

NEVILLE SHUTE

Gathering

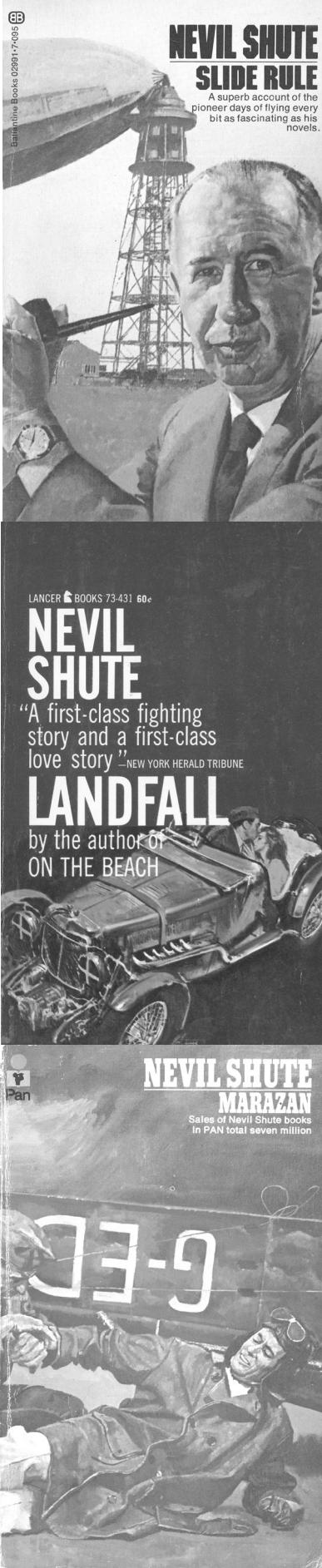


CapeCod2005

October 2-6

Hyannis, Massachusetts USA

“We Shall Remember Them”



Welcome!

Dear Fellow Shutists:

Welcome to the 4th Nevil Shute Gathering! We are so pleased that you have come to Cape Cod for this event. We are looking forward seeing all of you. Now that our 50th wedding celebration has past with all 17 family members gathered in France, we have one more wonderful event to take place and you are the main attraction.

After looking at many hotels we felt that the Cape Codder was just what we were looking for. It is family owned, not too big or too small and is a comfortable, relaxing site to hold our meeting. We hope you will feel the same. Don't forget to enjoy the Wave Pool! You may like to make an appointment to be pampered at the Spa or work your muscles in the exercise room.

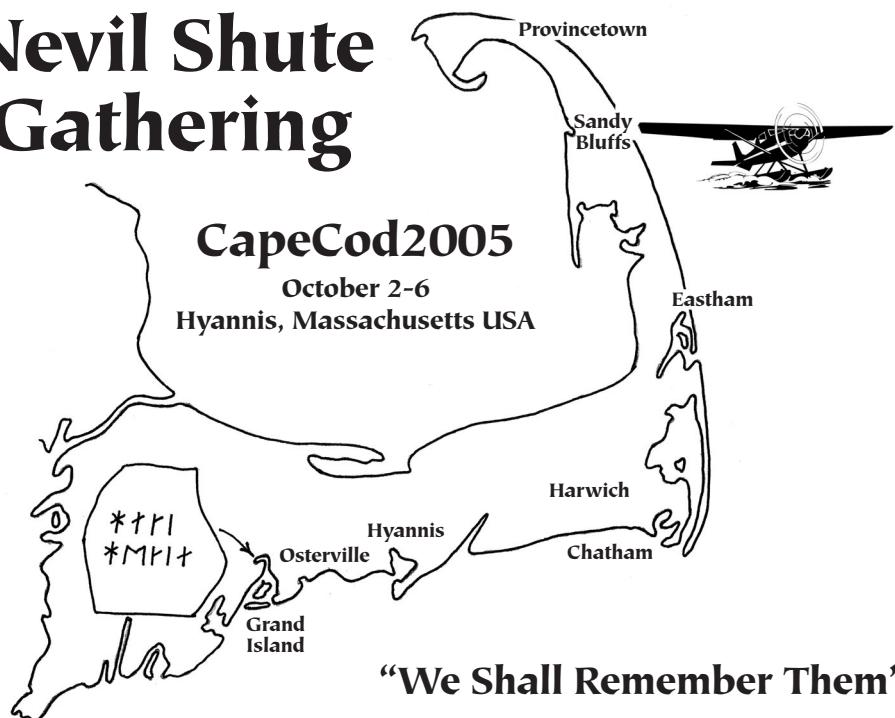
Just a REMINDER, you are on your own for breakfast and on Monday and Tuesday for evening dinners. A nice restaurant, the Hearth and Kettle, is here at the hotel or, if you want to take a short walk (exiting to your right from the hotel), you will find seafood at Cooke's or a family style restaurant at Friendly's. There are additional restaurants along Rt 132 but you will need to drive.

Please take a few minutes to look over your Program Book. We have wonderful speakers who have worked long and hard on their presentations. The exhibits have been thoughtfully brought by many participants. Also, an informative excursion is planned throughout Cape Cod. For the first time a short play will be presented with terrific actors and a dedicated director.

We hope this GATHERING will be fun, informative and another opportunity to share our admiration for Nevil Shute Norway.

Enjoy!
Joan and Art Cornell

Nevil Shute Gathering



Agenda

Day 1 Sunday, October 2, 2005

- 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm Afternoon Registration – Entrance to Emerald Room
1:00 pm - 5:00 pm Exhibit Viewing – see exhibit details, Page 6
1:00 pm - 5:30 pm Movie Showing – see movie schedule, Page 7
6:00 pm - 9:00 pm Welcome Reception – Emerald Room

Day 2 Monday, October 3, 2005 – Barnstable Room unless stated otherwise

- 9:00 am - 10:00 am Opening Address – Art Cornell
10:00 am - 10:30 am Opening Remarks – Dan Telfair
10:30 am - 11:00 am Tea Break – Sandwich Room
11:00 am - 12:30 pm Session 1 Graham Fricke – Holding the Mirror Up to Life
12:30 pm - 2:00 pm Lunch Break – Emerald Room
2:00 pm - 3:30 pm Session 2 Fred Erisman – An Old Captivity and the Early Days of Atlantic Flight
3:30 pm - 4:00 pm Tea Break – Sandwich Room
4:00 pm - 5:30 pm Session 3 Lillian Ruiz – Kids Reading Shute
5:30 pm - 6:30 pm Exhibit Viewing – Sandwich Room
6:30 pm - 10:00 pm Movie Showing - Barnstable Room

Day 3 Tuesday, October 4, 2005

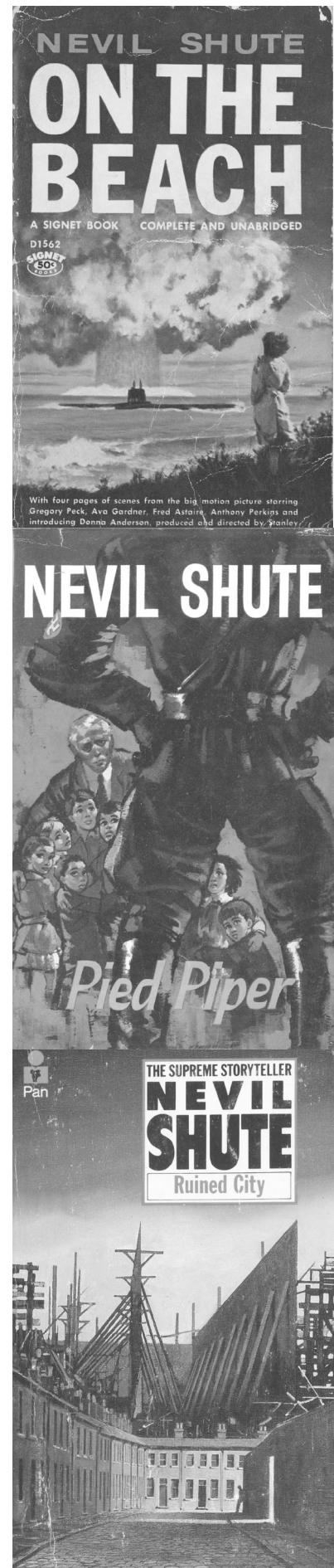
- 8:30 am - 5:30 pm Bus Excursion Tour of Cape Cod
5:30 pm - 6:30 pm Exhibit Viewing – Sandwich Room
6:30 pm - 10:30 pm Movie Showing - Barnstable Room

Day 4 Wednesday, October 5, 2005 – Barnstable Room unless stated otherwise

- 9:00 am - 10:30 am Session 4 John Anderson—Shute, Burney, the Toraplane and Landfall
10:30 am - 11:00 am Tea Break - Sandwich Room
11:00 am - 12:30 pm Session 5 Babette Hills—Panel Discussion with Dan Telfair, Laura Schneider and Andy Burgess
12:30 pm - 2:00 pm Lunch Break – Emerald Room
2:00 pm - 3:30 pm Session 6 Robert Wester—On the Beach
3:30 pm - 4:00 pm Tea Break – Sandwich Room
4:00 pm - 5:30 pm Session 7 Andrew Banta—The Alpha and Omega of Nevil Shute
6:00 pm - 10:00 pm Cape Codder Shore Dinner and Partial Reading of Vinland the Good

Day 5 Thursday, October 6, 2005 – Barnstable Room unless stated otherwise

- 9:00 am - 10:30 am Session 8 Margo Ganster— Favorite Shute passages read by John Anderson, Susan Batross, Art Cornell, Graham Fricke, Steph Gallagher, Margo Ganster, Alison Jenner, Shoshana Knapp, Zia Telfair, and David Weir.
10:30 am - 11:00 am Tea Break – Sandwich Room
11:00 am - 12:30 pm Session 9 – Shoshana Knapp - The 'I' in Nevil Shute's Writing: First Person as Narration and Characterization
12:30 pm - 2:00 pm Lunch Break – Emerald Room
2:00 pm - 3:30 pm Session 10 - David Weir—The Norway in Nevil Shute: From Cornwall to Cape Cod by way of the Northern Seas of Leif Ericsson
3:30 pm - 4:00 pm Tea Break – Sandwich Room
4:00 pm - 5:30 pm Dan Telfair and Art Cornell – Closing Remarks





Cape Cod

Cape Cod is a 399 square mile narrow peninsula extending 65 miles out into the Atlantic Ocean, farther than any other point in the United States. It is 1 to 20 miles wide depending on what town you are in.

Cape Cod is shaped like an arm and divided into the Upper Cape, Middle Cape, and Lower Cape, with Sandwich at the shoulder, Chatham at the elbow and Provincetown as the hand. There are fifteen towns with their own villages and sections to govern.

The Wampanoag natives were on Cape Cod when an English explorer, Bartholomew Gosnold arrived in 1602. He noted that the "codfysies pestered" his ship, and thus named the area Cape Cod. The cod fish were so large and so plentiful at the time but can hardly be found today. It has been designated

as the fish of Massachusetts and a great carved replica looks over the state House of Representatives. Congressmen hold their debates under this replica and depending on which way the head is pointing, east or west determines which party is in power.

In November of 1620 the Pilgrims first landed in Provincetown, and it was here that the Mayflower Compact was signed. In 1906 Theodore Roosevelt signed an act for construction of the

Pilgrim Monument in Provincetown and it was completed in 1910. It is the tallest all granite structure in the U.S. rising 252ft 7 1/2 inches.

The Cape Cod canal is a lockless canal built from 1910 to 1914 with private funding and purchased by the U.S. government in 1927. The canal is 17 1/2 miles long and 32 ft deep. The man-made canal reduced the distance a vessel would travel from Boston to New York City by 75 miles.

As you drive along the Cape you will notice the Cape Cod houses. The early ones were built simply with a center chimney, steep roof and set back from the water, facing south. Today, as in early times, the shingles are left to weather to a dark grey or the front may be painted white.. There are three styles. The half Cape which has two windows to the left or right of the door, the three quarter Cape which has a single window on one side of the door with the two windows on the other side, and the full Cape with double windows on each side of the door.

After the decline of the whaling and fishing industry in the 1800's, tourist began to come. A train from Boston would bring many families to enjoy our white sand beaches, soft breezes and roaring surf, as we do today.

Excursion

The bus excursion of Cape Cod will start at 8:15 am on Tuesday morning, October 4. Please gather outside the Cape Codder Resort near the buses so that we can leave at 8:30 am sharp.

We will travel to Provincetown where Shute in An Old Captivity wrote about the seaplane circling the town. We will spend about one hour there touring the downtown or the waterfront. After our tour of the town, we will go to lunch at Michael Shay's which is on the East end of town.

After Michael Shay's, we will travel to Nauset Beach described by Shute as a beach that extends as far as the eye can see. There is a cliff there and, hopeful-



ly, we will have enough time to go down to the water and walk around in the sand. Those of you from the United Kingdom may want to stay on top of the cliff and see if you can see your home.

From Nauset Beach we will go to the sand spit where the Viking ship entered Osterville Harbor. Shute wrote, "They sailed in past the sandy spit, lowered the sail, and got out the great oars." It is a very picturesque area.

After the sand spit area, we will go to Prince Cove where the seaplane in An Old Captivity landed. About this area he wrote, "the seaplane slowed, sank down into the water, and came to rest before the little cove. Ross turned and taxied in towards the beach." Art Cornell will point out where he found the stone..

We will then travel to the rear garden at the home of Art and Joan Cornell for tea and cherry cake.

At 5:30 pm we will be back at the Cape Codder Resort.

Banquet

CAPE CODDER SHORE DINNER AND THE PARTIAL READING OF VINLAND THE GOOD

At 6:00 pm on Wednesday evening we will all gather for drinks in the Emerald Room.

Following the cocktail hour, we will all partake in the Cape Codder Shore Dinner starting at 7:00 pm. This dinner will consist of

- Cape Codder Clam Chowder
- Seasonal Green Salad with Choice of Dressings
- Potato Salad, Cole Slaw
- 1 1/4 lb Boiled Lobster, Steamed Clams, Barbecued Chicken
- Corn on the Cob, Corn Bread
- Strawberry Shortcake

After dinner, we will experience a delightful medley of songs, mentioned in Shute's books, played for us on the violin by Lillian Ruiz and Gail Shoemaker. For example, they will play Mysterious Rag mentioned in No Highway, She's Too Fat For Me whistled by Jack Dorman in Far Country, and Greensleeves from The Rainbow and the Rose.

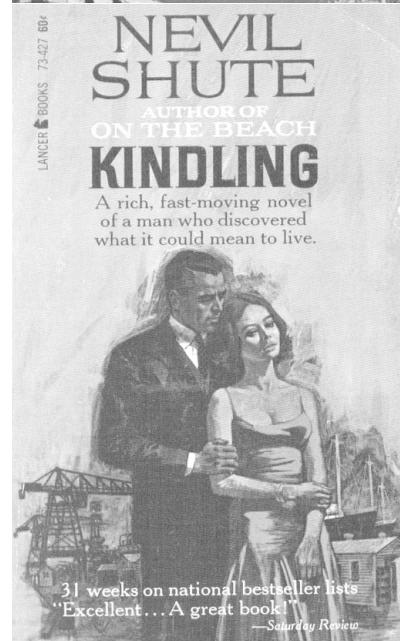
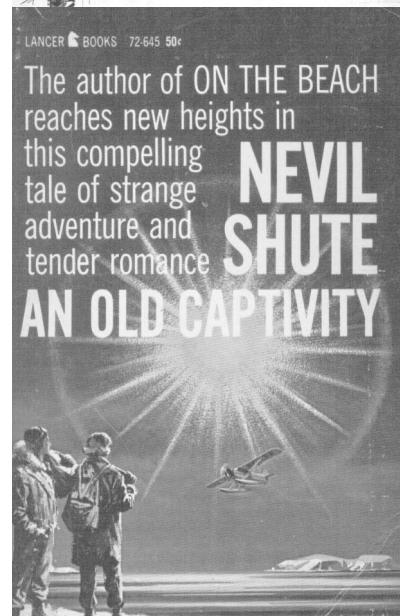
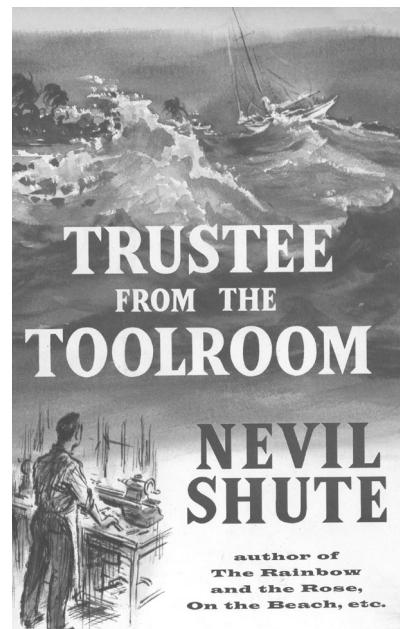
As a final event for the evening, we will be treated to a Partial Reading of the Screen Play written by Shute.

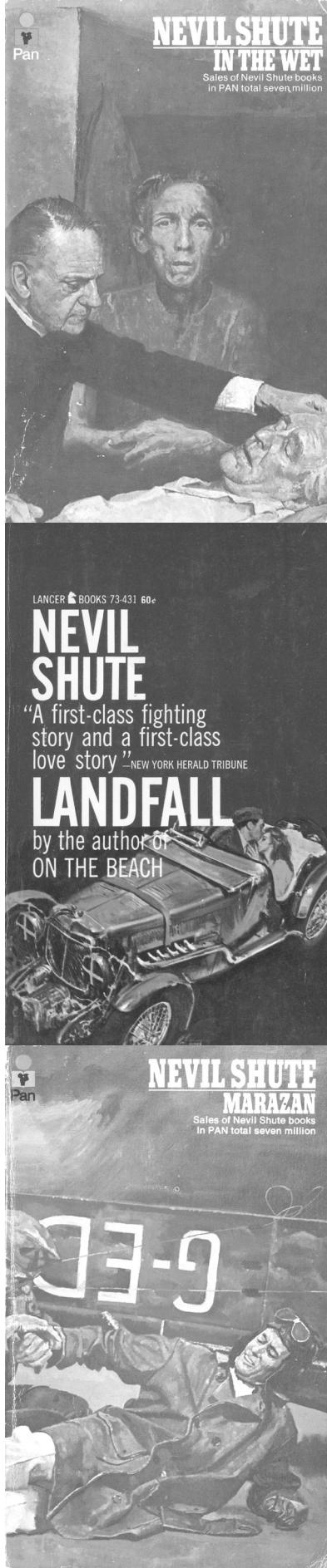
Vinland the Good One of the Great Legends of America

Told as a Saga in Modern Form

The partial reading is produced and directed by John Wallis Cooper and has the following cast:

Nevil Shute – John W. Cooper
Prologue Narrator – Sally Rossetti
Thorgunna – Laura Schneider
Haekia (Hekja) – Linda Banta
Major Callender – Grady Jensen
Leif Ericsson – Fred Erisman
Haki – Beall Fowler
Tryker – Philip Nixon
"A Man" & "Boy One" – Joe Accrocco
Understudy – Shoshana Knapp
Understudy – Paul Shein
Projectionist – Candace Ruiz





Shute Related Exhibits

Shute related exhibits will be displayed in the Sandwich Room. They are items collected by our attendees and brought here from all over the United States and England. Some are rare and of great value. There may be items displayed that are not listed below. That is because they were brought after the publication of this book. Please enjoy all of them.

