

Elizabeth Bishop Society of Nova Scotia Newsletter

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Summer 2009

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The EBSNS was formed in 1994 to celebrate the life and work of the poet Elizabeth Bishop. It produces an annual newsletter. In 1998, it also published *Elizabeth Bishop: An Archival Guide to Her Life In Nova Scotia*, documenting Bishop and Bishop-related documents in the province. The EBSNS contributed to the purchase of an extensive family archive that documents Bishop's Nova Scotia childhood and is housed at Acadia University Archives. The EBSNS holds its AGM in Great Village in June. It seeks through various activities to promote the appreciation and study of Elizabeth Bishop as a Nova Scotia writer, thus enriching our literary and cultural heritage.

**Check out the new
EBSNS website:
elizabethbishops.org**

Our Endlessly Curious Conversations

by Jeffery Donaldson

*Words in Air: The Complete
Correspondence of Elizabeth
Bishop and Robert Lowell*. Eds.
Thomas Travisano and Saskia
Hamilton. Farrar, Straus, Giroux,
2008.

Dearest Cal,

I don't know if this will reach you (the mails have been so bad here, both coming and going, for as long as I can remember...), but my copy of our Complete Correspondence came to me this week and I went through it right away, as you can imagine. The editors include the 150 letters already published in our individual collections, and they've added a further 300, so there is much that passes between us that most readers won't have seen.

But Cal, I'm still so much of two minds about these letters appearing at all. I know how you felt:

We should keep carbons, or rather you should, you who really write letters. I want to reread all yours someday — it would take a summer and would be reliving a long stretch of my life. I've seen a few of my own letters ... they aren't too much, but have words and sentences written seriously and unlike what I print.



"...a scattering of small urns and obelisks and broken columns..."

— "Gwendolyn"

Mahon Cemetery, Great Village, July '08

Yours have the startling eye and kept-going brilliance of the word to print.

You remember I'm sure how unsettled I felt when you sold our correspondence to the Harvard library, and my response when you offered to send me some of the proceeds from the sale:

Oh! No, no, a thousand times no — or five thousand times no I feel guilty enough living with the possible intention of selling personal letters. And I have just read the collection of Auden's reviews or most of it...and in almost every piece he goes on & on about the wickedness of printing private letters (although one can't help noticing he's a bit ambivalent about this sometimes — he regrets

— but he does love a good bit of gossip). And now I've finished after reading almost all night — the last vol. of the *Edel* Henry James — & James was even more severe on the matter — and burnt almost all his papers in his garden.

I suppose some people will take as decisive in the matter my needing to accept some of the money for bills, but there still seems something terribly raw about it, or indiscreet. Isn't it ironic that we debated all our lives where to draw the line between private life and public art? And now here we are, our intimate exchanges monumentalized into permanent biography, a unique art form of its own if the editor Thomas Travisano is right. If biographies are heard, then I suppose collections of letters must be *overheard*, as Mill once said poetry is.

The whole business has reminded me of how little our lives belong to us after we die. It all becomes a kind of terrible ventriloquism, don't you think? Our letters presuming to speak for us? There was so much we didn't say, even to each other! Even to ourselves. On the other hand, if they *must* speak for us, perhaps these may establish one or two impressions that some may wish to remember. For instance, I hope people will appreciate, as I did always, how essentially sane you were your entire life. I don't mean the breakdowns and the heartache you carried with you and left behind (if the worst people can say is that you weren't always *manageable*, you'll have done fine), but the intense curiosity, the patient wisdom, the impression you always gave those near to you of someone trying to get to the bottom of things, even in yourself. We both understood what it meant to have illness around us and I think we found that a comfort in each other.

And I hope you will remember how

much you supported me in my early years and in Brazil, found prizes for me, endowments, and later on the academic jobs when I returned to America. You saved me from my own reclusion, kept me connected with the world I felt so removed from (my self-imposed exile!). I loved how effortlessly you seemed to be able to recreate a scene, a room full of poets, a chance encounter. Your letter on that sailing trip off the coast of Maine feels to me like your biography in a grain of sand. And what about you? You always regretted that I didn't make more of my short stories than I did, and I think perhaps you found in my letters the same inner voice: something intimate, surely not modest so much as unassuming, quirkily immediate.



