

"Goodbye Old Buddy" -- Pirate Freedom murder mystery, take two

The Urth list — 27 messages, 9 voices, 01 Dec 2008

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/5248>

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Dave Tallman — 01 Dec 2008, 16:23

I previously posted a theory that Chris/Ignacio had killed Valentin and set Captain Burt up for betrayal by Lesage. I now think that idea was mistaken.

Chris says confessions that don't confess are useless (p. 281). He spends time justifying why he will break his vow of chastity (p. 321). If he was planning all of these other horrible crimes, wouldn't he leave justifications for these also? It's also improbable that he would set Captain Burt up for betrayal in a way that could get Novia killed or raped. There are alternatives if other time travelers are involved. In particular, Captain Burt and Lesage could be time-travelers.

Start with the man who received this confessional manuscript, or a criminal associate of his who got hold of it. Couldn't that man see a golden opportunity to become a rich pirate himself? From what Chris said about the wristwatches (p. 20) it looks like the whole monastery went back in time a year or more before Chris left. The man who would become Lesage could have hitched a ride and gotten out to establish himself before Chris did. He would have all the advance knowledge he needed to carry out the killing of Valentin and the betrayal of Captain Burt. In this case, Valentin's master was not the same man. The bogus Lesage killed Valentin, and put out a large reward he knew he would never have to pay, in order to misappropriate this background story for himself.

Taking the theory a step further, it's possible that "Captain Burt" was a young criminal associate of Lesage taken back in time to play that role. There are a few hints:

1. Captain Burt is marked as a time traveler by his anachronistic use of the racial slur "Dago" (p. 39), which wasn't used until the 1800's (the age of pirates was circa 1650). He also translates a ship's name ("Saint Charity" p. 39) which a real man of the sea would never do (p. 232).
2. He hints that he gets the Jersey/New Jersey joke (pp. 39, 138).
3. Burt is taller than the average person of the time, though shorter than Chris ("...the deck beams just cleared his head. I had to crouch in that cabin, just like I crouched in our cabin on *Sabina*" p. 279).
4. "The *Weald* was the first to put out. At the time, I thought nothing of it." (p. 287). Why would Chris ever think something of it? He may have had suspicions that Burt had a secret rendezvous with Lesage. Lesage probably kept his knowledge secret from his accomplice, and only told him what he needed to know just before it was necessary. He certainly didn't tell him about the betrayal.
5. From the narrative, the time-travelers might have expected that near-death in the past would send them back as adults to the time of their own birth. Chris came back when he nearly died in the hurricane. This may be

the source of Burt's confidence at the end (p. 304).

6. If Burt did come back to his own time and survived (a modern ER might have saved him (p. 303)), there's one more thing he might do. He might have a son genetically engineered, and name him Chris. Burt may be the mysterious father who trained his son in criminal survival techniques and then left in him the monastery to go back in time. Memories of the attack on Portobello made Chris dream of his father (p. 235). Could he have recognized Burt as a young version of his father on a subconscious level?

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Dave Tallman — 01 Dec 2008, 16:24 · follows Dave Tallman

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Dave Tallman — 01 Dec 2008, 16:43 · follows Dave Tallman

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Dave Tallman — 01 Dec 2008, 16:47 · follows Dave Tallman

Oops -- sorry about multiple sends of the same message. My mailer was malfunctioning and it looked like nothing was getting through, so I tried multiple times.

Mark Millman — 01 Dec 2008, 19:44 · in reply to Dave Tallman

Dear Mr. Tallman,

On Monday 1 December 2008, you wrote:
I recently posted a theory here that Chris/Ignacio murdered Valentin and helped Lesage set up Captain Burt for betrayal. I now think the truth is more complicated than that. . . . There are alternatives if other time travelers are involved. In particular, Captain Burt and Lesage could be time-travelers.

This hypothesis strikes me as unnecessarily complicated, but that's not the only reason to doubt it.

Taking the theory a step further, it's possible that "Captain Burt" was a young criminal associate of Lesage taken back in time to play that role. There are a few hints:

1. Captain Burt is marked as a time traveler by his anachronistic use of the racial slur "Dago" (p. 39), which wasn't used until the 1800's (the age of pirates was circa 1650).

