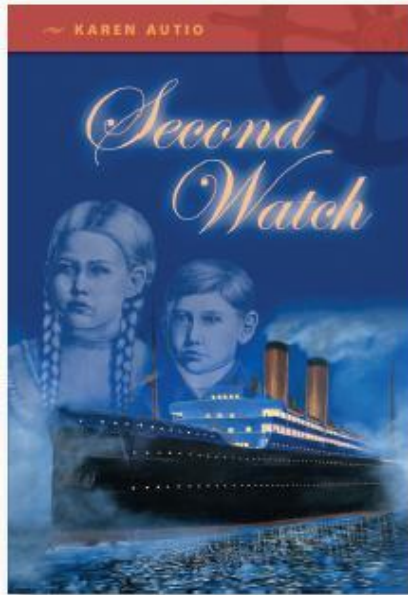


A Teacher's Guide to *Second Watch*

By Karen Autio



About the Book

Out of the mist emerged a large black boat. It rode low in the water, heading straight for us.

Eleven year-old Saara dreams of a trip to Finland to meet her grandparents. When Papa loses his job, family tensions rise and Saara's hopes fall. How will they ever save enough for the precious tickets, or convince Papa they should go? Uncle Arvo predicted a travelling year for Saara – but her journey will take her further than anyone could have imagined.

The 1914 tragedy of the steamship *Empress of Ireland*, Canada's worst nautical disaster in peacetime, provides an historical basis for this compelling tale of hardship and hope, faith and family. Spirited Saara comes to life in the vivid world of Finnish immigrant culture in northwestern Ontario. Join her as she navigates a challenging time at home, and as she seeks passage on the majestic *Empress of Ireland*.

?? Ask the Author ??

Why did you write this book?

When my youngest child entered Grade One in 1998, I decided to pursue my long held dream of writing for children. I enrolled in a "Writing Fiction for Children" course at the local university college with the plan of writing a picture book. The idea began with the gift of a silver sugar spoon from my Finnish grandmother that her Finnish friend claimed was saved from the *Titanic*. I discovered that the *Titanic* wasn't the only ship to sink in that friend's family history. Members of that Finnish immigrant family from Port Arthur (now part of Thunder Bay) perished on the *Empress of Ireland*. When the instructor assigned homework that involved writing the first page of a novel, I decided to invent a history for the spoon and *Second Watch* was born.



About the Author

Born in Fort William, Ontario (now part of Thunder Bay), Karen Autio makes her home in Kelowna, British Columbia. Her passion for history and love of the written word come together in *Second Watch*, a novel inspired by the gift of a silver spoon.

Art

Did you know?

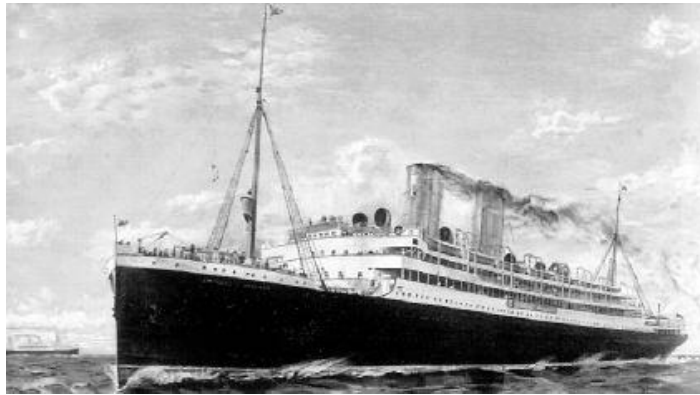
The cover art for *Second Watch* was created by a young artist, Briana Bach Hertzog, during her teens. Briana's great-great grandfather, Reinhold Bach, perished in the sinking of the *Empress of Ireland*.

Looking at the Book: The Cover Art

A good book cover is meant to:

- Entice the reader
- Provide clues about the story
- Suggest the age/type of reader

How well does the cover of *Second Watch* do what it's supposed to do? What elements of the story did the illustrator choose to feature on the cover?