"Mr. Johnson looks out through the little window in the middle of the bank of glass-fronted boxes, like an animal looking out over its manger. But he is dignified by the thick, bevel-edged glass boxes with their solemn, upright gold-and-black shaded numbers."

— "In the Village"
Great Village Post Office, July '08

You were such a generous spirit, Cal, wanted the best for people, struggled very consciously with the trouble you made for yourself and others, and did your best to turn your 'turmoil,' as you once called it, into art. We disagreed later about whether or not you should be turning Elizabeth's letters (and even mine!) into fodder for your sonnets — remember how shocked I was! And then there was your defense of the whole business, and your guarded apologies. I felt you had gone too far

in recasting intimate confidences sent to you in letters, but in the end, I tried to acknowledge the honesty of the vision, and you have nothing to regret in your own response to my misgivings:

My immorality, as far as intent and skill could go, is nothing in my book. No one, not even I, is perversely torn and twisted, nothing is made dishonestly worse or better than it was. My sin (mistake?) was publishing. I couldn't bear to have my book (my life) wait hidden inside me like a dead child.

How telling, that parenthesis and strike-out. Your life was your book, Cal; it was its *hiddenness* that you needed to erase, and that hiddenness erased became a book. But more than anything else now, our disagreement marked our divergence in artistic practice, our different looks, life and the memory of it, that blurry line between fact and fiction. But in the end I think our visions coincided, or folded together and complemented one another in their very differences. You know I would sometimes get so absorbed in one of our letters that I had to check to see which of us had written it!

If people go back to these letters, I think it will be for the trade-craft, our endlessly curious, always playful and mutually challenging conversations about one another's poems, about the art and our shared struggles to achieve something in it. We trusted each other. And even though I cringe at the idea, there's all that rich gossip about the poets of our time. Remember for instance how I disapproved of that

... kind of defiant English rottenness — too strong a word — but a sort of piggish-ness! — As if they've thrown off Victorianism, Georgeianism, Radicalism of the '30's — and now let's all give up together. Even

Larkin's poetry is a bit too easily resigned to grimness don't you think? Oh, I am all for grimness and horrors of every sort — but you can't have them, either, by shortcuts — by just saying it.

I got to thinking that we were like Lear and Cordelia in prison, talking about "Who loses and who wins, who's in, who's out...as if we were God's spies."

But oh how messy and disorderly our lives seem to me now. Were we different from anyone else? We kept questioning ourselves and never quite felt as though we had lifted our heads above all the untidiness. Yet somehow we wrote about that, or left a record of our grievances. Our friendship and intimacy allowed us to confess to each other just those fears and anxieties, the accidents of circumstance, the missteps and blind lurchings-forward into what was always an uncertain future. It wasn't just our friendship, but our *faith* in our friendship, our idea of what it meant, that made it all bearable. There was that time I told you that getting a letter from Robert Lowell made me feel so much more serious, so much less of a fraud somehow. (I never had your confidence!) And I guess you wrote similar things: "You make most people, even the most charming, seem as if seen through a glaze, as if they lived in a glaze."

But the point is, Cal, that we accepted each other, through all the heartache of our relationships, my years (mostly) with Lota, yours (mostly) with Elizabeth, their ambivalent and fumbled conclusions. We offered each other unconditional love and support, perhaps most because under the circumstances we were free to. But we saw in each other some lasting idea of an alternative life — one that we didn't or even couldn't finally

choose — that stayed with us through our lives, so that our chance to get clear of things was preserved, kept safe somehow, in the life we shared. And when it wasn't as much as all that, there was the stalwart courage, the grim hopefulness you always brought to life's bare minimums. I loved that in you.

