

Jules Verne and the northern waters
‘pas de bon voyage sans un bout de navigation’¹

Per Johan Moe, www.jules-verne.no

This essay draws the lines between the author’s first-hand experience with the sea since early age, and his visionary ideas connected to explorations of the arctic north. Both his own journey to Norway in 1861 and some of his fictional voyages in novels from 1855 are commented. Included are also selected quotes from Verne’s texts connected to travel and fiction. Because Verne apparently wished that ‘any journey should involve a certain degree of sailing’, several nautical elements during his visit to Scandinavia is emphasized.

The sea, ships and sailing are important elements in the novels of Jules Verne. His poetic view on ships and oceanic journeys is conveyed through the following lines from *Voyages et aventures du capitaine Hatteras* (AH). Like *Voyage au centre de la Terre* (VC) it was published exactly 150 years ago [in 2014]. The creation of both these novels, was quite possibly sparked by inspiring experiences during Verne’s journey in 1861.

Pour un penseur, un rêveur, un philosophe, au surplus, rien d’émouvant
comme un bâtiment en partance; l’imagination le suit volontiers dans
ses luttes avec la mer, dans ses combats livrés aux vents, dans cette
course aventureuse qui ne finit pas toujours au port, et pour peu
qu’un incident inaccoutumé se produise, le navire se présente sous une
forme fantastique, même aux esprits rebelles en matière de fantaisie.

(Verne, 1864 – AH) [nothing is more affecting than the departure of a ship]

Born in Nantes, close to the bay of Biscay, Jules Verne learned to sail as a young boy. He explored the river Loire and dreamt about distant shores and voyages across the great seas. Later the vessels got bigger. With the yachts «St. Michel» I-III Verne was able to navigate the English Channel and later the Mediterranean and the North Sea.

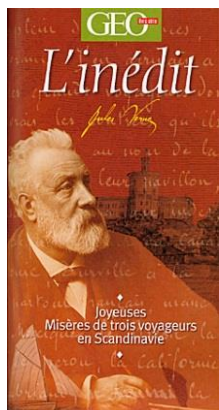
The fact that Jules Verne was familiar with seamanship and navigation, is easily detected by readers with nautical experience. His in-depth knowledge is displayed in several books. One example can be found in *Mirifiques Aventures de Maître Antifer* (1894). Almost the whole cast² of the novel is named after geographic locations along the French, Atlantic coast. The coastline on both sides of the Channel is further described in the author’s manuscripts for *Vingt Mille Lieues sous les mers*, partly written on board the «St. Michel». But long before he felt ready to take the readers aboard the «Nautilus» for the underwater circumnavigation of the globe, the northern oceans in particular were in focus. When Verne started as a writer, during the last years in the age of the great explorations, scientific attention was drawn to the last undiscovered areas on the planet; the arctic and polar regions. His dreams and imagination surfaced in his early twenties. Dunkerque, an important port for trade and arctic whaling at the southwest corner of the North Sea, becomes the starting point of a story describing a rescue expedition searching for French sailors who had disappeared close to Bodø and the Lofoten maelstrom in northern Norway. In *Un Hivernage dans les glaces* (1855), Verne introduces us to ‘Jean’ from Normandy, sailing north to explore - a central theme, used repeatedly in his novels the following years. Evidently, the author wanted to leave traces of himself and his vision in the texts. Several times the names of the protagonists, sometimes from Brittany or Normandy like himself, are phonetic variations over the

¹ ‘any journey worthy of the name involves a degree of sailing’ (Verne, 1861 - JM)

² St. Gildas, St. Enogate, St. Malo, St. Pierre, St. Servan og Cape Antifer – are all locations (lighthouses and villages) along the French coast, as well as names of characters in Verne’s novel

author's own name, Jules³; Jean, Jaques, John, Joël, Juhel.

His feelings - living with this dream - in the years following 'Hivernage', is clearly expressed in the unfinished text *Joyeuses Misères de trois voyageurs en Scandinavie* (JM) from 1861:



“[...] je mourais du désir de voyager. Cette passion comprimée chez moi de vingt à trente ans ne fit que s'accroître. J'avais lu tout ce qui peut se lire et même ne pas se lire en fait de voyages,[...] Après avoir longuement réfléchi, je choisis les Etats scandinaves pour but de mes explorations ; j'étais attiré vers les régions hyperboréennes, comme l'aiguille aimantée vers le Nord, sans savoir pourquoi.” (Verne, 1861 - JM)[I was drawn to the northern regions, like the magnetic needle to the north]

Here, the 33 year old Verne describes his urge to encounter what he so far only had read about. As soon as the destination Telemark in Norway, with its mountains and waterfalls is selected, and all economic aspects of such a journey settled, he can't wait to leave. And again, the upcoming events are poetically envisioned.