The Exhibit Room will be open at the following times:

Sunday afternoon, October 2	From 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm
Monday, October 3	Tea Breaks and lunch breaks and from 5:30 pm to 6:30 pm
Wednesday, October 5	Tea breaks and lunch breaks
Thursday, October 6	Tea breaks and lunch breaks and from 5:30 pm to 6:30 pm

Items on display include:

- No Highway movie poster – Susan Batross
- Two framed items (letters by Shute) – Grady Jensen
- Poster with pictures and other items – Andy Banta
- First edition of The Mysterious Aviator – Johan Bakker
- First edition of Lonely Road – Johan Bakker
- First edition of Ordeal and signed – Johan Bakker
- Signed portrait, ca. 1955 – Johan Bakker
- Set of salt dishes, wedding gift – Johan Bakker
- Notebook with pictures and minutes of meeting – Babette Hills
- Microsoft Flight Simulator – John Fowles
- Card model of R-100 at mooring mast – Art Cornell
- Card model of R-100 in shed – Art Cornell
- Wood/paper model of a Moth with Johnnie Pascoe and Brenda Marshall – Art Cornell (models of Johnnie and Brenda by Lillian and Olivia Ruiz)
- Pictures of R-100 over Toronto – Art Cornell
- Charts of the Toraplane trial results – John Anderson and Mike Meehan
- A copy of the Tern Glider stress calculations in Nevil's own handwriting – J. Anderson and M. Meehan
- Copies of items relating to the formation of Airspeed and relating to the Ferry aircraft – J. Anderson and M. Meehan
- A copy of a whole chapter, written by Shute, from a technical book which many people will never have seen before – J. Anderson and Mike Meehan
- Chapter VI. Heavier-than-air Craft by Nevil S. Norway, from The World, the Air and the Future by Sir Charles Dennistoun Burney (Knopf, London, 1929). – Beall Fowler
- Photo essay collection, The R.100 in Canada by Renald Fortier, National Aviation Museum, 1999 – Beall Fowler
- Collection of book and film reviews from the New York Times 1938-1960 – Beall Fowler
- 'Cultural depth-charges': Traditional meaning and prisoner-of-war fiction, extract from the Ph.D. of Roger James Bourke, University of Western Australia, 2001-2002 – Beall Fowler
- Nevil Shute and the Decline of the 'Imperial Idea' in Literature, Donald Lammers, The Journal of British Studies Vol 16, No. 2 (Spring, 1977). – Beall Fowler
- Les dirigeables R-100 et R-101, Michel Pratt (Quebec, 2003). A book with accompanying CD that includes some video along with two songs (in French) contemporary with the R-100. – Beall Fowler

Film Showings

Six movies based on Shute's novels will be shown in the Barnstable Room. Also, there will be a fifteen minute showing of the R-100 Airship in Canada. Each movie will be shown once at the times shown below. There will be no movies shown on Sunday evening or Wednesday evening so that everyone can attend the Welcoming Reception and the Cape Cod Shore Dinner.

Movie

Viewing details Barnstable Room

On the Beach	Sunday afternoon, 1:30 - 3:45
Pied Piper	Sunday afternoon, 4:00 - 5:30
Landfall	Monday evening, 6:30 - 8:00
R-100	Monday evening, 8:15 - 8:30
Lonely Road	Monday evening, 8:45 - 10:00
No Highway in the Sky	Tuesday evening, 6:30 - 8:15
A Town Like Alice	Tuesday evening, 8:30 - 10:30

Film Synopsis On The Beach (1959)

The first On The Beach is the film that made Nevil Shute a household word in the United States and elsewhere. It was produced by Stanley Kramer at United Artists, directed by Stanley Kramer, and starred Gregory Peck, Ava Gardner, Fred Astair, and Anthony Perkins. The story probably brought more dedicated readers to Nevil Shute than any of his other novels. It is also given credit for playing a major part in the international protest against nuclear weapons. In spite of its many accolades, Nevil Shute hated the film. He was enraged by its production to the extent that Shirley Norway believes his anger over the film hastened his death.

Like all his best stories, On The Beach was about ordinary people faced with extraordinary circumstances, rising to the occasion, and behaving very well. The problem was that Nevil felt behaving very well included remaining true to one's dead spouse. In the book, Captain Dwight Towers refused to give in to his passion for the Australian beauty Moira, and she was above trying to seduce him into betraying his dead wife. In the film, Towers, played by Gregory Peck, and Moira, played by Ava Gardner, left no doubt about whether or not their relationship was consummated. Nevil felt that this destroyed the central message of the book.

Notwithstanding Nevil's dislike of the film, it is a classic, and the power of its message is as strong today as it ever was.

Pied Piper (1942)

The Pied Piper is the second of Nevil Shute's novels to be filmed. It was produced in the United states at 20th Century Fox by Nunnally Johnson, directed by Irving Pichel, and starred Monty Woolley, Anne Baxter, Otto Preminger, in perhaps his only acting role, and a very young Roddy McDowall, as one of the children led to safety through war torn Europe.





This film, like the book, was pure propaganda against the Nazi war machine. Still, it is classic Nevil Shute – the epitome of an ordinary man, faced with extraordinary circumstances, and accomplishing extraordinary things. Unfortunately, the Foundation has not yet been able to locate an original of the film, and has to make do with a rather poor video dub. However, despite the relatively poor quality of the tape, Nevil Shute's genius shines through.

Landfall (1948)

Landfall is the second of two Nevil Shute wartime novels that were made into films, although it was not filmed until after the war. It was produced by Victor Skutezsky at Pathe Studios, directed by Ken Annakin, and starred Michael Denison, as the dashing young RAF pilot, and Patricia Plunkett, as the pure as the driven snow girlfriend, barmaid. The film closely follows the book, with the exception of one or two unnecessary twists, and a bit of hokey, period music thrown in. (Remember when almost all movies had at least one singing scene?) It is a good example of Nevil's view of wartime England's "ordinary people doing extraordinary things".. It also has some very good shots of the Wellington Bomber which was designed by Barnes Wallis of R100 and Dambusters fame.

The Foundation was fortunate to find a copy of Landfall, still in the film can, at Pinewood Studios in the United Kingdom. We were even more fortunate in that the curator there, Mr. John Herron, was kind enough to make a very good quality video tape of the original for the Foundation.

R-100 in Canada (undated)

There is a fifteen minute tape of The R-100 Airship in Canada. This tape was made from what appears to be an amateur motion picture film taken during the R-100's visit to Canada. This video is not commercially available.

Lonely Road (1936)

Lonely Road is the first of Nevil Shute's novels to be made into a film. It was produced at Ealing Studios by Basil Dean, Associated Talking Pictures, directed by James Flood, and starred Clive Brook and Victoria Hopper, well known actor and actress of that period. In his autobiography, Slide Rule, Nevil mentioned that he enjoyed watching the film being made. Several of the scenes were shot on a beach near where he lived. The film followed the book reasonably well right up to the end, where Nevil's tragedy was turned into a suggestion of "happily ever after". In spite of the popularised ending, it is an entertaining film and a good example of British cinematography of that era. This film is also listed in several references under the alternate title of Scotland Yard Commands.

No Highway In The Sky (1951)

No Highway in the Sky is the film based on Nevil Shute's famous novel No Highway, which predicted the effects of metal fatigue in modern aircraft and foretold the tragedy that befell British Comets several years later. It was produced by Louis D. Lighton at 20th Century Fox, and directed by Henry Kostner. It starred (rather improbably) James Stewart, as the eccentric Professor Theodore Honey, who predicted the disaster of the newly commissioned Reindeer aircraft, Marlene Dietrich as an aging film star, and Glynnis

Johns, as the flight attendant who grew to love the eccentric Mr. Honey. This is more good period film making, with horrible special effects and a few very trite final scenes. However, it is vintage Shute, and well worth seeing.

A Town Like Alice (1951)

This version of A Town Like Alice, was produced at Rank Films, directed by Jack Lee, and starred Virginia McKenna and Peter Finch. It might best be described as a film based on one half of a Nevil Shute novel. It is well done, but only covers the book through Jean's discovery that Joe Harmon is alive, and their first meeting thereafter in Australia. Their blossoming love, and the creation of 'a town like Alice' is not covered. Still, this is more vintage Shute and very worthwhile.

Please note, the majority of these movies are also available for hire at any time through the Nevil Shute Lending Library. For more details log onto: www.nevilshute.org

Participant Biographies

David Weir – Speaker

Professor David Weir is Professor of Management at Ceram, a leading French Grande Ecole, and Visiting Professor of Management Development at Lancaster University. He has been working on Nevil Shute for several years and is preparing a critical biography: gave presentations to the 1999, 2001 and 2003 Conferences in Albuquerque, Frankston and Southsea. Recently published: "Nevil Shute and the landscape of England" chapter in "Literary Tourism" ed. Michael Robinson and Hans-Christian Andersen: Continuum Press: 2002. "Crafting a Virtual Destination: the technique of the popular novelist": International Conference on Virtual Destinations in the Tourism industry: Dubrovnik: 2002

Graham Fricke – Speaker

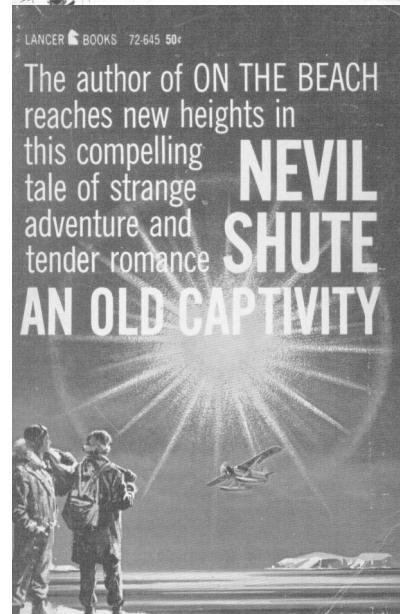
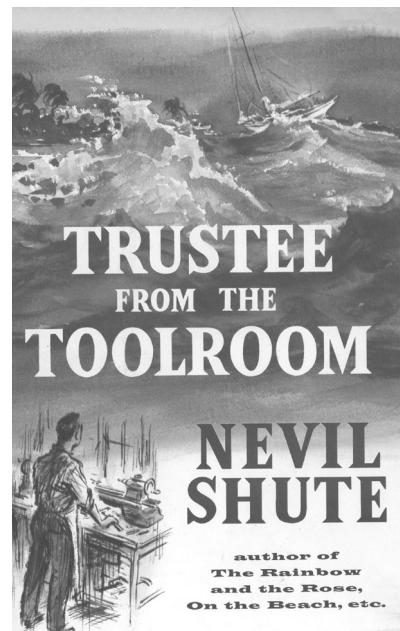
Graham Lewis Fricke was born in Melbourne Australia in 1935. After matriculating at Melbourne High School, Graham commenced a law course at the age of 17 at the University of Melbourne. On completing his law degree in 1956, he taught at the same law school before attending the University of Pennsylvania as a Ford Foundation Fellow in 1958-9.

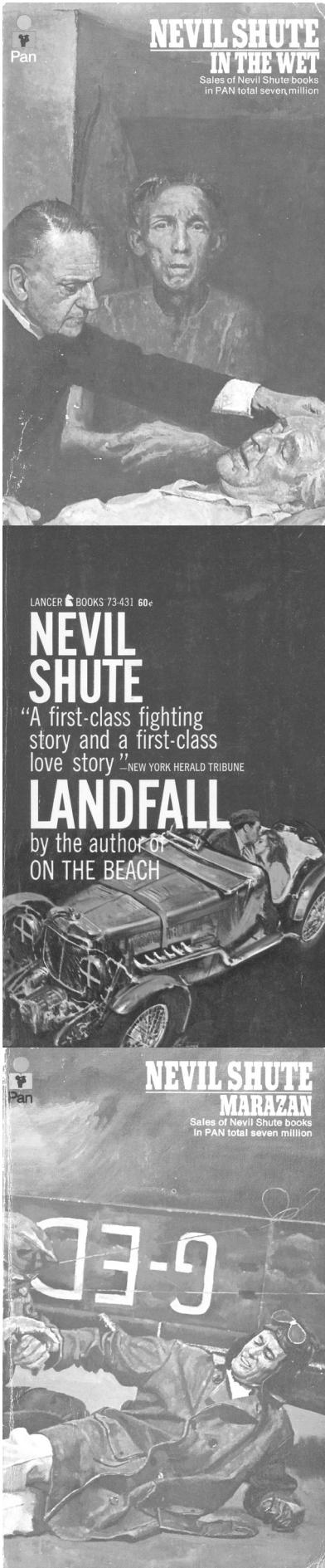
During a short teaching stint at the University of Tasmania, Fricke wrote several articles, including one on actions for breach of statutory duty that was published in the prestigious Law Quarterly Review.

Fricke then forsook academia and returned to Melbourne, where he practiced as a barrister for a couple of decades between 1962 and 1983. In 1978, he was appointed a Queen's Counsel. In 1983 he was elevated to the County Court of Victoria, the principal court for the trial of indictable offences in Victoria and a court with an extensive civil jurisdiction.

Fricke sat on the bench for more than 12 years before returning to academia as Visiting Professor at Deakin University. He taught Federal Constitutional Law, Trial Advocacy and Criminal Procedure for the next six years.

He wrote a textbook on Compulsory Acquisition of Land in Victoria for Law





Book Company (now Methuen) in 1975. A second edition, expanded to cover all Australian jurisdictions, was produced in 1982, with interstate contributors. During his period on the bench, the judge switched his authorial attention to lighter works. The first, *Libels, Lampoons and Litigants*, dealt with famous Australian libel cases, involving politicians, actors, sporting celebrities etc. It was published by Century Hutchinson in 1984. That was followed in 1986 by *Judges of the High Court of Australia* (same publisher). Biographical profiles on Australian prime ministers (*Profiles of Power*) were published by Houghton Mifflin of Australia in 1990. *Tales from the Courts* was published by Lothian in 1999.

In 2004, the former Judge Fricke was invited by his old court to write a book on the last 47 appointees to that court, that is, those appointed to the court over approximately a decade. He completed that book, which is due to be published in 2005. In 1999-2000, Fricke did editing work for the travel publisher, Lonely Planet.

Babette Hills – Panel Discussion Leader

Babette Hills works as a part-time librarian/river guide/swimming instructor. She is a full-time reader. Married over 30 years to Wayne Caruolo, they have two sons. Babette dabbles in skiing, tennis, indoor soccer, scuba, service puppy raising, watercolor painting and napping. She is a member of the Colorado Nevil Shute Chapter where Art recruited her to work this conference.

Dr. Fred Erisman – Speaker

Fred Erisman, Lorraine Sherley Professor of Literature Emeritus at Texas Christian University in Fort Worth, Texas, was the 2002-2003 holder of the Charles A. Lindbergh Chair of Aerospace History at the National Air and Space Museum, Smithsonian Institution, in Washington, DC. A specialist in the popular literature and culture of the United States, he holds a Ph.D. in American Studies from the University of Minnesota, and has published numerous studies of science fiction, detective and suspense fiction, children's literature, the Western, and, of course, Nevil Shute.

Margo Ganster – Leader of Dramatic Reading Program

Margo Ganster has lived in Albuquerque, NM since 1978. She has enjoyed a varied professional life. She received her Masters degree in Library Science from the Univ. of Illinois and worked as a librarian for 14 years. She changed careers and became a Human Resource person for 17 years. Six months before retiring from a large semiconductor manufacturing firm, she was ordained into the Ministry of Divine Science.. She has decided she does not want a physical plant, a flock or a board of trustees that go along with a church. Instead, she works from her home creating and performing ceremonies (weddings, funerals, memorial services, baby naming, house and business blessings, cronings). She offers individuals spiritual retreat at her home. She offers workshops and classes and she coaches individuals on their relationship to money. Margo was introduced to Nevil Shute by Dan Telfair. She had just retired in January 1999 and was happy to volunteer at the registration desk during the first Nevil Shute conference held in Albuquerque. Shute's books have become a mainstay in her reading life since.

Shoshana Milgram Knapp - Speaker

As Associate Professor of English at Virginia Tech (the largest university in Virginia), Shoshana Milgram Knapp teaches detective fiction, comparative literature, film, and science fiction, in addition to the usual period and genre courses. She has lectured at conferences in the U.S., Canada and the UK, as well as at American universities and the Smithsonian Institution. Her publications have included articles on Napoleon, George Sand, Victor Hugo, George Eliot, Herbert Spencer, Victoria Cross, W. T. Stead, E. L. Voynich, John Fowles, Henry James, Ayn Rand, Anton Chekhov, Fyodor Dostoevsky, and Leo Tolstoy; last year, she had the privilege of writing an introduction for Nevil Shute's "The Seafarers". Her current project is a biography of Ayn Rand's life up to 1957.

John Anderson - Speaker

John Anderson was born in Yorkshire and educated at Rydal School. He studied Mechanical Engineering at the University of Manchester and obtained B.Sc. and M.Sc degrees. In 1974 he joined the National Centre of Tribology in the UK as a Consultant on industrial problems of friction, lubrication and wear. He studied part time with the Open University on the History of Science and Technology, presenting a thesis in 1986 on the history of wear and wear prevention. In 1990 he joined the Atlantic Group as Managing Director. John is married with one daughter and lives in Cheshire.