So happy Lota's trouble was nothing. Tell her to take care from us. We must all continue. This part of our lives has something of the real changing quality of childhood, more enjoyable on the whole, but with — not here yet, thank God, but ahead — diminishment, disappearance of friends, our own disappearance, etc., waiting. Premature old age! I feel we are now what the young inevitably look on as alien, but real. That's how I used to look on people our age. But it's all illusion, we are ageless, a little wick burning in a fog.

Don't you think the editors did a fine job though? Mr. Travisano's introduction was quite sympathetic I thought. They sometimes err on the side of what young people now call "too much information." I had to raise an eyebrow, for instance, when I saw that they had included the text that accompanies the photograph on a postcard, and not only that, but offered a footnote on a small detail from it! But they did take great pains to save the reader time by quoting, or at least referencing, lines from poems that we talk about. In some cases the sleuthing they did to trace a poem title from only the vaguest reference was impressive indeed. But why do you suppose they called the book *Words in Air*? I know they're alluding to those lines from your poem about me ("Do / you still hang your words in air, ten years / unfinished, glued to your notice board, with gaps / or empties for the unimaginable phrase...?"). They are lovely, the lines themselves, but I don't know what they have to do

with our letters. Is it a tongue-in-cheek reference to air-mail, words sent through space? If they were going to use a line from one of your poems about me, perhaps it should have been *One Known Longitude*, which instead of referring to Nova Scotia and Brazil the way it does, could have alluded to our own geographical and spiritual alignments. Or perhaps something more tongue-in-cheek, like Frost's *Two Look at Two*?

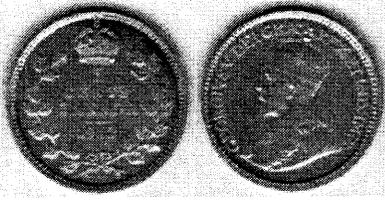
It's funny. I actually read the book as a kind of narrative and found myself growing apprehensive towards the end, both knowing that an end was coming and worrying about how we would manage things, our deaths mostly. But I was also curious as to what last thing we would say to each other, as though it would be some beautiful summarizing word! It turns out of course that we didn't have to manage things. The end took care of itself simply enough. I find that sense of anti-climax terribly moving. It reminds me of some of your poems, which often seemed to trail off, heartbreakingly, as though they were ending in the back of a taxi cab.

Cal, you needn't reply to this. I am not myself lately, but just thought I would write briefly in the spirit of the letters themselves. I hope you'll read this, and them, in the same spirit.

In the mean time, Cal, much love as always,

Elizabeth

Jeffery Donaldson is a poet whose books include *Waterglass*, *Once Out of Nature*, and, most recently, *Palilalia*. He teaches creative writing and American literature at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario, where he is also involved in the *Collected Works of Northrop Frye Project*.



"It is very tiny, very shiny. King George's beard is like a little silver flame. Because they look like herring- or maybe salmon-scales, five-cent pieces are called 'fish scales'.... What if one could scrape a salmon and find a little picture of King George on every scale?"
 ~ "In the Village"

Editorial

One of the most memorable public readings I've ever participated in was held last September in the sanctuary of St. James United Church in Great Village. Eight Nova Scotians — poets, fiction-writers, professors, musicians, and a filmmaker — read the entirety of Bishop's prose masterpiece "In the Village." Both the assembled audience and the readers themselves had the chance to savour Bishop's story sentence by sentence, paragraph by paragraph, scene by scene. The afternoon was a deeply moving testament to the precision and rhythm of Bishop's prose, the sharpness of her eye for social detail, and the delight of her humour — humour every bit as key to the story as the intimations of tragedy and sorrow.

For readers of Bishop, the primary publishing event of the past year has been the appearance of the long-awaited complete correspondence between her and Robert Lowell. We're very pleased to print here an unusual review of the book by our contributing editor Jeffery Donaldson (whose *Palilalia* is one of the finest collections of poetry published in Canada in the new century). Jeffery has expressed to me concern that his assuming of Bishop's voice may be "unorthodox, audacious, and presumptuous," but he's written the review in a playful,

respectful, and uncannily sympathetic manner. His act of impersonating Bishop tells us more about one reader's responses to *Words in Air* than some conventional reviews ever could; this review suggests by example what it is to enter into a writer's spirit for a while.