“-je gravissais la butte Montmartre, toute fière de jouer le rôle de montagne ; mes poumons s'habituait à ressoufflement ; de ces assises peu sourcilleuses, mon regard s'étendait sur la grande Capitale, que j'appelais l'Océan parisien ; puis, redescendu, je regardais d'un oeil méprisant ces passants sédentaires qui suivaient de simples rues, quand il existait des routes, qui parcouraient des places étroites, quand il y avait des plaines, qui traversaient la Seine au lieu de passer les mers, et je me disais avec un sentiment de pitié : voilà des gens qui ne vont pas en Norvège !” (Verne, 1861 - JM) [I said to myself pityingly: such people aren't going to Norway!]

Unfortunately, what remains from Verne's text (JM) about Scandinavia in 1861, is only a prologue to the actual journey. But many interesting descriptions can be found in the travel log of the author⁴. Here, in addition, Verne's own drawings of his observations along the journey can be studied⁵. One of these very fine drawings was displayed on the cover, when the first chapter of JM was printed as an attachment to the French magazine GEO, in 2003.



'Kastellet' on Kastellholmen, an islet outside Stockholm, was one of Verne's first observations on the Scandinavian peninsula.

'Pas de bon voyage sans un bout de navigation'

While Verne poetically expresses in the Hatteras novel an almost mythical relationship to sea journeys in general, in the half documentary JM, his personal passion for ships and sailing is even more clearly expressed (JM 1861): “Au surplus, j'aime les pays froids par tempérament : la Scandinavie faisait mon affaire ; elle comprend la Suède, la Norvège, le Danemark, trois poétiques contrées, vagues comme les poésies d'Ossian ; puis il y avait la mer à traverser, et pas de bon voyage sans un bout de navigation.” (Verne, 1861 - JM)

[any journey worthy of the name involves a degree of sailing]

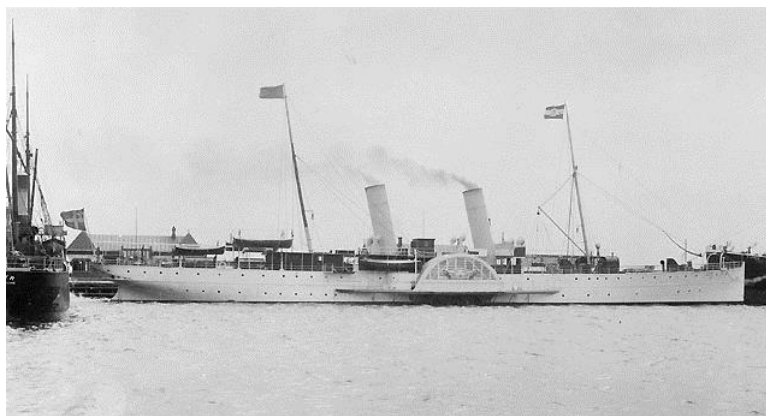
During the following weeks in Scandinavia, Verne got several opportunities to enjoy travelling by

³ Jean Cornbutte (Hivernage [HG]1855), John Hatteras, [AH](1864) Jaques ('Backwards to Britain 1859' [VH]1989)), Jaques Paganel [EG] (1865), Joël Hansen [BL](1886), Juhel 'nephew' (Antifer [AH]-1894)

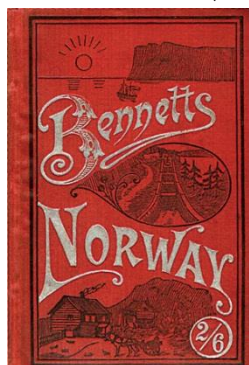
⁴ This diary is kept in the Verne collection in Bibliothèques d'Amiens Métropole, France

⁵ At the 150 years anniversary, the library of Amiens kindly permitted jules-verne.no to display the drawings

ship – large and small. Verne describes in JM the visit to a travel agency in Paris where tickets for the passage to Sweden is bought. There he is impressed by an image of the vessel that he will embark in Lübeck.