I'm afraid that both of these points are factually incorrect. The O.E.D. cites "dago" as appearing in print before 1725. As a slang word, it's likely to have been in use for a considerable time--several decades--before its first print citation. At the time, it was unlikely to have been considered a slur by its users any more than Shakespeare would have considered his use of the word "Polack" in

Hamlet to be a slur. Wolfe's having Burt correct himself when he first says it to Chris (also on page 39) is probably inaccurate, historically speaking. If it was insulting, it's more likely to have been a class issue than an ethnic one; "dago" might originally have suggested that the person of whom it was used was a common deckhand, which would have offended anybody of a superior rank.

The Golden Age of Piracy is generally held to have been between 1680 and 1720. Your date of

1650 is a generation too early.

He also translates a ship's name
("Saint Charity" p. 39) which a real man
of the sea would never do (p. 232).

This strikes me as more likely to be Wolfe's way to indicate that despite his denial ("We've been hours tryin' to get our bearin's. None of us speaks the lingo, you see," also on 39), Burt understands some Spanish. Alternatively, he may be so far from able to speak Spanish that he doesn't try to pronounce the ship's name, but gives the closest English equivalent that he can. (A more correct, and certainly more idiomatic, translation would be "_Holy Charity_".) Chris may also feel that the name of the ship that he tells Novia not to translate--_Castillo Blanco_--may be too funny, as she translates it to "_White Castle_".

2. He hints that he gets the Jersey/
New Jersey joke (pp. 39, 138).

I see no reason to believe that Burt thinks Chris is from anywhere other than the island of Jersey. It's probably why he asks whether Chris understands French (page 39 again); as a Channel Islander, he could easily come into frequent contact with Frenchmen. His suggestion that Chris go to New Jersey with his anticipated winnings (page 138) is probably suggested by (a) his belief that Chris is from Jersey, which puts him in mind of George Carteret's colony--so named because Carteret is also a Jerseyman--and (b) the likelihoods that Chris' money will go further and that he will be less likely to be discovered and prosecuted as a pirate in the colony.

3. Burt is taller than the average person of the time, though shorter than Chris ("...the deck beams just cleared his head. I had to crouch in that cabin, just like I crouched in our cabin on Sabina" p. 279).

This is irrelevant. George Washington was born in 1732, just after the GAO, and was 6'2" (188 cm) tall. Burt, as a former midshipman, is probably of good birth, from the gentry or better, and would have had adequate nutrition to reach his full height.

The time paradoxes in all this boggle the mind. But this seems far more satisfying than the original "evil scheming Chris" theory.

I do agree that the "evil scheming Chris" approach seems off-kilter for Wolfe.

Best,

Mark Millman

Dave Tallman — 01 Dec 2008, 21:28 · follows Mark Millman

Mark Millman wrote:

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The Golden Age of Piracy is generally held to have been between 1680 and 1720. Your date of 1650 is a generation too early.

Thank you for the date corrections. There's still enough of a gap between 1680 and 1725 that Wolfe may have intended a clue, but it's not as clear as I first thought.

...his belief that Chris is from Jersey, which puts him in mind of George

Carteret's colony--so named because Carteret is also a Jerseyman...

By the way, Burt refers to George Carteret as if still alive on p. 138, and Carteret died in 1680. That tends to limit how late the story can be set,

Burt, as a former midshipman, is probably of good birth, from the gentry or

better, and would have had adequate nutrition to reach his full height.

He says of himself on p. 55, "We weren't rich, you twig? My pa's a grocer." Still, a grocer's son might have access to better food than most.

It may be that Captain Burt was a pirate of that time who was duped by Lesage, perhaps believing the man had oracular powers. The idea that Lesage is a time-traveler who read Chris's manuscript can stand independently.

Dave Tallman — 02 Dec 2008, 17:38 · follows Dave Tallman

1. Captain Burt is marked as a time traveler by his anachronistic use of the racial slur "Dago" (p. 39). According to the Online Etymology Dictionary <<http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=dago>> it dates from 1823, and was used of Spanish or Portugese sailors on English or American ships. But Mark Millman on the urth list<<http://lists.urth.net/pipermail/urth-urth.net/2008-December/010781.html>>says the O.E.D. cites the word as appearing in print before 1725. I checked the O.E.D. online, and the only early reference it cites is the diary of Jeremiah Bumstead (1723)<http://www.mayflowerfamilies.com/diaries/jeremiah_bumstead_diary_1723.htm>, which says "Ye negro Dago hanged for fiering Mr. Powell's house..." which is ambiguous since it could be the man's name. The next reference they give is dated 1832. I stand by my theory that this is a genuine anachronism. (The age of pirates that Chris visits is circa 1680).

