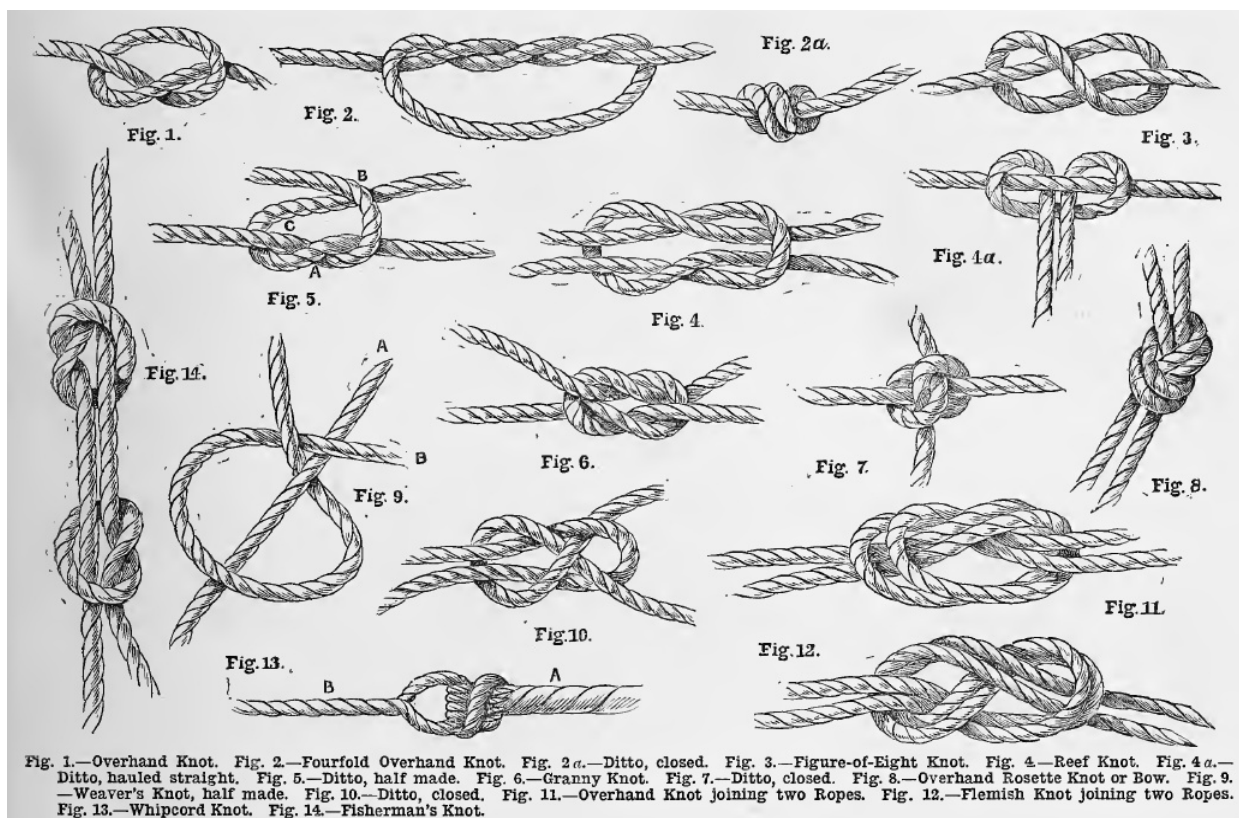


## The Mystery of Lancelot L. Haslope and *Knotting*

Lancelot L. Haslope wrote and illustrated a series of articles on *Knotting, Splicing and Working Cordage* in *Work* magazine of 1891-1892 (Vol. III), edited by Francis Chilton-Young and published by Cassell & Co., London (<https://archive.org/details/work1891unse/>). Haslope's articles were substantially reproduced (without attribution) in a book edited by Paul Nooncre Hasluck (1854-1931), who was the editor of *Work* magazine from 1893 (Vol. V) - 1909 and a prolific editor of DIY handbooks around that time. The book, titled *Knotting and Splicing Ropes and Cordage* (<https://archive.org/details/knottingandspli00haslgoog/>) was first published by Cassell & Co. in 1904, and it has been reproduced under various titles and imprints in many editions to the present day.