“Il existait à Paris une agence centrale du Nord ; on y trouvait des billets de trajet direct de Paris à Stockholm par Lubeck; [...] là, mes yeux ne purent se détacher d’un tableau représentant le *Svea* qui fait la traversée de la Baltique. Le prix payé, on nous remit un petit cahier rouge dont les feuilles devaient tomber peu à peu sur la route, et une carte destinée à régler notre admission à bord du *Svea*.” (Verne, 1861 – JM) [my eyes could not tear themselves from the board displaying the *Svea*]



The above mentioned (JM) red booklet, received by the travellers together with the tickets for the steamer «Svea», might be what was known as the ‘Bennett bible’. This was a travel hand book, widely published by the Bennett agency in Norway. The fact that Verne comments that the leaves of their guide book would come out the following weeks, indicates its extensive use on the journey. His own meeting with Mr. Thomas Bennett, is registered in the diary on July 22. In the novel *Un Billet de Loterie* (1886) the importance of the Bennett network in Scandinavian tourism is commented. Several pages show how the main characters in the novel benefit from his services.

“[...] bazar de M. Benett, si connu de Christiania et de toute la Norvège. [...] ce gentleman est-il la Providence des touristes, désireux de visiter la région scandinave. C’est l’homme universel dont Christiania ne pourrait plus se passer.” (Verne, 1886: cXVIII – BL) [M. Benett[...] a man Christiania could scarcely do without]



Guide book in hand, Verne eventually arrive the Baltic coast of Germany, and thereafter enjoy the passage to Ystad, Sweden on July 6. The journey on board the «Svea» continued the next day towards Stockholm, where several days were spent before departure on still another ship. From July 14 to 17, the spectacular Trollhätta and Göta canals, with its stair case locks, was selected for the westward passage, bound for the Swedish Skagerrak coast. A “voyage extraordinaire”, the

author characterized this leg of the journey, in an interview with the American R. H. Sherard, 33 years later: “a journey in Norway in 1862 [1861], when we travelled from Stockholm to Christiania by Canal, mounting ninety-seven locks, an extraordinary voyage of three days, and three nights in a steamer, and when we took carriage to that wildest part of Norway, the Tolemark, and visited the Gosta falls, nine hundred feet high” (Verne, 1894 - McClure’s).

Via the great lakes Vättern and Vänern, these canals connects the Baltic and the North Sea. At the tiny lake Viken, the steamer passed the highest point - 91m above sea level - as is commented by

Verne in his diary: "Lundi 15. - aspect de Baltique - Petite Ville de Motala - Mardi 16: "Torebida [Töreboda] station du chemin de fer - beaucoup de voyageurs - on a passé pendant la nuit le point le plus élevé du canal de Gotha, 308 pieds - on peu après le lac de Wilken [Viken] Grand lac Weves [Vänern] Sjøtorp" (Verne, 1861 - JV MS 12.5)

The names Motala and Viken, some Verne readers might recognize, and connect to novels containing descriptions of vessels on Northern waters. Several years after the visit to Scandinavia, in *Les Indes noires* (IO) 1877 and in *Un billet de Loterie* (BL) 1886, Verne includes dramatic incidents where Norwegian ships are involved. Through these lines of his 1861 diary, we get an indication on the source of inspiration. It has been frequently commented in scholarly work on BL, that Verne most probably named the shipwrecked fishing boat in that novel (and *Maître Antifer*), after the «D/S Viken», on which he arrived himself in Christiania, Norway. The fact that Verne also passed a tiny lake by that very same name, the night before boarding this Norwegian mail steamer in

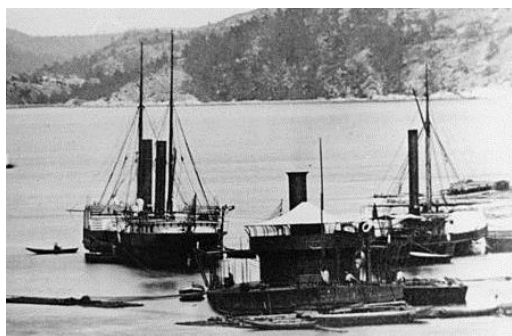


Gothenburg, surely helped the memory. A similar connection, between novel and name, probably also exist regarding the location Motala. This name reappeared 16 years later, in Verne's tale about 'the underground city'. Victim to a treacherous, false lighthouse, the Norwegian brig «Motala» shipwrecked on the Scottish coast. The Hetzel edition of the book contains an engraving by Férat/Barbant of the incident. In 1975 a Spanish adaptation for comics, published by 'Joyas Literarias' also highlights the same disaster.