2. To refine the date further, we know Drake sailed around the world in the *Golden Hind* "almost a hundred years ago" (p .139). That should mean less than 100 years, and Drake's voyage was from 1577 to 1580. Thalassocrat on the Urth list<<http://lists.urth.net/htdig.cgi/urth-urth.net/2007-December/008418.html>>suggested a date of 1675 based on this.

Dave Tallman — 02 Dec 2008, 20:27 · follows Dave Tallman

I just found another reference that helps clinch the case for Captain Burt's "Dago" anachronism, and ties him directly to Lesage.

Asuka calls Chris a "rital" and he says "I suppose she had picked that one up from Lesage, along with the rest of her French" (p. 130). According to the French Wikipedia entry for ritual <<http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rital>> it says (roughly translated) "This term was given by the French to the Italian immigrant workmen who came in mass before and after the Second World War to work in France and Belgium." Two anachronistic racial slurs for our two suspected time travelers? This is probably no coincidence.

Dave Tallman — 02 Dec 2008, 22:42 · follows Dave Tallman

The more I check out Burt, the more bogus he looks. Here's more...

Burt's story of being a midshipman on half-pay (p. 55) is a lie. Midshipmen were in training to be officers, but were not yet officers. The lowest rank to get half-pay <http://www.napoleonguide.com/navy_rnhalfpay.htm> when a ship is "laid up" in reserve was a lieutenant.

The HMS Lion <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HMS_Lion_%281557%29>, Burt's supposed ship (p. 39) was a ship of the line from 1658 to 1677, and during that time its guns were increased from 48 to 60. It does not appear to have been "laid up" during the time Burt could have been in the Royal Navy.

Burt's knife was supposed to be very good because it was made of Sheffield steel (p. 55). Steel was made in Sheffield<<http://www.northeastengland.talktalk.net/SouthYorks%20STEEL>>from Chaucer's time, but it was not especially good until 1750.

Henry Eissler — 03 Dec 2008, 04:59 · in reply to Dave Tallman

Dave Tallman wrote:

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Dave,

Unfortunately, I don't have a copy of *Pirate Freedom* to reference, and it's been a year since I read it, but I'd like to make a couple points, nonetheless.

Others on this list postulated, and I happen to agree, that there are at least 2 Chris2's. Jaime being the other. I read this spoiler theory while I was still reading the book, and so noticed 2 things: One is that Chris does his musing about this world being either heaven or hell right after Jaime burns to death horribly. The other is Father Chris asking God to please help him past the temptation to warn away young Chris and his father (presumably to have Sabina all to himself). I believe that Mr. Wolfe feels that, though there can be multiple futures, there can be only one past. So the Father Chris that did not rise above the temptation (and must have left the monastery as soon as he hit the past), must have gone insane when he saw Sabina's sketches of young Chris.

I would be willing to believe that there was also a Father Chris bent on revenge.

I do not, however, believe that Jaime sailed to New Guinea in order to kill Valentin. Valentin's murder is indeed mysterious.

During the aforementioned discussion, I recall some supposition about Bram Burt being another iteration of Chris. I don't believe that, but you do make some excellent points toward his also being a time traveller. I can't wait to buy myself a copy and read it again with that in mind. One idea has occurred to me upon reading your theory and considering it, and that is that though I assumed the first time through that Chris was the product of genetic engineering ("...my father had me made..."), it might actually be that he is a clone, and that clones with Chris' face are not uncommon in his time. Therefore it wouldn't surprise him if Brother Ignacio had look-alikes at the monastery. Just a thought.

At any rate, to my mind, Brother Ignacio represents the best Father Chris: the one that gets to live in heaven. I don't believe he would have murdered Valentin or Bram Burt.

I really loved this book. Thanks for reminding me of it.

---H

Henry Eissler — 03 Dec 2008, 05:01 · in reply to Dave Tallman

Dave Tallman wrote:

Start with the man who received this confessional manuscript, or a criminal associate of his who got hold of it. Couldn't that man see a golden opportunity to become a rich pirate himself?

One more point-

I think the man who received the manuscript was none other than G.W.. The same guy who translated those old scrolls, etc..

---H

JBarach at aol.com — 03 Dec 2008, 05:41 · follows Henry Eissler

Henry writes:

I think the man who received the manuscript was none other than G.W.

That's correct, I think. This is a commonplace in science fiction and fantasy. In fact, you can write a whole alternative biography of Edgar Rice Burroughs (and someone has, though I forget where I read it) based on the information he gives you in the forewords to his various books about meeting John Carter, and so forth. Wolfe likes to play with this kind of stuff, as his introduction to the Latro books indicates.

