

# ***SALUT AU MONDE!***

## Aquapelagic Instruction in the *Red Funnel Magazine*

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**ABSTRACT:** Between 1905 and 1909, the New Zealand-based Union Steam Ship Company published a monthly “glossy,” the *Red Funnel Magazine*. On this sea-going platform, Annie Eliza Trimble offered literary instruction in c. 20 essays. These essays offer a peep, only, at her enthusiasm for the US poet Walt Whitman. Subtle too, though, is these essays’ reach toward the land-sea-human assemblages that have been termed *aquapelagic*. My findings about these essays extend research on aquapelagity, Whitman fans, educational journalism, the Union Steam Ship Company, socialistic journalism, early New Zealand literature, and island stories.

**KEYWORDS:** Annie E. Trimble, Walt Whitman, *Red Funnel Magazine*, New Zealand, aquapelagity

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Some people, reading the title of this article, will recognise “*Salut au Monde!*” as the name of a poem by Walt Whitman. Experts in the revision practices of this US author may know, also, that an early version of this poem mentions “little and large sea-dots.” Annie Eliza Trimble (1863-1911) left no papers that reveal whether she preferred this description of islands in the 1860 edition of *Leaves of Grass* to the “deathbed” edition’s call-out in 1891 to “[a]ll islands to which birds wing their way.” Odds are strong, however, that she read both editions while she and her husband gathered the largest aggregation of books and pamphlets, south of the Equator, by and about the bard of democracy who had proclaimed: “Within me latitude widens, longitude lengthens.”<sup>1</sup> Annie’s fandom for Whitman is obscured when historians designate that aggregation “the W. H. Trimble Collection.” In contrast, William Heywood Trimble (1862-1927) put Annie’s fandom for Whitman on transnational show when he contributed, on her posthumous behalf, to a book of tributes for the radical US visionary. Most contributors wrote lengthy recollections of meeting Whitman, corresponding with him, or pondering his art. To represent Annie, though, William chose a three-word phrase that Whitman had used as the name of a poem: the hailing, *Salut au Monde!*

This introductory paragraph could suggest an article for Whitman scholars. I will be glad if they find my work useful. My topic though is a Whitman fan in New Zealand who has drawn less scholarly attention than the British and US fans who met Whitman in person.

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<sup>1</sup> I write of the 1860 edition of *Leaves of Grass*, rather than its 1856 predecessor, because 1860 is when Whitman first gave the poem in question the title by which it became best-known: ‘*Salut au Monde!*’

Annie and William were much younger than those fans. But also, they lived far from Whitman, and were not wealthy enough to travel. Adding on, I found no evidence that Annie was a Whitman fan until she met William in 1898 – thus, six years after the poet had died. I contend, even so, that she laboured for the poet of little and large sea-dots with the subtlety needed to escape the denunciations that had battered William in 1905 when he published an appreciative book on Whitman. I further contend, however, that good reason to begin inquiry into Annie’s literary instruction, by calling attention to her island-dwelling fandom for a long-time island-dweller who lyricised islands to which birds wing their way, is that William’s battering helps analysts gain a sense of the milieu in which his loving wife offered instruction on recent and contemporary authors. In sum, though New Zealand was world-famed for its progressive politics, conservatives were not quashed. Annie had to negotiate this truth when she wrote for a monthly “glossy” magazine, of c. 40 pages per issue, that New Zealand’s largest passenger-shipping line funded between 1905 and 1909. Today, the two quick peeps at Whitman that she allowed in the *Red Funnel Magazine* may seem too timorous to record fandom. Back then, though, even peeps at radical writers were daring in the Union Steam Ship Company’s headquarters: New Zealand’s South Island city, Dunedin.

Archival research reveals little about Annie. Yet simple perusal of the *Red Funnel* – meaning, the sort of intelligent but not specially trained perusal that intended readers could give – retrieves three essays that are startling in their boldness. Because none of these essays offers even a peep at Whitman, I discern calculations about when, and how much, to dare. This discernment urges questions such as: what else did Annie dare, to what ends, with what conceptualisation of hailing the world, and what conceptualisation of islands? I contend that because she conceptualised *each* of the world’s land-masses as a sea-dot, little or large, she urged book-lovers to learn from birds who wing their way to all islands rather than to British Isles, uniquely. I acknowledge that most of her 20-ish *Red Funnel* essays were about English authors: she wrote, for instance, about Queen Victoria’s letters.<sup>2</sup> I add, moreover, that much of this preponderance discussed authors as popular as thriller-specialist, A.E.W. Mason. Yet if, as I contend, this preponderance was an effect of calculation, Annie’s not-bold essays gave her the freedom to offer instruction that could unsettle *Red Funnel* readers’ worlds. She put this freedom to fullest use when she offered instruction in 1908 on writings by Russian revolutionary Maxim Gorki and by US journalist Jack London, and again in 1909, when she offered instruction on searing novels by France’s Emile Zola. This timing signals greater daring as the Union Steam Ship Company (USSC) lost faith in the magazine that the firm’s founder, James Mill, had funded as a way by which to spread cheery encouragement for leisure travel. It may seem unwise to dare more as a venue sags. Yet Annie could not keep the *Red Funnel* going. She could only try to direct its last few issues to her socialistic use.