The other review in this issue, of a new book by young scholar Zachariah Pickard, gives attention to the first single-author book-length critical study of Bishop's poetry both written by a Canadian scholar and published by a Canadian press (not to forget the multi-author compilation of essays about Bishop gathered from a 1998 conference in Wolfville, or Sandra Barry's pioneering biographical/archival book on Bishop's Nova Scotian affiliations). In the past year, other evidence has arisen of an increasing interest in Bishop among Canadians. Robert Boschman of Mount Royal College in Calgary has published *In the Way of Nature: Ecology and Westward Expansion in the Poetry of Anne Bradstreet, Elizabeth Bishop & Amy Clampitt*. (Look for a review of it in the next issue of The EBSNS Newsletter.) Poet Catherine Joyce provides an on-line appreciation of "The Moose" in *Arc* magazine's "How Poems Work" column, at arcpoetry.ca. Nova Scotian poet Jeanette Lynes' first novel, *The Factory Voice* (Coteau Books, 2009), uses as an epigraph for the book a line from Bishop's poem "Questions of Travel": "Oh, must we dream our dreams / and have them, too?" And in her recent collection of prose meditations, poetry, and pencil sketches, *The Marram Grass: Poetry and Otherness* (Gaspereau, 2009), poet and novelist Anne Simpson offers "World at Play," a finely turned, finely tuned prose piece inspired by her sojourns in the Bishop-Bulmer house in Great Village.

In recent months a few poets and scholars in Canada have been discussing, in person and on-line, the question of Elizabeth Bishop's national — or more accurately, international — character. This discussion has sprung in part from the refusal of the permissions department at Farrar, Straus, Giroux to allow Zachariah Wells to reprint Bishop's "Sonnet" in his anthology *Jailbreaks: 99 Canadian Sonnets* (Biblioasis, 2008), though Bishop's poetry was earlier well-represented in two anthologies of Atlantic Canadian poetry. Wells was told that Bishop "is considered an American poet and including her work in an all-Canadian anthology may cause some confusion." It appears that Bishop herself, in her self-definition "New-Englander-herring-choker-blueser," was more keenly aware of her complex internationalism than some employees of her publisher appear to be.

Just before going to press for this issue, we heard with sadness of the unexpected death of Alice Methfessel (1944-2009) on 28 June. She was the last partner and heir of Elizabeth Bishop, as well as literary executor of the Bishop Estate. In a letter written in February 1972, Bishop described Methfessel as "a wonderful travelling companion... kind and generous and very funny."

BB

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 Except for the images of the Canadian nickel on this page, all photos in this issue are by the editor.

Membership in the EBSNS costs \$10.00 for one year or \$25.00 (CAD) for three years. Annual dues entitle you to the newsletter and all other privileges of membership.
 Elizabeth Bishop Society of Nova Scotia
 P.O. Box 138
 Great Village, NS
 Canada B0M 1L0

Elizabeth Bishop Society of Nova Scotia Annual General Meeting 21 June 2008 – Minutes

President Sandra Barry called the AGM to order at 1:30 p.m. and welcomed the 30+ members and guests present.

The first order of business was the reading of the Minutes of the 2007 AGM by John Barnstead. Motion to accept Minutes (Nancy Corrigan; seconder, Fonda Smyth). Passed.

Treasurer Joy Graham distributed copies of the financial report for 1 April 2007 to 31 March 2008. As of the latter date we had a bank balance of \$4,941.92. Motion to accept report (Joy Graham; seconder, Barbara Bell). Passed. Joy then distributed an update of our financial status. As of 20 June 2008, our bank balance was \$5,345.13. Lois Bray presented Joy with a donation of \$100 toward the pergola project, which came from a house concert given at Field House in Great Village on 14 June 2008. Joy also noted that the old bank account had been closed and the bank automatically changed the account to a new type. Neither account provides much interest, but the cost of writing cheques is slightly lower.

The next order of business was the Nominating Committee Report by Brian Robinson.