John

*****Life should be easier. So should your homepage. Try the NEW AOL.com.
(<http://www.aol.com/?optin=new-dp&icid=aolcom40vanity&ncid=emlcntaolcom00000002>)

Dave Tallman — 03 Dec 2008, 16:22 · follows JBarach at aol.com

Henry Eissler wrote:

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I don't read the temptation paragraphs that way. "What if my father decided not to go to Cuba to run the casino? What if he did not enroll me in the monastery school because of something I... happened to say to him? Novia would be lost. Everything would be lost. *None if it would ever have happened*." (p. 226) He didn't want to warn away young Chris and his father in order to have Sabina all to himself. On the contrary, he was afraid that he would change the past and

end up not knowing Sabina at all. The temptation was simply to see himself as a young man, and to see his father again.

The idea of multiple alternate Chris's accessing a common past is plausible but not supported by the text IMHO. If true, it would mean no treasure for poor Ignacio, since Chris3 would have had to dig it up to become the rich Senor Guzman.

In any case, there is a physical clue showing Jaime wasn't Chris. Page 302: "Novia had been married to Jaime Guzman for thirty-four months and had never been pregnant, so it had seemed to us that there was a good chance she never would be. Now I knew it had been him. Maybe he had known it too, and that was why he was so jealous." In other words, Jaime was sterile and Chris was not. Also 34 months is nearly three years -- Chris3 didn't have enough time to do this, even if he left as soon as wristwatches disappeared at the monastery.

Dave Tallman — 03 Dec 2008, 16:53 · follows Dave Tallman

Henry Eissler wrote:

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That's not quite feasible, because the world of Fr. Cris has city-to-city monorails, human genetic engineering, and the communists out of power in Cuba. But for the sake of argument, let's say the recipient managed to transmit the manuscript back to our G.W. without revealing it to anyone else. It's still possible for the other time travelers to know enough to intervene in Chris's life, if Chris's father is Captain Burt2.

Burt2 seems to be the mastermind behind the whole plot. If so, the "betrayal" by Lesage isn't what it appears to be. When Burt appears to be dying, he is just sending himself back to the future. He knows he will recover (in the year of his own birth) and he will pick up his share of the gold at secure location agreed on with Lesage in advance. No wonder he is smiling and confident at the last. He knows he will survive, because it was his older self who recruited him and Lesage to carry out this mission in the first place. He will use the pirate gold (plus knowledge of the future for the next few years) to establish himself as a gangster. Part of the money will go to create his genetically engineered son, Chris.

Burt's first name is Bram, which the appendix says is short for Abraham. The biblical Abraham is famous for almost offering up his only son Isaac to God when God asked him to. After this test of his faith, he was blessed to be the father of multitudes of descendants. The New Testament takes Isaac as a type of Christ. So here we have Bram giving up his only son to the monastery to be sent back in time on a "mission from God." Bram will have multitudes of progeny descended from Chris and his children, and they may be highly successful in investing their pirate wealth given their foreknowledge of history.

Christopher (a name meaning Christ-bearer) "dies" and comes back in a way that his bride Novia doesn't recognize at first, just like the early disciples had trouble recognizing the resurrected Christ. They will travel around the world, as the Church spread the Gospel.

Henry Eissler — 04 Dec 2008, 03:13 · in reply to Dave Tallman

I think you're right; 3 years is too long. I don't know about the sterility thing serving as proof, however- that could just have been the will of God. Jaime could have contracted something along the way. Anything. And we don't know that Ignacio is potent, either.

Dave Tallman wrote:

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Henry Eissler — 04 Dec 2008, 03:14 · in reply to Dave Tallman

Of course, I forgot that even Fr. Chris' time was in our future. I don't remember anything about city-to-city monorails, though.

But the manuscript that Chris passed on to his 'confessor' doesn't really identify the monastery. It's walking distance to Havana, but how unique is that?

Still, your Bram Burt-as-mastermind theory makes me wonder. The Abraham reference makes sense.

But death is death. You don't mean that he believes that his experiences will be carried on into his infant self, do you? That doesn't make sense to me.

I have to read the book again.