So, a Whitman fan offered, on a corporate platform, a pedagogical avatar of *L’Internationale*? Yes, in that Annie’s literary instruction flouted linguistic and national borders, and yes again, in that her bold essays exhort. Still, a caveat is due: a lower-case “s” in “socialistic” leaves vague what this adjective denotes. This vagueness is true to Annie’s era, judging by disputes among British church leaders in which some pious men defined “socialism” as a brave enactment of what Jesus preached while others inveighed against socialism’s threat to Christianity, and others again deemed socialism an advance – or a

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<sup>2</sup> The number is inexact because I may have missed some of Annie’s pseudonymous work. I wonder, for instance, if s/he is the *Red Funnel* contributor, “Netta,” who criticised New Zealand writers’ taste for fictive Maori princesses (Hamblyn, 2016: 17).

decline – that an analyst of our day might tag “post-Christian” (Barclay, 1910: 23-5). Rather than get mired in a multi-directional adjective, therefore, I tuck the socialism in Annie’s bold essays into her fandom for Whitman without losing sight of her home-training: her father had been a Methodist minister. I have no information whether Annie had lost her evangelical moorings by the time she exhorted socialistically, had used those moorings to validate some grasp of socialism, had reconfigured her home-training in ways which refract poems that some fans prized as “the Bible of a New Religion,” or, or, or... the paper trail is so patchy that guesses, even, are frail (Robertson, 2008: 16). This, however, Annie’s bold essays brandish: she used the platform that the *Red Funnel* offered. Michael Hamblyn compares this “glossy” to an inflight magazine because the USSC’s periodical was sold only onboard the firm’s ships and at wharf offices (2016: 1). This comparison takes the USSC’s perspective. It reveals little, though, of the calculation that is indicated by Annie’s decision to dot bold instruction amidst genial accounts of female character-types, Egypt in *belles lettres* and in life, and literary hoaxes.

Putting this claim differently, I contend that William’s choice of the hail, “*Salut au Monde!*”, to record Annie’s Whitman fandom, helps historians notice how the 12 inch by 14 inch *Red Funnel* led her to aquapelagic tactics in three essays. Here, I remark that only Annie’s last bold essay, the one on Zola, comes anywhere near affirming Whitman’s candour about human sexuality. When William was battered, that candour was the vexation. Yet there was more to Whitman’s work. Inasmuch as many fans extolled him, first and foremost, as the poet of the common man, I argue that enthusiasm for this aspect of his *oeuvre* chimes with Annie’s socialistic instruction. An example of this chime draws from her essay on Gorki. His message, she told *Red Funnel* readers, was of in-born ability. “A man’s words carry weight,” she wrote,

when he can say: “See, I was a slave, yet I am free. With my own brain, I found out the way to loosen my fetters, and with my own hand I struck them off; and you, you too, can be free. But you must free yourself. The power to be free comes from within you. I cannot give you the power, but I can show you how to use the power you have. (1909c: 13)

This lesson affirms what William had said in his appreciation of Whitman: “all he asks of man is that he realise his own inherent nobleness” (Myerson, 2006: 49).

Annie was more circumspect: fandom for Whitman was not apparent in her *Red Funnel* essays. In hindsight, though, the gender-free and stateless by-line “A. E. Trimble” has affinities to Whitman’s pose in the poem that Carol Zapata-Whelan describes as his “calling card to the world” (1998: 603). The affinity is, he presents himself in ‘*Salut au Monde!*’ surveying the Earth from the sky, or as if he is spinning a table-top globe: looking down imaginatively, in effect, from on high. I suggest that the by-line “A. E. Trimble” was supposed to have a similar effect: to transcendentalise her instruction much as ‘*Salut au Monde!*’ transcendentalises Whitman. A glaring difference is, other poems presented him as a resident of an island, Manhattan. Annie had no incentive, however, to do the same since a woman and a New Zealander, of no previous journalistic experience, had little if any standing to offer literary instruction. It is possible that socialistic commitments played a part in this calculation. But even apart from those commitments, it was in Annie’s interest to downplay gender and state when the objective was expansion of her readers’ reading worlds. It also made sense to allow peeps, only, at her Whitman fandom.

These calculations backdrop the change in Annie's instruction in 1908. Germane too though is exhortation which implies her awareness, decades before Frances Steel made the case, of how "shipping poses questions about what constitutes national space" (200: 147). In service to those questions, Steel gathered evidence of interactions amongst USSC passengers of varied classes, races, ethnicities, and agendas around 1900. Her findings are relevant to Annie's bold instruction. Yet one part of Steel's project, above all, guides inquiry into *Red Funnel* essays, genial or bold: how "challenging" it can prove "to craft independent and distinctive 'island stories' from the perspective of the sea" (2011: 137). *Red Funnel* contributors who ignored this challenge wrote about spinets, sewerage, chrysanthemums, comic episodes in a parson's life, and so on. Annie's mission, though, was to stimulate, and possibly disturb, what Anyaa Anim-Addo calls voyagers' "imaginaries" (2013: 29). Girding her socialistic essays, I argue, was quiet – hence, carefully calculated – exploration of an "expanded definition of an archipelago" that "encompasses the spatial depths of its waters" (Hayward 2012: 5, 6).