A common characteristic of these novels set in Scotland (IO) and Norway (BL) is that the action in the two are almost identical to the journeys taken by the author himself in the years 1859 and 1861 respectively. Verne visited these countries on each side of the North Sea, shortly before his breakthrough as an author.

Arriving in Norway

After 3 days on the calm, inland waterways of Sweden, heavy weather awaited in the port of Gothenburg. "Jeudi 18. à 2 heures, on se réveille – personne ne vient de l'agence – on se lève – on part – point de Viken – attente – voyageurs - malles en soleil – fumée signalée- vent terrible – arrive à 6 heures – départ – le fiord de Goteborg – prononcer ieteborg - la mer mauvaise – retard - a 5 heures arrivée a fredereiksvern – aspect – port naturel – large jetée au bois – maisons rouges en bois – drapeau norvégien que porte aussi le Viken"



(Verne. 1861 - JV MS 12. After getting up in the middle of the night, bad weather conditions is observed, waiting to board the Norwegian paddle steamer «Viken». Then, enduring heavy wind and seas for eleven hours, the 95 nautical miles across Skagerrak, Jules Verne arrives the Norwegian port of Frederiksvern⁶. Today, this former naval base, situated at the entrance of the Oslo fjord, is called Stavern. Within the sheltered waters on the Norwegian coast, Verne and his friends enjoy the sailing

through this unique archipelago: "Jeudi 18. Navigation curieuse dans les rochers affectant les formes les plus fantastiques - pas la moindre vegetation - îlot de la Baleine – on les rase à les toucher – le capitaine ne quitte pas la passerelle – arrivée dans le fiord eaux plus calmes – à 6 h ½ dîner – journaux français [...] après le dîner – mauvaise mer dans le fiord." (Verne, JV MS 12.5)

⁶ Named after Frederik V, king of Denmark-Norway from 1746 to 1766

'Trois voyageurs en Scandinavie'

<p>Værelser med Dampskibet Viken, ankomne til Christiania den 19de Juli.</p> <p>Frølich. Fra Göteborg: tenischen, Hilliers, Rosensfeldt, 2 Frøkn. v. Tangen, 2 Her Povois, Werner, Hignard,</p>	<p>Anmeldte Reisende</p> <p>Kjøbm. Ege med Datter fra Bergen, Advokat Lorois, Mignard og Jules Werad fra Paris, Peterfen fra Kjøbenhavn, Christophersen fra Horten, Barth fra Drammen i Hotel du Nord; Gjestang fra Sandefjord, Mr. Calbert fra Landet,</p>
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A black and white illustration of a river scene. In the foreground, a small boat with two men is on the water. One man is in the boat, and the other is on the shore. The background features a large mountain and a small village. The illustration is signed 'G. B. 1891' in the bottom right corner.

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Taylor Pritchett⁹ (Moe, 2013). The problem is, Roux may then have copied a row boat, not from the Tinn area. The extremely high stem (with a characteristic forward bend), and the slots for the oars indicate a vessel not from Telemark. Below is a typical 'Pram' from Tinn in Telemark.



On the mail steamer bound for Copenhagen

Eventually, Verne and his friends reached Vestfjorddalen, in Telemark, the final destination on their Scandinavian journey. After having climbed the Gausta mountain and admired the mighty Rjukan waterfall, they travelled by horse and carriage back to the Norwegian capital. Then once again, Verne embarks a Norwegian mail vessel after some waiting for the «Viken», which, according to timetable, was scheduled for the passage towards Denmark at 6 am, on August 3.

Passagerer med Dampfartøiet Kronprindsesse Louise,
afgaaede fra Christiania den 3die August,
Til Kjøbenhavn: Mad. Nielsen. Til Moss: Frøken
Larfen, Andren, Monsen, Kronqvist, Fru Thalberg, Krog
med Datter, Th. Krog, Frøken Stabel, Provst Blod, Læ-
del med Frue, Fru Poulsen, Kohn, Frøken Holst, A. Sig-
nard, Hølfjær, Holst med Kone, 2 Børn og Amme, Gaard-

This particular day however, as notified in newspaper Morgenbladet, «Viken» was replaced. The sister ship; «Dampfartøiet Kronprindsesse Louise» then probably carried the French friends southwards. In news clip, at least the name 'A. Hignard' can be found on the list of passengers on board, bound for Copenhagen.