'Til then,

---H

Dave Tallman wrote:

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Matthew Keeley — 04 Dec 2008, 04:23 · in reply to Henry Eissler

On Wed, Dec 3, 2008 at 10:14 PM, Henry Eissler
<henryeissleriii at mindspring.com> wrote:
Of course, I forgot that even Fr. Chris' time was in our future. I don't remember anything about city-to-city monorails, though.
I have to read the book again.
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I'm pretty sure there is something about monorails. Fairly early in the text, though I could be wrong about its location in the book. Given how long such a system would take to construct, and given how little time the Cuban Commies seem to have left in the Real World, I believe there was some speculation that Chris comes from sort of parallel future? I don't imagine that Wolfe thinks we'll build an extensive monorail system before the Castros get swept into the dustbin of history - he's too much of an engineer and a realist.

-Matt

Dave Tallman — 04 Dec 2008, 12:19 · in reply to Henry Eissler

Henry Eissler wrote:
Of course, I forgot that even Fr. Chris' time was in our future. I don't remember anything about city-to-city monorails, though.

Near the part about temptation we were talking about, Fr. Chris said he could take the monorail to New Jersey (p. 226).

But the manuscript that Chris passed on to his 'confessor' doesn't really identify the monastery. It's walking distance to Havana, but how unique is that?

The name of the monastery is given: Our Lady of Bethlehem (p. 58).

Still, your Bram Burt-as-mastermind theory makes me wonder. The Abraham reference makes sense.
But death is death. You don't mean that he believes that his experiences will be carried on into his infant self, do you? That doesn't make sense to me.

In this theory I'm assuming that the same thing will happen to Burt that happened to Chris: when he nearly died after the hurricane he returned to the time of his own birth, as an adult. If I'm right, Burt would return to modern-day Rio Hato and could get fixed up there.

It's also possible that the death scene was faked. Burt didn't let Chris check him very carefully. It's a bit too pat that Chris returned to the battle scene just in time to receive Burt's dying

bequest. Burt could have used a safer means to return to the future after Chris left.

Dave Tallman — 04 Dec 2008, 12:25 · in reply to Matthew Keeley

Matthew Keeley wrote:

I'm pretty sure there is something about monorails. Fairly early in the text, though I could be wrong about its location in the book. Given how long such a system would take to construct, and given how little time the Cuban Commies seem to have left in the Real World, I believe there was some speculation that Chris comes from sort of parallel future? I don't imagine that Wolfe thinks we'll build an extensive monorail system before the Castros get swept into the dustbin of history - he's too much of an engineer and a realist.

The first trip of Chris to the past resulted in the early invention of the jib sail. Perhaps the changes brought about by Chris and his descendants pushed technology along faster than in our world.

brunians at brunians.org — 04 Dec 2008, 14:22 · in reply to Dave Tallman

The first trip of Chris to the past resulted in the early invention of the jib sail. Perhaps the changes brought about by Chris and his descendants pushed technology along faster than in our world.

I am extremely skeptical of the jib sail being invented as late as the late eighteenth century. It just pegs my BS detector.

Allan Anderson — 04 Dec 2008, 15:49 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

brunians at brunians.org wrote:

The first trip of Chris to the past resulted in the early invention of the jib sail. Perhaps the changes brought about by Chris and his descendants pushed technology along faster than in our world.

I am extremely skeptical of the jib sail being invented as late as the late eighteenth century. It just pegs my BS detector.

Well, this site (<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/systems/ship/sail-sails.htm>) says "Until the jib was invented in the 18th century,..."

It's an interesting read, with some descriptions of ship designs which remind me a bit of Chris's. With all the mentions of Fr. Chris looking up internet sites on pirates, I imagine Wolfe did a bit of the same.

Dave Tallman — 04 Dec 2008, 16:18 · follows Allan Anderson

Now that we have cleared Chris of the murder of Valentin and the other time-crimes of Burt and Lesage, it's time to re-evaluate his morality. Wolfe invites us to do this: "I am not like that -- either I have never lost Him or I have never sought him. When you read this you can say which" (p. 17).

Chris started out with plenty of original sin; he had wise-guy in his genes. His father sent him to the monastery school in hopes that he would stay out of the gangster life (p. 58), but Chris chose to leave and lied to the abbot that he would return (p. 21). He was drifting toward a life of crime, though he didn't know it yet.

The trip to the past gave him a brutal taste of that life. Like the characters in "Free Live Free," he got a chance to live his dreams so that he could have better ones. When he got back to the present he had a chance to start over, and he chose the ministry.