A few paragraphs ahead, I expand on this definition of *aquapelagity*. But now, introductory steps intervene. This is one step of that kind: there is no way to figure out, from today's remove, if any of Annie's essays stimulated reflection, exchanges with other passengers, and/or discussions – which could turn into debates – when readers reached their destinations. In contrast, there is ample cause to contend that stimulation was her goal even if income from *Red Funnel* writings helped (as it must have) to fund the aggregation of Whitman books and pamphlets. The *Red Funnel* offered an extraordinary platform from which to stimulate, and possibly disturb, due to the USSC's domination of transport as far West of the Trimble home as Cape Town; as far East as Tonga; and as far North as Yokohama and Vancouver (see Figure 1). Too, when people had to travel further, the USSC's 500-pound ships connected with other firms' routes to the Middle East, South America, and Europe. Numerous New Zealanders felt pride in the firm that was nicknamed the "Southern Octopus." Yet Gavin McLean points out that "many people travelled second or third class" on USSC ships that could be "elderly" (nd: online). I wonder if Annie started to teach socialistically as she realised that because first-class passengers tended to bring reading material on board, most *Red Funnel* readers paid lower fares or were crewmembers who picked up discarded copies (Hamblyn, 2016: 20 fn18).<sup>3</sup> Certainly, though, she understood how world-hailing literary essays might help voyagers among little and large sea-dots to craft independent and distinctive stories *for* (not merely *about*) disparate islands to which birds might wing their way.

This frame for Annie's pedagogical foray extends Steel's work by taking a broad vantage on the concept, *island stories*. The nature of the extension is realisation that stories reflect instruction when an instructor shapes stories' content, informs story-telling methods, and/or guides story-seekers. Be it noted therefore that a belief that modern societies are strengthened by the cultivation of literary taste, drove the editorial statement in the debut issue of a periodical that the *Red Funnel* sought to out-last and, no less, to out-sell. The gist of this statement in the *New Zealand Illustrated Magazine* (1899-1905) was that the New Zealand archipelago was lavish in beauty but mingy in a "receptive public" for island stories (Talbot-Tubbs, 1899: 7). The problem was not low literacy or a dearth of readers: to the contrary, New Zealanders loved books and periodicals that went well beyond fluff. The problem was, instead, uncultivated taste. Annie was in her late teens when a US critic

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<sup>3</sup> On a USSC crewmember taking home reading material that he found – discarded, inferably, onboard – see a New Zealand fan's mail to Canadian author "Ralph Connor" in Box 48, Folder 4, of the Charles William Gordon Papers at the University of Manitoba.

rified on the Bible's *Luke 14:10* to urge taste-cultivators that their tone should be, "Friend, come up higher" (Butler, 2007: 171). She may have read this riff since it was available in her home in England. But she also may have found her way to this belief, unaided; it has a socialistic ring, after all. Either way, Annie approved this *ethos* since a few months after her Zola essay in the *Red Funnel*, she crafted an extremely friendly tone in an instructive essay for the premiere US cultivationist journal. Leaving discussion of that display of Whitman fandom, in the *Atlantic Monthly*, for later, I preview here that Annie's non-socialistic essays in the *Red Funnel* were friendly.

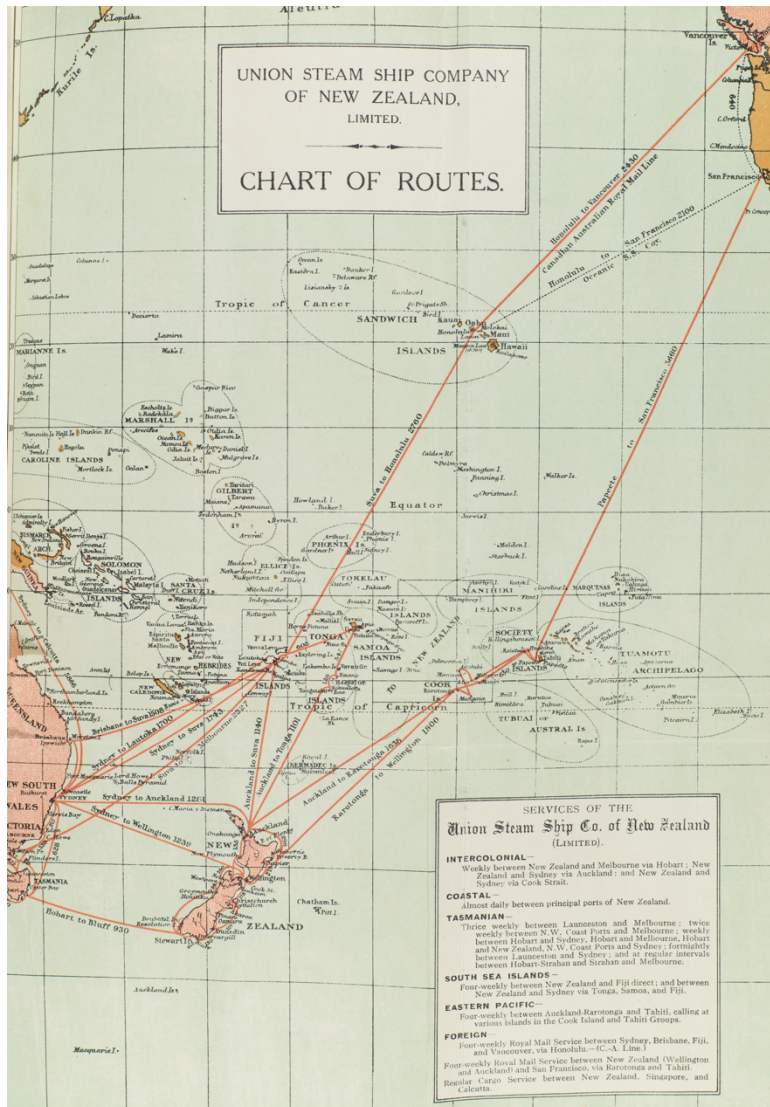


Figure 1 - Chart of Pacific routes, 1910, in Union Steam Ship Company of New Zealand Limited Records, AG-292-002/003, Hocken Archives, Hocken Collections, Uare Taoka o Hākena, University of Otago.

