



Arthur Ransome Bibliography, Contributions to Books

Introduction

Arthur Ransome contributed to over thirty books by other authors. In addition to writing introductions, forwards, stories and essays, he also edited, translated, advised, proof read and – in the case of the schoolgirls Pamela Whitlock and Katharine Hull – acted as literary agent.

The most comprehensive information on contributions by Arthur Ransome to books can be found in *Arthur Ransome, A Bibliography*, Wayne G Hammond (2000) ISBN 1-58456-022-3.

The World's Story-tellers and the Mariner's Library

Ransome had a leading role in two book series: the eleven volume *The World's Story-tellers*, published by T C and E C Jack in 1908 and 1909, and *The Mariner's Library*, forty-eight titles re-published by Rupert Hart-Davis from 1948.

In 1907, Ransome was “worrying over the technique of narrative which I found at once so interesting and so difficult”. He therefore suggested *The World's Story-tellers* to E C Jack as “an excuse for as much reading as I could persuade a publisher to pay for”. Jack liked the idea and agreed that Ransome should edit the series, translate works where required, and provide an introductory essay for each volume. The essays were later combined into Ransome's *A History of Story-telling* (1909).

Ransome and Hart-Davis became friends in 1933, when the latter was a director at Jonathan Cape, publishers of Ransome's *Swallows and Amazons* novels. By 1946 Hart-Davis had established his own publishing house. A chance conversation between the two men led to highly-successful *Mariner's Library*. Ransome wrote seven introductions for the series, and also acted, according to Hart-Davis, as “godfather and nanny” to every volume in the series.

A Far-distant Oxus

Ransome played an equally important role in mentoring Katharine Hull and Pamela Whitlock's *A Far-distant Oxus* to publication. In his lengthy introduction to their novel, Ransome described how the two school-girls, then aged fifteen and sixteen, sent him their



unsolicited manuscript together with a request for advice on what to do with it. Ransome was initially suspicious, suspecting an adult hoax. But once his suspicions were allayed, he championed their work, telling Jonathan Cape that *A Far-distant Oxus* was that year's best children's book.

Contributions by Arthur Ransome

- *The Dream Garden* (1904) A children's annual. A story: *The Uncle and the Faeries*.
- *The Book of the Open Air* (1908) Ed: Edward Thomas. An essay: *Trees*.
- *Stories by Theophile Gautier* (1908) Editor; a chronology & introductory essay.
- *Stories by Ernst Theodor Wilhelm Hoffmann* (1908) Editor; a chronology & introductory essay.
- *Stories by Edgar Allan Poe* (1908) Editor; a chronology & introductory essay.
- *Stories by Nathaniel Hawthorne* (1908) Editor; a chronology & introductory essay.
- *Stories by Prosper Merimee* (1908) Editor; a chronology & introductory essay.
- *Stories by Chateaubriand* (1909) Editor; a chronology & introductory essay.
- *Stories by Honore de Balzac* (1909) Editor; a chronology & introductory essay.
- *Stories by the Essayists* (1909) Editor; a chronology & introductory essay.
- *Stories by Cervantes* (1909) Editor; a chronology & introductory essay.
- *The Book of Friendship* (1909) Anthology arranged by Arthur Ransome.
- *Stories by Gustave Flaubert* (1910) Editor; a chronology & introductory essay.
- *Stories by Daudet and Coppee* (1910) Editor; chronologies & an introductory essay; probably translator.
- *The Book of Love* (1910) Anthology arranged by Arthur Ransome.
- *A Night in the Luxembourg* (1910) Translator; preface and appendix.
- *The Odd Volume* (1912). Ed: John G Wilson. An essay: *On Reading Virgil*.
- *A Week* (1923). Iury Libedinsky. Translator; introduction.
- *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1926). Articles relating to the Russian Revolution.
- *The Kuomintang and the Future of the Chinese Revolution* (1928) T C Woo. Publisher's Note.

- *Down Channel* (1931) R T McMullen. Biographical foreword.
- *The Book of the Fly-rod* (1931) Ed: H Sheringham & J C Moore. An essay: *The Travelling Companion*.
- *The Cruise of the Teddy* (1933) Erling Tambs. Introduction.
- *The Junior Book of Authors* (1934 – USA) Ed: S J Kunitz & H Haycraft. Autobiographical sketch.
- *The Far-distant Oxus* (1937) Katharine Hull & Pamela Whitlock. Introduction, editing, proof-reading & advice.
- *Sailing Alone Around the World* (1948) Joshua Slocum. Introduction.
- *The Falcon on the Baltic* (1951) E F Knight. Introduction.
- *The Cruise of the Alerte* (1952) E F Knight. Introduction.
- *The Cruise of the Kate* (1953) Empson Edward Middleton. Introduction.
- *The Voyage Alone in the Yawl Rob Roy* (1954) John MacGregor. Introduction.
- *The Constant Fisherman* (1957) H E Moritt. Foreword.
- *F W Hirst by his Friends* (1958). Untitled essay.