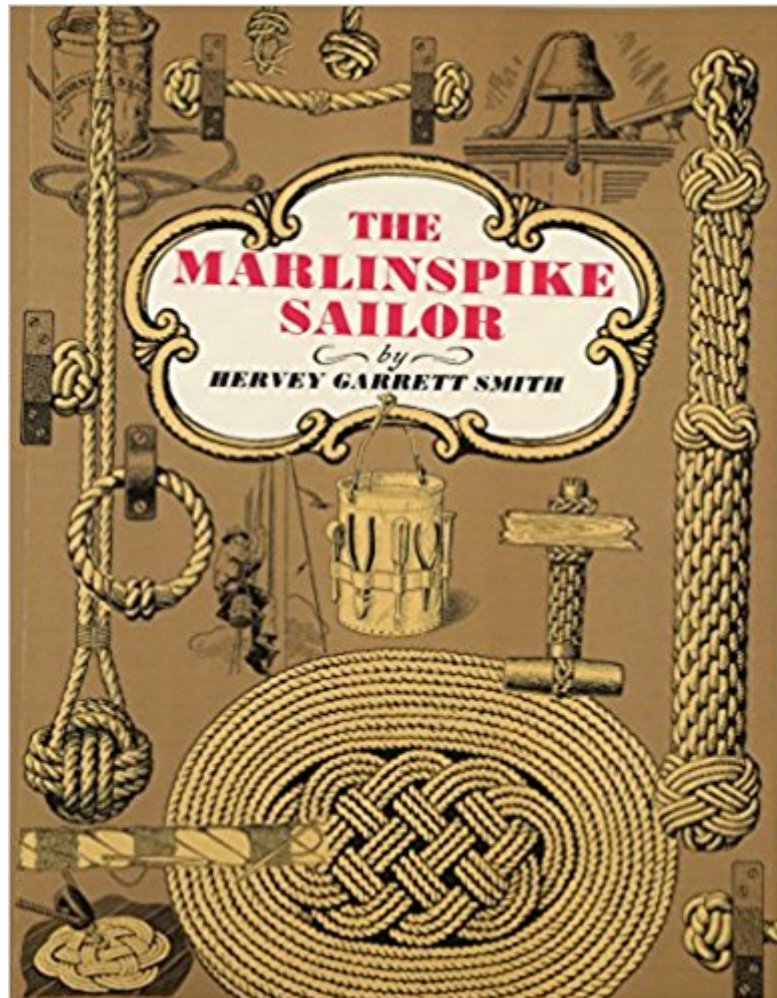




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The Marlinspike Sailor (International Marine-RMP)



Synopsis

Hervey Garrett Smith was the foremost marine illustrator of the 1950s and 1960s, and his wonderful drawings of traditional ropework quickly propelled *The Marlinspike Sailor* to cult classic status when it was published in 1956. With the addition of a section on modern, synthetic rope in the 1970s, its popularity has continued undiminished to this day. It teaches a few basic knots--the bowline, sheet bend, and rolling hitch, among others--and splices in three-strand and braided rope. But its real business is decorative rope and canvaswork--the traditional arts of the sailor--and here it has no equal. For a rope mat, a rope ladder, a sea chest, a ditty bag, a canvas bucket, a mast boot, and the best-looking rope fenders or heaving line in the marina, this is the book of choice.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The art of creating a boaty' boat. If you don't have this title, now is the time to get it." [Smith's] original illustrations are a marvel of clarity and charm." "Smith's" original illustrations are a marvel of clarity and charm."

Hervey Garrett Smith was the foremost marine illustrator of the 1950s and 1960s, and his wonderful drawings of traditional ropework quickly propelled *The Marlinspike Sailor* to cult classic status when it was published in 1956. With the addition of a section on modern, synthetic rope in the 1970s, its popularity has continued undiminished to this day. It teaches a few basic knots--the bowline, sheet bend, and rolling hitch, among others--and splices in three-strand and braided rope. But its real

business is decorative rope and canvaswork--the traditional arts of the sailor--and here it has no equal. For a rope mat, a rope ladder, a sea chest, a ditty bag, a canvas bucket, a mast boot, and the best-looking rope fenders or heaving line in the marina, this is the book of choice.