For some reviewers like thalassocrat on the Urth list<<http://lists.urth.net/htdig.cgi/urth-urth.net/2007-December/008386.html>>, his years of living amends as a priest are not enough. They want him to commit temporal suicide -- to prevent young Chris from going back to be a pirate. This would wipe out the everything, good and bad. Slaves would not be freed. Novia would come to a bad end as a battered wife or a run-away adulteress. Chris' son would never be conceived. Young Chris would drift into the life of a wise-guy, carrying out in modern dress the same sort of crimes that he did in the past. This would have been throwing the miracle back in God's face.

When Chris returned as Ignacio, he was prepared to be a good husband and father. He chose not to leave his wife and child abandoned in the past. This is to his credit, whether or not it's a sin against his vows. My verdict is that Chris started out bad but ended up redeemed and reformed. Yes, he rationalized some of the evil deeds he did as a pirate. By gangster logic he had to kill Michet to maintain respect. But he did change his ways, which is what real repentance is all about.

brunians at brunians.org — 04 Dec 2008, 16:59 · in reply to Allan Anderson

There is no doubt that it says that.

I'll be darned.

brunians at brunians.org wrote:

The first trip of Chris to the past resulted in the early invention of the jib sail. Perhaps the changes brought about by Chris and his descendants pushed technology along faster than in our world.

I am extremely skeptical of the jib sail being invented as late as the late eighteenth century. It just pegs my BS detector.

Well, this site (
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says "Until the jib was invented in the 18th century,..."

It's an interesting read, with some descriptions of ship designs which remind me a bit of Chris's. With all the mentions of Fr. Chris looking up internet sites on pirates, I imagine Wolfe did a bit of the same.

Dave Tallman — 04 Dec 2008, 22:51 · follows brunians at brunians.org

Here are more "Burtisms" -- anachronistic and heavily British-slangy. He's almost as over-the-top as King Kanoa in "An Evil Guest" (by the way, I also think Kanoa is faking his speech patterns to disarm suspicions -- he's clearly on the side of the Storm King).

"Gentleman" (p. 55) without meaning someone with noble birth or property: 1700's. "You twig?" (p. 55): 1800's. "Surefire": American, 1900's. "Set her cap" (p. 57): 18th century. "Chap" (p. 136) meaning "man": 1700's. "Awfully" as an intensive without any connotation of dread or awe

(p. 257): 1800's. "The lay of the land" (p. 258): 1800's. "Flash" (p. 258): 1800's. "Make book" (p. 260): 1800's. "A spot more wine" (p. 261): 1800's. "Keep your chin up" (p. 267): American slang from the 1930's.

Ending sentences with the interrogative particle, "eh?" is probably anachronistic, too.

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes — 04 Dec 2008, 23:15 · in reply to Dave Tallman

On Thu, Dec 4, 2008 at 2:51 PM, Dave Tallman <davetallman at msn.com> wrote:
Here are more "Burtisms" -- anachronistic and heavily British-slangy. He's almost as over-the-top as King Kanoa in "An Evil Guest" (by the way, I also think Kanoa is faking his speech patterns to disarm suspicions -- he's clearly on the side of the Storm King).

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"Chap" (p. 136) meaning "man": 1700's.

"Awfully" as an intensive without any connotation of dread or awe (p. 257): 1800's.

"The lay of the land" (p. 258): 1800's.

"Flash" (p. 258): 1800's.

"Make book" (p. 260): 1800's.

"A spot more wine" (p. 261): 1800's.

"Keep your chin up" (p. 267): American slang from the 1930's.

Ending sentences with the interrogative particle, "eh?" is probably anachronistic, too.

Matthew King — 05 Dec 2008, 20:15 · in reply to Dave Tallman

On Thu, Dec 4, 2008 at 10:18 AM, Dave Tallman <davetallman at msn.com> wrote:
When Chris returned as Ignacio, he was prepared to be a good husband and father. He chose not to leave his wife and child abandoned in the past. This is to his credit, whether or not it's a sin against his vows.

His wife was dead long before he took vows. What is the moral situation of a man who, as in My Favorite Wife, thinks his wife is dead and commits himself to another?

Dave Tallman — 06 Dec 2008, 05:06 · in reply to Matthew King

Matthew King wrote:

His wife was dead long before he took vows. What is the moral situation of a man who, as in My Favorite Wife, thinks his wife is dead and commits himself to another?

I think you're right. At the time Chris took his vows he probably had no idea he would ever get back to the time when his wife was alive. It was only one day when he looked in the mirror and saw Ignacio that he realized a second miracle was available.