2008-2009 Executive and Board:

Lois Bray – Acting Chair
Sandra Barry – Secretary
Joy Graham – Treasurer

Board: John Barnstead, Brian Bartlett, Angus Chisholm, Arthur Chisholm, Rebecca Colwell, Nancy Corrigan, Meredith Layton, Alexander MacLeod, Linda Shears, Fonda Smyth

Motion to accept Nominating Committee Report (Sandra Barry; seconder, June Chisholm). Passed.

Brian R. spoke on behalf of himself and Ann Marie Duggan, who were stepping down from the EBSNS Board after over a decade of service. Brian expressed thanks to a number of EBSNS Board members and appreciation of many years of working together. He reminisced about some of the more

unusual locations for Board meetings, and concluded by saying how much both he and Ann Marie had enjoyed being on the Board.

The next order of business was outgoing President Sandra Barry's final President's Report. Sandra gave a brief update about the on-going pergola project; she spoke about the BBC Radio documentary and about her stepping down as President. She also offered special thanks to Ann Marie Duggan and Brian Robinson for their many years of active service to the EBSNS, saying how much they will be missed and wishing them well in all their endeavours. There was a heartfelt round of applause for Ann Marie and Brian.

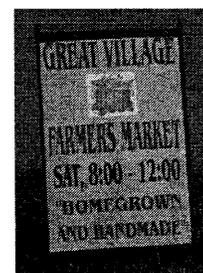
Sandra also noted that the EBSNS welcomes all interest and participation and looked forward to welcoming new Board members – noting a particular welcome to the newest Board member, Linda Shears.

Sandra also spoke about the upcoming Bishop event on Saturday 27 September 2008, a public reading of Bishop's story "In the Village" in St. James United Church. She also mentioned the publication of a volume of Bishop's poetry, prose and letters by the Library of America. Motion to accept the President's Report (Fonda Smyth; seconder, Alexander MacLeod). Passed.

In other business, Rebecca Colwell gave an update about the future EBSNS website, reporting that the EBSNS has a domain name and a server host for the site, which will incur no cost for the society. She also noted that Jim Colwell has put up on his website photos of the 2007 AGM and the pergola ribbon-cutting ceremony, viewable at www.jcowell.ca.

Meredith Layton and Lois Bray both eloquently expressed thanks to Ann Marie and Brian for their years of work on the EBSNS Board. More applause. Lois also expressed heartfelt thanks to Sandra for her time as President. More applause.

Meeting adjourned, after which there was a screening of *In the Village*, a Bishop documentary by Nexus Media of Chester, N.S.



A Gift of Vision

By Elizabeth Jones

Zachariah Pickard, *Elizabeth Bishop's Poetics of Description*. McGill-Queen's University Press, 2009.

Forty years ago, in May 1969, Elizabeth Bishop gave a reading at the Guggenheim Museum in New York. Introduced by Robert Lowell as "the famous eye," she replied with characteristic self-deprecating humour: "The 'famous eye' will now put on her glasses." What Zachariah Pickard has done in this book is put on his scholarly, critical glasses to examine with scrupulous care both the intellectual activity behind that "famous eye" — "Bishop's unusual focus on the physical world" — and the poetic result: "her unusual ability to convey it to the reader." This may sound daunting, and though Pickard develops his arguments coherently and writes with jargon-free clarity, this study demands the reader's utmost concentration. A challenge, but one that offers rich rewards in the pleasures of exploring in depth the importance of description in Bishop's poetry.

Something Pickard never forgets is how deeply Bishop's poems are rooted in the physical world keenly apprehended by all five senses, sight above all. At the same time he is aware of how remarkable the poems are for their insight, and that requires mind. For him Bishop is "a poet invested in scrutiny as an intellectual endeavour as well as

description as a literary practice." Of the eight chapters that comprise this book Chapters 1 and 8 deal with the latter while the six chapters in between, which make up the bulk of this study, are concerned with discussion of various topics that reveal how Bishop scrutinizes the world. Happily, when dealing with topics such as "imagery, psychology, epiphany, knowledge, morality, narrative, travel...description itself," Pickard never loses sight of the poetry and proves to be a perceptive close reader with many original observations to make. Both in his close readings and in his discussion of the three prose works that serve as a framework for seven of the chapters, Pickard engages with scholars whose comments he considers wrong or inadequate, but only for clarification and never with acrimonious triumphalism. One of the appealing features of this study is that the author is so imbued with Bishop's spirit that he extends the sort of careful, courteous attention with which she views the world.

