

THE INSTITUTE FOR HISTORICAL STUDY

VOLUME 35, No. 2, FALL 2015

NEWSLETTER

Learning History Through the Soles of My Feet by Joanne Lafler

I must have seen the *Red Oak Victory* many times in the early 1990s, when I crossed the Benicia Bridge on my way from Oakland to UC Davis, but only as one of the scores of ships lying in limbo in Suisun Bay. I never knew her name or history. Over the years the once-great “ghost fleet” had been diminishing, as ships were taken away to be scrapped. Today only ten remain; by 2017 they too will be removed. But two ships escaped the fate of being scrapped—the Liberty ship *Jeremiah O’Brien*, now a museum at Pier 45 in San Francisco, and the *Red Oak Victory*, which found a home in 1998 in the former Kaiser Shipyards in Richmond.

In July of 2014 the California and the West study group met at Berth 6A in the port of Richmond for a tour of the *Red Oak Victory*. For sheer historical impact, nothing could have taken the place of *being there*—measuring the size of a victory ship against my small human self as we climbed aboard; learning its history through the soles of my feet as we walked the decks, above and below.

There was much to be learned through eyes and ears, as well as feet, from the volunteers who guided our tour and have worked to preserve and restore the ship. Victory ships, which were first launched in early 1944, were designed to be larger and faster than liberty ships, able to undertake more demanding and dangerous operations. As with liberty ships, they were equipped with guns used only for defense. They were the navy’s work-horses, sometimes carrying troops, but for the most part carrying cargo, especially ammunition, to warships. Transporting munitions was the job of the *Red Oak Victory* after her launching at the Kaiser Richmond Shipyards on November 9, 1944. On tours from the Philippines to warships in the Marshall Islands, her hold was packed with explosives. She was, in effect, a floating tinderbox. Hearing that story as we stood several decks above the now-empty hold, I thought of the *Red Oak Victory* as a small, fragile world.

Visiting the crew’s quarters was unexpectedly moving. Furnished with clothing and personal effects from the period of military service, the cabins looked comfortable and homey; they were undoubtedly a welcome resort from ever-present danger. I remembered the novel and movie *Mr. Roberts*, set on a cargo ship that sailed, as Roberts remarks, “from Tedium to Apathy and back again, with an occasional side-trip to Monotony.” That was not the story of the men of the *Red Oak Victory*.

Those crewmen were very lucky. Victory ships were never intended to have long lives. “Rosie the Riveter” played no part in building them. Their seams were welded, not riveted, and sometimes ships sank when the welding did not hold. The sturdy *Red Oak Victory* not only survived military action without a single casualty, but in the postwar period went on to serve in the Merchant Marine, including tours to Viet Nam. Now she is in the hands of dedicated caretakers from the Richmond Museum of History. They are always looking for original artifacts to complete their work of restoration and always willing to share their stories.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I hope that your summer was fun and fruitful.

The Institute's annual potluck dinner was an enormous success, thanks to the marvelous hospitality of Jody and Stuart Offer and to the culinary efforts of the assembled members. The potluck is a wonderful event which gives us good food and the opportunity to touch base with friends we seldom get to see, to catch up, and, best of all, to exchange ideas about history and life in general. While it is great to "talk among ourselves," I continue to ponder ways to increase our public outreach and impact.

We need to recruit new members. Not because we are dangerously dwindling—the loyalty of our current membership is enormously gratifying—but because new members bring new ideas and stimulate new directions. Those of us who belong to associations with related interests (book clubs, reading groups, etc.) should publicize the activities of the Institute and encourage others to sign up.

We need your suggestions. In just over a year we will commemorate two important historical events with profound impact for the world: America's entry into the First World War and the Russian revolutions of February and October 1917. *Chto delat'?* What Is to Be Done? The Institute had great success with the WWI film series. We might try something like that again. But surely, our membership can come up with even more stimulating ideas. Let us have them!

Minigrant season has come and gone. I was surprised that the number of applicants was so small. Are only a few of us doing active research? Or is the task of applying so great and the reward so small as to not make it worthwhile? Let us know.

Finally, even if you are not actively researching a topic, preparing a book, article, or embarking on another creative adventure, we have all accumulated knowledge and insights over the years which we can share. Recently, I became involved with the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI), teaching courses on aspects of Russian history. I have found this to be enormously satisfying. I know that there are other members who enjoy teaching and have much to teach. Consider proposing a course—or two. It is another way of increasing Institute's public profile, not to mention boosting your own ego. Recently I was asked if I knew someone who might offer a course on the Balkans. Any takers?