An admirer was not wrong to describe Annie as “one of New Zealand’s greatest writers” (McSutgren[?], 1911: np). To see where her *Red Funnel* essays led, time might be invested in trying to figure out whether this magazine reached story-tellers, or -seekers, in places to which the USSC carried cargo or passengers. An obvious example of such a story-teller is New Zealand’s Katherine Mansfield (1888-1923). But add Australia’s progressive political author Frank Dalby Davison (1893-1970), Canada’s libertarian Isabel Patterson (1886-1968), US nature-diarist Opal Whiteley (1897-1992), and/or South Africa’s utopian poet of a multiracial state, Samuel Edward Krune Loliwe Ngxekengxeke Mqhayi (1875-1945) – for instance, only – and there is cause to suspect that Annie would have sighed at the admirer’s nationalized compliment. Why? First, because “one of New Zealand’s greatest writers” does not say enough about how she tried to salute the world. But second, because that label spot-lights an archipelago whereas her bold essays had explored aquapelagity to encompass, to the extent print could, the depths of the waters between the little and large sea-dots to which the USSC travelled. Here again, Steel’s analysis is illuminating since she is right to relate that “transit time was not ‘dead’ time” when cultivators managed to put the hours, or days, on ship to use (2011: 147).

It is time to define *aquapelagity*. The more familiar word, *archipelagic*, evokes islands in a string like the Singapore-Indonesia arc. The word *archipelagic* can also describe a large sea-dot’s proximity to smaller ones: eg, Greenland vis-à-vis the Faroes. It is a distinct approach, therefore, to strive to honour – salute – a great many people’s worldviews by “re-emphasis[ing] the significance of waters between and waters encircling and connecting islands” as this significance nurtures a “social unit” in which “aquatic spaces ... are utilised” in ways that are “fundamentally interconnected with and essential to the social group’s habitation of land and their senses of identity and belonging” (Hayward 2012: 5-6). Adding specifics to this abstract definition, genial essays put the *Red Funnel* to *archipelagic* use: all contributors agreed that transit time was not dead time. In three bold essays, though, Annie turned this sea-borne venue to *aquapelagic* purpose.

To back up this claim, consider a recent clash: after Godfrey Baldacchino argued that “domesticity of, and affinity with, the surrounding marine” in a poem by St. Lucia’s Derek Walcott marks “a key attribute of ‘the archipelagic state’” (2012: 23), a Tasmanian poet, Pete Hay, replied that aquapelagic inquiry insists that surrounding seas keep wildness intrinsic to island attitudes (2013: 225). I see geopolitical wildness, of interest to socialists, in Steel’s idea that shipping poses questions about what constitutes national space. Another wildness though, that I discern in Annie’s bold essays, was reported in the scripture on which she had been raised. An Old Testament example is Jeremiah’s look to “waves” of Babylon that “roar like great waters” (51: 55). However, the New Testament reports several, too: eg Matthew’s report of Jesus calming a storm (8: 23-27). If Annie had routinely wakened a disturbing sense of storms or roaring waters, the USSC would have fired her. It was fine, in contrast, to offer friendly instruction in literature as “difficult,” for many book-lovers, as satires of social pretension by France’s Alphonse Daudet; reflections on handcraft by English potter-turned-novelist William de Morgan; and realist fictions of US racial inequity by George Washington Cable.

Wait, though: if friendly instruction was what the USSC sought, why allow even one bold essay? Answer: supply and demand. During the *Red Funnel*’s first years, “name” writers contributed. But by 1908, they chose other magazines. Annie seems to have calculated that the USSC management would risk some readers’ affront if a few bold essays, dotted among issues, made the *Red Funnel* a talking-point.

Scholars have taken no interest, to date, in essays on a platform that can be compared to a floating island. Annie's "Friend, come up higher" instruction may have been as uninteresting to intended readers. I doubt this, however, due to another contributor's grouse, after the USSC had shut down the *Red Funnel*, that the firm yielded to "querulous old ladies in Dunedin" (Hamblyn, 2016: 8). This grouse predicts the decades over which liberal New Zealanders mocked Dunedin as a bastion of rock-ribbed Presbyterianism. Let the record show, too, that the grouser wrote an admiring eulogy for Annie. These points adduced, though, article content may have meant less to USSC management than struggles with the *Red Funnel's* advertising revenue; the departure of the fast-talking American who had devised that revenue-stream; or a decision that his strong-arm method was unseemly for the firm run by the first New Zealander to be knighted: in 1909, James Mill was given this imperial-nationalist honour. In 'Full Steam Ahead!' (2016), Michael Hamblyn discusses fast-talking A. A. Brown. Inasmuch as his editing leaned as far Left as essays by US sociologist W. E. B. Du Bois and US labour organiser Samuel Gompers, Brown's support is a likely factor in the *Red Funnel's* welcome for Annie's socialism. That said, however, the year of her first bold instruction, 1908, may refract New Zealand's Dominion Days; respond to Gorki's published thoughts on Christianity and socialism; or fold in the Trimble's friendship with world-travelling Jack London. Thereafter, the date on Annie's boldest essay, the one about Zola, likely bespeaks Brown's departure and, thus, in addition to supply-problems, no one at the *Red Funnel's* helm.