A necessarily over-simple survey of the eight main chapters should give an idea of the framework for the themes Picard investigates, while indicating the poems he analyzes to illustrate his points. As the framework for Chapters 2 to 4, Pickard takes the Darwin Letter written to Anne Stevenson in January 1964; there Bishop speaks of her admiration for Darwin who builds a "beautiful solid case...out of his endless heroic *observations*," of feeling the "the strangeness of his undertaking," and of "see[ing] the lonely young man, his eyes fixed on facts and minute details, sinking or sliding giddily off into the unknown."

In Chapter 2, "Surrealism," a movement to which Pickard considers Bishop basically hostile, the central topic is the conscious versus the unconscious with particular reference to "The Man-Moth," "The Monument," and "The

Gentleman of Shalott." Chapter 3, "Epiphany," considers the relationship of the slow accumulation of detail ("empirical observation") to "the gift of vision"; Pickard makes an interesting comparison between "The Country Mouse" and "In the Waiting Room," the latter a reworking of the former so as "to include ideas from, and verbal echoes of, the Darwin Letter." Chapter 4, "Water," consists of excellent, almost exhaustive, close analyses of "The Weed" and "At the Fishhouses" in an exploration of knowledge, "the relationship between empirical and abstract mental processes."

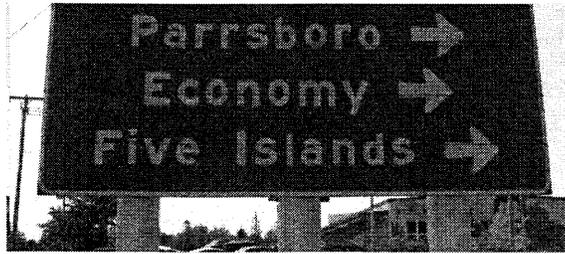
Randall Jarrell's "The Poet and his Public," published just after WWII in *Partisan Review*, serves as the framework for Chapter 6, "War." With general discussion and careful analysis of "Cirque d'Hiver," "The Unbeliever," and "Quai d'Orléans," Pickard is persuasive in showing how, though Bishop "disliked 'social conscious writing'," morality – a recognition of the good as opposed to horror and cruelty – underlies her aesthetic.

The remaining three chapters have as framework "Time's Andromedas," a student essay Bishop wrote in 1933, which Pickard calls "a difficult essay on a difficult topic." In Chapter 6, "Narrative," he explores Bishop's distinguishing between "real life" (fluid, "experienced by the subjective consciousness") and "narrated life" (frozen by retrospection) by analyzing "Paris, 7 A.M.," "Over 2,000 Illustrations and a Complete Concordance" and "Santarém." Pickard notes how, over time, Bishop's youthful insistence on "presentness" mellows into an interest in the "malleability of the past." Chapter 7, "Travel," features the "two opposing models" of travel and tourism. Pickard's study shows how in "Arrival at Santos," "Brazil, January 1, 1502," and "Questions of Travel" Bishop negotiates between tourist and traveler.

The above schematic account should make clear Pickard's interest in binaries, found in all the topics discussed from conscious and unconscious to travel and tourism. (Binaries feature too in Chapter 1, "Imagery," and Chapter 8, "Description," where Pickard deals with the more formal, rhetorical aspects of description, making useful distinctions in the former chapter between intensive and expansive imagery, and in the latter between descriptive and associative poetry.) In each case when dealing with these opposites, Pickard sees a basic pattern emerge regarding Bishop's thought and poetic practice and shows cogently how the "Bishopesque manoeuvre is neither to deny the validity of the binary nor to validate one of its terms Rather it is to insist that both terms are very real, very important, and very different but connected in a strange and unexpected way." To make such a connection involves *looking*, "focus[sing] on details in order to see, peripherally, some larger meaning."

