

Bluewater Sailing

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Sailing, Power & Navigation Instruction
Yacht Management and Delivery

Our Professional Instructors Average More than 20 Years Experience On The Water Boat Rentals & Yacht Charters
First American Sailing Assn. & International Yachtmaster Certification Facility in the World Group / Private Lessons

NAUTICAL QUOTATIONS:

NAVIGATION:

COASTAL NAVIGATION

CELESTIAL NAVIGATION

SELECTED BY

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“ I must go down to the seas again,

To the lonely sea and the sky,

And all I ask is a tall ship

And a star to steer her by . . .”

John Masefield

“For Worsley, navigating had ceased to be a science and had turned into a kind of sorcery. To get a sight of the sun meant Worsley had to kneel on the thwart, where Vincent and McCarthy would hug him around the waist to keep him from pitching out of the boat as it bucked and leaped over the waves. Then, while Shackleton stood by with the chronometer, Worsley would wait until the boat reached the top of the wave and the horizon came into sight, then shout “Now!” as he shot the sun. His books were fast turning into useless pulp. His sun sights were the crudest of guesses, and to look up positions in the tables he had to peel apart the wet pages one by one. Making his calculations with a pencil became laughably impossible. The boat pitched and rolled so badly that he could barely read his own scribbles. The weather was so foul that in the whole journey he managed to take a sight of the sun only four times.”

Jennifer Armstrong

Shipwreck at the Bottom of the World

Sextant 1) Entertaining, albeit expensive, device, which, together with a good atlas, is of use in introducing the boatman to many interesting areas of the earth's surface which he and his craft are not within 1,000 nautical miles of.

2) Brass device for detecting the night-time activity of guests.

3) Canvass shelter devices used while camping when the kids are in school.

“Our state is shaken by innumerable storms, and there is only one hope for its future safety; just like a ship in the middle of the sea which the winds grasp, it now breaks up in the briny water. But if the brothers of Helen, shining stars, appear, good hope restores those downcast spirits.”

Alciato's Book of Emblems,
(pub. 1531) Emblem 43,
"Spes Proxima" (Hope is Near)

“The beauty of celestial navigation is that you don't have to know where you are to determine where you are.”

Anonymous

“While we were talking platitudes, As any sailor might,
We forgot to take our longitude, Which was a grievous wrongitude,
So we did not reach Hong Kongitude, Till very late that night.”

Anonymous

“Navigation is what tells you where you are, even when you aren't.”

Anonymous

“If you rely solely on GPS to cross an ocean, you will not know if you are correct until the last day.”

Anonymous

“What is more pleasant than a friendly little yacht, a long stretch of smooth water, a gentle breeze, the stars?”

William Atkin

“He had bought a large map representing the sea, Without the least vestige of land: And the crew were much pleased when they found it to be a map they could all understand. "What's the good of Mercator's North Poles and Equators, Tropics, Zones, and Meridian Lines?" So the Bellman would cry: and the crew would reply "They are merely conventional signs!"

Lewis Carroll

The Hunting of the Snark

“And biased by full sails, meridians reel,
Thy purpose -- still one shore beyond desire!
The sea's green crying towers a-sway, beyond.”

Hart Crane

“The heavens call you and circle about you, displaying to you their eternal splendors . . .”

Dante

Purgatorio, Canto XIV

“As the miles bubble under the keel, sailors seem to shed skins one after the other until the scales so necessary for living in crowded cities and towns drop away, leaving just the human creature all but naked under the stars. For most, once those scales are gone, they never grow back quite as thick and hard as they once were.”

George Day

“... and the water was as unfathomable as the black holes between the stars at night.”

Ray Kauffman

“I set thee high for a star in the heavens, a sign and hope for the seamen.”

Charles Kingsley

Andromeda

“The new ship here is fitted according to the reported increase of knowledge among mankind. Namely, she is cumbered end to end, with bells and trumpets and clock and wires, it has been told to me, can call voices out of the air of the waters to con the ship while her crew sleep. But sleep thou lightly. It has not yet been told to me that the Sea has ceased to be the Sea.”

Rudyard Kipling

“The acquisition of the knowledge of navigation has a strange effect on the minds of men.”

Jack London

“With the sextant he made obeisance to the sun-god, he consulted ancient tomes and tables of magic characters, muttered prayers in a strange tongue that sounded like *Indexerrorparallaxrefraction*, made cabalistic signs on paper, added and carried one, and then, on a piece of holy script called the Grail - I mean, the Chart - he placed his finger on a certain space conspicuous for its blankness and said, "Here we are." When we looked at the blank space and asked, "And where is that?" He answered in the cipher-code of the higher priesthood, "31 -15 - 47 north, 133 - 5 - 30 west." And we said, "Oh," and felt mighty small.”

Jack London,

The Cruise of the Snark

“The difference between the sun's position and the position where the sun ought to be if it were a decent, self-respecting sun is called the Equation of Time.”

Jack London,

The Cruise of the Snark

“The *Snark* sailed from Fiji on Saturday, June 6, and the next day, Sunday, on the wide ocean, out of sight of land, I proceeded to endeavour to find out my position by a chronometer sight for longitude and by a meridian sight for latitude. The chronometer sight was taken in the morning, when the sun was some 21 degrees above the horizon. I looked in the Nautical Almanac and found that on that very day, June 7, the sun was behind time 1 minute and 26 seconds, and that it was catching up at a rate of 14/67 seconds per hour. The chronometer said that at the precise moment of taking the sun's altitude it was 25 minutes after 8:00 in Greenwich. From this date it would seem a schoolboy's task to correct the Equation of Time. Unfortunately I was not a schoolboy.”

