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THE ARTIST WHO LOVED BOATS

PERCY 'POWDER' THURBURN – MARINER •
ARTIST • ADVENTURER (1869–1961)

Tom Cross, David Hale & Pin Armitage



Once in a while a book comes along that can only be described as unique. This is the story of Percy 'Powder' Thurburn, a true Great British eccentric in the best tradition whose early life was full of danger and adventure and who later lived in a house he built for himself on the banks of the Helford River. It was here in Cornwall at the romantically-named Frenchman's Creek, that he painted many of the pictures that now appear for the first time ever in this superb book.

Powder, as he was nicknamed, was an enigma. Well educated and from a wealthy family he ran away to sea as a boy only to become involved in a mutiny aboard a square-rigged ship in

Australia. Later he and a trusted crewman went on a gun-running expedition from Brixham in Devon to Africa. Changing his mind when he came across a band of cut-throat pirates, he made for another port where he exchanged the guns for wine. These exciting and dangerous voyages provided him with just the experience necessary for a dashing career as a RNVR officer aboard a minesweeper during the Great War. Even so his free spirit led him into a spot of fishing while on patrol! On leaving the service Powder sailed from port to port around the British coast, eventually settling on the Helford River in Cornwall where he continued to paint the boats he loved.

It is likely that his friendship with the celebrated marine artist Arthur Briscoe sealed his love of painting, while his knowledge of ships and the sea provided his main subject. In his lifetime Thurburn never sold a painting, preferring to give them away to his friends. This book, which will be treasured by all those who love ships, boats and the sea, provides a fascinating story of a remarkable life, illustrated with over a hundred wonderful paintings.

Author, **Tom Cross**, will need no introduction to those many who have enjoyed his books on the Newlyn and St Ives Schools and art and artists in Cornwall through his trilogy *The Shining Sands*, *Painting the Warmth of the Sun*, and *Catching the Wave*. He is an established writer and artist who lives on the Helford River in Cornwall.

David Hale, spent his youth on the Helford River, often staying with Powder Thurburn at Frenchman's Creek. Powder gave him and his family many of the paintings that appear in this book. Together with Pin Armitage, David provided much of the story of Powder's life.

Pin Armitage's family were also among Powder's closest friends and own many of his paintings. She knew Powder from 1941, when she was born, to 1961 when he died. Powder was an important figure in her life.



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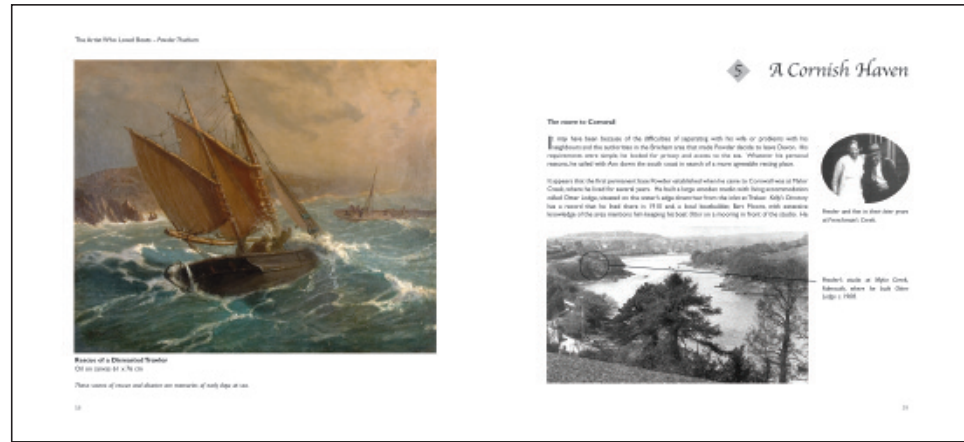
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FEATURE CHAPTERS AND GALLERY – THE ARTIST WHO LOVED BOATS

Feature Chapters:

- Chapter 1 **Percy Cecil Thurburn (Powder) 1869–1961**
- Chapter 2 **Aboard the Chance**
- Chapter 3 **Ashore in Brixham**
- Chapter 4 **Powder at War**
- Chapter 5 **A Cornish Haven**
- Chapter 6 **Life on the Helford River**
- Chapter 7 **Young Friends**
- Chapter 8 **Clouds, Shadow and Light**
- Chapter 9 **A Love of Boats**
- Chapter 10 **Last Days**



Example of a double page spread.



Hauling a Net.



Bobbie Smyth's dog, Poly.



Blue Mainsail.



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