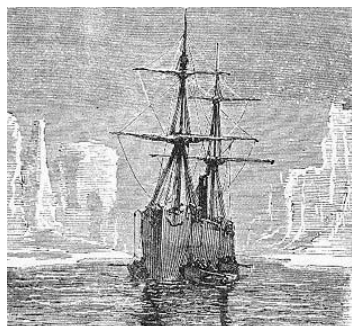


'A ship is a habitat before being a means of transport'

This journey, and this period in Verne's literary development gave impulses for several texts. Both Hamburg and Copenhagen, cities visited in -61, became opening locations for VC, set in 1863. The action in BL and AH, took place in 1862 and 1861 respectively. A central element in both the author's own journey in -61 as well as the fictional journey (AH), set in the very same year, is 'the ship'. As will be discussed later in this article, the ship «Forward» played an important role when Captain Hatteras struggled with the icebergs, on his way towards the North Pole.

⁹ For BL, Roux apparently copied seven illustrations from Pritchett's book which also contains some drawings of Norwegian boats [Pritchett, Robert Taylor (1879): *Gamle Norge, Rambles and Scrambles in Norway*, London: Virtue & Co.]

The significance of the ship, in Verne's lifelong literary project was characterized brilliantly by the semiotician Roland Barthes in 1957. In the essay 'Nautilus et Bateau Ivre' he analyses "The image of the ship", so important in Verne's mythology. "the ship may well be a symbol for departure; it is, at a deeper level, the emblem of closure. An inclination for ships always means the joy of perfectly enclosing oneself," - Barthes says, and he continues: "To like ships is first and foremost to like a house, [...] a ship is a habitat before being a means of transport." (Barthes, 1957)



The concept of closure is also relevant in approaching the novel about Captain Hatteras and his ship «Forward». Inspired by the robinsonades he read as a boy, Verne later worked on similar themes himself.

Several titles in the 'Voyages Extraordinaires' series are stories where a group of people has to deal with a difficult situation, isolated from the rest of the world – not only on desert islands. In the basket under a balloon, inside a moon projectile, inside a submarine or on a ship surrounded by icebergs - what happens to a group of people in a confined space, is the central theme of many Verne novels. At one stage of the manuscript, Verne's working title for the Hatteras story

was "Les Robinsons du pôle"¹⁰, by this indicating how he saw the similarities – being isolated (on a field of ice) in the arctic vs (on an island) in the southern seas.

Soon after returning from his Nordic round trip, Verne gets on with the great work about Hatteras, and his conquer of the North Pole. The weeks in 1861, meeting people, culture and exotic scenery, gave impulses and material to write convincingly about the north. The novel about the expedition of Cpt. Hatteras has several references to Norwegian culture¹¹.

Hatteras and Nansen, «Forward» and «Fram»

2014, is the 150th anniversary of Verne's extraordinary journeys to the center of the earth and to the North Pole. And the truly realistic, but fictional journey set in the arctic, inspired several polar explorers like Nordenskiöld and Nansen. We know for sure that Adolf Erik Nordenskiöld (1832-



1901), the first to navigate the Northeast Passage, had read the Hatteras book. He even wrote the preface to the 1892 edition of the novel in Sweden. The Norwegian polar explorer Fridtjof Nansen (1861-1930) also most likely knew the novel since early age. The book was available in Norway from the 1870s. In this he may have read about the «Forward» - frozen within a field of ice – drifting towards the Pole. He never put it plainly himself, but the fact that he named his famous polar vessel «Fram» – which is the Norwegian equivalent to the name «Forward» - has been taken by many commentators, as a proof of inspiration. Anyway, both Nansen and Verne were quite aware of each other, and, as we shall see, they did have contact.