– *Richard Robbins*

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WORKS IN PROGRESS

A New Theory about the Location of the Sonoma Mission Cemetery

Members of the Institute spent a very interesting afternoon on June 21 at the home of Georgia Wright where they heard **Peter Meyerhof** explain his theory about the location of the Sonoma Mission Cemetery. He has found new evidence, from maps and correspondence, about the possible location of the Sonoma Mission Indian burial ground. Close to 900 Indians working at the mission died of accidents or diseases to which they had no resistance. (A smallpox epidemic in 1838 is believed to have killed thousands more in Northern California.) Various sources have misled historians about the location of the Indian burial ground. Archeological evidence does not support an area to the west of the church built in 1823 nor to the east of the newer mission church built in 1830. Paintings of the mission do not help because the artists were not familiar with the actual buildings.

Peter investigated a previously unknown map of Sonoma drawn in the early 1850s that clearly indicated a site labeled “Cemetery del Padre.” It was drawn by William Boggs, who was an historian and close friend of General Mariano Vallejo over a period of many years. Boggs’ adobe residence was drawn just southeast of this cemetery. Once Peter had accurately located the former site of this adobe and other landmarks on the map, the location of the cemetery could be determined. It was found to be on an undeveloped hillside a few hundred yards from the Sonoma Mission.

Several of the other California Missions had Indian cemeteries on distant hillsides for their large Indian populations—La Purisima, San Antonio de Padua, San Diego. The land around the Sonoma Mission is flat and swamp-like, with poor drainage, not conducive for a cemetery. Furthermore, a mountain stream ran next to the Church on the west, and a reservoir, which flooded in winter, on the east side. The

cemetery on Boggs’ map was 500 yards away from the Mission church, approximately five minutes walking, on the high ground nearest to the Mission. It is now private property. Archeological investigation is the logical next step, and ground-penetrating radar might be the first approach. Gaining permission for such study could be a challenge.

Peter’s talk was enlightening and provocative. We are grateful to him for his fine work and wish him luck.

– *Edith L. Piness*

N.B. Since his presentation, Peter has found “a letter contemporary with the map, written by the property owner, that stated there was indeed a “burying ground” on his property that was at the suspected location of the Cemetery del Padre.

Ghost Ship:

The Manila Galleon *San Felipe of 1576**

On July 19, members of the Institute sat enthralled in the home of Ellen Huppert listening to the fascinating research and adventures of **Edward Von der Porten**, a nautical archaeologist.

For several years he had been investigating porcelain shards from the wreck of the *San Agustin*, a Manila galleon that came ashore in Drake’s Bay in 1595. In cataloging the shards he came across a book illustrating many larger and more impressive ceramic pieces from another galleon that had been found at an “unpublished site” in Mexico by anonymous beachcombers. After locating and convincing this secretive group to reveal their site, Edward became the organizer of a much larger project, putting together a research team of Mexican and American experts in various fields. Team

* *Be sure to read to the end of the article!*

WORKS IN PROGRESS

members made their way to an unnamed and remote beach on the west coast of Baja California. Almost immediately Chinese porcelain pieces were recovered that could be used to accurately date the wreck to within a few years. The dating process relied upon the ever changing patterns found on the borders of ceramic bowls, “Kraak ware,” produced at a factory group in Jingdezhen, China. It was immediately apparent they had discovered the shipwreck of one of the earliest Manila galleons dating to the late 1570s. The galleon had evidently broken apart and a significant portion of the ship and its cargo had washed ashore. The wreck site was found to occupy an eight-mile stretch of coastline.

The Manila galleon trade between Acapulco and Manila occurred between 1573 and 1815. Silver originating in Mexico and Peru was shipped directly across the Pacific on a two-month voyage. The silver was sold to Chinese merchants in Manila who exchanged it for silk, spices, and porcelain—items that were of great value in the Mexican market. The six-month return voyage was extremely hazardous because it required taking advantage of the tail end of the early summer monsoon winds to drive the galleons northeast, where a westerly wind would take them to the coast of California. From here they could find their way south to Mexico. Most of the Chinese cargo would be auctioned in Acapulco and about 20 per cent would be sent to the treasury of King Philip II in Spain.