Smith is a master illustrator as well as in the Arts of the Sailor (another title of his) which makes this book a perfect primer for "learning the ropes"! From the three basic knots to know aboard to some pretty fancy decorative work and utility items, Smith's illustrations are key to understanding the processes of setting up these knots and their finish. Many start with Ashley's and can't follow the details and complexities and put the book on the shelf. Start with Smith's and from there..... you can work any knot.

It is not for beginners, as a how-to so much of basic sailor knots, for that you need a basic to advanced knotbook, but it shows complex knots, a very easy way to learn to the Turks Heads and a myriad of sea/sailor related projects, both inventive and traditional. The illustrations are very good and the text is very interesting reading. It is like Herman Melville in tone, to me, reminding me of the age-old uses of rope, though it fits nicely in the modern realm, of a knot-work book, and can greatly add to your skills as you learn and improvise on the various projects mentioned. Some go beyond knot-work in sailing and other practical things. So if increasing your knowledge (it has nice descriptions of the Star Knot, Matthew Walker, and various others) and gaining some insight into the days of old, and ways to make projects that still have use and beauty in the modern time this is ONE great book to own. I was very pleased for the price. Hervey Garrett Smith did a great job and the illustrations as he points out he put them in his book because others he found were not clear, and they are a beauty too look at too. If you are just getting into Marlinspike Seamanship/Ropework Crafts, this is a great book. I take about three with me or keep them close at hand, along with my ropeowork kit, and this is one of them.

I enjoyed this read. In Navy bootcamp we learned a skosh about marlinspike seamanship, but that was 50 years ago. I'd often admire the work of bosuns on ships and shore stations, and did a few simple things with heaving twine. Thank God I don't have a boat, or I'd be dressing up all sorts of stuff. Here in the Mohave, door handles get HOT in the afternoon, and a few places wrap 'em. I wonder if I did some fun stuff like this...

It's a quick introduction to the world of knotting, but moreso to the world of yachtsmanship. The

illustrations are endlessly helpful in getting a handle on visualizing the various procedures. The written instructions are written in an educated verbiage that some might struggle with, but this is nothing that can't be solved with some help from a dictionary. The dry wit and overall candor of the text is quite refreshing. Since most informative texts are rather plain and seem unsympathetic to a layperson's interpretation, it does a heart good to encounter such thoughtful work. If nothing else, the book's levity will keep a complete neophyte grounded in the learning process, rather than giving up before he's even begun. As you can tell, Smith's writing has taken its effect on me, in more ways than one.

The Marlinspike Sailor is a classic in every sense of the word. Written by a life-long sailor and nautical illustrator, it not only gives the history of each item described, but presents each knot, bend and hitch in such a clear fashion. The chapter on the star knot is an excellent example. This book was the ONLY one to describe the knot step-by-step. I was able to tie a serviceable star knot after 2 tries, and after 3 it was perfect. The chapters on the short and long splice are mostly for historical interest (as three strand laid line is seldom used in sailing now) but it is interesting to read about. Finally the non-decorative knots that Mr. Smith felt were essential for every sailor I heartily agree with; the ones he chose are indeed the ones I find myself using over and over. A word must be said about the writing style. Clear and easy to follow, but written in a puckish, engaging manner. It comes across quite clearly that Mr. Smith was a true sailor. We shall not see his like again.

The good: Excellent illustrations and instructions
The bad: Limited selection of knots.
Overall: It's not ABoK, but for beginner/intermediate knotwork, it's excellent.

I chose this because my dad wanted a book to learn to make a sea chest handle. I looked over it a little once I gave it to him, and it seems like the instructions are not as explicit as I would like for myself. For example, sailcloth...unless you are a sailor, how in the world would you know what's comparable to this?! It's one of the requirements for building these chest handles, so I'm sure he'll figure it out, but having examples of what other cloth would work may be more helpful.

Hervey garrett smith is a great writer, his style is informative and spiced with a bit of humor. Descriptive and clean illustrations. A must-have for any mariner worth his salt.

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