The first chapter of the novel contains passages like a historic text book on arctic expeditions with the famous ships and their captains. Verne displays in-depth knowledge about the expeditions of Franklin, Scoresby, Ross and McClure. In Verne's days, the arctic was uncharted territory. So far, no one had sailed the Northwest Passage – travelled from the Atlantic to the Pacific along the northern shores of Canada. In fact, scientist had no proof whether the North Pole was in the middle of an ocean or on dry land. Jules Verne

¹⁰ Butcher (2005): Notes on Text and Translation in *The adventures of Captain Hatteras*, New York: Oxford University Press

¹¹ References to Norwegian culture in AH – can be seen on: <http://julesverne.wordpress.com/jv-i-nor-tekstsitater/>

presented theories about ocean currents in this area, both in AH and *Le Pays des fourrures* (with the floating island): “**cette île errante, qui les portait alors, était peut-être le vrai véhicule pour aller au pôle Nord! Avec un courant favorable, pourquoi n’atteindrait-on pas cet inaccessible point du globe ?**” (Verne, 1873 – PF)



Nansen will be remembered for his daring plans in the arctic, where he deliberately let his ship freeze up, and drift across the polar basin on the currents that sets from the Bering Strait towards the North Pole. For this purpose, the «Fram» with its reinforced hull, was specially built to resist the immense pressure of the pack ice. The key elements of both Verne’s novel and the real-world feat of Nansen, were ocean currents. An unusually strong ship also was crucial. The situation where a ship is immobilized in the ice, was in the tale about Cpt. Hatteras a dangerous consequence of the conditions, in the case of Nansen it was a calculated

plan. In his memoirs, Nansen credited the meteorologist Henrik Mohn (1835-1916) as the source of the initial ideas. Frozen debris from the shipwreck of the polar vessel «Jeanette», had been carried across the Arctic Ocean, and was later found close to Greenland.

After the famous expedition on board the «Fram» (1893-96) Nansen toured Europe to speak about his expedition, the farthest north to date. In 1897, he visited ‘Société normande de Géographie’ in Rouen¹². Verne initially planned to be present, but unfortunately had to stay home. Instead he sent a telegram that was read out loud at the venue. In this, we hear how Verne clearly saw Nansen’s expedition as a real-world version of the one he had visualized himself, some 30 years earlier: “**‘J’aurais été bien heureux de fêter celui qui a accompli en réalité le voyage que je n’ai fait, hélas, qu’en imagination’. Le capitaine Hatteras, c’est Nansen prévu et annoncé au monde**” (Verne 1897)

[‘I have been happy to celebrate he who accomplished in reality, the [same] journey that I have, but alas, only in imagination.’]



Several journalists were present to interview Nansen. From the newspapers, the French public where already aware that parallels had been drawn between Verne’s fictional journeys, and explorers of the day. The question was asked, whether Nansen also was one of these ‘students’. He replied that, “Yes, I have read again and again with passion, the books of Jules Verne”. Afterwards he was asked to put down in writing some lines that could be returned to the ‘master’: “I convey my heartfelt greetings to Jules Verne, whose very fine and challenging books have inspired an interest for scientific research. You are the man of dreams. What was but life, without dreams!” (Nansen 1897).¹³

In this light, Verne’s selection of the year (1861) for the action in the Hatteras book gets an almost symbolic meaning. It was the very year that the author visited Scandinavia for the first time. Maybe he wanted the action of the novel to coincide with his own northern journey – maybe the first ideas for the book was already in his head. The very same days in 1861, while Jules Verne travelled on board the «Viken» across the Skagerrak and up the [Oslo] fjord towards Christiania – John Hatteras and the «Forward» ‘was’ at the North Pole. Two months after Verne had returned to Paris, Fridtjof Nansen was born, in October 1861.

¹² Details presented by Volker Dehs in the BSJV (no.17) -article; “Quelques Temoignages arctiques”

¹³ Journal d’Amiens. Moniteur de la Somme, 1. April 1897 p. 2, Source: Dehs, Volker (2004) *Quelques Temoignages Arctiques 1867-1897* Revue Jules Verne no. 17

It has been commented regarding Verne's 'Voyages Extraordinaires' that, while Alexandre Dumas dramatized historic events, Verne selected to base his novels on geographical topics. The author Roland Huntford¹⁴ comments in his Nansen biography, the similarities between Verne's literary work and the real-life polar project, and indicates that Nansen probably owed at least the name of his ship «Fram» to Verne. He also quotes a Paris newspaper¹⁵: "Nansen belonged to a different race ... He spends on actions what we spend on words. We make our journeys around the world in the books of Jules Verne, as we learn the history of France through the novels of Alexandre Dumas. And when one fine day ...we are brought face to face with a Nansen we are just as surprised as if we were to pass Captain [Grant] or d'Artagnan in [the] street" (Le Figaro 1897, according to Huntford)¹⁶.