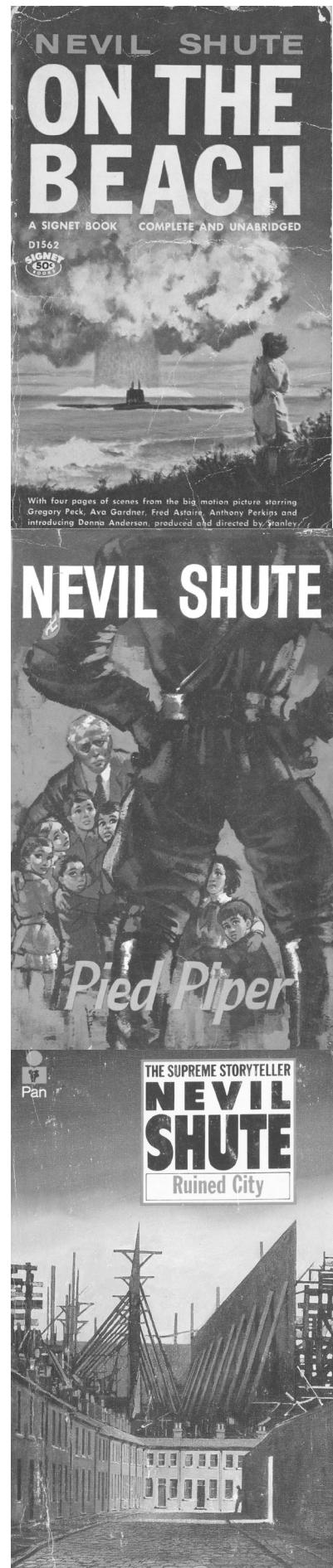
Since the UK2003 gathering, John, with other UK Shutists, has been actively researching the life and work of Nevil Shute.

Dan Telfair (El Supremo Emeritus) - Panelist

Dan Telfair is the Founder and Secretary/Treasurer of the Nevil Shute Norway Foundation, the past host of the Centennial and OZ2001 celebrations, the past Editor of the Foundation Newsletter, and the past Manager of the Nevil Shute Norway Web Site. His most recent related accomplishment involved editing and minor revisions to Nevil Shute's unpublished manuscript "The Seafarers", resulting in the first Nevil Shute book to be published in over forty years. Dan is a retired US Army Ranger, paratrooper and pilot, retired business owner, and retired organizational consultant, who spends his time flying, travelling, and working the family airplane and hangar, and on Nevil Shute projects. His interest in Nevil Shute's work dates to the late 50s when he first read "On The Beach". Since retirement, that interest has become an obsession. Dan, his wife Zia, their German Shepherd Kokopelli and their CCI puppy Shrader, share their home with Nevil Shute in New Mexico - the Land of Enchantment.

Lillian Ruiz - Speaker

Lillian Ruiz was born in Aspen, Colorado to Candace Cornell (daughter of Art and Joan Cornell) and Felimon Ruiz from Jalisco, Mexico. Once moving to Denver she started kindergarten and, thanks to her mother, was home schooled for first and second grade. She then attended Crown Pointe Academy, a charter school for third through sixth grade. In the summer of 2000, when Lillian was 11 years-old, she was chosen to participate in an international peace camp in Bologna, Italy called Children's International Summer Villages or CISV. During her sixth year of school she took up the violin with a





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private instructor. She also helped illustrate her grandfather's book about the family heritage. Auditioning in visual arts and violin she was accepted as an orchestra major at the Denver School of the Arts, a middle school and high school that focuses on the arts while maintaining regular core classes. When Lillian's sister Olivia was 11 she also was chosen to participate in a CISV camp in Guatemala and they started their own business to help raise money for her to go. The business is called Olian International Cookies & Mixes, LLP (www.olian.biz). The business has since won awards as well as recognition from the media. In January, 2005 Lillian participated in another CISV camp as a 16 year-old Junior Counselor in Geelong, Australia. Lillian started reading Nevil Shute books when her grandfather started the chapter in Denver in 2001. Her favorite book is *In the Wet*. She has read over 10 Shute books.

Robert Wester – Speaker

Robert was born New York City, raised in Denver, CO. He received a Bachelor of Arts and Science in Cell Biology from the University of Colorado, Boulder, CO May 1974; Doctor of Medicine May 1978 from Creighton University of Medicine, Omaha, NE.

Robert has been married since May 1978 to Christine Anne Wester. They have three children Stephen age 20, Annie age 17, and James age 9. He has been in private practice in Obstetrics and Gynecology since August 1982 in Denver, CO and is involved in resident education as clinical facility and attending physician at St. Joseph Hospital Ob-Gyn residency in Denver, CO. His passions ... my family, running, climbing the Colorado Fourteeners, reading books, organizing and facilitating two book groups and spreading the word about Nevil Shute.

Art and Joan Cornell – Co-hosts of CapeCod2005

Art was born and raised in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Joan was born in Baltimore, Maryland and raised in Detroit, Michigan. They met at Eastern Michigan University and were married in 1955. They have four children and seven grandchildren.

Art worked for the Bendix Corporation for thirty-one years as a mathematical engineer. He simulated the motion of airplanes, helicopters and space vehicles on computers in order to solve engineering problems. Joan taught elementary school before children and was a substitute teacher after..

They both were introduced to Nevil Shute in 1983 when their neighbor, who visited and loved Australia, gave them *Trustee from the Toolroom*. They started collecting and reading the Shute books. Soon Art realized he would like to meet people who also liked them. In 1992 he started the Nevil Shute Society with his Shute friend, Paul Shein.

Laura Schneider – Panelist

Laura Schneider is a Middle School Language Arts and Social Studies teacher in New Jersey. Laura's singular appreciation of literature derives from the knowledge that every student values a well-told story. With Shute's flair for putting ordinary people in extraordinary circumstances, his timeless stories perpetually resonate with both children and adults. Laura has authored three books for children that feature animals who teach humans subtle but important lessons. Indebted to Nevil Shute for introducing Australia to her through

his novels and her travels, Laura continues to be drawn to the physical beauty of Australia and the friendliness of Australians.

Laura, her husband Phil and ever-appreciative rescued golden retriever Emily, live in Central New Jersey.

John W. Cooper - Producer and Director of Screen Play, *Vinland the Good*

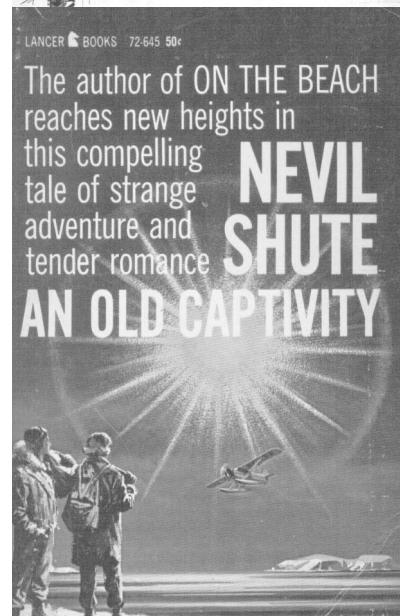
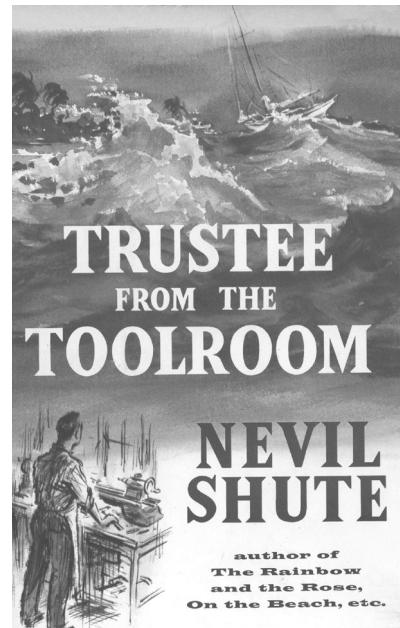
John W. Cooper has had a seafaring career of over forty years as a sailor in the U.S. Navy and as a physical oceanographer at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution on Cape Cod and at the Southwest Research Institute in Texas. This career has taken him from ice island ARLIS II in the Arctic Ocean to many extended trips to the Atlantic, Indian, and Pacific Oceans and to the Caribbean and Mediterranean Seas and to the Gulf of Mexico. As a navy junior he lived and went to school in China and the Philippines before WWII. He has a BS degree in physics from William & Mary and did graduate work in physics at Georgetown University and physical oceanography at Texas A&M. For the past six years he was on the Board of Directors of the Human Power Vehicle Association. In 1999 he attended and wrote press releases for the Nevil Shute Centennial Celebration in Albuquerque, NM. He is now retired and lives in San Antonio, Texas with his wife Dorothy.

Andrew Banta - Speaker

Andrew Banta is a professor emeritus at California State University, Sacramento, where he taught mechanical engineering from 1982 until retiring in 2004; he was Department Chair for 5 years in the early 1990s. His most recent research on the performance of a small gas turbine engine has been presented at international conferences in Europe and the USA. He presently spends his time on a variety of activities many of which are related to automobiles, photography and book collecting.

He was first attracted by the engineering aspects of Nevil Shute's writing; he has been reading Shute's writings and avidly collecting first editions for the past 40 years. He has a particular interest in Shute's unpublished works of both fiction and non-fiction.

He and his wife, Linda, have traveled extensively in Australia. While Andy and Linda were visiting scholars at University of Technology, Sydney in 1996, they lived in North Sydney for 6 months. Their most adventuresome travel was by a trip by motor coach across the Nullarbor Plain with a one day stop at Eucla, Western Australia.



PROCEEDING OF THE NEVIL SHUTE GATHERING CAPE COD MASSACHUSETTS OCTOBER 2 - 6, 2005

HOLDING THE MIRROR UP TO LIFE

Graham L Fricke

AN OLD CAPTIVITY AND THE EARLY DAYS OF ATLANTIC FLIGHT

Fred Erisman

KIDS READING SHUTE

Lillian Ruiz

SHUTE, BURNEY, THE TORAPLANE AND LANDFALL

John Anderson

NEVIL SHUTE PANEL DISCUSSION

Babette Hills

"A CONTEMPORARY INTERPRETATION OF ON THE BEACH"

by Robert Wester

THE ALPHA AND OMEGA OF NEVIL SHUTE

Andrew Banta

READING SHUTE ALOUD

Margo Ganste

THE "I" IN NEVIL SHUTE'S WRITING: FIRST PERSON AS NARRATION AND

CHARACTERIZATION

Shoshana Milgram Knapp

THE NORWAY IN NEVIL SHUTE: FROM CORNWALL TO CAPE COD BY WAY OF THE NORTHERN SEAS OF LEIF ERICSSON

David Weir

HOLDING THE MIRROR UP TO LIFE

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Most of us get our perspectives about the manners and mores of earlier eras from films. Many of those films are based on books. So we learn about Georgian and Victorian England from novels by writers such as Jane Austen and Charles Dickens, and from films based on those books. Historians may prefer to use other sources, but even they sometimes resort to fictional depictions of customs. A perceptive journalist writing about Shute in *Time* magazine suggested that posterity might find his works 'a remarkably reliable portrait of mid-twentieth century man and his concerns'. Shute in fact reflected the customs and language of three distinct milieus: pre-war England, the second world war in Britain, and post-war Australia. His first five published works (including *What Happened to the Corbets*, which anticipated war) and his first two novels, published posthumously under the title *Stephen Morris*, deal with the pre-war (or between wars) era.

PRE-WAR ENGLAND

These novels depict Britain in a leisurely age in which houseguests are greeted by butlers and young men are honourable enough to desist from marriage until they can afford to support their brides in decent comfort. Italians are denigrated as 'dagoes', while Chinese are

called 'chinks'. The weather is 'perfectly beastly' or sometimes 'perfectly devilish'. A meal is described as a 'corking breakfast', while a midday meal is a 'rattling good lunch'. Women are referred to as 'the Flossies', and some of them are described as 'damn good sorts'. Another is disparaged as a 'blue-stocking of the most virulent description'. People gush that 'It's most frightfully good of you' or sometimes that 'It's awfully good of you'. And so on.

BRITAIN IN WARTIME

In his wartime novels, patriotism is a dominant consideration, as is the clash the war poses between duty to the nation and duty to one's family. In *Landfall*, the change in mores is emphasised by a romance between two people of different social classes leading to their marriage, something that would have been unthinkable in the old class-ridden England. Mona, however, is a fast learner. She takes lessons in elocution and deportment, and learns to abandon the phrase 'You didn't ought to do that', in favour of 'You should not do that.' Ultimately she learns to say, 'You oughtn't to do that'. Thus equipped she becomes Flying Officer Chambers' wife.

Plainly, the second world war revolutionised a number of aspects of English life. It not only accustomed the British to the idea of women participating in large numbers in the workforce, but it led to the breaking down of old barriers, such as that which would have deterred young women from going into a bar together.

In *Pied Piper*, we gain some insights into grim wartime conditions in both France and England. In France, the situation is full of confusion and disruption. People are ordered out of hotels, timetables are unprocurable, trains are cancelled, and those that begin a journey start

late and then fail to complete their journey. On and adjoining the roads there is a cavalcade of people in lorries, carts and on foot, pushing their belongings in hand-carts and old prams. No-one pays much attention to normal standards of dress or even hygiene. In London, the populace is being bombarded by enemy bombs and fires erupt from time to time. Citizens carry with them gas masks, tin helmets and revolver-belts. During an incendiary raid, the waiter informs the two members of the club that there is a shelter available in the basement.

Pastoral depicts the Royal Air Force and Women's Auxiliary Air Force in mid-war when the air force was beginning to have some success in its raids on Germany. It is set in the close, institutional, gossipy environment of an air base in Oxfordshire where young men and women are thrown together in daily contact, but where a rigid, almost puritanical set of rules make intimate relationships even riskier than office romances. Those who are observed to be forming close relationships run the risk of being transferred to another base. In this difficult milieu, a romance develops between Flight Lieutenant Peter Marshall and Section Officer Gervase Robertson.

Air force parlance creeps into descriptions of relationships. When Gervase's rejection of Peter's premature marriage proposal turns him into a difficult, irritable leader, one of his crew tries to explain that 'I think somebody shot him down, sir.' When the Wing Commander learns who the suspect is, he replies, 'A very nice girl... I'm sorry if she shot him down.' The Wing Commander, of a similar age and family status to his creator, perhaps echoes the author's views when he reflects that courtships in the intervals of night raids over Germany were difficult and that, once troubles in relationships started, peace of mind 'did not come till you were married'.

The next book to be published, *Most Secret*, was written earlier than *Pastoral*, but its publication was prohibited on security grounds by the authorities. It is set in an earlier stage of the war, in 1940-41. It concerns the use by members of the English navy of a diabolical weapon, a flame-thrower, to direct a torrent of fire at German Raumboots patrolling the French coast, in an attempt to improve the morale of the French. Shute, as Commander Norway, was designing secret weapons and had in fact experimented with a flame-thrower in the early stages of the war. The hatred of the enemy engendered by the war and the escalating brutality and desensitized feelings are well delineated by the writer in this book.

POST-WAR AUSTRALIA

Just as Nevil Shute's flight to Australia in 1948 marked an important transition in the author's life, so did his next

book *A Town Like Alice* mark a transition in his writing. It is set partly in pre-war England, partly in wartime Malaya, and partly in Australia. But it looks to the future of the nation that Shute was about to adopt, and more than half of it is devoted to a story that culminates in the development of a small town near the Gulf of Carpentaria on the western side of Cape York Peninsula by the protagonist, Jean Paget. She uses an inheritance to construct a series of businesses in Queensland's fictional Willstown to make it a 'town like Alice', the outback town of Alice Springs in the very centre of Australia's three million square mile continent.

In this book, Shute reveals his quick learning capacity and keen ear for local argot with his depiction of Joe Harman, who tells Jean that 'Alice' [Springs] 'is a bonza place'. As a slow talking Queenslander, Joe is credible, although Shute has him saying 'my word' far too often. Joe uses authentic expressions, such as 'the Curry' for the town of Cloncurry, 'gone walkabout', 'tucker' and so on. In an age that was not given to political correctness, Aborigines are referred to as 'boongs', who are not counted in Willstown's population. Shute even anticipates a form of American-style segregation when he has Jean and Joe discussing setting up a separate ice-cream parlour for Aborigines.

Shute effectively captures the nature of the outback life, the camaraderie and the mutual dependence in times of crisis, the use of radio transmitters to communicate between homes and bases, the resourcefulness in emergencies such as injuries and floods. With his narrative skills, his ear for dialogue and his imaginative use of stories told to him, he manages to spin together a tale that was sufficiently dramatic and engaging as to warrant a novel, with varying editions, a film and a television series.

Before writing *The Far Country*, Shute had spent months flying around Australia acquainting himself with its peculiarities. Part of this time he spent in the Merrijig district on the Delatite River, between Mansfield (called Banbury in the book) and Mount Buller in north-eastern Victoria. He soon picked up local speech patterns, including the description of the district. Just as Alice Springs was called 'the Alice' and Cloncurry became 'the Curry', so was Merrijig referred to as 'the Jig'.

Shute had been an enthusiastic propagandist for the country of his birth in his wartime novels. He became just as keen a promoter of his new country in his post-war novels. The father of the protagonist in *The Far Country*, Jenny Morton, is a doctor who practises in Leicester. He reflects on the declining standard of living in England from an era when his father, also a doctor, had servants and plenty of food to one in which people depended on Australian generosity for food parcels.

Under the Health Service, doctors work longer hours but earn less than dentists. His daughter travels to Australia and soon begins to rhapsodise about the country, as does the man she meets, Carl Zlinter, a former doctor from Czechoslovakia who is not permitted to practise in Australia. He tells her how he loves his new country for its freedom, its prosperity, its beauty, its open spaces and its tranquillity. By contrast, all of the English characters in the book complain about controls, rationing, high taxation and the dreaded Socialist government.

The fact that Zlinter is not allowed to practise medicine without spending three years in an Australian hospital receives ambiguous attention. In a country with an acute shortage of doctors it seems rather rigid. Is it due to prejudice or a well-founded desire to maintain standards? The standards of medical practice in some European countries may be inferior (Rumania and Albania get a mention), but a system of tests could surely sort out the good from the bad with a shorter qualifying period. But when Zlinter tries to help out in an emergency by treating two accident victims, he is dealt with in a sympathetic manner by the coroner.

Shute seems to admire the sturdy independence of Australians, such as Jack Dorman, who did not require subordinates to salute him during the war, and who did not mind Zlinter driving his vehicle without being licensed. The police take a tolerant attitude to breaches of licensing laws at Merrijig, for that keeps the drinkers away from the busier traffic scene in Banbury.