Qualifiers such as "may" and "likely" signal conjecture. Evidence being ample, though, of Annie's Whitman fandom, I tie her bold essays to aquapelagic instruction which affirms his lyric sense of a "drown'd secret hissing" of the sea: "the low and delicious word death/And again, death, death, death, hissing melodious" ('Out', 1891). Recalling, thereafter, Annie's Methodist upbringing, I argue that she tried to stimulate not just literary cultivation but also awareness of watery depths as readers leafed through a luxury expense: the *Red Funnel* cost six pence per issue.

Where to dig in? With what scholars know about Annie, and what my research adds. After that, additional information about the *Red Funnel* leads to analysis of aquapelagic essays which urged readers to moral action that would shape island stories. Epeli Hau'ofa evoked wildness in his counsel that islands act "as a persisting point of origin for the migrant and the voyage" (Hay, 2013: 219). Taking Annie's point of view, though, she would have expected *Red Funnel* readers to be steeped in poetry that voiced concern for "[t]hey that go down to the sea in ships" (*Psalms* 107:23). Poetry was not the sole consideration, moreover, considering how often this passage must have been quoted at funerals and memorial services.

So, Trimble scholarship. Joel Myerson established his priorities in the title of his article, "Walt Whitman and the Trimble's" (2006). He was as open, though, about his respect for Annie's years of labour on the first concordance of *Leaves of Grass*. William initiated this fan project. But he lost interest in the task that was so herculean, dull, expensive, and unlikely to repay outlay, that Annie may sometimes have wanted to quit, too. It was her fandom nevertheless that led to completion, and her *Red Funnel* earnings that helped to pay for paper, ink, light, groceries, and so on. The only other scholar to mention Annie alludes to articles she published in a Dunedin newspaper in 1910. Donald Kerr's topic though, in his book *Hocken: Prince of Collectors* (2015) being Thomas Morland Hocken, he mentions Annie in passing only (2015: 275). To these projects, I add a cultivationist note: before Annie Nelson's marriage to William in 1899, aged 36, she had taught in a school

that she ran with her sisters. Thus, she had not only been an instructor; she had also managed a career.

Moving from those thoughts toward aquapelagic instruction that cultivates island stories, this information looms large. Around 1888 Annie emigrated, likely with her family, from England to New Zealand's North Island. Her father's vocation ensures daily prayer before the voyage, during the voyage, and in the new home. As tellingly though, J. E. Traue points out that 19th Century English travellers were advised to bring books to New Zealand (Wevers [referencing Traue], 2017: 4). This advice suggests hours of shipboard reading, reflection, and discussions of reading with fellow passengers. What sort of reading? Annie's *Red Funnel* essay on George Meredith – whose talent she judged “godlike” – suggests a taste for novels that blend a progressive social vision with sophisticated art (1909a: 15). Meredith had roused a stir, for instance, with his proto-feminist *Diana of the Crossways* (1885).

If the descriptor “godlike” seems odd from a minister's daughter, it may hint that Annie had lost her religious faith. A Canadian novelist of our day, Joan Thomas, depicted loss of this kind by having a narrator ponder how travel from a large sea-dot to a little one fretted her “low Church” upbringing. In a pivotal scene, this character gazes out on “heaving grey waves with nothing of me in them, the blunt iron prow pushing through water intent on its own secular purpose” (2008: 279). Annie may not have gazed in this way: some socialists of her era believed that they worked for Christ. Still, by raising the possibility, I prod thought about an instructor who categorised a novelist as “godlike.”

Is this all that can be said about Annie as a voyager? No, because a South Islander, with kin on the North Island, would often have wanted to coast-hop up to visit them, and may have done so.<sup>4</sup> Failing that want, or capacity, many Dunedin residents had friends who coast-hopped around New Zealand with the USSC or another firm, voyaged across the Tasman Sea, or took passage to the Friendly Islands (today's Oceania). Anyaa Anim-Addo's demonstration of ways in which voyagers' senses of potential could be reorganised c. 1900 by “everyday materialized movements between islands” (2013: 29) can raise awareness that materialised movement of this kind may have given Annie a wake-up call if the USSC ever recompensed her with a fare, rather than cash in hand. My conjecture in this register is that even if her fare was first-class, she would have seen how the USSC accommodated less affluent passengers. This conjecture can be expanded to include passage with another firm or recalling her first voyage on great waters since either could have stirred a socialist to ponder the engine-thrum that second- and third-class USSC voyagers felt as they read her instruction, reflected on it, or discussed her essays with others. As stirring, however, may have been a socialist's imagination how these people gazed on deep seas, listened to gulls squawk, or reacted to the seats they were allotted far from the wood-panelled (and windowless) first-class lounge.

This speculation about potential readers' *sensoria* enhances study of articles in the *Red Funnel*. When students of early New Zealand literature mention this magazine, they usually list contributors whose names are known now. It is as significant, though, that several articles told island stories in the educational (not belletristic) sense that readers

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<sup>4</sup> NB the only indication that I have found of land-sales of the *Red Funnel* is a North Island bookseller's claim that he had issues in stock. Chas. W. Muir's advertisement in the *Poverty Bay Herald* (17 February 1908), targeted readers in Gisborne. Gisborne is where Annie Nelson had run a school with her sisters.



could learn about Fiji in 1810, present-day Guiana's aboriginal people, Ceylonese agriculture, and Samoan industries. The *Red Funnel* also published photos of Japan, fairy tales with Maori characters, and a serialised Australian novella. For a Whitman fan, these places were sea-dots. Sensorially though – meaning, with a sense of great waters – any voyager could feel, on a trip from the island of Bombay which included a coast-hop from Perth to Hobart to Sydney, and ended at Bora Bora, that this journey was one of “join'd unended links, each hook'd to the next/Each answering all, each sharing the earth with all” (*Salut*, 1891). It may sound melodramatic to charge that Annie tried to insist on realisation of the surrounding marine and thus of watery depths, below. She would have known, though, that many *Red Funnel* readers had emigrated across great waters to their current homes, that others who read her essays were far from their hearthsides, and that even the readers who sat by their hearthsides were aware of compatriots, at least, and kin or friends in many instances, who had drowned even in shallow seas.

