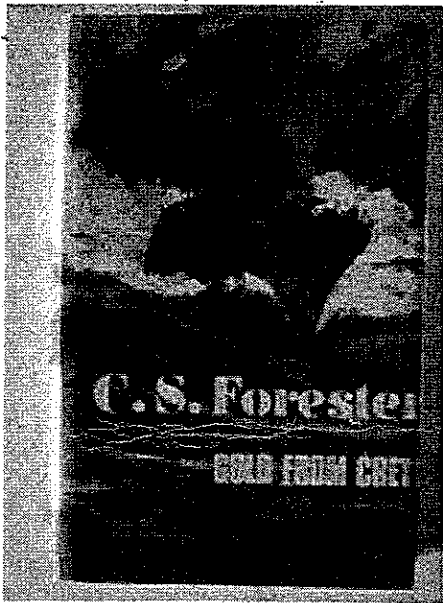
"One of the philosophers had said: 'I have often regretted having spoken, but I have never regretted holding my tongue.' Rich remembered the saying, and got himself into bed with no more speech."
Cassell's Classified Quotations by W. Gurney Benham has, under the heading "Silence": "Xenocrates said that he had often repented speaking, but never of holding his tongue. Valerius Maximus, Book 7."

According to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Xenophanes of Chalcedon (396-314 BC) was a Greek philosopher and Rector of the Academy from 339 to 314 BC. It appears that one of the tenets of this effective teacher was that the philosopher does of his own accord what others do under the compulsion of law.

It would be interesting to know whether the quotation in *The Earthly Paradise* is an exact transcription of Xenocrates' words. It may be pointed out that Valerius Maximus was a Latin writer who flourished in the reign of Tiberius. The collection of his works was used as a schoolbook and was very popular in the Middle Ages.

Adrian Turner, Norfolk.

But disregarded by researchers thereafter, until recently. One wonders, therefore, if Forester had the memory of a Latin Unseen – i.e. a piece for unprepared translation from a source the student was unlikely to know, often containing some gem of logic or wit which, in the teacher's opinion if not the student's, would allow the latter to get the meaning without necessarily knowing all the vocab! Lack of another citation of the same remark



makes it impossible to comment on VM's accuracy.

Cover versions

Ken Napier's comments (*Reflections* 4, page 6) on the cover for *Gold from Crete* are interesting, and show how sharp-eyed the editors have to be, but they seem to have boomed this time. It may be because the book was published posthumously by Pan, when there was a scramble to get into print all the unpublished MSS and their editorial standards may have slipped. My only other copy is from Michael Joseph and I could not comment on that except to say that the warship looks very different to the Pan one – but the angle is very different. The usual practice of Little, Brown was to give the cover artist a full, original carbon copy of the text – at the same time that a copy went to the author and editor. The artist would then plan his cover having read the text.

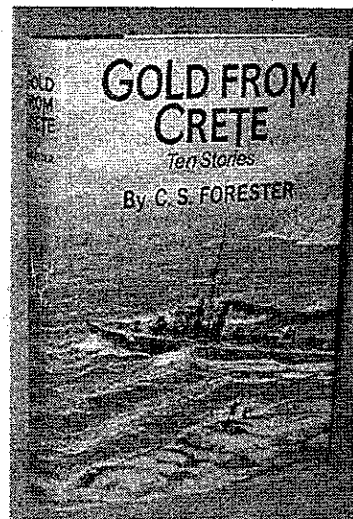
There are other examples of mistakes in dust-wrapper illustrations. The original cover for *The General* had no stirrups on the horse being saddled by Curzon!

Colin Blogg, Oxford.

The front-cover illustration on the Pan Books edition of *Gold from Crete* appears in Pan's *The marine paintings of Chris Mayger*.²³ In a comment dated March 1973, the artist notes - "I have received letters from admirers of this one, so a lot of people must like it!"

Richard Miller, Co. Wicklow.

*Chris Mayger is apparently not associated with any other CSF covers, although Pan Books issued a fair few titles. He was, however, closely associated with Alexander Kent's Richard Bolitho series. The Bolitho Maritime Publications website offers the following comment, which shows how the world of publishing has changed: "It is frequently necessary to commission the jacket before the story is actually finished and the author then provides a short brief for the artist. In the case of *In Gallant Company*, Alexander Kent wrote the closing scenes with Chris Mayger's jacket rough in front of him to ensure that his final text conformed with the incident shown in the rough."*



*The design for the Michael Joseph (1971) jacket of *Gold from Crete* (left) is credited to Graham Humphreys. The artist for the US edition (above) - Little, Brown & Co (1970) is as yet unidentified.*

Coming soon in *Reflections*

- ❖ ***Selling The Sky and the Forest***:: a dossier of editorial and review materials sheds light on the publication of Forester's second African novel.
- ❖ ***European atrocity, African catastrophe***: the Congo from Stanley to the mobile phone. A new book by a former senior diplomat contains, did he but realise it, a complete commentary on *The Sky and the Forest* between one set of covers!
- ❖ **Contributions and comments please to:** david-stead@lineone.net or by post to 151 Walkley Crescent Road, Sheffield S6 5BA, UK.

²³ David Larkin (ed.), *The marine paintings of Chris Mayger*, Pan Books (1976): ISBN 0330 24832 4.