



A Thoroughly Mischievous Person

The Other Arthur Ransome

by Alan Kennedy

DESCRIPTION:

First published in 1930, *Swallows and Amazons* secured Arthur Ransome's reputation as one of the most influential children's authors of all time, yet prior to writing fiction he had had a turbulent career as a journalist and war correspondent in revolutionary Russia. In this refreshing account of Ransome's work, Alan Kennedy sets out to explain his enduring appeal, combining literary criticism with psychological expertise.

Not only did Ransome apply a careful narrative theory to his works, his use of symbolism aligning them more with the modernist tradition than with the event-driven children's literature of contemporaries such as Richmal Crompton and Enid Blyton, but his novels are also more than usually autobiographical. This Kennedy ably demonstrates with reference to three particular challenges Ransome faced in a seriously conflicted life: his father's untimely death, his abandonment of his infant daughter in order to escape his catastrophic first marriage, and the innumerable compromises that kept him alive during his Russian exile. *A Thoroughly Mischievous Person: The Other Arthur Ransome* is the first study to tackle this matter systematically, giving casual and scholarly readers alike new insights into this fascinating figure.

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Alan Kennedy is Emeritus Professor of Psychology at the University of Dundee. He is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, an Honorary Member of The Experimental Psychology Society, and a Member of the Society of Authors. Previous publications include *Reading as a Perceptual Process* (Elsevier, 2000) and *The Psychology of Reading* (Routledge, 2020) as well as several articles in the journal of the Arthur Ransome Society.

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