Annie did not evince this knowledge though, in early essays, or in late ones that took a genial tone. Instead, her early *Red Funnel* essays were of a piece with contributions as upbeat as those of a Premier, a Chief Justice, a Major-General, feted creative authors, and a health authority. As this supply lessened though, and contributors from outside New Zealand dwindled, a “newchum”<sup>5</sup> could seize the opportunity. Financially, the *Red Funnel* was a rare mis-step while the USSC enjoyed a surge in custom that a journalist would reckon in terms of fleet tonnage that jumped from 77,738 in 1900 to 232,147 – over 75 vessels – by 1913 (Gillespie, 1935: np). Yet to be noticed, however, is a difference between the *Red Funnel* and the *Illustrated New Zealand Magazine* that Annie, and fast-talking A. A. Brown, weighed, surely. First, similarities: both magazines published original creative works, both were illustrated when illustrated magazines were rare in the Antipodes, and both had short lives. A critical difference, nonetheless, is that the *Red Funnel* abjured the *New Zealand Illustrated Magazine's* faith that North and South Island residents would pay to read independent or distinctive island stories. Evidence for this difference is the fact that the *Red Funnel* was far less literary *and* tried to develop a larger readership: potentially, every English-language literate on the spinning globe.

As a newchum, Annie published amidst articles like those listed earlier – on spinets, for instance, or chrysanthemums – as well as an essay on time, by a math professor, and stories of manly adventure. One of her early efforts was a short story signed “L'Inconnue” (1907). Another pseudonymous contribution, attributed to a “Dale Rivers” (1908), was a travel narrative which described a day-trip to one of New Zealand's coastal towns, Opotiki. This narrative indicated tacitly that in New Zealand, women safely travel alone but, then too, are assured enough to do so.<sup>6</sup> A two-word phrase in this article, “my frocks,” is the only gendered self-reference in all of Annie's *Red Funnel* writing (ibid: 6). Yet, of course, the self-reference was obscured by the pseudonym. On full show, in contrast, was literary instruction. Some of Annie's instruction may have been thought gender-alert: eg cultivation to relish fiction by “lady novelists.” However, these essays taught genially, rather than exhorting: they were not bold.

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<sup>5</sup> A colloquial term used in New Zealand and Australia in the 19th and early-mid 20th centuries to refer to a recently arrived migrant.

<sup>6</sup> This indication may have been intended to “umbrella” other Antipodean women, since the Dale River runs through Western Australia, east of the Midgemooroo National Park. A larger consideration there could be that A. A. Brown was trying to mask the magazine's loss of Australian contributors.

It was quite a change, therefore, when Trimble risked outcries with an essay on Gorki. In August 1908, she wrote that he urged that people were fettered, yet need not be. Her tone was friendlier than it would be in the essays on Jack London and Emile Zola. But a genial tone notwithstanding, her instruction was hortatory. The good news of self-initiated freedom was, she advised, “Gorki’s message to his countrymen” (1908a: 13). However, it was “not to them alone, but” also “to the slaves of superstition, of ignorance, and of tyranny over the whole earth” (ibid). Nor did Annie stop there. She continued: equally, Gorki’s “message is to the slaves of the Chicago butchers, to the slaves of political Bosses in New York, to Tammany slaves, and slaves of the great Trusts” (ibid). This list denounces US capitalism. But Annie also saluted “the slaves of industrial conditions, in England and on the Continent” as allies of “the hordes of overworked, underpaid, and unemployed [people]” across statist borders and internationally (ibid).

Whitman would have seen a *camerado*. But Annie wanted to do more than hail the world as if from on high, or limit the sea’s hissing to erotic innuendoes. In the Canadian novel excerpted earlier, *Reading by Lightning*, Joan Thomas depicts a voyager, raised in a pietist Christian fellowship, “seeing the ocean” as great waters which are “indifferent to the ships plowing along its surface and ... rotting below with skeletons bobbing in their cabins” (2008: 252-3). I contend that whether Annie had lost her religious faith, or made it gird her socialism, her bold essays tried to stimulate awareness of rot below. With regard to Hayward’s concept of the aquapelago, she tried to assemble wild aquatic spaces with land that was only partly domesticated, to find room on both for errant humans, so that her readers would think this assemblage essential to their habitations of land, and their senses of identity and belonging in whatever sea-dot they called home. I would be fascinated to learn that she made this bold attempt because of a voyage, or death, by water: an anniversary, for instance, of her family’s passage to New Zealand, or more recent grief for a fisherman whose boat had been lost. A literary alternative, however, could be that Annie’s aquapelagic turn honours a reading milieu which included books as popular as Rudyard Kipling’s *Captains Courageous* (1897), Joshua Slocum’s *Sailing Alone Around the World* (1900), Erskine Childers’s *The Riddle of the Sands* (1903), and Jack London’s *The Sea-Wolf* (1904).