Jack London

The Cruise of the Snark

“One day, according to my longitude sight, I discovered ... (our vessel was)... inside the walled city of Addis Ababa, capital of Ethiopia!”

Dwight Long

“No aspect of the sailor's world is more mysterious to the landsman than the practice of navigation. To find a precise point in a trackless waste seems neither art nor science, but magic. Yet in no other sphere of progress has the continuity of development been so clearly based on the heritage of the past, nor has the accumulated knowledge been so universally shared by men of all races , creeds and nations.”

Carleton Mitchell

“The boundaries of our country, sir? Why sir, on the North we are bounded by the Aurora Borealis, on the East we are bounded by the rising sun, on the South we are bounded by the procession of the Equinoxes, and on the West by the Day of Judgment.”

Joe Miller

The American Joe Miller's Jest Book

“Some say, he bid his angels turn askance The poles of earth twice ten degrees or more
From the sun's axle; they with labour push'd Oblique the centric globe: some say, the sun
Was bid turn reins from th' equinoctial road Like distant breadth to Taurus with the seven
Atlantic Sisters, and the Spartan Twins, Up to the Tropic Crab; thence down amain
By Leo, and the Virgin, and the Scales, As deep as Capricorn, to bring in change
Of seasons to each clime.”

John Milton "Paradise Lost"

“(The navigator) He knows the course of the stars and can always orient himself. He knows the value of signs, both regular, accidental and abnormal, of good and bad weather. He distinguishes the regions of the ocean by the fish, by the color of the water and the nature of the bottom, by the birds, the mountains, and other indications . . .”

The Mu'allim, 434 AD

“I lay on the bowsprit, facing astern, with the water foaming into spume under me, the masts with every sail white in the moonlight, towering high above me. I became drunk with the beauty and the singing rhythm of it, and for a moment I lost myself – actually lost my life. I was set free! I dissolved in the sea, became white sails and flying spray, became beauty and rhythm, become moonlight and the ship and the high dim-starred sky! I belonged, without past or future, within place and unity and a wild joy, within something greater than my own life, or the life of man, to Life itself. To God, if you want to put it that way.”

Eugene O'Neill

“The expert and prudent navigator will act as his prudence dictates . . . one is more exposed to have misfortune in navigation than good fortune, due to [the channels’] narrowness and the lack of any way out, or places too difficult to pass, which is the case when within it with the cross winds.”

Juan Pantoja Y Arriaga

The Log of the Frigate Princesa (1782)

“And then again, when you sit at the helm of your little ship on a clear night, and gaze at the countless stars overhead, and realize that you are quite alone on a wide, wide sea, it is apt to occur to you that in the general scheme of things you are merely an insignificant speck on the surface of the ocean; and you are not nearly so important nor so self-sufficient as you thought you were. Which is an exceedingly wholesome thought, and one that may effect a permanent change in your deportment that will be greatly appreciated by your friends.”

James S. Pitkin

“I became really worried when my dead-reckoning put me on top of a hill a hundred feet high, and there was no land in sight!”

E.A. Pye

“For the first time, and not on paper and in dreams, I had the little ship alone in my hands in a night of velvet dark below and stars above, pushing steadily along into unknown waters. I was extremely happy”.

Arthur Ransome

“From just about the first moment you set foot on a boat you heard two things talked of in hushed tones, Cape Horn and celestial navigation. With the passage of time you likely as not came to see the Horn as the mariner’s Everest and celestial as one of the higher Alps. At this stage you may not be dreaming about the Great Cape anymore. But hey, there’s still the Matterhorn.

Why learn celestial navigation?

Hewitt Schlereth

Because it will satisfy your soul.”

Celestial Navigation in a Nutshell

“Let me not to the marriage of true minds

Admit impediments. Love is not love

That alters when it alteration finds,

Nor bends with the remover to remove.

Oh, no, it is an ever fixed mark

That looks on tempests and is never shaken.

It is the star to every wandering bark

Whose worth's unknown although its height be taken.

Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks

Within his bending sickle's compass come.

Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,

But bears it out, even to the edge of doom.

If this be error, and upon me proved,

I never writ nor no man ever loved.

Shakespeare, Sonnet 116

“For one whole month my vessel held her course true; I had not, the while, so much as a light in the binnacle. The Southern Cross I saw every night abeam; the sun every morning came up astern; every evening it went down ahead. I wished for no other compass to guide me, for these were true. If I doubted my reckoning after a long time at sea I verified it by reading the clock aloft made by the Great Architect, and it was right.”

Joshua Slocum

Sailing Alone Round the World

As the sky grew velvet, and the last of the daylight passed away,
In the darkness the stars seemed hanging low all across the heavens,
It spread in all directions, They clustered together,
They glittered in constellations, They ran across the firmament,
In the heaven wide galaxy of the Milky Way, That great silver river of the sky.

Edwin Way Teale

Autumn Across America, 1956

“A compass can go wrong, the stars never.”

Tongan Saying

“For my part, I know nothing with any certainty, but the sight of stars makes me dream.”

Vincent van Gogh

“We had twelve hours of daylight, and if we did not sight the coast, I should conclude that Brazil was merely a geographical expression.”

Frank Wightman