Shute's next novel *In the Wet*, is based at the outset, like much of the Australian section of *A Town Like Alice*, in the Gulf Country of north Queensland, although significant portions are set in England. The title refers to the 'wet' season in the Australian tropics when deluges occur and people occasionally hallucinate. Like *Round the Bend*, it is one of his 'serious' works, with a mystical flavour.

Shute sometimes descends into language that today would be regarded as politically incorrect. Thus David, the quadroon, is called 'Nigger', while full-blood Aborigines are called 'boongs'. In these respects, Shute is merely reflecting accurately the usages of the era. The same applies to the Australians' disparaging references to some English migrants as 'pommies', and to the 'inferiority complex of an Australian' that makes it hard for him to understand why anyone would want to come to Tharwa, near Canberra.

Some of the author's own views are reflected in the pronouncements of his protagonists. His elitism is revealed in the enthusiastic support for a system of multiple voting, whereby citizens begin with one vote, but get extra votes based on education, overseas travel and so

on. His support for personal autonomy is reflected in a conversation between the Prince of Wales and 'Nigger' Anderson. The prince envies the pilot's achievements and lifestyle. Anderson disputes that he was 'born lucky', adding that he was born in a ditch to a half caste girl. Prince Charles replies that he was aware of that, but still maintained that Anderson was born lucky: 'You could choose your life, and make it what you wanted it to be'.

An Old Captivity and the Early Days of Atlantic Flight

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Given the fascination of the Haki/Hekja tale, Nevil Shute's interest in the transmigration of spirits, and the growing attraction between Donald Ross and Alix Lockwood, readers tend to overlook the attention *An Old Captivity* gives to the flight itself. A comment by a customs official late in the book, however, injects a new perspective. Inspecting the Lockwood group's passports upon their arrival in Halifax, he offhandedly remarks, "We don't get many Atlantic fliers in these parts." Cyril Lockwood, reflecting on the comment, muses, "I never realised that we were putting ourselves into that distinguished category." In that quiet exchange, Shute opens the door to a wholly new consideration of the book, one in which the novel emerges as a rumination on the adolescence of aviation and Atlantic flight.

An initial reminder that comes from the novel is the relative youth of the airplane. The principal action of the book is set in the spring and summer of 1933, only thirty years removed from the Wright Brothers' flight at Kitty Hawk, six years later than Lindbergh's flight to Paris in 1927, and a year past Amelia Earhart's corresponding solo Atlantic flight in 1932. The airplane is still a new, evolving, and largely untested mechanism, and, almost daily, serves as a tool for exploring just what the possibilities of its technology may be. One such exploration is the MacRobertson England to Australia Air Race of 1934. Though its events postdate those of *An Old Captivity*, Shute includes hints of it in his story. Funded by Sir Macpherson Robertson, the competition was intended as a proving ground for aircraft designs, commercial as well as experimental, "for future air traffic development, and... also to show in how short a time passengers can be transported from Europe to Australia." It drew sixty-four

entrants from thirteen countries, although only twenty craft, representing six countries, actually took part. The winning aircraft, the British DeHavilland D.H. 88 Comet, was built especially for the race; second place went to a Douglas DC-2 flying a KLM commercial route, and third place to a Boeing 247 borrowed from United Air Lines and flown by Roscoe Turner.

Significantly, not all those entering American ships in the race were American nationals. One was the Australian aviation notable Sir Charles Kingsford-Smith, known for his long-distance flights across the Pacific, who precipitated “howls of criticism from advocates of ‘buy Empire’ when [the] national hero chose a Lockheed Altair with which to enter the race.” Kingsford-Smith stood firm, however, insisting that the British market had nothing suitable for his needs, and Shute echoes his determination in an exchange between Ross and Sir David Lockwood’s secretary, Hanson. “Sir David would very much prefer to use a British aeroplane,” Hanson says. “Isn’t that possible?” Ross’s reply is to the point: “If you want the best machine for flying in the North, you must go to the States for it... The British manufacturer hasn’t gone for that market.” And, when the secretary expresses Sir David’s likely disappointment, Ross shrugs: “I’ve got to tell him what machine is best for the job. I only wish he’d start in building aeroplanes himself to suit Canadian conditions.” (AOC 45) National pride and prestige are all to the good, but the functional efficiency and inherent quality of the machine must take precedence. The evolution of the technology in the United States has outstripped that of Great Britain; Ross and Kingsford-Smith choose the craft best suited to their needs, and unless innovative designers and builders step in, the country will soon be left behind.

The MacRobertson Race explored aviation’s potential for commercial passenger travel. A second glimpse of the early days of Atlantic flight occurs when Shute proposes exploration of the world, using the airplane’s capacity for covering challenging terrain to open previously unknown parts of the world to mankind. (AOC 13) Aerial exploration in the North Atlantic was in the news in the 1930s, and Shute sees it as a noteworthy application of the airplane. Two such expeditions, both of which were based in commercial enterprises, leave their marks on *An Old Captivity*. One is the British Arctic Air Route Expedition of 1931, a year-long exploration of Greenland to determine “the most promising air route from England to Winnipeg and British Columbia.” Mentioning the expedition by name, Shute builds it into his story. When Ross first hears of Lockwood’s plans, he is delighted: “Greenland was in the news; Ross, and the world with him, knew all about these Greenland expedi-

tions. They were recruited from young men, very young... It would be a light-hearted affair of youth, a brave business nonchalantly carried out. It would probably be a year of freedom from anxiety and of good fellowship.” (AOC 15-16) Drawing upon his readers’ awareness of Greenland flights, Shute prepares the way for the greater concerns of his story.

A second Greenland flight important to *An Old Captivity* is that made by Charles and Anne Morrow Lindbergh in the summer of 1933. Funded by Pan American Airlines, they set out in a float-equipped Lockheed Sirius to consider weather, terrain, and likely base sites along Great Circle routes over the North Atlantic from the United States to Europe. They left from New York on July 9, 1933, flew along the North American coast past Halifax and Hopedale, crossed the water to Godthaab, went on to Julianehaab and Angmagssalik, thence to Reykjavik, the Faroe Islands, and Europe, arriving in Copenhagen on August 26, 1933. Their story, as chronicled by Anne Lindbergh, provides a factual background for much of what Shute includes in *An Old Captivity*.

There are telling parallels between the Lockwood flight and the Lindberghs’, in both detail and spirit. Although Ross and the Lockwoods trace the route in reverse, leaving from Scotland and ending in New York, they touch at the same principal settlements and experience many of the same sights and incidents (including a brief stop at an Eskimo village and a lavish entertainment given by a local official). Internal bits also echo the Lindbergh flight. When Ross sketches out the route with Lockwood, he refers to Hopedale as “practically back in civilised parts,” and the don chuckles at “your idea of civilised parts.” (AOC 72-73) Anne Lindbergh adds her own take on civilization in the North when, she says, “in retrospect from Hopedale..., I looked on [Cartwright] as a hub of civilization.” What’s more, Ross’s obsession with the weight of the aircraft and its contents parallels Charles Lindbergh’s. Every item carried about the Lindbergh plane was weighed, whether an anchor at 37 pounds or a packet of surgical needles among the emergency supplies at _ ounce. For those of us for whom overweight baggage is almost a thing of the past, Ross’s concern gives insight into some of the trials of early flight. (AOC 79-82)

The final exploration that *An Old Captivity* takes up is perhaps the most suggestive, for it involves aviation as a key to the human self. From the outset, Shute intended the book to be one more instance of his recurring theme of ordinary persons doing extraordinary things: “I wanted this book to show that great flights are not made by flash-in-the-pan heroes, but by men who can work

eighteen hours a day at tiring, menial jobs... These are the sort of men who made the great flights that established civil aviation, and that was the sort of man I wanted to write about." Aviation may be a realm dominated by technology and applicable to many commercial uses, but its ultimate success inevitably requires the human element – and that success will come only if human skills at all levels are involved.

One obvious test is that of knowledge. Aviation is not an undertaking for the ignorant; its success depends upon knowledge of matters great and small, and no one can say when any given piece of information may make a crucial difference. We learn, early on, that Ross, already a competent flier, quickly acquires the specialized knowledge to make him a successful Arctic bush pilot. (AOC 10-11) This knowledge, in turn, makes him attractive to Cyril Lockwood, and this is the knowledge that, ultimately, makes the expedition a success. Beyond his necessary understanding of piloting, navigation, and logistics, Ross knows that even the color of the aircraft is important. When Alix recoils at the brilliant orange of their ship, Ross replies that it is "The most conspicuous [color] there is, on any background... That colour shows up like a flame, on any background – snow, or trees, or grass, or water. It's saved dozens of lives, that colour has." Alix, to her credit, is taken aback: "It was a new idea to her that the colour of the paint might mean for her the difference between living and enjoying life, and dying in the wilderness." (AOC 90)

Ross is not the only flier to appreciate the importance of vivid orange. In writing of her first trans-Atlantic flight, as a passenger aboard the Fokker tri-motor, *Friendship*, in 1928, Amelia Earhart remarks that the color of the craft "was chosen... not for artistic effect, but because chrome-yellow, its technical name, can be seen farther than any other color. In case we had to come down, a little bright spot bobbing about on the water would have stood a better chance of attracting attention than one of neutral tints." What is a new idea to Alix is commonplace among those proficient in flying in hazardous conditions, and the expertise of the latter, fictional or real-life, ensures the safety of the former.

A second test is that of the body, for flying carries its physical demands as well as its challenges to knowledge. Some of the demands are those of hard work; Ross's giving four hours to refueling the aircraft in Reykjavik awakens Alix to the understanding that "it was not courage, or resourcefulness, or ability that counted in this game... It was the capacity to work efficiently at tiring, menial tasks upon the ground that made great flights a success." (AOC 134-35) Ross accepts shifting heavy weights, breathing nauseating fumes, and repeating

motion after motion as a necessary adjunct to the continuance, and success, of the flight, just as he accepts the dangers of the boredom that can come from hours of uninterrupted, uneventful flight. When the three are forced to return to Reykjavik because of fog, the flight drones on and on until Ross finds himself stupefied by monotony. Fatigue takes its toll. He recognizes the hazards, and only Alix's unbending to talk inconsequential with him saves the flight from disaster. (AOC 144-145).

A final test of the human self provided by flight is perhaps the most significant, for it involves the essential nature of the human individual. Shute understands, and conveys to us, the absolute necessity of total, candid self-knowledge. The successful (and prudent) flier must be able to judge circumstances realistically, and give priority to essential matters no matter how unpalatable they may be. Once again in discussion with Sir David, Ross speaks bluntly, though he knows his realism may dissuade the industrialist: "I wouldn't take this job if I had to guarantee results, sir. It's too unusual. I'll do my best, and in my judgment we can get the photographs... But we may run into sheer bad luck... I shall play for safety first. In that case, we may spend the money and show no results." At book's end, his realistic self-assessment of his mental state causes him to surrender what, for him, has been the job of a lifetime. After landing in a quiet bay at Cape Cod, he turns to Lockwood and says: "I suppose you think I'm mad, sir... Probably I am. If so, I'm not fit to fly for you any more... I've flown enough for the time being, evidently. There comes a time when you've just got to stop. It may be I shall never fly again. In any case, I'm chucking up the job." (AOC, 49, 329) As realistic in his judgment of himself as he is of external conditions, Ross chooses the route that he believes will most directly bring the expedition to a safe ending.

Both of these qualities, commitment and realism, are wrapped up in a final trait, that of determination. Ross understands aircraft, he understands flying, he understands himself, and he understands the needs of his profession. His determination to preserve the flight exacts its toll upon him, testing his will as severely as it tests his body, yet he carries on, and carries through. Unassuming, careful, and efficient, he is, as Alix realizes (and Shute intends) the epitome of the sort of person who carries out a demanding task. In Halifax, herself prompted by the customs agent's off-hand remark, Alix reflects:

"Every step of the journey, considered at the time, did not seem very difficult or very arduous; it was only when you came to look back upon it as a whole that you saw what a job it had been... They had never realised in Oxford what the journey would be like; if they had had the knowledge then that they had now, they might never

have started at all. But the pilot, with his experience, had known all about it. He had known the difficulties that they would meet, and had not been afraid." (AOC 317-318)

At the time of the story, five persons had flown the Atlantic single-handedly, sixty-odd had crossed the North Atlantic in heavier-than-air ships, and several hundred had made the passage in dirigibles. Atlantic flight is still not to be taken lightly, and it takes persons of the caliber of Donald Ross to make it feasible. Ross is, indeed, the kind of person of whom Nevil Shute likes to write, and his experience gives us insight into both aviation and humanity.

Today we make Atlantic flights with little preparation and in relative comfort, with only a modest outlay of money and a moderate amount of inconvenience. We take for granted safety and reasonable creature comforts, and worry more about legroom and the film to be shown than about the nature of the flight itself. Yet flight was not always so, and *An Old Captivity* is a reminder of what has gone before, giving us a provocative understanding of the dangers that pioneering fliers faced and the efforts that have led to our own happy situation. Shute's novel is, without doubt, a tale of two appealing young persons and the odd interweaving of their lives, but it is also a substantial and provocative dramatization of aviation history. We can learn a great deal from its message.

had no idea what kind of plane flew over them or where exactly they were all the time but I liked the kids and I felt like one of them in the story. I loved the adventure and the suspense of that book which is what kept me reading.

TECHNIQUES FOR READING

As each new book was selected to read and as I got older my mom and I found it hard to finish the books sometimes. *Pied Piper* my mom had read to me out loud in bed at night and later on she started to give me the book to read myself while she read at the same time. We would agree on a certain chapter to stop at and then we would talk about it and then we would take turns reading out loud to each other.

One time we were scrunched for time because we were going on a road trip. My mom had worked in the local library for awhile and knew that they had books on tape. She found that they had the book we wanted and got it for the road trip we were going on.

When our chapter decided to read *On the Beach*, my mom was worried about me reading it. I was 14 at the time and she wasn't sure if I would understand it or that I would understand it and it would make me depressed or something. So she found the movie and I watched it by myself and later we talked about it. Now I am not exactly looking forward to reading the book but I have confidence that I will find it more interesting and impact on my views about war compared to when I was 12..

KIDS READING SHUTE

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How old are most of the Nevil Shute readers? 40... definitely. 60... yup. 30... maybe. 50... totally. 70... oh, ya. But what about 10, 15, and 20? There are a couple of generations of readers missing from the Shute Gatherings. You can easily say there really aren't any kids reading his books. So how do you get kids reading Nevil Shute?

I am 16 and I started reading Shute books when I was 12 when my grandfather started the Denver chapter and asked my mom and me to become a member. The first one I read was *Pied Piper* which is a really good one for young readers because there are a lot of kids in it. A child can identify better with a character that is his own age. Had I read *On the Beach* I probably would never picked up another of his books. After that I kept reading the books because I liked the stories. In *Pied Piper*, I

ACCELERATED READER

I don't know how familiar you are with Harry Potter but my sixth grade teacher decided towards the end of the year that she would read the first one out loud to us in class at the end of the day. She was also the music teacher and she was very energetic and fun. She would read the book with a British accent and lots of enthusiasm. It was almost like a play. We weren't just getting a story read to us, it was really an experience. Everyone loved it when she read to us. It was the best part of the day.

After she had finished the book we were given a test. The test was part of a program called AR or Accelerated Reader. AR is a way to test a child's reading comprehension. Usually at the beginning of the year kids are testing on their reading ability on the computer by asking them to give the definitions or finding a synonym for a word in a multiple choice fashion. After that the student is given a reading range. The range is two numbers like 5.2 to 6.3. The first digit is the grade and the last digit is the time in the school year a normal student should be able to read that particular book. So 5.2 is a fifth grade

reading level in around the second month.

There is a library in the school where all the books are organized by this number range. The student can pick a book anywhere between his or her range to check out and read. It is suggested that the student read books toward the higher end of his range to push him in his reading so he can improve. After reading the book he returns the book and tells the teacher he is ready to take the test. The test is 10 questions and is usually about the plot of the book. Depending on how high the reading level is for the book and how the student scored on the test he will get points. At certain times during school he can go the AR Store and buy little toys and stuff with his points. AR challenges students to read and read better. This tests how well an elementary student can follow the story. Parents and teachers can request books to be part of the program. A test is written for the book and can then be bought and put on the shelves of the school library.

ANALYZING A BOOK

AR is used for elementary but how do you get high school kids interested in literature? My freshman literature class taught about literary terms and their meaning. Literary terms are the tools used to analyze a book to give a deeper meaning and understanding. This class also taught us how to use them and how authors use them. By reading novels and finding these literary terms we developed a better understanding of the books we read. The process began with reading a few chapters at a time and then taking a quiz that not only tested us on the story line but what the significant events meant in life in general or specifically to that character. There would then be a discussion which evoked creative and deeper thinking of what the author might be saying with his book.

Probably the most important term, and the one that should be thoroughly discussed, or thought about it, is the Theme of the book. The Theme is a statement about life a particular work is trying to get across to the reader. Babette Hill from the Denver Chapter concluded after reading *Requiem for a Wren* that three themes were: consequences of actions, life after war, and "my own country" or patriotism. After studying a book in this manner it blossoms into a statement of self-awareness and the hardships of being in love rather than war.

Literature is simply not a black or white situation; instead, there are many gray areas much the way that life is. Everyone looks at a situation differently based on their prior knowledge and values that make each piece of literature have a different impact on that person. I encourage that the book clubs be more of an intellectual overview of the books. I think sometimes our chapter does this in their discussion without even knowing it and

it improves the discussion greatly. On a last note, everyone reads, analyzes, and interprets a book differently. Whether they are 10 years-old or 70 years-old each of Nevil Shute's books have a different message for each reader, young or old. But it is up to them to understand it.

If you would like to learn more about Accelerated Reader visit their Web Page at
<http://www.renlearn.com/ar/default.htm>

Office Locations-USA, UK, Canada, and Australia

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Shute, Burney, the Toraplane and Landfall

by

John Anderson

Presented at the Nevil Shute

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Section 1 The Toraplane and Landfall

1. Introduction

Between leaving Airspeed in 1938 and joining the Navy in June 1940, Nevil Shute wrote three novels, made a visit to the United States and worked with his old boss from R-100, Sir Dennistoun Burney, on gliding torpedoes. In his biography of Shute, Julian Smith [1] devotes one paragraph to this work. Smith provides little detail but says that by May 1939 Burney had found Admiralty support for the gliding torpedo project. However the official papers from both the Admiralty and the Air Ministry on this work exist at the UK National Archives. The purpose of this paper is to unravel the story of the Toraplane (the gliding torpedo), from the official records, highlighting the part played by Shute.