These best-sellers proffered different national-imperialist homilies. But all four portrayed sea-life as brutal. Annie admired *The Sea-Wolf*: she judged it “a parable” and “a sermon” (1908: 409). She took sustained interest though in London’s exposé journalism, *The People of the Abyss* (1903). When she urged readers to appreciate why he pursued so undomesticated a life – “He feels the great earth-heart throbbing” (ibid: 417) – Whitman fans may have heard resonance with a line in ‘*Salut au Monde!*’: “I have look’d for equals and lovers and found them ready for me in all lands.” If so, Annie would have nodded. It is another part, though, of “Jack London, A Significant San Franciscan”, that turned her instruction aquapelagic: “We can no longer hug ourselves before our warm fires,” she exhorted, after “having realised that men and women and children are struggling to live in a veritable hell of torture” which is only a stone’s throw from the British Houses of Parliament, Mayfair, and other enclaves of the rich: the slums of London’s East End (1908b: 413-414).

What makes this preaching aquapelagic? *Red Funnel* readers’ likeliest siting: on a ship steaming over great waters. In this site, talk of warm fires prodded voyagers to recall that they had homes to cherish, jobs to do, fortunes to seek. Other people were less fortunate; they had been crushed by England’s pursuit of Mammon. “What Jack London shows,” Annie taught:

*is this: Our civilisation is power using power. It robs, tyrannises, and murders under the names of property, justice, and patriotism; our civilisation has but reached the wolf-stage; it snarls, fights, and struggles against all possible rivals. (1908b: 409)*

Voyagers might forget miserable slum-dwellers if they fell prey to the vanity – as the Bible’s *Ecclesiastes* deploys this word (1:2) – of “congratulating ourselves that we deserve the immunity from those tortures, since we have worked out our own salvation and earned our present ease” (ibid: 417). Annie admitted that *The People of the Abyss* “is too painful to dwell upon in a magazine article” (ibid). The reason is, the sort of people who hugged themselves before their warm fires, with no thought for others, “don’t like to have their sensitive feelings harrowed” by details of sweatshops and reports of people who, though they cannot pay for lodging, cannot sleep on the streets because the police move them along, through the night (1908: 413-4). Having stated this admission though, Annie retold *The People of the Abyss* for nine more approving paragraphs.

The fact that the USSC did not fire her forthwith, may reveal that this firm was as progressive as Frances Steel contends. Maybe, instead or also, contributors were hard to find. Certainly, though, Annie’s instruction about Jack London tried to nurture a “social unit” in which “aquatic spaces ... are utilised” (not crossed, merely) in a manner that was “fundamentally interconnected with and essential to the social group’s habitation of land and their senses of identity and belonging” when she used a sea-going platform to assert globally, as it were: “We are haunted by the thought of the poor, tormented, maddened souls, and we long to be up and doing something to help them” (1908b: 414). It may be coincidence that the USSC put an end to the *Red Funnel* a few months after Annie’s even bolder essay, on Zola. Knowing though how her husband William had been battered for admiring Whitman, Annie dared much – knowingly – when she taught that “the clean-minded student” of literature will take no harm from novels that “may easily be mistaken for a mere mass of moral putridity” (1909c: 227 and 232).

A gauge of her daring is this silence: nothing about the reading and writing milieu in any country the USSC served indicates a large number of readers who wished to be taught to esteem an author whose style is “brutal, sombre, and monotonous” (1909c: 231). This unappealing description of novels like Zola’s *Nana* (1880), in which the eponym is a heartless prostitute, comes near the end of Annie’s boldest essay. She had led up to this boldness though, by enthusing for Gorki’s writing and London’s, and by admitting that novels such as Zola’s *L’Assommoir* (1877) – a story which seems to trust the gains of honest labour until a work-injury, and self-medicating alcoholism, encroach – are more educational than uplifting. Significantly too, she admitted certain commentators’ rage against Zola’s conception of art. It verged on discourtesy to these commentators, still and all, to frame her instruction as a “defence... of the charges popularly brought against him” which would ensure “that both the man and his works stand acquitted in the estimation of the just, the pure, and the good, who are also intelligent” (1909c: 227).

It was bold, this analysis reveals, to try to cultivate readers by admitting that Zola’s “books are none of them to be read for pleasure. They destroy delight” (1909c: 227). Yet as that look-at-me locution indicates (“are none of them to be read”), Annie was foraying further than anyone could have foreseen when she started with the *Red Funnel*. What made her so daring? It had been a big relief to complete the *Leaves of Grass* concordance. The need to earn ebbed also. Globally, though, publishing in the *Atlantic Monthly* in September 1909

was a tremendous feather in Annie's cap. The *Red Funnel* had published her Zola essay four months earlier. Chroniclers who factor in transoceanic postal services can infer that Annie is likely to have known, while she drafted fiery exhortations for Zola (and verged on insulting readers who disagreed with her), that the world would soon become aware of her Whitman fandom.

