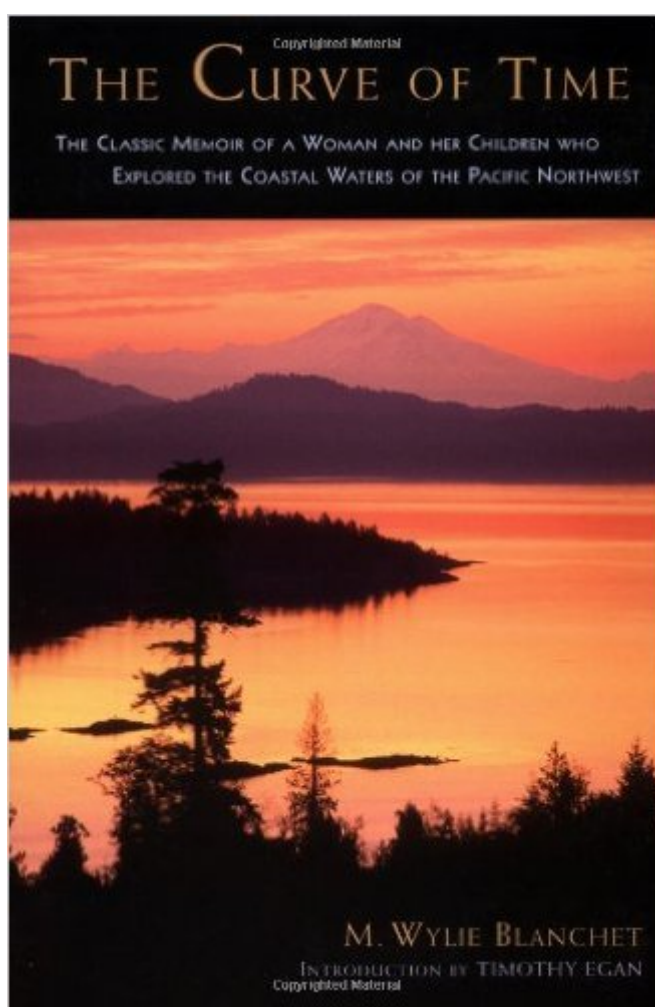


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The Curve Of Time: The Classic Memoir Of A Woman And Her Children Who Explored The Coastal Waters Of The Pacific Northwest (Adventura Books)



Synopsis

After her husband died in 1927, leaving her with five small children, everyone expected the struggles of single motherhood on a remote island to overcome M. Wylie Blanchet. Instead, this courageous woman became one of the pioneers of family travel, acting as both mother and captain of the twenty-five-foot boat that became her family's home during the long Northwest summers. Blanchet's lyrically written account reads like fantastic fiction, but her adventures are all very real. There are dangers; rough water, bad weather, wild animals; but there are also the quiet respect and deep peace of a woman teaching her children the wonder and awesome depth of the natural world. Filled with observations on natural history and the wonders of the wild, (Blanchet's) prose, like the waterfall she describes, sings.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I've read the the book many times and never tire of it. My father was one of the five children: Peter. I was only 5 or 6 when Capi died but I can still remember her. She was a very 'matter of fact' woman. My dad was able to relate many other stories and expand on the ones in the book. When he grew up he sailed up and down the coast. Only 1 of the 5 children remain alive today and she (Joan) resides in Victoria.

I read M. Wylie Blanchet's book, THE CURVE OF TIME, for the first time last summer and decided

to re-read it again this year, as it was so utterly delightful. Ms. Blanchet's love of nature, the ocean, her wonderful children and people--from the hermits who lived in splendid isolation on the BC Coast in the '30's and '40's to the Coast Indians, who left lonely villages behind--is one of the best books ever. This collection of essays, in no particular chronological order, left me amazed at this remarkably self-assured widow who made sure her children learned about people, literature and the beautiful world that surrounded them in British Columbia. It was easy to imagine my own children in that environment and I could almost see my children swimming with hers in those great sun-warmed coves in BC. The book ended with the "sense of place" they all felt upon returning to their "Little House" on Vancouver Island, surrounded by sea and forest. I wish I could somehow learn more about their lives. Thank you, Timothy Egan for making sure we all knew about this obscure author.

The book is wonderful both for the things that it does and does not say. The book is full of charming episodes that made me envy them and the certainty and beauty of their life: the rare pleasures this little family sees in their boat; the way that they read Maeterlinck together; the other pioneering people they meet on their way. But just as the beauty is very real, so too are the things that she barely touches on: the loss of her husband; the fear for her children; the decision to turn her back on the world of the cities. I admired her tremendously for the hard things as well as the easy. The lyricism of the book was deepened by the clear difficulty of her choices. Highly recommended.

A thoroughly readable account of summers spent in a simpler time. Muriel Wylie Blanchet's accounts of many consecutive summers spent sailing north from Victoria into the wild, sparsely populated islands and coastal communities of British Columbia is a delightful read. She prevailed as a mariner, amateur mechanic, and raconteur at an age and at a point in history when merely being a widow and mother of 5 young children would have been daunting enough. You can feel the anticipation of her young family as they embark each year to see new places and meet new friends. As they grow, so does the reader's appreciation for the isolation, raw physical beauty, and many charms of Canada's west coast. I have referred many friends to this book, and all have become devotees. You do not need to have ever been to the west coast, or even to have been on a boat, to appreciate this delightful tale.

This is clearly my favorite book on cruising the Inside Passage and about women. Capi was an inspiration not only as an adventurer but as a mother, accomplished mariner and author. I only wish she had written more or that more had been written about this amazing woman. Her literary style

was wonderfully understated. She tells an exciting story of cruising the Inside Passage alone with five small children as though she were taking an inconsequential stroll around the block. Only those that have experienced these waters can fully appreciate the courage and self confidence of this remarkable woman. This book should be mandatory reading for all young girls.

My boyfriend and I read this book and because of it took 3 weeks to cruise the Desolation Sound area. We would read the stories from the book filled with background history as well as Ms. Blanchet's excursions in the area and then we would experience it for our selves. Recalling how Capt. Vancouver discovered the area and then how this single woman with 5 children in the mid-1920's experienced this area. It was fabulous and the area is still a lot like it was 50 or even hundreds of years ago. Breath taking scenery and a sense of peace and freedom is the only way I can describe my experience of the Inside Passage. I will never be the same and anytime I want to go back I can through reading the stories in this book.

This book was highly recommended to me by a friend who has cruised the Inside Passage and explored the islets of British Columbia and Alaska for the past 15 years. Many beautiful places are vividly described by Ms. 'Capi' Blanchet. The lasting impression is the feeling of having spent time as a companion to the author and her children as they experience the adventure of travel and exploration as they cruise far from home in their small boat, in the 1930's. I enjoyed meeting unique people like 'Mike' - the knowledgeable recluse who expresses much of what must be the authors own philosophy of life. Altogether this little book is a bit of history, a bit of philosophy, and a bit of adventure. I didn't want it to end.

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