Sir Dennis Burney was the key figure in the Toraplane story and he was, to a great extent, a patron and mentor of Nevil Shute. Very little has been written about him compared with Barnes Wallis and it is appropriate to provide some biographical detail. This is given in Section 2.

The background to most of Shute's novels came from

his own real life experiences and perhaps none more so than in writing "Landfall", in which he drew immediately from the work and people he was engaged with during his time on gliding torpedoes. In a remarkable fashion he adapts the events he is, or has just, experienced to the story he tells and weaves them into a novel to which his readers can relate.

2. The Toraplane.

Julian Smith writes that "*Burney shared very strongly his protégés (Shute's) conviction that Britain had frittered away the time she should have spent arming for war with Germany*" (a view also held, most famously, by Winston Churchill). Being an exnaval officer and given his background in World War I, it is not surprising that Burney's attention turned to methods of aerial attack on ships. A perceived problem with attacking ships with torpedoes dropped by aircraft was that, because the aircraft needed to get close to stand any chance of hitting the vessel, it would be vulnerable to the vessel's anti-aircraft fire. Torpedoes also had to be dropped from low level (less than 100 feet) to avoid damage on hitting the water. Although the Admiralty Torpedo Design Committee had considered gliding torpedoes, very little work on them had been carried out. In March 1939 Burney offered to provide the Admiralty with gliding torpedoes to his design for trial purposes. These would be built at his own expense if the Admiralty would undertake to co-ordinate the tests and thus began the story of the Toraplane as Burney christened it [2]. This was not a trivial project and was to consume hundreds of man hours and a considerable amount of money and scarce resources, but had backing at the highest level.

The idea was simple enough – fit wings, a tailplane and rudder to a standard 18" torpedo. When released it would thus glide for some distance before shedding its wings just prior to hitting the water. Then it would behave as a conventional torpedo and run underwater to its target. This would mean that the torpedo could be launched further from the target while the aircraft was beyond the range of anti-aircraft fire. Burney's Broadway Trust Company designed and built the Toraplanes but used the workshop facilities at the Torpedo Development Unit, RAF Gosport. By mid summer 1939 Shute had been engaged by Burney as a consultant both on this project and others that Burney had in hand. Indeed Burney made the point at a high level meeting with the RAF in September 1939 that "*the design of the Toraplane wings was the result of careful preliminary calculations by Messrs Norway and Hansel*" Sydney Hansel was an Airspeed designer recruited by Burney.

The wings are clamped to the torpedo body by a steel band. Twin rudders and elevators are fitted on the tail,

the rudders being controlled by a gyro. To detach the wings and tail unit a paravane unwinds from a cable. The paravane is essentially a small aerodynamic body with inverted aerofoils. The paravane, trailing beneath the torpedo, hits the water first and the snatch shears the bolt on the wing clamp. Two cables link the wings to the tail assembly so both wings and tail unit detach together. On entry into the water the torpedo runs to its target in the normal manner.

3. The Toraplane trials.

The trials of the Toraplane were originally scheduled to begin in July 1939 and the key naval person was the Commander-in-Chief Portsmouth, Admiral Sir William James. His staff would arrange the trial location, liaise with the RAF Station Gosport which provided the aircraft (a Fairey Swordfish) for dropping the weapon. In late July Burney wrote to Admiral James saying that there would be some delay in beginning the trials because the Toraplanes were not ready.

The first trial was on 14th August 1939 and marked the beginning of about 60 trials that lasted well into 1940. The original test area was a zone 9 miles radius some 20 miles off St. Catherine's point, the southern-most point of the Isle of Wight. Many of the trials were filmed and photographed and on some occasions a second aircraft was provided for aerial observation. Both Shute and Hansel, were frequent observers either from the sea or air. Some of the trials were recorded on ciné film and some of these film shots still exist and are archived in the Imperial War Museum.

There were a mixture of successes and failures for many parameters had to be taken into account – the height and speed of the aircraft, the angle of the Toraplane relative to the aircraft, the dihedral and position of the wings and the gyro system. One by one various dropping parameters were tried but very often the glide time was inadequate or the angle of entry into the sea was wrong or the glide was unstable. There was however sufficient progress to keep the Admiralty interested and by the 12th trial in October 1939 they agreed to take over the funding of the work. Up till then the development work had been funded entirely by Burney's company, who claimed that his staff costs were running at £1000 per month (although Shute was an unpaid consultant). The support of Admiral James was important. He was initially an enthusiastic supporter of the Burney Toraplane and wrote to Churchill, who was appointed First Lord of the Admiralty on 4th September 1939, asking for funds to be made available. £1000 was initially authorised by Churchill. Later this budget was increased to £20,000. Churchill was kept fully in the picture both by letters from Admiral James and also by Professor

Lindemann, a long-standing friend of Churchill's, whom he appointed a scientific advisor to him at the Admiralty.

Throughout the autumn and winter of 1939 the trials continued, sometimes two per day but there were gaps of several days when production of Toraplanes was held up by shortage of materials and on more than one occasion by lack of gyros.

4. The R.A.E. Toraplane and the T.D.D. Committee.

In late autumn 1939 the Royal Aircraft Establishment, Farnborough, produced their own design of gliding torpedo. Spurred into action by what Burney's team had so far achieved, they pressed forward with their version which differed from Burney's by having gyros in the wings to control ailerons and rudder and which was a more universal design that could easily be adapted to gliding bombs. Anxious to maintain the project for the Admiralty, but wishing to avoid conflict, Churchill proposed the setting up of a committee with Admiralty, RAF, RAE and civilian representatives to co-ordinate the work, and this was agreed by the Air Ministry. Thus the T.D.D Committee came into being, holding its first meeting at Admiralty House, Portsmouth on 28th October 1939. Admiral James chaired the meetings and Professor G.P.Thomson acted as an independent scientific advisor. Thomson was then professor of physics at Imperial College, London and was recruited as an aerodynamics advisor. Air Marshall Sir Philip Joubert, representing the RAF, was the third senior figure on the committee.

Burney and Shute attended this and subsequent T.D.D. meetings where Shute is recorded as "Mr Norway, assistant to Sir Dennis Burney"; in later meetings he is referred to as "Mr.N.S.Norway B.A. F.R.Ae.S". The principal outcome of the meetings was cooperation between the Admiralty and R.A.E Farnborough and this resulted, early in 1940, in a parallel programme of tests on both the Burney and RAE Toraplanes. It became clear as the trials unfolded that the RAE design was superior. It was better in its stability and control than Burney's and, moreover, was more universally adaptable. In March 1940 Admiral James reported that "*at a meeting at the Air Ministry, attended by the TDD Committee it was decided to focus all attention on developing the RAE Design*". Although a training squadron was formed for gliding torpedoes, it was never used in action and by the end of 1941 the whole project had been abandoned, principally because it could not be dropped with predictable accuracy.

5. The Toraplane aiming sight.

In order to launch the Toraplane accurately an aiming device was necessary and this was another aspect in which Shute was closely involved. In conjunction with

Messrs Cooper, Gauss and Spencer of the Gramophone Company at Hayes in Middlesex, a gyro stabilised aiming sight was developed. A gyroscope provided a stable artificial horizon against which the target could be viewed by an arrangement of half-silvered mirrors. From this the angle of launch could be computed. Shute spent a considerable amount of time at Hayes during the winter of 1939-40 working with them on the sight. At TDD sub committee meeting on 8th January 1940 it was reported that "*Mr Norway produced a sight designed by the Gramophone Company and explained that the aim was to produce an accurate gliding angle and that the computer could be operated by the second member of the crew. On the Swordfish the sight was situated on the starboard side of the windscreen.*" Also "*three of these sights were being manufactured and one would be ready for trial in an aeroplane on 17th January. The other two were expected by the end of January.*"

At the same meeting "*No computer for ship speed and direction had been designed but Mr.Norway considered that he could get out a design in 2 week's time. The box would probably be large and the gyro angle would be indicated on a dial*" In the event the equipment was found to be too large to fit into a Swordfish. In the spirit of cooperation some of the sight's features developed by Shute were used in a sight produced by RAE and which was fitted for trial purposes in a Blackburn Botha aircraft.

6. Three men on a yacht

In November 1939 the Admiralty yacht HMS Grive had been made ready and put "*at the disposal of Sir Dennis Burney and his party*" and this was their base for the Toraplane trials from November 1939. A number of letters and memos from Burney at this time are addressed from aboard HMS Grive. According to Julian Smith, quoting a letter from Sydney Hansel, this was "*a huge commandeered yacht stocked with good food and fine wines.*" The yacht not only provided accommodation but had facilities for recovery of the torpedoes after the trial. Photographs of HMS Grive show that it did indeed provide accommodation with some luxury for the Burney team. The results of the Toraplane trials would have been discussed aboard this vessel and also, no doubt, the other projects that Burney had in mind.

If he thought about it at all during this period of great activity, Shute may have had a sense of déjà vu. Had he not written about such a thing – Sir David Fisher, Stephen Morris and Rawdon working aboard Sir David's yacht on an aviation project in the novel "Pilotage" which he had written then shelved more than 15 years earlier. Perhaps life had to some extent imitated art.

7. Shute's departure for the Navy.

By March 1940 it was clear that the Burney Toraplane development had come to an end: work on the RAE design would continue. Given these factors, and with the end of the phoney war in June 1940, bringing a threat of imminent invasion, it is not surprising that Shute decided that he must abandon theoretical work to go and fight. He joined the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve following the call for "elderly yachtsmen". He believed he could put his sailing experience to practical use. In June 1940 he went to HMS King Alfred for officer training and had only been there for a few days when he was sought out and interviewed by Charles Goodeve and recruited to DMWD. An experienced aeronautical engineer, a yachtsman, and with recent experience of working on secret projects, Shute must have seemed God's gift to Goodeve.

8. The background to "Landfall"

So here was Shute in the latter part of 1939 and early 1940 involved in a secret development project, regarded as highly important by the Navy. He was attending high level meetings chaired by an Admiral, with an eminent professor acting as advisor. He was observing and witnessing trials of the weapon at sea and was aware of rivalry between RAE (and probably the Air Force) and the Admiralty. The Burney team were under pressure to produce results.

Nearly all of Shute's novels draw on his own experiences and the characters in them by people he met. For example the experiences on his flight to Australia inspired "Round the Bend" and "A Town like Alice". With Landfall the connection between events in the novel and reality is even more immediate. In the novel Jerry Chambers is posted to the "Marine Experimental Unit" at Titchfield to pilot an aircraft on trials of a secret weapon. Meetings are held at Admiralty House, Portsmouth chaired by "Admiral Sir James Blackett" Professor Legge is the scientist, a character most likely modelled on his other mentor, Barnes Wallis. Trials at sea are observed from a trawler. However for obvious security reasons Shute could not mention the actual weapon – the Toraplane – so he based the fictional work on magnetic influences around a ship used to trigger a weapon. Shute may well have known of the use of coils fitted to a Wellington bomber for detecting submarines by their magnetic field, work on which Barnes Wallis had been involved.

One can imagine Shute, attending meetings and working closely with both Naval and Air Force people, observing events and characters and storing them away to be woven into his novel. Trawlers were used to ferry observers to the trials and Shute may well have seen and overheard the naval divers preparing to recover tor-

pedoes after dropping which he used in Landfall when divers descend to the Caranx.

For interest Table 1 is a comparative list of characters from Landfall and the people in the Toraplane project.

Section 2 – Sir Charles Dennistoun Burney ¹

We know that Shute worked for Burney on the R-100, but what is less well known is that they worked closely together a decade later on weapons development for the coming war.

Burney was born on December 28th 1888, the son of Admiral Sir Cecil Burney. Sir Cecil was second in command of the British Fleet at the Battle of Jutland in 1916. Dennis was educated at Marlborough School and at Ranelagh and, like his father, joined the Navy. In the First World War he commanded various ships, but his main interest was in finding ways to protect vessels from mines. He invented a device called the paravane, underwater hydrovanes designed to cut the cables of mines. A number of naval vessels were fitted with this device which proved to be successful in dealing with underwater mines without danger to the vessel. Later on a variation called an otter was developed for merchant vessels.

Burney received no financial reward from the Navy for his invention, but he was allowed to patent it and received royalties. It is recorded that royalties he received totalled £350,000, a not inconsiderable sum for the time, and thus made him a fairly wealthy man

[5]. His London house was 20 Carlton House Terrace, a very fashionable address, and he also had a country house at Baynards Park in Surrey.

As is well known he set up the Airship Guarantee Company to promote his Imperial Airship scheme after long discussions with the board of Vickers Ltd. So keen was he to promote the cause of airships that he became a Member of Parliament in 1922 for the Uxbridge constituency and he retained the seat until the General Election of 1929. He became an MP, not merely to represent the electors of Uxbridge, but so that he could exert political pressure in his cause. For that was his way; throughout his life he seems to have courted support for his schemes from influential people in high places. This applied to Airships and also to his gliding weapons work.

Burney recognised talent when he saw it and enlisted Barnes Wallis, then the most successful airship designer in Britain, to the R-100 team. Although initially he had his own calculator, J.E.Temple, it is more than

¹ Burney was always known in the Navy by the first name of Dennis. In correspondence he signed himself as C. Dennis Burney

likely that Burney himself recruited Shute as an aspiring young aeronautical engineer. Shute had respect and admiration for both men for in "Slide Rule" after saying that Wallis "*was the greatest engineer in Britain at that time and for twenty years afterwards*" he goes on to say this of Burney: –

"Sir Denis Burney, our Managing Director, was equally outstanding; he had the keenest engineering imagination of anyone that I have ever met, coupled with great commercial sense. He had the ability to stand back and take a birdseye view of an entire industry... .And here he would put forward some entirely novel scheme such as nobody had ever thought of before, grandiose perhaps, but based on the soundest engineering principles" (Slide Rule p90)

As Shute notes, temperamentally Wallis and Burney were poles apart. Burney was the man with grandiose schemes, cultivating influential people, impatient with progress and not averse to all night gambling sessions, whereas Wallis was cautious, methodical, immersed in detail and with a rather ascetic lifestyle. Wallis grew to dislike Burney intensely for what he perceived as meddling and interfering; as R-100 neared completion and his attention turned to aircraft design, he spent an increasing amount of time away from Howden. Thus it was that Shute assumed more responsibility and his promotion to Deputy Chief Engineer was no doubt endorsed by Burney. It was Burney and Shute who represented the manufacturers on the R-100's historic flight to Canada and back in 1930 (Wallis had wanted to go but this was vetoed by his superiors at Weybridge). Moreover when Burney published his book "The World, the Air and the Future" [6] in 1929 it was to Shute, rather than Wallis, that he had turned to write a chapter on "Heavier-than-Air Craft". This chapter by Shute is interesting for the views he puts forward on likely aircraft development in the future.

9. The Burney Amphibian.

If Sir Dennis Burney was a man of imaginative schemes and grand visions, then the Burney Amphibian was probably the most ambitious of them all and in the mould of his visionary Imperial Airship Scheme of the 1920's. Having set in train the development of the Toraplane, Burney went on to promote a scheme for what was an in effect an airborne aircraft carrier. By early 1940 drawings, specifications and performance figures had been produced for the Burney Amphibian a huge aircraft of 180 ft wingspan with 6 engines of 2000 HP each. This twin hulled monster, with accommodation for a crew of up to 22, would be capable of carrying "satellite fighter" aircraft within its wings, the idea being that these satellite aircraft could

be launched and also retrieved in flight [8]. This is the airborne aircraft carrier referred to by Julian Smith.

Burney's proposal, as set out in a memo the Air Ministry, was that a US aircraft company could take out a licence to manufacture them. Indeed "*prior to the war the Martin Company informed me through my agent in Philadelphia that they were prepared to build these boats in 2 years to my general specification*" The estimated cost per aircraft was one and a quarter million dollars. Burney contrasted this with the cost of a conventional aircraft carrier (about \$25 million) arguing that several Amphibians could be built for the same cost and would provide a greater speed and search area than could be achieved by a single ship.

The drawings and specifications of the Amphibian, dated in early 1940, are signed by Sydney Hansel but as Shute, Hansel and Burney were working in such close collaboration at that time, it can be assumed that Shute was closely involved with the Amphibian project, probably in a consultative capacity. The proposal was put to the Air Ministry by Burney and was turned down by them, the specification being regarded as "fantastic".

10. The Second World War and later.

Throughout the wartime period Burney continued to invent and to patent new weapons – a recoil-less gun, rocket propelled bombs, new types of mine and he was an occasional visitor to the DMWD offices in search of help and advice, being treated as an elder statesman and impressing young officers with his grand manner. As Pawle [9] recounts, after one meeting on the Hajile project, he observed to a DMWD officer "*Young man ... you'll never get anywhere without Cabinet support*".

Two comments on Burney can serve to illustrate the opinion that others had of him. This is from the Managing Director of Alvis: – "*I have known Burney for many years... I always admired his indomitable energy- I know his technical deficiencies but I am always prepared to have an open mind believing that some day and in some way he may possibly produce a rabbit from under his hat*".

The following quote is from Sir Henry Tizard, a very well respected scientist, and was written in reply to a request by the Air Ministry when asked to assess the potential of the Chordal Engine. "*Sir Dennis Burney and his friends invite a lack of sympathy in their schemes through never acting frankly, and revealing in their conversations with Ministers what has previously happened and what promises they have made and failed to fulfil. In spite of the past history of Sir Dennis Burney's various schemes I always try to keep an open mind in case he brings along anything useful, as he is active and energetic*".

Table 1 A comparison of characters and locations in Landfall and the Toraplane Project.
Fiction versus Real Life

	Landfall	Toraplane
Admiral	Sir James Blackett	Sir William James
Scientist	Professor Legge	Professor Thomson
Paymaster Captain	Captain Sutton	Captain Pertwee
RAF Officers	Wing Commander Dickens	Squadron Leader Coleman
Experimental Station	Marine Experimental Unit, Titchfield	Torpedo Development Unit RAF Gosport
Project	RQ Apparatus	Gliding torpedo
Trials Area	Nab Tower (off Isle of Wight)	off Isle of Wight
Aircraft	Wellington	Fairey Swordfish
Pilot	Flt/Lt Jerry Chambers	F/O Day and others



Assembly of the Toraplane



Trial No. 42 from a Fairey Swordfish Aircraft



Toraplane just after release



The Toraplane aiming sight

After the War Burney continued to be active, turning his attention to methods of freezing fish at sea. In all his name is associated with over 80 Patent applications showing a wide range of interests. He was apparently still active into his seventies and died in Bermuda in 1968 at the age of 79.