Over the past 16 years, including 14 years in the field, Edward has researched the shipwreck of this very early and previously lost Manila galleon on the Baja coast. A wide variety of porcelain products from highly decorated polychrome pieces to “seconds” has been recovered, suggesting that the Chinese merchants provided a “sampler cargo” for this very early voyage in an effort to discover what products might be popular in Mexico. In addition to 1,700 pieces of porcelain, several

large blocks of beeswax were found on the beach. The beeswax probably originated in Indonesia or the Philippines and was of value to the Mexicans, who could not produce their own at this time. A crude piece of Iberian ware, large fragments of stoneware jars, a few silver Mexican coins, a compass gimbal, a sounding lead, a bronze fragment from a Chinese firearm, the bronze top of an incense burner, and a decorative cloisonné piece were also recovered in the constantly shifting sands. Many of these artifacts had never been known in any Manila galleon cargo. Each has its own story to tell with respect to its construction, its origin, and especially the significance of its motif.

Several pieces of lead sheet outline a portion of the lower hull that evidently washed ashore. In this area a Chinese bronze mirror was found. Based on shipworm holes in one of the beeswax blocks, Edward believes the 450-ton galleon grounded off the coast of Baja, but did not break up for another year or two when a storm washed much of the wreck ashore.

Magnetometer tracings have as yet been unsuccessful, and both nonferrous metal detection equipment and ground-penetrating radar have been of limited value. However Edward’s immediate plans for the future include another trip to the shipwreck that will include a more thorough use of metal detection equipment in the area around the hull. He will soon publish a scholarly book as well as a popular work outlining the major discoveries and conclusions from his comprehensive investigations. Mexican officials have proposed a large gallery in a new museum in Ensenada to house and display the extensive collection of artifacts and interpret the important historical significance of the discovery.

Edward shared with us the most recent revelation from his research. Until one week ago it was generally believed that the galleon found upon the Baja coast was the 1576 shipwreck of

the *San Felipe*, but recently discovered documents have now convinced him that it almost certainly is the 1578 wreck of the *San Juanillo*.

Needless to say we all look forward to hearing updates from this continuing investigation by one of our new members—an ongoing adventure in which we can only participate vicariously.

– *Peter G. Meyerhof*

“Art Capital of the West”: Real and Imagined Art Museums and Galleries in Berkeley

In **Ann Harlow’s** presentation at the home of Lyn Reese on September 26, she invited us to hear a draft of her talk for the opening of a new exhibit at the Berkeley Historical Society on Oct. 11. The ironic title in quotation marks indicates the “imagined” prominence of Berkeley in the cultural life of the West. Ann focused on a “real” museum as she traced the evolution of what is now called the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive from its earliest predecessor on campus in 1881 to the upcoming opening of its new building on January 31, 2016.

Ann was able to trace certain paintings from the early years, discovering that a painting by the important American artist Albert Bierstadt remains in the museum collection and that another by Emanuel Leutze hangs in Doe Library. A good deal of her talk concerned ambitious plans that were never realized, such as a proposed “Fine Arts Square” in the University master plan of 1898. Encouraged by Phoebe Hearst and her son William Randolph Hearst, architects John Galen Howard, Bernard Maybeck, and Julia Morgan laid further plans—all for naught. Finally, in 1934, the renowned art patron Albert Bender was able to

get an existing building remodeled into a modest but real University Art Gallery.

The museum that we have known for 35 years owes its origin to the German artist Hans Hofmann, who had taught at Cal in the early 1930s, when he first came to America. In 1963, Hofmann donated 45 of his paintings and \$250,000 toward funding the museum. After many twists and turns, the Brutalist building opened in 1970 to acclaim from architectural critics.

When the university was unable to remedy the museum’s seismic deficiencies, it had to be closed. In keeping with past history, a plan that won praise from the architectural world foundered in the recession of 2009. Planners then decided to work with an extant building, the disused Art Deco printing plant. The new almost-open museum, incorporating the Pacific Film Archive, consists of the reconceived printing plant with a substantial addition.

The exhibition that Ann has curated at the Berkeley Historical Society lays out in much more detail this complicated history. The public has until next April 2 to view it.

– *Carol Sicherman*

California and the West Study Group

On May 16 a group of members and friends traveled to the historic town of Sonoma. **Peter Meyerhof** performed the role of guide and historian expertly. We met in the morning at the Maysonave House where Peter presented his talk on the community’s history. The House is operated by the Sonoma League for Historic Preservation and it serves as the Heritage Center for arts and culture.