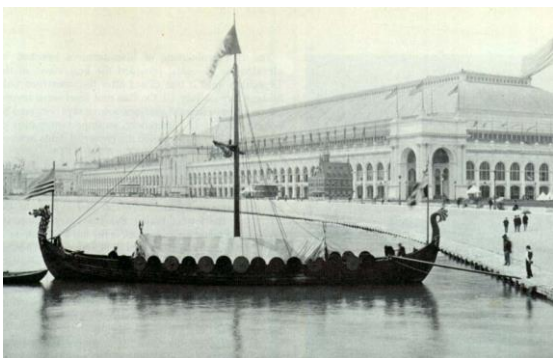
Nansen in fiction

A couple of the novels written shortly after 1897, echoes Verne's fascination for Nansen. The accomplishments of the Norwegian explorer are mentioned both in *En Magellanie* and *Bourses de voyage*, written in this period. In *Magellanie*¹⁷, we meet the protagonist Kaw-djer. Jules Verne has supplied him with characteristics that make him almost a 'brother' of captain Nemo, with an obscured background, possibly of higher education with exceptional language skills: "Had he been in touch with British, French, German, Norwegian or Spanish traders – any of them might have taken him for a fellow countryman. [...] he might have accomplished great things had he been possessed by a passion for discovery akin to Livingstone, Stanley, and Nansen" (Verne, 2002:36 – EM).



In *Bourses de voyage*, the sailing boys from the Antillean school, were winning students representing several nations. From the Swedish colony Saint Barthélemy [Saint Barts] came a young man called Magnus Anders, apparently ready for transatlantic journeys¹⁸. In the opening chapter the students tries to guess where the promised journey might take them: "No, an exploration of the polar regions!, said Magnus Anders, who would have gladly followed in the footsteps of his glorious compatriot¹⁹ Nansen" (Verne, 2013:6 – BV).

The names that appear in this (last)sentence, have the year 1893 in common. That year, the World's Columbian²⁰ exposition was held in Chicago, to celebrate the discovery of the Americas. In



Norway, a viking ship replica was built based on recent excavations, to demonstrate that viking ships could indeed navigate the oceans, and was the first to reach the shores of North America. In charge of its passage across the Atlantic, was captain Magnus Andersen (1857-1938) from Vestfold.

So, in the summer of 1893, two vessels left Norway on two remarkable journeys in maritime history, both headlining front pages internationally. The «Fram» going north, The «Viking» sailing west. Most likely,

neither escaped the attention of the maritime minded Verne, as indicated by this sentence in the novel.

¹⁴ Roland Huntford was correspondent for *The Observer* in Scandinavia, and has written biographies about both Shackleton and Nansen

¹⁵ The newspaper *Le Figaro*, 27 March, 1897

¹⁶ Only partly correctly quoted (by R.H.) from *Le Figaro*, March 1897, S. 1 – according to translator, German JVclub: Scholtz

¹⁷ Manuscript not published in Verne's lifetime. (with alterations, published as *Les Naufragés du « Jonathan »* in 1909)

¹⁸ "I believe that it will take place rather on board a big ship, perhaps a transatlantic," declared Magnus Anders, who saw himself already in the middle of the ocean.' (Verne, 2013:6 – BV)

¹⁹ In BV, Magnus Anders is Swedish, still considered a 'compatriot' of Nansen from Norway. The author evidently regarded the Swedish/Norwegian union (1814-1905) as one state.

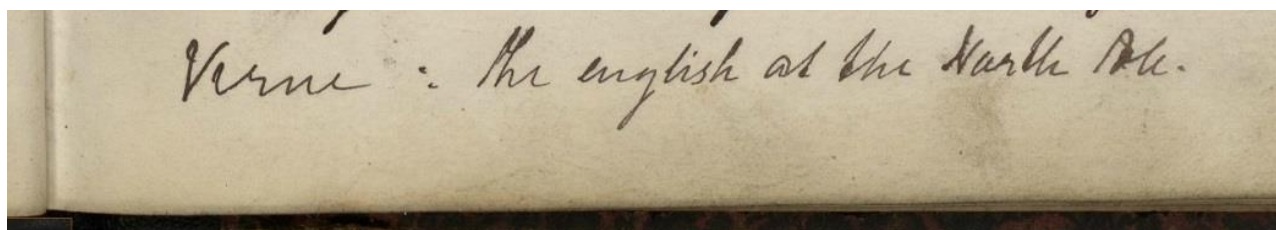
²⁰ 400th anniversary of Christopher Columbus' arrival in the New World in 1492

Jules Verne on board

As we can see, Nansen appears in some of Verne's texts. They never met, but telegrams were exchanged. But, can we conclude that Verne was Nansen's source of the theories on which he based his journey with the «Fram» towards the North Pole? Was the naming of the polar vessel «Fram» a homage to Verne, Hatteras and the «Forward»? Did he get his initial ideas from reading Verne's novels²¹ at early age? Did he in fact read the Hatteras novel at all?