I may seem to have forgotten island stories. But if Annie had devised the title, 'Concordance-Making in New Zealand' (1909b), the essay would underline that localisation, surely. Instead, the body-text hides the concordance-makers' location so rigorously that their labour could have been understood as taking place near Buenos Aires, in a village that got its news from Des Moines, outside a *dorp*<sup>7</sup> two days' rail-travel from Pretoria, in sight of Mecca, and so on. I infer on this basis Annie's near-preening rejection of most New Zealand writers' penchant, at the time, for dragging New Zealand-specific plants or animals into every third paragraph, or using Maori words whose meaning was seamlessly rendered in English (for instance, *kai* for food). I argue, on this basis, that she wanted "Concordance-Making" to be transnational and, so, transcendental. The snag was that she had no recourse when the *Atlantic* imposed a title that "islanded" her.<sup>8</sup>

The by-line of this article is still "A. E. Trimble" and the self-presentation is still gender-free. In addition, "Concordance-Making" is still instructive. By reading this genial, even merry, essay, English literates in many parts of the globe could learn how to co-compile a concordance, and justify doing so with no hope of profit. Along the way, they could learn about the concorders' hopes of penal reform, vegetarianism, and affection for US Transcendentalists: Ralph Waldo Emerson, for instance, and Louisa May Alcott. Despite all this, when Annie tried, in a second submission that was more fantastic, to cultivate fandom for Whitman's vision – what he preached – the *Atlantic* said, no thanks. After her sudden illness in 1910, coast-hop up to Auckland to seek medical care, and unexpected death, William published her imagined "conversation" with Whitman in which his replies were culled from *Leaves of Grass*. William always denied being the sort of fan that detractors scorned as "Whitmaniacs." To some minds, though, his decision to publish Annie's other-worldly *fantasia* can make that label fit. This reminder of the milieu in which both Trimbles had offered literary instruction, and in which William continued to promote Whitman (with less fervour than in his younger years), may explain why he chose such a short tribute, on Annie's posthumous behalf, to the fan-book mentioned earlier: 'Salut au Monde!'

Is there more to say about island stories? Yes: Annie's last publications were a series of articles, for a newspaper with readers all along the Otago Peninsula, on Maori artifacts. The *Atlantic Monthly's* "islanding" may have sent her in this island-y direction. Certainly though, she used a more specific by-line: "Annie E. Trimble." Writing for Dunedin's *Evening Star*, Annie could not viably pose as ungendered or stateless.<sup>9</sup> A bigger factor, however, was likely a decision to distinguish her articles from writings and lectures by the Hocken collection's librarian: William. A local analogue can thus be Elizabeth Hocken's water-colours of South Island flora. Her lovely paintings were not the labour of a "mere"

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<sup>7</sup> A South African English term of Boer origin referring to a small and unimpressive rural town.

<sup>8</sup> Because "Concordance-Making" is part of Cornell University's *Making of America* database, it can be read on-line: browse within: [http://collections.library.cornell.edu/moa\\_new/browse.html](http://collections.library.cornell.edu/moa_new/browse.html).

<sup>9</sup> If *Evening Star* editors chose the by-line "Annie E. Trimble," they may have judged the helpmeet role to be appropriate. Yet considering this newspaper's politics, the goal may have been to vaunt women who wrote for adults.

help-meet. But conservatives could accept her art under that rubric. An omission to remark, in this context, is that no hint of Whitman appears in Annie's Maori articles. Inasmuch as one of her *Evening Star* articles mentions Zola (quickly) (1910: 4), she kept on offering literary instruction. It may have meant as much to her, though, that she could claim of these articles, as Whitman had in '*Salut au Monde!*', "I have taken my stand on the bases of peninsulas" (1860: online).

To conclude, I review the sort of island story that Annie told after she was "islanded" by the *Atlantic*. Her *Evening Star* articles held the Maori high as voyagers, craftspeople, world-builders. At the same time, though, these articles taught Dunedin about a curious and intelligent woman who ministered by trying to educate. Insofar as an implication of Annie's latest writing is that many people were ignorant about Maori artifacts, she may have considered sending some of these articles to journals with broader readerships. Yet even if all that she had in view was educating Dunedin, a result was nurturance for independent and distinctive island stories. I discern an embrace of "islander" identity in which an incomer respects predecessor-inhabitants' heritage, and spreads knowledge of it. There were snarly implications to this embrace due to how few Maori resided, by 1910, on the South Island. Yet even so, in no part of Annie's *oeuvre* did she allow twee exoticisations: Maori princesses, for instance, or unneeded references to *kai*. In this regard, an island story in her *Evening Star* articles is one of archipelagic New Zealand as a persisting point of origin for a future graced by shared awareness, shared endeavour, and, maybe, social justice graced by harmony.

What about the island story, though, in her *Red Funnel* essays? By agreeing with Frances Steel to treat "the ship as a key site of historical enquiry" (2011: 138), I find that Annie told no island stories, in her own name, in that part of her career yet did her best to help others do so. I have named a few writers who may have read her *Red Funnel* essays. But I have also mentioned a reading public which was not as receptive as some authors would have liked. For years after Annie's death, many innovative, and potentially progressive, writers and thinkers on "numberless islands of the archipelagos of the sea" (to excerpt '*Salut au Monde!*' one last time), experienced resistance when they tried to stimulate, and possibly disturb, readers who preferred A. E. W. Mason to Gorki, Queen Victoria's letters to *The People of the Abyss*, or a report of a day-trip to Opotiki to *Nana*.

Quiet indication that Annie tried a fresh approach, after the Zola essay that urged readers to take interest in delight being destroyed, is her last *Red Funnel* instruction: despite British author John Galsworthy's appeal to the bourgeoisie, she taught, his fictions do not edify. Why think so? "Because in the faces of men and women he sees the clod instead of the spark, he is not truly great. He lacks love" (1909d: 191). The freshness of this approach was Annie's use of a gauge that recalls how Whitman fans saw Whitman but, as saliently, how Christians see Christ. Had she devised this approach earlier, the *Red Funnel* might have lived longer. Still, three years of instruction were quite an accomplishment for a socialist who added wildness to lessons she offered to readers traveling to little and large sea-dots by ships, which could be elderly, under and around which watery depths rolled uncaringly.

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