Pickard concludes the book with the observation that whereas Blake can "see a world in a grain of sand," Bishop achieves vision by focussing like her "'finical' Sandpiper...on 'millions of grains,' 'black, white, tan, and gray, / mixed with quartz grains, rose and amethyst'." One achievement of this stimulating study is to inspire the reader to focus not only on the details of Bishop's work, thought, and craft, but also on the endlessly fascinating physical world to which "the famous eye" paid such loving attention.

Elizabeth Jones, a Nova Scotia author, teacher, and translator, has published a work of history, *Gentlemen and Jesuits: Quests for Glory and Adventure in the Days of Early France*; and three collections of poetry: *Castings, Flux, and Nude on the Dartmouth Ferry*. Recently she has been working on translations of Horace.



Local Reception

by Joan Dargan

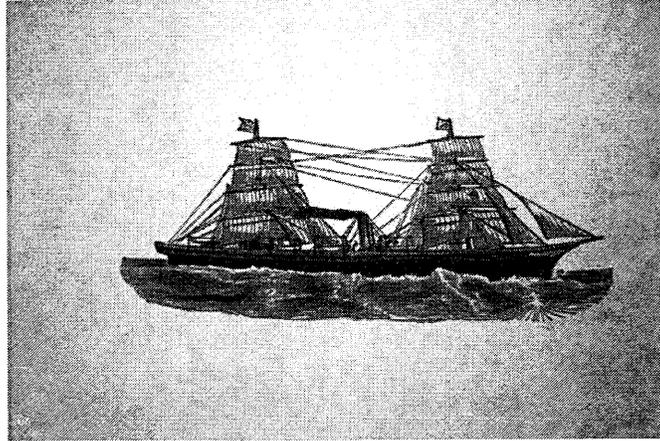
for Sandra Barry

Two turtles on stilts,
failures at stealth,
in profile divulge
identities already
brazenly broadcast:
guinea fowl
gone AWOL;
no, attitude seigneurial,
they recline and will not budge
from their chaises of tall grass
for the half-blind hoi polloi
unworthy of their screeching.

Incoming, earful —
Hamelin, Edinburgh? —
piper's blast,
multiplied by five
(plus three drums complicit):
explosion in the church parking lot
turned melodic; rehearsal.
Were these inflatable pouches
lured by those practiced slouches
out preening the night before
and awfully abuzz?

Uncalled-for choruses burst, clamor
(who, what is self-contained?),
split eardrums, prove walls porous,
and assembly, on occasion, altogether
free, riotous, joyous.
Good to be ensconced
in this magically waiting room
no stranger to music (broadly defined),
susceptible to time-travel
and camaraderie:
old wireless lovingly owned and feather-dusted,
kept humming

**Joan Dargan completed an M.A. and Ph.D. at Princeton University
and now teaches French at St. Lawrence University in Canton, New York**



Final image in Vassar College yearbook, 1934,
edited by Elizabeth Bishop

**Esther Clark Wright Archives
Acadia University
Wolfville, Nova Scotia**

**To visit Elizabeth Bishop writings on-line
Go to: library.acadiau.ca/archives/
Click "Research" from the top menu
Select link: [Elizabeth Bishop, 1911-1979](#)**



Brazilian school children greet visitors for international
Elizabeth Bishop conference, May 1999

Brazil in Great Village

On Saturday 3 October 2009, the EBSNS and other Great Village organizations (the GV Community Association, the GV Historical Society, Friends of St. James, Great Village School and Parents' Association) will host a day-long Elizabeth Bishop celebration with the theme "Brazil in Great Village," highlighting Bishop's 15 years in Brazil. Many events will take place, including a capoeira workshop, a concert of music and readings, a community supper with guest speakers, and a family dance. On Friday 2 October, the Colchester Literacy Association is holding a family literacy evening in GV, which will also tie in with Saturday's festivities. For more information check later this summer at **www.elizabethbishopns.org**