We will of course probably never know, and Nansen, regardless of which source was his initial inspiration, definitely had scientific research as basis for his expedition towards the North Pole. Anyway, Fridtjof Nansen was never clear about the origin of the name selected for his ship, but apparently told publicly (in Rouen) he had read some of Verne's novels. According to sources, his crew members, who in 1896 on Svalbard, met the participants on the unsuccessful expedition of balloonist S.A. Andrée (1854-1897), told they had dreamt about being picked up by balloon – while at the same time reading Verne's *Five weeks in a balloon* on board «Fram».

A recent search among Nansen's private documents gives more answers. The collection of handwritings at the National library in Oslo, has several documents connected to his expedition. Here we find a catalogue²² over the library on board the «Fram». On this list we find *Five weeks in a balloon* and



“The English at the North Pole”, an English edition of Verne's *Voyages et aventures du capitaine Hatteras*.

Abbreviations:

Verne novels; AH, BV, EG, HG, PF, VC, VL, TL – ref. <http://jv.gilead.org.il/biblio/voyages.html>

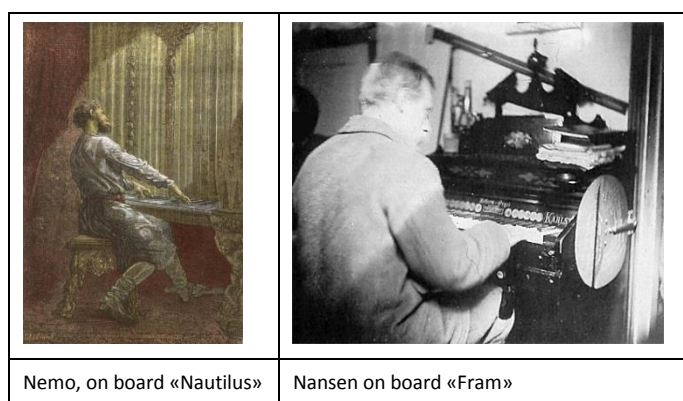
BSJV: *Bulletin de la Société Jules Verne*

JM: Verne, J : *Joyeuses Misères de trois voyageurs en Scandinavie*

[some translated Eng.'key'sentences' originate from William Butcher's English online version at ibiblio.org/julesverne]

JV MS 12.5: Verne Carnet 1861, Bibliothèques d'Amiens Métropole, JV MS 12.5

[Carnet/Diary transcriptions by Volker Dehs]



²¹ The idea of a floating field of ice, drifting towards the pole, is presented both in AH and PF

²² Kept at National library; Nasjonalbiblioteket, Oslo – håndskriftsamlingen, Ms.fol. 1924 : 2 : a : 14

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Cover graphic, attachment 'Geo' 2003
Drawing by Jules Verne of the 'Kastellet', Stockholm harbour
Photo, 'Kastellholmen', Stockholm

Page 3:
Photo, Steamer "Svea" [between Germany-Sweden], Swedish mail museum
Cover, Bennett guide book, 1896
Photo, Steamer "Stettin" on Göta canal 1870

page 4:
Graphic novel, Joyas Literarias: *Las indias negras*
Photo, steamers "Viken" and "Vidar", Norwegian mail museum

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News clips, Morgenbladet, 1861, dated
Engraving BL, G.Roux, 1886 'Rowers arriving at lake Tinn'
Drawing, Robert Taylor Pritchett 1879 [Rowing boat]

Page 6:
Photo, 'Pram' at Tinn, Telemark
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Page 7:
Engraving, É.Riou: "Forward"
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Page 8:
Photo, Nansens "Fram" in the arctic, 1894
Graphic/Photo, Nansen wintering [at Frans Josef's land (?)]

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Book cover illustration; Tony Renault and Magnus Anders', *Travel Scholarships*, Wesleyan University Press, 2013
Photo, Viking ship "Viking" at World Exhibition i Chicago, 1893

Page 10:
Scan, from catalogue over library on board "Fram" - Nansen documents at National library, Oslo

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