It is also easy to see why Shute would have admired Burney for his energy and determination, for his willingness to get things moving in the face of official obstacles and doubts and for his visionary imagination and enterprise. These were characteristics that the two had in common. Yet whether Burney's schemes showed "great commercial sense" or were based "*on the soundest engineering principles*" is open to question.

Acknowledgements

Mary Durkin, House of Commons Library, for providing a copy of the obituary of Sir Dennis Burney.

Kirsty Taylor, Deputy Librarian, Nuffield College Library Oxford, for making the files of correspondence between Sir Dennis Burney and Lord Cherwell available to me.

Andy Burgess – for his work in preparing the Toraplane trial photographs

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[1] Julian Smith "Nevil Shute, A biography", Paper Tiger Inc. 2002

[2] ADM 179/137

Combined naval and air staff requirements for gliding torpedoes; reference to Toraplane invented by Sir Dennis Burney; Doravane development and trials minutes of meetings 1939-1940 The National Archives

[3] British Patent GB551880 Improvements in or relating to observing or sighting devices, ARTHUR HENRY COOPER;; CHARLES DENNISTOUN BURNLEY;; HUBERT EDWARD GAUSS;; ROLF EDMUND SPENCER;; NEVIL SHUTE NORWAY 1943.

[5] Obituary The Times, Thursday, Nov 14, 1968; pg. 12; Issue 57408; col E Commander Sir Dennistoun Burney

[6] N.S.Norway "Heavier than Air Craft" Chapter 6 in C.D.Burney "The World, The Air and the Future" Alfred Knopf 1929

[7] AVIA 8/422 Scheme for new type of aero engine: proposals by Sir Dennis Burney 1936-1941 The National Archives

[8] The Cherwell Archive, Correspondence between Lord Cherwell (Professor Lindemann) and Sir Dennis Burney, File G447, Nuffield College, Oxford.

[9] Gerald Pawle "The Secret War" George Harrap 1956.

Nevil Shute Panel Discussion

Babette Hills
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Babette Hills will lead a panel discussion which will include the works of Nevil Shute, the life of Nevil Shute Norway, and activities of Nevil Shute readers around the world. Questions will be previewed by the panelists and may also include questions from the audience. The panelists are Andy Burgess, Laura Schneider, and Dan Telfair

"A Contemporary Interpretation of *On The Beach*"

by Robert Wester
Denver, Colorado

Robert will have his abstract available at the time of the Gathering.

THE ALPHA AND OMEGA OF NEVIL SHUTE

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INTRODUCTION

Nevil Shute is best known for the 22 novels published during his lifetime. This very successful literary career is bracketed by a series of unpublished short stories which were probably written before publication of his first novel, "Marazan" and an unfinished novel, "Incident at Ucla" which he was writing at the time of his death. An additional short story was written sometime later, presumably the middle 1930s. Typescripts of these works are in the National Library of Australia in Canberra, ACT. This study examines these unpublished works and compares them to Shute's published works and each other.

SHORT STORIES

Basic Plots:

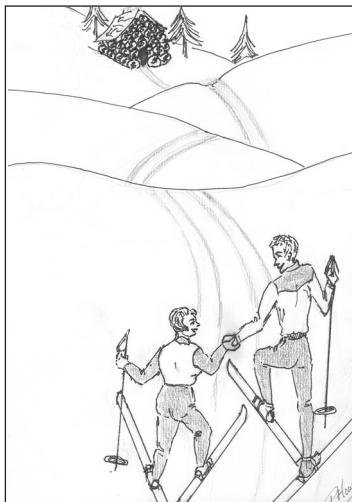
"Before the Mail" (1) is basically a Swiss skiing vacation romance between a rather common Englishman,

Donald Burton and the heiress to a Canadian lumber fortune, Marjorie McAlpine. It is told in three parts; the first is narrated by a friend of Donald; the second part is told by Marjorie's friend who is acting more or less as a chaperone. Basically the romance is going nicely until someone recognizes Marjorie and starts a great deal of gossip which brings it to an end when an unflattering cartoon is posted in the ski lodge. The third part is narrated by a Reverend Cyril Stedman and is a weak attempt to bring some closure to Donald's story. While others have minor roles, this is really a story about Donald, Marjorie and her friend.

"Tudor Windows" (2) is a story about a 16th century house which is haunted. The principal characters are the narrator and his friend Jonas, owner of the house. Women who live in the house all die at the age of 43. After the death of the latest tenant, the narrator and Jonas find a hidden room which has a lady's dressing table with personal items and a sketch of a woman who looks very much like the all the others who have died in the house.

"Knightly Vigil" (3) is a story about a pilot, Mr. Cratchett, on the night before he leaves on a trans-Atlantic flight from the UK to the USA. He really wants to write a letter to his girlfriend, Elsa, in Johannesburg but keeps getting interrupted by phone calls from reporters, an oil company representative, etc. In the end he writes Elsa a short note and leaves for the airfield.

"In the Uttermost Parts of the Sea" (4) is classic Nevil Shute at its best. It is set on a British aircraft carrier, the Victorious, on maneuvers in the Atlantic in 1932 where the crew and the captain are enthralled by an American movie actress who is also an aviator. The carrier receives word that the actress and her navigator are down in the ocean, fortunately in a seaplane. The Victorious launches 14 planes to look for the downed aircraft. While they are successful, strong winds arise and it becomes almost impossible to land the planes on the carrier. No one dies but a couple people are injured and several planes are lost. The captain of the Victorious is unceremoniously retired, marries the actress and takes up residence on the 9 ton yacht, Runagate.



"Piuro" (5) is the story of an earthquake in the Italian town of the same name. The principal character is Benevouli who first notices his neighbor's bees have left their hives. While this strange occurrence is being discussed by the town, a woodsman, Andaroso report trees shaking and a ruptured tank. Panic sets in; people start to leave. The last line states that the town is buried under 60 feet of earth and it is now covered with chestnuts.

Analysis:

While these stories are well written, none of them are literary award material. "Before the Mail" and "In the Uttermost Parts of the Sea" are the best stories; the latter isn't very believable. "Tudor Windows" and "Piuro" are not quite as good; "Knightly Vigil" is the poorest. "Piuro" is a very different from anything else Shute wrote which leads to the question is he really the author? This question is supported by the appearance of the typescript which is in a different font and has none of the penciled in corrections found in virtually all of Shute's typescripts. It is the only typescript lacking the author's name. Three of the stories have some relationship to aviation. In the case of "In the Uttermost Parts of the Sea" and "Knightly Vigil" it is obvious. Donald Burton, the protagonist in "Before the Mail" was a military pilot prior to the time of the story. "In the Uttermost Parts of the Sea" is the only story with reference to sailing.

All of these stories have a relatively small cast of characters with two or three main characters. As is common in short stories, the plots are relatively simple with the most complicated being "Before the Mail" which is told by three different narrators. Three are set in England, one is primarily set in Switzerland with references to England and Canada; one is set in Italy. That is, places that were known to Shute. It is interesting to note that part of the action in his early novel, "So Disdained" also takes place in Italy. The question of the place of colonials versus true Englishmen—a theme which shows up all through Shute's writing—appears in "Before the Mail".

INCIDENT AT EUCLA

Text Material:

"Incident at Eucla" (6) is the book Shute was working on when he died. As noted by Julian Smith, his fatal stroke occurred while he was typing the manuscript. Thus it is necessary to analyze it on the basis of the 30 pages of typescript and eight pages of hand written notes which are in the National Library of Australia. Much of the action takes place in the building that was the telegraph station at Eucla, a very small town on the Great Australian Bight very close to the border between Western Australia and South Australia.

Based on the notes, the story is an allegory of the Christmas story complete with virgin birth, wise men, gifts of the magi and a couple miracles thrown in for good measure. As is obvious from "On the beach", in his later years, Nevil Shute was very concerned about nuclear warfare and the consequences thereof. Much of this concern seems to be based on a talk by Charles Noel Martin, a French Physicist, in 1954. One purpose of writing "Incident at Eucla" was to further deal with these issues and, in my opinion, give some hope for a better future.

The notes are pencil written in a neat but small hand which is difficult to read, especially from a photo copy. Apparently Shute's original idea was to write a play but he changed his mind and started to write the story as a novel. The notes do lay out the rather large cast of characters with a very brief description of most of them. They also lay out the plot in general terms. While the notes and typescript give a good indication of where the novel was going, there isn't enough to actually get a complete picture.

Story Synopsis:

The story starts in Yorkshire, England; the wife of the metallurgist protagonist, William Spear, has just died after a long illness. Much of the opening chapter is devoted to the tidying up of her affairs which builds the character of William Spear; e. g. he gives her car to her sister. It also introduces a marvelous new metallic alloy, Spearite 46. This alloy is extremely hard and strong; the principal use discussed is an edge for knife blades. At the suggestion of his boss, Spear embarks on a trip to Australia with two purposes; first, to visit with the companies in Australia who deal with the company's products. Secondly, Spear wants to place a plaque in Ceduna, South Australia, where his son was died during World War II. Essentially the plan is to go by ship to Perth in Western Australia, buy a Holden station wagon, drive across Australia stopping at Ceduna to place the plaque and then makes a second stop to talk with Broken Hill Proprietary, (sic) Ltd. At this point he would sell the station wagon and fly home via the United States with a stop in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, to talk with Comsteel Inc.

The trip to Perth is passed over very quickly. In Perth, Spear meets with the company's representative and gets outfitted for the drive across Australia. This part of the story is based on Shute's own travel—according to Julian Smith (7)--in about 1955. In 1960 when the story was being written the Eyre Highway across Western and South Australia was a two lane unpaved road subject to flooding in the wet season. As you might expect,

our protagonist runs into flooding and is more or less stranded with many others at Eucla. About fifteen people are being housed in the old telegraph station, a rather large stone building which still exists but is now buried under the sand. They include a young woman and her hired stockman who are transporting a bull and a farmer with a truck loads of pigs. There also is a scientist by the name of Heimfield who appears to be one of the wise men. The role of many of the others is unclear. Other than William Spear, the two most important characters are Joseph a carpenter who is part aborigine and his wife Daydream Mary who is "great with child". The trucks with the bull and the pigs are brought in through large doors. This is the point at which the typescript ends.

The notes indicate even more additional characters; the most important ones are a British and an Australian scientist, the other two wise men. The gifts of the magi are: Gift of oil to Australia through brown coal, defense against nuclear radiation and a gift of water for Australia by magnetic distillation of sea water. While being pure fantasy, the notes do include some rough calculations for the last item.

The indicated miracles include feeding a large number of people with "five tins of bully beef and two of salmon" and "the 1935 Ford coupe carrying Joe and Mary . . . over bad pot holes to amazement of the police". Finally the notes state "I saw it. I was actually in the room and I saw it myself"; this must refer to a virgin birth!

I would speculate that had Shute lived to finish the book, the story would go something like the following: The action would continue at Eucla over a few days with the miracles taking place as indicated above. I'm not sure how the gifts of the magi would be introduced; I don't think all of them are revealed at Eucla. William Spear continues to Ceduna where the notes indicate one of the scientists commits suicide; again the exact sequence of events is unclear. Presumably, the plaque is dedicated with some sort of ceremony. Spear then goes on to talk with Broken Hill Proprietary Ltd., possibly at New Castle, NSW. Spear then continues his journey to Pittsburgh in the USA. I have a feeling something important happens at this meeting but I'm not sure just what it is. Finally, in true Shute fashion, Spear returns to Yorkshire and once more takes up his research.

Analysis:

As is typical of Shute's later books, this story has a very complicated plot with variety of characters, many of whom are based on real people. This is in obvious contrast to the early short stories discussed above. This book was obviously one Shute was writing because he

had a cause; it was not intended to be a book to make money. This book has a more Christian theme than any other of his books. Referring in his notes to the "Nativity at Eucla" he states "throughout the story the parallel is never drawn". As mentioned above, Shute again raises questions about the proper place of colonials in the scheme of things. In this case he seems to feel the Australians can sell and use the Spearite 46 alloy but they won't be permitted to actually manufacture it.

The writing style is very typical of Shute's later books with much attention to detail. For example, there is a long description of how William Spear deals with dividing up his wife's jewelry. Similarly, the preparation of the plaques to commemorate his son is carefully described. Great attention to detail is included in the description of the trip from Perth to Eucla; in his notes he lays out the distances along the journey. In his story Shute talks about some large doors in the Eucla telegraph station; a careful investigation indicates that these doors are purely fictional and never really existed.

The gifts of the magi are the hopeful part of the story. The nature of the gifts lead me to believe this book was intended to be in contrast to "On the Beach". That is, this book was, at least in some sense, going to show the positive side of modern science.

Having given it considerable thought, my biggest question is how Shute intended to extract his protagonist from the scene at Eucla. In other words, what did he intend to do with the rather large cast of characters present in the telegraph station?

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The "Lumber Love" cartoon was specially created for this paper by Penny Howard.

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READING SHUTE ALOUD

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Ten individuals will read selected passages from a variety of Nevil Shute's works. Through these readings various aspects of Shute's writings will be highlighted. The participating readers are:

Art Cornell
Steph Gallagher
Alison Jenner
Graham Fricke
David Weir
Shoshana Knapp
John Anderson
Susan Batross
Zia Telfair
Margo Ganster

THE "I" IN NEVIL SHUTE'S WRITING: FIRST PERSON AS NARRATION AND CHARACTERIZATION

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Why did a writer who maintained a reticent, dignified privacy choose, repeatedly, to feature the voice of a prominent "I"? Many of Nevil Shute's books include some sort of first-person narration – as a bridge between the reader and the chief characters, but often also as something more. With typically unpretentious effectiveness, Shute adapted to his own purposes a mode of narration that, in other hands, is frequently no more than a stock device of literary convenience. His narrators not only serve as our means of access to events, but epitomize (in ways they themselves may not grasp or articulate) the fundamentals of an attitude toward the essentials of life as it is lived in his fiction.

This paper examines several of Shute's narrators as

speakers who tell us not only about the story, but about themselves and their view of the world.

Dr. Morgan, the narrator of *An Old Captivity*, is a professional psychiatrist traveling by train to a consultation in Rome. He introduces the reader to Donald Ross, a pilot who works for Imperial Airways, a man with something on his mind. When the two of them find themselves delayed on the train overnight, "marooned right in the middle of a forest, miles from anywhere" (Chapter 1), Ross asks the doctor if "a chap" who had vivid dreams, some five years ago, should be concerned about his mental stability. Surely this is not the first time that Morgan has encountered questions about the problems of an interlocutor's "friend." He responds, sympathetically. First, he reassures Ross that vivid dreams, years ago, are no cause for professional concern; then, since he recognizes that the dreams are in fact of concern to the man involved, he invites Ross to talk about the experience. The narrator, after a mere six pages, disappears from the narrative, and does not return, not even to close the frame at the end of the novel.

What does Morgan contribute to *An Old Captivity*? To begin with, he is, like Ross, a trained and competent professional – and Ross's attitude to his work is a cardinal virtue of his character, as it is dramatized throughout the bulk of the narrative. The nature of Morgan's profession, moreover, qualifies him to narrate both the actions and implicit emotions of a man who is relatively inexperienced with introspection. Morgan is a trained observer, accustomed to extrapolating from his observations. Hence the narrative that follows is validated as likely to be true to what Ross said and to what he meant.

Roger Hargreaves, the narrator of *In the Wet*, is, like Morgan, a professional accustomed to contact with other human beings at times of crisis, and in matters concerning their souls. Hargreaves, however, becomes much more involved with the action of the story, and participates throughout its duration. A clergyman of sixty-three in a remote Queensland town, he leaves his own sickbed to travel, in the pouring rain, through flooded roads, to the sickbed (and, eventually, deathbed) of the alcoholic Stevie Figgins. During a long night of distorted consciousness, a night in which Hargreaves experiences the effects of malaria and Figgins the effects of peritonitis, opium, and habitual alcoholism, the time of the narrative shifts to the future, a time of political transition for the British monarchy – and to the story of an Australian pilot, David Anderson, who flies what is known as the "Queen's Flight."

Hargreaves eventually takes note of the fact that, on

the night of Stevie's death, a child is born who is to become the David Anderson of whom Stevie dreamed.

But what does the narrator have to do with the central narrative, which concerns Anderson's professional competence and heroism, his romance with a young woman on the Queen's staff, and speculative extrapolations regarding politics? How does Shute make use of him in the work as a whole? As a frame narrator, Hargreaves introduces and ends the novel, and is thus able to comment on the significance of the narrative and of his access to it. He begins by saying that he has written nothing but sermons; this piece, too, is a kind of sermon. He concludes – as he might in a sermon – by saying that "we make our own Heaven and our own Hell in our own daily lives, and the Kingdom of Heaven is here within us, now, for those who have gone before" (Chapter 10). The implication that Stevie Figgins in some sense has "returned" as David Anderson, moreover, suggests a form of surprisingly intimate connection between two people who are otherwise unrelated – and the Figgins/Anderson connection is analogous to the connection between Stevie Figgins and Roger Hargreaves. Hargreaves possesses Anderson's unpretentious courage, unblinking honesty, and unimpeachable decency – as we see in what he says about his own life, and in the way he says it. He is the right man to tell David Anderson's story.

Noel Strachan, the elderly solicitor who serves as the narrator of *The Legacy (A Town like Alice)*, is also a key character in the central narrative, much more so than Morgan or Hargreaves in their respective novels. He suggests (and negotiates) the terms of the will that initiates and defines his formal relationship to the protagonist, Jean Paget; he gives her the news of her legacy, and helps her to consider how to handle the change in her life; he makes available to her the funds she requests for the important actions she chooses to take. When Joe Harmon, whom Jean is seeking in Australia, arrives in London seeking her, Strachan – calmly, deliberately, and judiciously – controls their access to information and to each other. He ultimately admits what the reader has long since guessed: that he himself is in love with Jean, whom he regards, wistfully, as the girl he met "forty years too late" (Chapter 11).

Strachan has a special status among Shute's first-person narrators – not only because of the popularity of the novel in which he appears, but because he hovers on the border between being a bridge to the story (e.g., Morgan in *An Old Captivity*) and a character basic to the story line (e.g., Tom Cutter in *Round the Bend*). We know enough about Strachan to respect his judgment, to be curious about his opinion, to be moved

by his pain. We have time, in the course of his narration, to ponder his advice to do nothing in a hurry—by contrast with his own actions, upon the death of his wife, in making a clean break: “It’s no good going on living in the ashes of a dead happiness” (Chapter 1). How are these opposing positions relevant to him – and to Jean Paget – and to the fact that he makes both of these attitudes known to the reader?

