



Pugwash in the Pacific; Pugwash and the Buried Treasure

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After some years in dry dock, the good ship *Black Pig* took to the ocean again last year in celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of her launch. She had first sailed under the pennon of her master, **Captain Pugwash**, and two more of his not altogether seamanlike adventures were recounted alongside: **Pugwash Aloft** and **Pugwash and the Ghost Ship**. (He and his overweight crew are entirely dependent on cabin-boy Tom to get them out of their entanglements either with the ship's rigging or with Pugwash's nefarious rival on the *Flying Dustman*, Cut-throat Jake.)

Now two more despatches are to hand originating from 1973 and 1980 ? the first date having a minor political significance. Admiral Sir Splycemeigh Maynebrace is ordered by the Prime Minister (clearly an eighteenth-century Edward Heath) to capture ?this pirate rascal Pugwash? and when he returns in triumph ? but with Cut-throat Jake, by mistake ? he is greeted by a new Prime Minister, a dumpy little Harold Wilson, complete with pipe.

Far bolder than any of these buccaneers is their onlie begetter, John Ryan, whose schemings for their adventures are daring master-strokes of loopiness and whose energetic caricatures of all and sundry are as bright as they are barmy. Don?t believe though that it is all thoughtless jollification. For while it is unlikely that, say, piratical villains in their hammocks would have washing pegged out on an overhead line or pistols neatly hanging from nails in the timbers, the artist?s control of his maritime, and sometimes his sartorial, details has a convincing air of authenticity. (Two further titles, **Pugwash and the Sea Monster** and **Pugwash the Smuggler**, have recently been reissued at £11.99 each.)

Running Order:

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