Our next stop was the Depot Park Museum (formerly the Northwestern Pacific Depot), operated by the Sonoma Valley Historical

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Society, where the current director of the museum is Patricia Cullinan, who recently joined the Institute. One of several exhibits is a stage (or “theater”) curtain painted by my grandfather. When Tilden Daken, an artist and fresco painter, lost his home and studio in the 1906 earthquake, he moved to Sonoma County. In 1907, Sonoma’s Union Hotel commissioned him to paint the curtain. A scene of Sonoma Creek is featured in the center of the curtain, surrounded by period-style advertisements for local merchants. It hung in the ballroom for five decades until the hotel was demolished. A member of the Sonoma Valley Historical Society had the presence of mind to store the curtain in a carriage house, where it remained for another four decades. In 1997, the curtain was restored by a team of artists and hung in the Depot Park Museum. According to Patricia, a wing of the museum had to be enlarged to accommodate the expansive stage curtain.

Most of the remaining places we visited are collectively part of the Sonoma State Historic Park, a California State Park. Our stops included:

a) Sonoma Barracks, the adobe building facing the plaza, built by General Mariano Vallejo, actually by his Indian labor, around 1841, to house Mexican soldiers who had been transferred from the Presidio in San Francisco. Vallejo is credited with creating the plaza footprint.

b) Mission San Francisco Solano de Sonoma (commonly referred to as the Sonoma Mission), founded in 1823. It was the last mission built in Alta California, shortly after Mexico gained independence from Spain.

c) Blue Wing Adobe, originally the home of the Mission *mayordomo*, and later enlarged into a gold rush hotel, the Blue Wing Inn, where we peered in through the windows.

d) Home of General Vallejo, which was built for him in 1852 and still contains the original furnishings. He named it *Lachryma Montis*, roughly meaning “crying mountain.” The two-story wood frame house was prefabricated, designed and built on the east coast, then shipped around Cape Horn and assembled in Sonoma. Steps from the general’s home is the Swiss Chalet, built in 1852 by Vallejo to store his wine, fruit, and produce. Today it houses various Vallejo artifacts including a carriage. Also hanging in the Swiss Chalet is Tilden Daken’s “Sonoma Mission Roof Tile,” commissioned by Luisa Vallejo, one of the general’s daughters. A scene of the Sonoma Mission is painted on a roof tile salvaged from the old mission after the 1906 earthquake.

Lunch took place on a glorious patio of the Swiss Hotel (another adobe building dating from the Mexican pueblo period in the 1840s).

Peter is a most knowledgeable and enthusiastic guide. Thank you Peter!

– *Bonnie Portnoy*

Play Readers

In the summer newsletter I reported that we had begun reading *The Weavers*, a play written by Gerhardt Hauptmann in 1892, which portrayed an uprising by Silesian weavers in the 1840s. I described the play as an epic tale of misery, with workers receiving almost no compensation for their work and families close to starvation. Their depredation was the result of conditions in the early years of the industrial revolution—the introduction of mechanical looms as well as the import of fabrics from elsewhere. Our group was strongly moved by the script, which we finished later.

At its next meeting the group started reading *Trumpets and Drums* by Bertolt Brecht, who

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was born Germany in 1898. His most famous work, *The Threepenny Opera*, was written in 1928. He left Germany in 1933, when Hitler came to power, going first to Scandinavia and later to the United States. After the war Brecht returned to Germany and established his Berliner Ensemble company in East Berlin.

Trumpets and Drums was first produced by the Berliner Ensemble in 1955. The play is his adaptation of an earlier play by George Farquhar, *The Recruiting Officer*, first performed in 1707, which takes place during the War of the Spanish Succession, after the Battle of Blenheim. Brecht followed Farquhar's plot in *The Recruiting Officer*, which was concerned with the attempts of Captain Plume and Sergeant Kite to recruit a company of soldiers in the country town of Shrewsbury.