Even more than with Hargreaves, Shute shows us why Strachan is the right man to tell this story. Hargreaves was vouchsafed a narrative through the aid of medicine, malaria, and mysterious forces – but Strachan, we see, is the right man to tell this story because he was the right man to hear it.

Shute introduces Strachan as a sympathetic, inquiring mind. It is, of course, part of his job to interrogate people and to be sure that he understands them – but his skills go beyond the requirements of his job. When he goes to see Dr. Ferris, for example, all he needs is a certification of the death of Donald Paget, Jean’s brother, in Malaya. But he learns much more. He learns what kind of officer Donald was, and how many illnesses Donald survived before eventually dying. Then he learns about the doctor’s own experiences with disease and with difficult working conditions. And then he elicits from the doctor a remarkable statement: “It was so beautiful. The Three Pagoda Pass must be one of the loveliest places in the world. You’ve got this broad valley with the river running down it, and the jungle forest, and the mountains... We used to sit by the river and watch the sun setting behind the mountains, sometimes, and say what a marvellous place it would be to come to for a holiday. However terrible a prison camp may be, it makes a difference if it’s beautiful” (Chapter 1). This revealing episode hints at the qualities in Strachan that will make Jean tell him what she does, as and when she does – from her love for a skating rink to her love for Joe Harmon.

D. H. Lawrence advised readers to trust the tale, never the teller. In the full version of this paper – which deals also with first-person narrators in additional Shute novels, and with the narration of *Slide Rule* – I will attempt to show why, in the universe of Nevil Shute, we can trust and respect the estimable tellers as well as the remarkable tales.

The Norway in Nevil Shute: from Cornwall to Cape Cod by way of the

Northern Seas of Leif Ericsson

David Weir

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“If yo’ know your history, you would know where yo’ comin’ from”

Buffalo Soldier: Bob Marley

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1

Nevil Shute was in my view arguably the second most important English person of the twentieth century (assuming that most people would place Winston Churchill in first place). But in his own inner estimation he was possibly not English at all. My argument in this paper is that Nevil Shute was always conscious of the “Norway” in his identity and that much of his writing is in one way or another, concerned with a search for his ethnic and cultural roots. This is a bold claim but I hope to make you think a little about this.

The family were of Cornish stock but the name came from an ancestor thought by the native Cornish people to have come from Norway, the survivor of a shipwreck on the wild Cornish coast. Too young to get a chance to fight in the War, he went up to Oxford to read engineering, graduating with a third class honours degree and a

prize for which he chose a set of drawing instruments and a copy of William Morris's *The Earthly Paradise*.

The choice was no casual one: one of the central core dimensions of Morris's endeavour was to create a mythic Nordic past that would position the very notion of Englishness, of his identity. *The Earthly Paradise* is a wonderful collection of poems but is probably not read much today, and Morris is remembered more for his contributions as designer and entrepreneur to the Arts and Crafts movement and as a passionate exponent of revolutionary Socialism. *The Earthly Paradise* was a great undertaking, and its stories, such as "East of the Sun and West of the Moon" and "Atalanta's Race" are truly epic tales. It was a best-seller in its time and is a classic of the English literature of Victorian England.

The first volume of *The Earthly Paradise* was published in 1868, the second and third volumes appearing in 1870 and the three volumes comprise 42,000 lines of rhymed verse. Twelve of the stories come from Greek sources and the other twelve include several from the Norse and Icelandic sagas.

The structure of the work is set out in a preliminary Argument that states: "Certain gentlemen and mariners of Norway, having considered all they had heard of the Earthly Paradise, set sail to find it, and after many troubles and the lapse of many years came old men to some western land, of which they had never before heard: there they died, when they had dwelt there certain years much honoured of the strange people". While dwelling in the Earthly Paradise they regale their hosts each month with a tale.

Morris himself introduces the theme in the Apology, claiming to be a

"Dreamer of dreams, born out of my due time,
Why should I strive to set the crooked straight?
Let it suffice me that my murmuring rhyme
Beats with light wing against the ivory gate,
Telling a tale not too importunate
To those who in the sleepy region stay,
Lulled by the singer of an empty day."

William Morris himself became more and more obsessed with the ancient origins of the sagas, making a long visit to Iceland, and it was to Norway that he sailed on his last long trip in a fruitless attempt to recuperate from the disease that was to kill him. The Norse-land was both the backdrop and the setting to much of Morris's inspiration. This was the book that the young Nevil Shute Norway asked Balliol College to give him for his prize. It was a revealing choice.

I believe that Shute's whole life can be read as a counterpoint of the two themes represented in his Oxford prizes, between the straightforward practicality of

the drawing instruments, the tools of the workaday trade of engineering, of which he became a supreme exponent and the sweep, vision, mysticism and other-worldliness of the "Earthly Paradise". Throughout Shute's relatively short life, he was both a journeyman and a spiritual traveller in search of something ethereal. Flying remained a consistent thread throughout his life and figures in almost all of his books. As with St Exupéry, flying gave Shute a glimpse of a new world that transcended the accepted boundaries of knowledge.

As a writer he stuck to what he knew about and never wrote about places he had not visited, but that gave him much scope for his experience was wide ranging, encompassing many parts of the world. He was a traveller, and as well as his journeys through physical space and time he was engaged in a lifelong inner journey of personal discovery.

2

There is no doubt that he admired and respected many aspects of American life and culture and could clearly have worked well within that environment.

In the 1950's America was relatively a more attractive destination than was Australia and must have appeared an attractive possibility for Shute and his family, once the decision to leave England had been made. It is interesting to speculate why he made on behalf of himself and his family the decision that he did, what was in his mind and what the decision implies about his perception of the new frontiers of opportunity opening up in the post-war world.

In fact, his interest in North America had led him into some unpredictable areas of writing that engaged another theme of constant concern, to do with Scandinavia and the Norse origins of North America, and of the Norse impact on Europe and the world. This theme was, I argue, fundamental to Shute's personal agenda.

Although Shute was one of the most successful novelists of his time and earned very large sums of money from his writings it is clear that he did not only write to sell books to earn a living. He was a man with a message, in fact with more than one message. It is often easier to decode Shute's overt messages to the outside world than it is to guess at his inner message, the call to himself, the response to his inner journey.

The abiding thread of his work can be found in the perception that technology and its mastery was the central integrating force in contemporary society. In the pursuit of these wisdoms he saw twentieth century people, men and women, not as the precursors of superheroes, enabled through mastery of new science to undertake projects that would have been unavailable to earlier

generations, but as inheritors of traditions, passers on of torches that had been lit by their ancestors. I believe that there was a torch that Shute felt he had to pass on, a quest that he left unfinished. There is a consciousness of interrupted continuity in Shute's writings for he understands that those who seek to solve the problems of the present must build on the past and on its techniques of control, but they must recover knowledge that has been lost but whose relevance is still strong and necessary.

In 1939 Shute published a book the impact of which was enormous. In "What Happened To The Corbets" (published in the USA as "Ordeal") he describes the likely impact of a bombing campaign against the South of England. The message is stark and highly compelling.

But if this book was clearly of as well as for its times, Shute's public was probably greatly surprised at the choice of subject for his next offering. So might we be, considering what was going on in the world and in Shute's own personal and public life. This book we may surmise was one that he had to write then or at least before he died. And the prospect of an early death was undoubtedly one that engaged Shute as it engaged the anxieties of the English nation as a whole.

The war was imminent, within months the new Prime Minister Winston Churchill was offering "Blood, Toil, Tears and Sweat". What was the agenda on which Nevil Shute Norway felt he had to urgently move forward? What was the message he had to give the world? The answer was a book that, for a reasonably-successful but by no means absolutely-established, author was innovative in theme and treatment. What made him do it? Why was it important for him to get this agenda out of his system at a time when the realities of the war meant that any book he wrote next could well have been his last? What did he need to tell the world at this precise moment in time?

In "An Old Captivity" Shute tells a story that uses time itself in an unusual way. A present-day pilot, Ross, undertakes a commission to fly a slightly eccentric professor of archaeology to discover the sites of ancient Norse settlements in Greenland and on the coast of New England. The professor is accompanied by his attractive daughter with whom initially Ross forms no rapport. In sleeping in the ruins of what turns out to have been a Viking longhouse, the pilot slips into coma and becomes invested with the spirits of a young man and woman from Scotland who had voyaged with the Viking ships, centuries before. On recovering, the hero's dreamtime experience leads him to recognize and rediscover the place in New England where the Norsemen had originally landed. His mission becomes a success. He gets the girl as well.

This was the book that Shute felt he had to write in

1939 when he knew that war was inevitable and personal survival for those living in a Britain at risk of invasion was becoming a lottery.

The risk for an author of Shute's standing and growing reputation as an accessible popular novelist, writing for the mass market would have been obvious then and untenable as a commercial proposition now. One can well imagine Shute's publishers and agents swallowing hard as they recommended the title to the sales force. But the book did well. It was translated into several languages and the titles chosen including "Prisonnier du passé", De droom van Ross (Ross' Dream) and Drømmen om Hekja-

"The dream of Hekja" are interesting. We have to consider that the theme, the text, of "An Old Captivity" held a central place in Shute's inner agenda.

I believe that Julian Smith's dismissive comments are rather wide of the mark when he says that "Shute chose to withdraw from the world of action to that of dream and imagination, of metempsychosis; balanced against the nuts and bolts reality that unhinges Ross are primitive lore, superstition, and the complexity of the human mind." As always, Shute knew precisely what he was doing. As a good Scot myself, I find it quite credible that the two apparently Norse runners were in fact young Scots.

Shute's next four books, all successful, were in their different ways more recognizably in tune with the war and its urgent agenda. But, as soon as the war was over he returned to the Norse theme basing his only play "Vinland the Good" on the "Viking" portions of "An Old Captivity". Once again there is a counterpoint of two time periods: once again Shute felt he had to deal with themes of timeless import, the role of the little man in history and the vital role of the teacher, the imparter of neglected truths in the transmission of the necessary myths on which society is based.

The counterpoint in these two books is also one of Europe and America and the necessity of each coming to accept the mythologies of the other. Shute was also of course trying to generalize the significance of his biographical and familial identities also. His very family name – "Norway" - was a statement of racial and tribal connotation rather than the evidence of a true genealogical history. He was trying to bridge some gaps in his family history that he knew could never be precisely recovered. But "Vinland the Good" was not a commercial success and Shute did not return to this genre.

For Shute was, in his own perception, representative of the marginal characters of his own dreamland, scion of the Cornish family whose mysterious origins had really been Norwegian, the boy brought up in Ireland who saw the Easter Rising at first hand, the engineer who was

never a “proper” scientist, the provincial from Howden, York, Hayling Island near Portsmouth and ultimately the scrubland of the Mornington peninsula beyond Melbourne, a marginal figure who was never a member of the ruling English establishment, in his own eyes perhaps a bit of a rebel and deep down a bit of a rogue.

He was of course in real life the “irascible” managing director who fell out with his best friends. He was the cool stress calculator, the airship and aircraft designer at the leading edge of technology, the entrepreneur who rustled up investment money from Yorkshire farmers (that alone deserved a medal for Yorkshiremen, tough and dour have been described as Scotsmen with the generosity squeezed out!) He was the inventor of useful and useless “dodges and wheezes”. He was a would-be farmer, not too concerned about the commercial aspects of that trade. He was all these on the outside and the world saw it and applauded, but the inner man was a romantic, sailing the cold Northern seas, running swiftly over barren Viking moors.

The great American sociologist, WI Thomas, once wrote gnomically “what a man believes to be real, that is real in its consequences.” The inner belief in Nevil Shute Norway that he needed to find out who he really was, where he really came from, in my view is a major clue to his writings. He was one of those travellers looking for a twentieth century version of *The Earthly Paradise* that had sent William Morris’s travellers to the world’s edge. Shute wanted to go “East of the Sun and West of the Moon.” And at the still quiet core of his being he was the weaver of tapestries of simple words and timeless stories who belonged by choice on the fringes, in the frontier lands where the future would be forged. The story-teller is a central and honoured figure in the Norse sagas.

The fearless traveller through time, the relentless voyager to far-distant shores was the lineal descendant of those Norse warriors whose long-boats forged new routes to England, and on to the Ultima Thule of New England, for Nevil Shute was a “Norway”: he was a Norseman, he was those two runners Haki and Hekja flitting through the Greenland forests, invading the soul of the sleeping pilot Ross, just as they invaded the waking dreams of Nevil Shute Norway.

Truly he fitted the matrix of William Morris, who introduced *The Earthly Paradise* when he wrote:

“Dreamer of dreams, born out of my due time,
Why should I strive to set the crooked straight?
Let it suffice me that my murmuring rhyme
Beats with light wing against the ivory gate,
Telling a tale not too importunate
To those who in the sleepy region stay,
Lulled by the singer of an empty day.”

Nevil Shute Norway may too have believed that in a sense he had been born out of his due time for his stories are timeless, his characters move through literal time like the shadows of the two runners and he saw that this crooked world needed a lot of putting straight, but hard work and attention to honest principles of craft would make a good start.

In *Vinland the Good*, his narrator, Callender, the School teacher whose Headmaster advises him to take up a job selling razors, having sat through a presentation of *Vinland the Good*, tells his students “People in history were not a different race from you and me. Your history books deal mostly with the great people, the Kings and Princes and the Ministers of State. They’re just the froth upon the surface; the Kings and Princes and Ministers—they don’t mean much. History is made by plain and simple people like ourselves, doing the best we can with each job as it comes along.”

Shute’s tales, modest affairs in his own estimation, were “not too importunate” but his powerful themes would he guessed continue to beat with light wing against the ivory gates that shielded the drowsing dwellers in the sleepy regions. They were wake-up calls about globalisation, the need for inter-cultural understanding and the impending end of the world, perhaps about the Second Coming through the re-incarnation of old Gods in the unlikely raiment of Mongolian or Aboriginal half-castes.

And in the dark days of 1939 he crafted a tale that reached beyond the stark dangers of the immediate present into an unknowable, but believable future. As Callender reminds the students: “Leif went out to get timber to build cowhouses, and found America. That’s how real people make history. You may make history yourselves one day, any one of you, but you may never know you’ve done it. Leif didn’t”

“Nevil Shute” was the nom de plume he chose for his persona as the writer of the popular fiction that in a way he rather disparaged, making light of his own outstanding accomplishments, but it was the “Norway” that he concealed from the public world that drove his ceaseless quest for his own version of *The Earthly Paradise*. He wrote for future generations quite explicitly as much as he wrote for his immediate publics.

As for us, the descendants of those readers whom Nevil Shute Norway wanted so importantly to engage in those desperate days when Britain stood alone, we can say with Haki, as his companion Haekia brings the gift of berries to Leif Ericsson:

“Lord, when we are old and grey and ill, and near to death, we shall still be thinking about the fine journey we have made.”

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

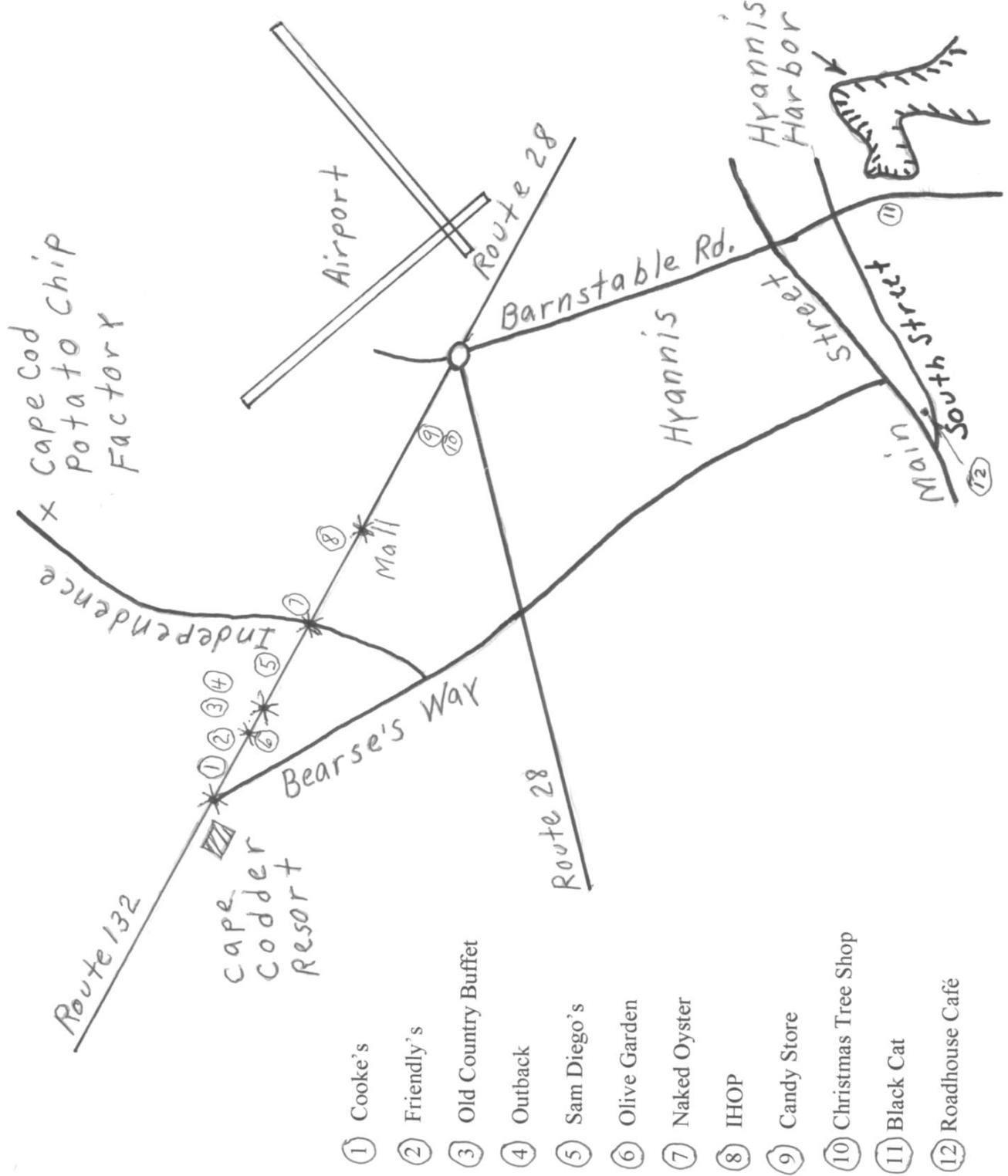
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Restaurants, Etc.