History

Looking at the Past, Living in the Present

Compare life today with life in 1914, nearly one hundred years ago. How are transportation, school, shopping, clothing, family life, communication and entertainment the same? How are they different? Compare the 1914 map of Canada (p. 196) with today's map. How many differences can you spot?

Writing, Personal History, Interview Skills

Conduct an Interview

Interview an adult family member about a memorable event from his or her childhood. Collect all the basic facts by asking questions starting with the 5 W's: WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN, and WHY. You might also ask 'How' and also what your interview subject thought, felt, and said during the incident.

Write a newspaper-style article about what happened. Don't forget a snappy headline!

Creative Writing

Ideas are Everywhere

Karen Autio was inspired to write *Second Watch* after receiving the gift of a silver spoon. The imagined history of that spoon combined with a real life event (the sinking of the *Empress of Ireland* in 1914) in a novel about a Finnish family.

TRY THIS:

1. Find an ordinary household object small enough to fit in a drawer
2. Find a newspaper clipping about an interesting event or person
3. Use both the object and something from the newspaper article in a short story.

History, Research

Why Thunder Bay?

Why did Finnish immigrants choose to settle in Thunder Bay?

Where Do We Come From?

Many Canadian families have ancestors who travelled here from other countries. Many immigrants travelled here on one of the *Empress* ships. Ask your grandparents if they know anyone who travelled on one of the *Empress* steamships.

Math, Graphs

Where Were Your Grandparents Born?

As a class, compile the data and create a chart showing all the countries of origin represented by your classmates. Make a bar graph and show how many people come from each place. Find each country on a world map and mark the place with a coloured pin or small flag.

Social Studies

Leaving Home for Home

Immigrating to a new country is difficult for many reasons. If your family decided to move from Canada, list five things you would miss most.

Art, Geography

Where Are You Going?

If you could go on a journey anywhere in the world, where would you go and how would you get there? Create a travel brochure about your chosen destination.

History

Interesting Facts

- The sinking of the *Empress of Ireland* is Canada's worst maritime disaster in peacetime.
- May 29th, 2005, is the 91st anniversary of the sinking.
- Thousands of Canadians have personal connections to the *Empress of Ireland*. The ship carried more than 117,000 passengers to this country during her eight years in service as an Atlantic liner.
- The cover of *Second Watch* consists of three illustrations by Briana Bach Hertzog, the great-great granddaughter of Reinhold Bach who perished in the sinking.

"I want to present authentic historical settings and accurately reflect human nature in my writing so that the words take hold in the minds and hearts of readers."

-Karen Autio

Language Arts

Finnish-English Dictionary

Karen Autio uses some Finnish words in her story. Compile a Finnish-English dictionary that includes the following words. Alphabetize carefully and include illustrations for at least three words.

Mummu

sisu

piirakka

kantele

kulta

sauna

pulla

Say What?

What does this Finnish proverb mean?

Oma tupa, oma lupa. (p. 20)

Share a proverb from your own culture to share with the class. Can you think of a proverb that originated in Canada?

The Author Note

What clues does the author provide about her personal connection to this story? If you could ask Karen Autio one question, what would it be? Visit the author's website at www.karenautio.com. Is your question answered?

Further information about the *Empress of Ireland* and the ship's artifacts can be found in the following resources:

Empress of Ireland: The Story of an Edwardian Liner
by Derek Grout

Forgotten Empress by David Zeni

Ghostliners: Exploring the World's Greatest Lost Ships
by Robert D. Ballard and Rick Archbold

On the Web:

www.shmp.qc.ca

<http://www.royalalbertamuseum.ca/vexhibit/empress/index.cfm>

www.sea-viewdiving.com/shipwreck_info/empress_of_ireland1.htm

www.empressartifacts.org

Further Research

• Karen Autio is available for author presentations in schools. Contact the author at contact@karenautio.com or contact Sono Nis Press for details.

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