In *Trumpets and Drums*, however, Brecht moved the story ahead to the period of the American Revolution. Instead of being a hero at Blenheim, Captain Plume is the hero of Bunker Hill. (He won the battle by cutting open a dike so that the American "dirt farmers" fled to try to save their fields). Recruiting is going badly, as Plume is informed by Sergeant Kite. Love also has its complications. Plume's friend Mr. Worthy is in love with a flighty heiress, Melinda, who is also being pursued by Captain Brazen. In order to be near Captain Plume, Victoria, the daughter of a local justice, disguises herself in men's clothes and is commissioned as Lieutenant. Plume gives his friend Worthy, a shoe manufacturer, advice in matters of the heart, and in return Worthy offers him a handsome commission on boots, which Worthy needs soldiers to fill. Plume and Kite are unable to recruit men successfully by legal means; they try various tricks and finally resort to a morality campaign which "cleans up" Shrewsbury. The community's able-bodied poor are found guilty of assorted petty crimes. The Military Act allows them to be enlisted into Plume's company and sent off to fight in America.

At the end of the play (which we finished reading at a second session), complications of love and money are settled. Victoria's real identity is revealed, and Plume is happy to take her as his bride with a fortune of 1200 pounds a year—after her father refuses to agree to 2400 pounds a year. Brazen, who has been told that the Boston Tea Party left Melinda penniless, is happy to take over Plume's recruits and go off to war, leaving the field open to Worthy. Our discussion focused on the deep cynicism of the Brecht play. Monica Clyde pointed out that it had been written in the aftermath of the East Berlin Uprising, which had left Brecht, a committed Marxist, finally disillusioned with Communist rule in East Germany.

A special note: Anne Oldfield, the actress who starred in the earlier play, *The Recruiting Officer*, was the subject of a biography by our leader Joanne Lafler. Oldfield was the highest paid actress of her time—her career beginning in 1699 and lasting until her death in 1730.

– *Edith L. Piness with additions by J. Lafler*

Writers' Group

We had a lively discussion at our monthly meeting on September 13 at the home of Rose Marie Cleese in San Francisco's Richmond district. As we did in this meeting, our band of writers regularly offers invaluable critiques and fellowship. We encourage any member who is working on a manuscript to join us.

We reviewed a portion of Louis Trager's book (title is tentative). Lou plans to provide readers with a lens into the U.S. power structure in the mid-twentieth century. He focuses on major groups and organizations: business, government, and nonprofits. His book is a narrative for a trade publisher. For Lou, this book poses a special writing challenge. As a journalist, he

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didn't write more than 5,000 words; now he's looking at 50,000 or more words to manage.

Several members appreciated the excerpt that Lou presented. The manuscript had structure and the elements of "story"—a beginning, middle, and end. Another said the book would be important because of the behind-the-scenes look at political machinery. The most significant criticism came from members who felt readers would be "lost" in the material, that the writing needed more direction for readers. "Where is this book going?" some asked. Another wondered how Lou's book fits into other accounts of this period and these events. In summary, members felt that Lou needed to focus the work more, give the story direction, and show a commitment to revising the work.

Other news: Cathy Robbins is now the coordinator for this group. She will send out notices and prepare the reports. We will be communicating via e-mail about some new rules for the discussion moderator at our next meeting.

Since so many people cannot meet in October, we have scheduled our next meeting for Sunday, November 8, at the home of Rob and Cathy Robbins. Cathy will offer revised chapters from her book manuscript "A Torrid Splendor: Finding Calabria."

– *Cathy Robbins*

Welcome to Taryn Edwards, a librarian for the Mechanics' Institute of San Francisco. She is researching the life of Andrew Smith Hallidie, "one of the most extraordinary figures of 19th century San Francisco," and his role, including president, within that 160-year-old institution. Taryn writes that she "is fascinated by the 'mechanics' of writing in the digital age: how authors and historians manage their research, design their project's structure, and use technology to supplement their workflow." She

also writes a blog, *Tracing the Truth*, which explores the writing of biography and history.

Maria Sakovich joined a panel of presenters for the Family History/Reunion Day at the Angel Island Immigration Station in July, speaking about people from Russia who entered the U.S. through this West Coast port. Between 1910 and 1940, approximately 8,000 former Russian citizens were processed by immigration and public health officials and sometimes detained. This presentation led to a follow-up two-hour workshop with Immigration Station docents, who enjoyed reading from transcripts of interrogations. Just recently Maria also introduced this topic at a large gathering at the home of the Russian Consul General.

In August **Karen Offen** participated in the 22nd International Congress on Historical Sciences, held in Jinan, China. "My Chinese colleague and I organized a round-table on 'Women's History at the Cutting Edge'; we had seven respondents, including several of the leading figures in women's history from France, Russia, the UK, etc. We will be publishing those papers in the *Women's History Review*—eventually!"