1. Cooke's — Inexpensive sea food
2. Friendly's — Inexpensive family restaurant
3. Old Country Buffet — Inexpensive, all you can eat
4. Outback — Steak house
5. Sam Diego's — Mexican
6. Olive Garden — Restaurant

7. Naked Oyster — Sea food
8. IHOP — International House of Pancakes
9. Candy Store — Good chocolate and jelly beans
10. Christmas Tree Shop — Extra good buys
11. Black Cat — Good Restaurant
12. Roadhouse Café — Good Restaurant



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A number of people must be acknowledged and thanked for their efforts in making this Gathering a success. Here are some of them:

Dan Telfair — Dan has given us continued excellent advice that we have appreciated every step of the way. Even though he has organized two of the previous Gatherings, he always let us make the decisions for this one. We cannot thank him enough.

Steph Gallagher — Steph, in her recent success with the Gathering in England, also gave us excellent advise and help. She was always there to let us know what she did for a similar problem. We received 193 e-mails from her and are thinking of publishing them or giving a humorous talk on them at the next Gathering.

Tom Cass — Tom, a good member of the Cape Cod Chapter, will be one of the bus guides, a movie operator and will fill in where else we need him.

Hemchand Sookdeo — Hemchand, our son-in-law, has provided the power point projector, the overhead projector and the slide projector. He will bring them to the Cape Codder Resort, set them up and make sure everything is working properly.

Cathie Sookdeo — Cathie, our daughter, will show movies, work on registration and the welcome reception.

Pat Skelly — Pat is a Cape Cod chapter member. He has helped with the mailings and now will work on the Sunday registrations and in the Exhibit room. He has been a big help to us and continues to be.

Ernie and Liz Buchner — Ernie and Liz are not Shutists but dear friends who have come to Cape Cod from Toronto to help us. They will do what ever is needed.

Tony and Pat Revell — Tony and Pat are friends that we met canaling in England. They have brought from England the artifact Harpic and cherries for the cherry cakes. Pat and Tony will help with what ever needs to be done.

Dave Crocker — Dave is a friend who provided the taped Shute music in the exhibit room.

Joe Accrocco — Joe is a Cape Cod Chapter member who has provided the note pads and paid for the design, production and printing of the Program Books.

Sally Rossetti and Margaret Ostro — Sally and Margaret are two Cape Cod Chapter members who have helped with many things along the way and will help with Sunday registration and work in the exhibit room.

Candace Ruiz — Candace is our daughter and a member of the Colorado Chapter. She will be the projectionist for the literary sessions and the partial reading of *Vinland the Good*.

Lillian Ruiz and Gail Shoemaker — Lillian is our granddaughter and Gail is the wife of Shutist Bill Shoemaker. They will play on their violins, between dinner and the partial reading of *Vinland the Good*, music that was referred to in Nevil Shute's novels.

John Cooper — John is a Shutist from San Antonio, Texas. He is the producer and director of the Partial Reading of *Vinland the Good*.

Neil Good — Neil, a Cape Cod resident, is a long time researcher of the Vikings discovering Cape Cod. He has gathered the information shown on the last four pages of this book.

The ten speakers.

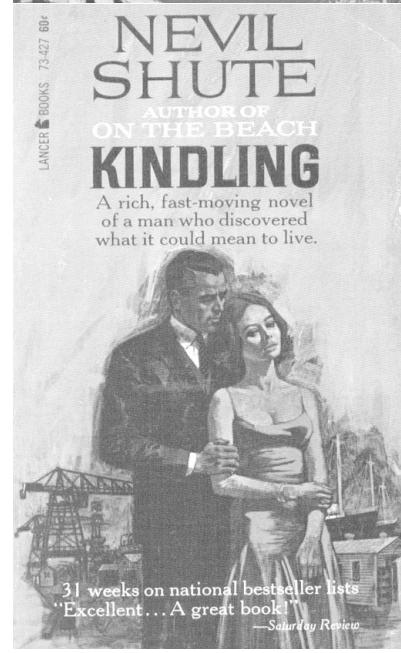
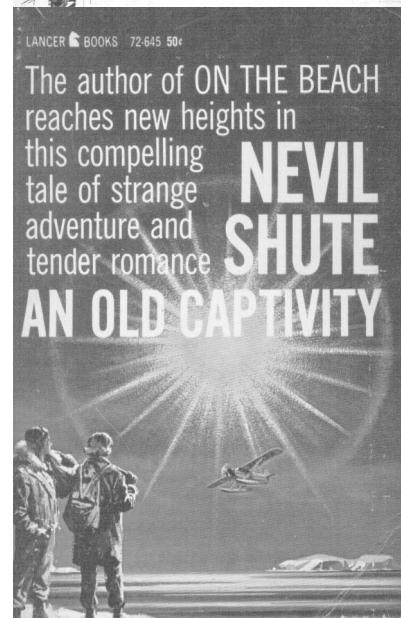
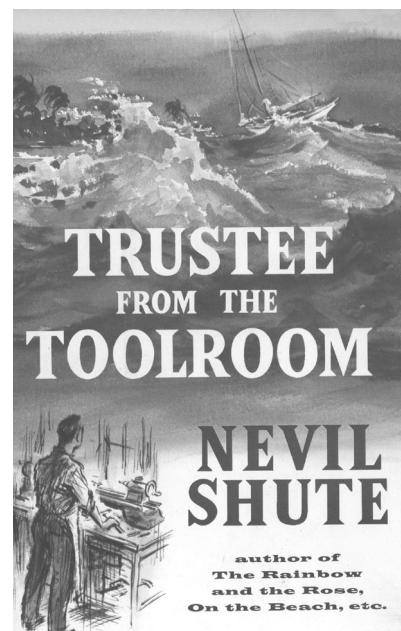
The three panelists.

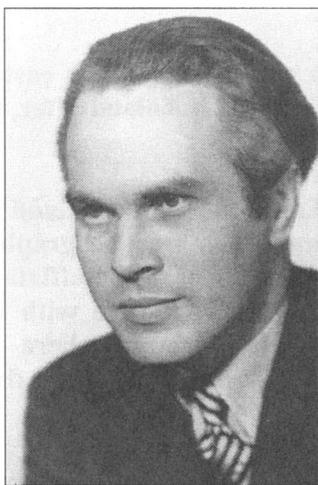
The cast of the partial reading of *Vinland the Good*.

The ten dramatic Shute readers.

The sixty-four participants.

We thank each and every one of you and any that we have missed. You have all contributed to making this Gathering a memorable, happy, educational event.





“...the Vineland settlements must have been on the southern shore of Cape Cod in Massachusetts.”

Áskell Löve
1916-1994

“... a world leader in the science of plant cytotaxonomy and phytogeography.”

‘In Memoriam’ and ‘Bibliography’
Acta Botanica Islandica, 12[1995]: 3-5, 6-34

LOCATING VINELAND

by Dr. Áskell Löve

Dept. of Botany, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Canada

(Originally published in Congres International de Botanique, 1954)

It is now almost 250 years since the Icelander Thormodus Torfaeus published his short paper on «Historia Vinlandiae antiquae», in which he tried to substantiate the view that the countries Helluland, Markland, and Vinland, discovered by the Icelanders and Icelandic-Greenlanders about 1000 A. D. and mentioned in some Icelandic Sagas, must have been somewhere in North America. This marked the beginning of the still unsolved «Vinland-problem» which has since been discussed from several angles by a constantly growing number of specialists.

Although there are some discrepancies in the reports of the Icelandic Sagas on the lands in the west, it is generally agreed that the narratives are based largely on fact. We can conclude therefore that the Icelanders really were in America about 500 years before Columbus. No archeological discoveries have been made, however, and until such are found somewhere on the continent, full certainty as to the location of the countries named cannot be reached. However, the information given in the Sagas about the countries in question is so detailed that localization can be fairly accurately estimated by means of astronomical, nautical, and ethnographical data, as well as geographical and botanical descriptions.

Besides this information in the written narratives, additional evidence might be provided if, as the Danish botanist Iversen pointed out fifteen years ago, the Icelanders brought plants to and from the new continent. The Greenland species hitherto studied with this in mind are, however, chorologically somewhat disputable, but it is very likely

that palynological studies in that country will uncover pollen grains of common eastern American plants which grew as weeds at the Icelandic settlements in Greenland after, but not before, the discovery of Vineland.

As there were no settlements on Helluland (or Flagstone Land) nor on Markland (or Forestland), the localization of these countries is of minor interest only. Most geographers seem to agree that while the former must have been on the southern part of Baffinland, the latter was probably situated on the east coast of Labrador, or, though with less likelihood, in northern Newfoundland. The site of Vineland, however, where the Icelanders are said to have made their short-time settlement, has been less precisely fixed as somewhere between Newfoundland and Florida.

In an attempt to narrow this range, the present writer has tried to identify three plants named in the Sagas as being characteristic of Vineland. «the tree called *mösurr*», «*a self sown hveiti*», and «*vinvidur* bearing the fruit *vinber*».

There seems to be no doubt about the identity of the tree. By its description and name it must be a birch, and most probably either *Betula papyrifera* or *B. popalifolia*, if not both. The self-sown hveiti, or wheat cannot have been *Elymus*, since that plant was already known by the Icelanders and would therefore have been called by name: and the ecological data exclude maize. The only species which could have been used as grain by the Icelanders in Vineland and which has the ecological preferences described is the Indian Rice, or *Zizania aquatica*.

The identity of the *vinvidur* and *vinber* has been much discussed by non-Icelanders, but as Icelanders know, the term used now as then in Icelandic, leaves no doubt that this plant is some species of grape. From the size of the grapes and other characteristics given the species might be either *Vitis rupestris* or *V. Labrusca*. As only the latter is common near the coast, the writer is inclined to regard it as the species of grape characteristic of the Vineland to which it gave its name.

By aid of the distribution areas of the three plants described in the Sagas it is possible to make a fairly exact localization of the Icelandic settlements. The *Betala* species involved are met with from Long Island northwards, so that the place cannot have been farther south. The *Zizania* species is known from southern Maine southwards, and, thus, sets its northern limits. Since both species are also known from the St Lawrence region in southern Quebec, this locale, too, must be considered a possible site. The *Vitis* species, however, occurs near the coast from southern Maine to southern New England, but is unknown from Quebec. Therefore, from the botanical evidence, it is concluded that the Icelandic settlement must have been situated somewhere on the coast from southern Maine to Long Island.

From other geographical, nautical, and astronomical points of view it has been pointed out by several authors since Rafn's «Antiquitates Americanae» in 1837, that the Vineland settlements must have been on the southern shore of Cape Cod in Massachusetts. This is in line with the botanical testimony. All that is needed is archeological confirmation. It is highly desirable therefore that learned specialists from Scandinavia investigate archeological remains in this region before housing projects and unwise amateur archeologists have destroyed the possible evidence. If the archeologist's discoveries corroborate our other conclusions the «Vineland problem» will be solved.

The Vinland Controversy

A Few Comments: 1911-2001

"It may in any case be regarded as certain that the Greenlanders discovered the American continent, even though we are without any means of determining how far south they may have penetrated... Incidents such as the bartering for skins with the Wineland Skraelings and the combat with unfortunate results, seem to refer to something that actually took place: they cannot be easily explained from the legends of the Fortunate Isles... The very mention of countries to the south-west; first the treeless and rocky Helluland (Labrador?), then the wooded Markland (Newfoundland?) farther south, and then the fertile Wineland south of that, may also point to local knowledge."

Fridtjof Nansen, 'In Northern Mists,' 1911



'[The Vinland settlement] may have been on the east coast of the Cape Cod peninsula, but more probably it was on the south shore, in Nantucket Sound.'

William Hovgaard, [Dir., School of Naval Design, MIT,] 'Voyages of the Norsemen to America,' 1914



*"...some place in the neighbourhood of Chatham harbor on the heel of the Barnstable peninsula seems indicated."
"It would be hard to find a place more accurately fitting the description given."*

Prof. G.M. Gathorne-Hardy, 'The Norse Discoverers of America,' 1921, reprint 1970, Oxford Uni. Press.



"The account of the meeting of the Skraelings and the Norsemen is most realistic, and presents an excellent picture of a primitive people. It is so true to life that it could not have been invented, but must go back to a reliable tradition... If we are to accept the account of the Saga, we must assume that the landfall took place somewhere on the coast of New England south of Passamaquoddy Bay." Dr. Halldor Hermannsson, 'The Problem of Wineland,' Islandica, 1937, Cornell Uni. Press.



"Where was Leif's Vinland? In the region of the forty-second parallel. The only land in this latitude that extends far into the ocean is the Barnstable peninsula. One must look inland, not along the completely unsheltered seacoast, nor west of Cape Cod, where there is generally much frost in winter. But one scarcely dares to be more definite. It is alluring to search for sheltered coastal districts within the interior of Cape Cod to attempt to rediscover what was told of Vinland: the shallow water, the salmon, the wine-berries, and the good cattle pasture. In order to accomplish such an unraveling, one must in any case undertake researches over a wide local area. Any responsible investigator who has not done this cannot go further than what has been said here about Vinland."

Prof. Anton W. Brögger, [Pres. International Congress of Archaeologists], 'Vinlandferdene,' 1937



"Finally we have the description of Vinland's littoral. The saga mentions that when or after the seafarers entered "the sound" and approached the shore where a river flowed out, they found that "it was very shallow there at low tide, so that their ship ran aground, and soon it was a long way from the ship to the sea." These extensive shallows are also mentioned in the description of the voyage of Thorwald... The only place on the Atlantic coast from Long Island northward where there are many islands and shallow waters is the region of Nantucket Sound, Vineyard Sound and Long Island Sound... The physiographic aspects of the Vinland waterfront are in exact agreement with those of Nantucket Sound... They evidently entered the sound with the coming of the tide and reached the mouth of a river, but here their vessel was left high and dry on an extensive shoal as the tide went out. When the tide returned they pulled it into the river for safety."

Hjalmer Holand, 'Norse Discoveries and Explorations in America,' 1940

"It remains uncertain at which particular point on the coast Leif halted. Massachusetts is the place most frequently named in the very extensive scientific discussion of this problem. None the less it is still a moot point; hence there are always those who would transplant Leif Ericson's Vinland to Virginia, Florida, New England or Newfoundland. Yet none of the objections to Massachusetts are very convincing." "We must content ourselves with noting that Massachusetts corresponds most closely to the indications of Vinland's position given in the sagas..."

Paul Herrmann, 'Conquest by Man,' 1954.



"Every one of the theories put forward has had to disregard one or more inconsistencies between the two sagas or even within the sagas themselves; but, generally speaking, the most acceptable interpretation of the elusive information in the sagas suggests that Vinland was somewhere in the New England region, and the majority of scholars have inclined to this view." "In the end it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that Vinland cannot have lain very far from New England."

Magnus Magnusson and Hermann Pálsson, 'The Vinland Sagas,' 1964



"The description of the landing and the lake seems convincing: this was the kind of thing that seamen would remember."

Helge Ingstad, [discoverer of L'Anse aux Meadows, Newfoundland] 'Land Under the Pole Star,' 1966



"The primary hope for locating Vinland has always been in the sailing directions in the sagas. Indeed, in the case of Vinland the sagas give so much in the way of detailed sailing directions that it almost seems impossible for any actual location to satisfy the dictates of all of them... It would seem that a very important rule to adopt would be to let the sagas speak entirely for themselves on the subject, with no interpretation. If a location for Vinland can be found that fits the words of the saga the way they are written, then the probability that this location actually represents Vinland seems high- indeed, higher than that of a location that requires explanation and interpretation of the words in the sagas, however valid or true the explanation might be"

James R. Enterline, 'Viking America,' 1972

"Vinland was placed in southern New England by early, well informed students. Later, others located it in northern Newfoundland, inferring either a climate much milder than at present or that vin did not signify grapes. Reviewing what the sagas said of plants, animals and people, I found additional evidence in support of Vinland as having been in southern New England, the climate as at present"

Carl O. Sauer, [Prof. of Geography, Uni. of Calif., Berkeley], 'Seventeenth Century North America,' 1980



"The topography of the Greenlanders' Saga agrees with the south of New England. Leif, nearing the place where he was to build his booths, sailed west around a cape into a stretch of shoals. Here the ship went aground, to be refloated at high tide. They took the ship's boat into the mouth of a river where they anchored to overwinter. It was here that Leif built his camp, Leifsbudir, that was to serve the later expeditions."

Carl O. Sauer, 'Northern Mists,' 1968



"All criteria converge on New England as the promised land of the Norsemen; but there is nothing in the sources that permits us to be more specific. We can only say: somewhere on the south New England coast Leif Ericsson and Thorfinn Karlsefni stepped ashore on the American continent and saw that it was good." "This whole topographic description (Greenlander Saga) points unmistakably to the shores of southern New England."

Einar Haugen, [Prof. Scand. Languages, Harvard Uni.] 'Voyages to Vinland,' 1941

"I cannot accept the proposition now being advanced that L'Anse aux Meadows on the northern tip of Newfoundland is the Vinland of the sagas." "There can be no doubt that New England fulfills the conditions described in the sagas better than does Newfoundland."

Einar Haugen, 'Was Vinland in Newfoundland?' 1981



"Wishful thinking in the past, misidentifications and the occasional hoax have given the New England theory a worse press than it probably deserves." "Everything indicates that the voyagers had reached New England."

Prof. Erik Wahlgren, [Prof. Scand. Languages, UCLA], 'The Vikings and America,' 1986



The descriptions of the landscape, vegetation and the human inhabitants of the regions in question are quite realistic. The fact that the Norsemen were present in America in this period was corroborated beyond doubt in 1969 when a team led by the Norwegian scholars Anne Stine and Helge Ingstad had finished excavating a Viking site at L'Anse aux Meadows in Newfoundland. Ingstad thought that he had found Wineland itself but most scholars now agree that Wineland could not have been so far north and that the site should be seen as a station on the way further south."

Thorsteinn Vilhálmsson, [Prof., History and Science, Uni. of Iceland]

'Time and Travel in Old Norse Society,' 1997

"We may take the essence of these reports as historical fact, just like any other historical fact, as a result of the excavations at L'Anse aux Meadows. The tone of the saga accounts is matter-of-fact, and few of the phenomena described can be dismissed as mere fantasy or superstition. On the contrary the accounts show that the Old Norse explorers of Vinland were keen observers of nature."

Thorsteinn Vilhálmsson, 'Navigation and Vinland,' in Approaches to Vinland, Sigurður Nordal Institute, 2001