Monika Trobits reports that she gave two illustrated book presentations in August and September for the San Francisco Public Library, at the Merced branch and at the Main: "The Politics on the Streets of Antebellum and Civil War San Francisco." She was also interviewed for a local TV program, *10 Percent*, hosted by David Perry, broadcast throughout Northern California on Comcast channel 104.

The Asociación Española de Historia Económica, (Spanish Economic History Association), at its annual convention at Alicante, Spain, on Sept 3, awarded **Richard Herr** the title of Socio de Honor (Member of Honor). "Valerie and I were invited to the conference for me to receive the award and I made a short talk in acceptance."

Margaretta Mitchell's latest exhibition "Iconographies" was on view September 3 - October 10. Margaretta created her images using the now historic Polaroid 20x24 studio camera. For archival purposes, each 20x24 image was immediately captured as a 4x5 transparency using a conventional camera. A limited number of prints made from these transparencies are available for purchase.

Also in the arts and history realm is the exhibit just opened at the Berkeley Historical Society, "'Art Capital of the West': Real and Imagined Art Museums and Galleries in Berkeley" curated by **Ann Harlow**. See the Work-in-Progress report of Ann's presentation for the opening (on page 5).

Two more interesting talks were given at the Merced Branch of the San Francisco Public Library by Institute members: **Jeanne McDonnell** in September on "The Briones Heritage: Interpreting California through a Notable Life, 1802-1889" and **Sue Bessmer** on "Slavery: Ancient Greece and Rome vs. the American South," in October.

Taryn Edwards will be making two presentations, both in October, on the 15th: Bancroft Library Roundtable - "Before the PPIE—The Mechanics' Institute and the Development of San Francisco's 'Fair Culture' (1857-1909)," and on the 23rd: Sonoma County Wine Library in Healdsburg - "Wines, Brandies, and Vinous Products at the Mechanics' Institute's Industrial Expositions, 1857 - 1899"; reception at 6:30, program at 7:00.

Judith Offer is happy to report that her historical play, *Compared to What?* (based on the founding of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters) was taken by a theater company in Easton, Maryland, for an early February production. This is her first full-length play, of any type, produced outside the San Francisco Bay Area.

The Price of Blood
by **Patricia Bracewell (Viking, 2015)**

Patricia Bracewell's exciting novel continues the saga of an overlooked queen of Anglo Saxon England during the years 1006 -1012. This is the second story in the author's trilogy about Emma, daughter of Richard I, Duke of Normandy. In 1002, Emma became the second wife of King Æthelred of England. The times were grim. Warlords defied the king and successive invasions of Viking armies, particularly the well armed Danish "shipmen," pillaged and plundered England's southern coasts.

Times were personally bleak for Emma, who walked a sword's edge between her aging husband and his oldest *aetheling* (heir to the throne), with whom she had fallen in love. As the king's second wife, her position was weak. Tradition called upon her to do nothing more than manage the king's household, ensure his comfort in bed, and school his resentful stepdaughters. An unhappy and angry Emma began to think of herself as a prisoner, wife of a hostile king, who was convinced that she was really only a pawn of her brother in Normandy. "Against my will I was made to give you a crown, yet that gift has not satisfied you," he railed.

Adding to Emma's woes is the appearance, again, of her arch enemy Elgiva, whom we met in the first Emma book. This time events turn against the beautiful Elgiva when her husband is murdered by the king, and her liaison with the powerful Danish King Cnut suffers severe setbacks.

In spite of the fact that there is no mention of Queen Emma nor the activities of royal women in the major contemporary record, Patricia has found enough clues to create a creditable story.

– *continued on the next page*

She tells us that even though much in the book is fictional, there are facts which can be elaborated upon. Under Patricia's pen, Emma becomes a clever queen who uses subterfuge to protect her life and the always threatened position of her young son, Edward. And she enlivens the story with vivid depictions of the dress, manners, and speech of the women and men surrounding the court.

In her Author's Note, Patricia mentions her sources and where fact and fiction intertwine. Quotes at the beginning of each chapter, from two main sources, William of Malmesbury's *The History of the English Kings* and *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, help ground the novel in the major events of this brutal age. The third novel in the Queen Emma of Normandy series is now in the works.

– *Lyn Reese*

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