Haslope's articles (and the books substantially derived from them) contain many original illustrations (an example is reproduced below) and clear descriptions. They are important in the documented history of knot-tying, yet he is hardly known. Ashley (1944) does not mention Haslope, but on pp. 590, 595 attributes the book and its content to Hasluck. Day (1947) notes the origin in *Work*, and speculates (on p. 227 of the 4<sup>th</sup> edition) that Haslope might be a pseudonym. Of course, these two giants among early authors on knotting did not have access to the electronic search capabilities that exist today. Amazingly from today's perspective, Haslope is not even mentioned in the books substantially derived from his work.



An example of original illustrations on knotting by Lancelot L. Haslope. This set was published in *Work* magazine of Saturday April 18, 1891; early in his series on *Knotting, Splicing and Working Cordage* (<https://archive.org/details/work1891unse/>). Sharp-eyed knot tiers will notice the error in the illustrated "Figure-of-Eight Knot" (but not the related "Flemish Knot"). The error of illustration was corrected after the first printings of the book substantially derived from this series, though the associated error in description of the tying method remained in the text. From the text, it is clear that Fig. 8 is "an overhand knot made with two ropes ... sometimes called an openhand knot"; and not a "rosette knot or bow" as stated in the caption. This error was long perpetuated in the book.

Until the early 1900s, it was commonplace to publish 'work from various sources' without attribution. Today, in many countries, that would breach the inalienable rights of the original authors under copyright law (sometimes called moral rights). In any case, knot tiers might be interested to know more about this author.

The archives of Cassell & Co. were destroyed by the bombing of the company headquarters at La Belle Sauvage in London during WWII ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cassell\\_\(publisher\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cassell_(publisher))), so they can give us no clue as to the identity of Lancelot L. Haslope or his arrangements with the publisher.

From research by his genealogically-inclined relatives ([www.stockfamily.me.uk/g0/p46.htm#i2958](http://www.stockfamily.me.uk/g0/p46.htm#i2958)), the only Lancelot L. Haslope found in UK records of the relevant period is Lancelot Llewellyn Haslope (1820-1908). Although direct proof has not been found that he is the author of the articles on *Knotting*, *Splicing and Working Cordage* in *Work* magazine of 1891-1892, the circumstantial evidence is very strong.

Lancelot Llewellyn Haslope (LLH) was the 10th of 11 children of Lancelot Haslope (a very successful ship broker) and his wife Harriet (nee Stock). LLH was born on 11 May 1820 in Highbury Lodge, Islington, Middlesex. Llewellyn was the maiden name of his paternal grandmother. Highbury Lodge is now Barclays Bank at Highbury Corner. LLH lived subsequently in: King's Norton, Worcestershire; Hornsey, Middlesex; Chesterton, Staffordshire; and (from at least 1871-1899) Falmouth, Cornwall. Apparently a gentleman of independent means, partially blind by 1901, he died on 25 January 1908 in Devon.

With his wife Emily (nee Melvill; 1830-1913), LLH had 4 children from 1860 to 1865.

The elder son (Lancelot Melvill Haslope, 1860-1946) became a vicar and moved to Australia in 1920. The vicar's two sons served in the RAAF and both died as pilots, in 1951-52.

The younger son (Pearce Llewellyn Haslope, 1865-1938) became an author and artist. He lived (initially with his parents) in Torquay, Devon, from 1899 until his death. From its preface (concluded with "Torquay, 1905") we may be reasonably sure that Pearce is the P. L. Haslope who authored *Practical Sea Fishing* (<https://archive.org/details/practicalseafis01haslgoog>). The title page of this book refers to several other works by the same author, including one titled *Knots and Knotting*. No other trace has been found of these works, so their nature is unknown. *Practical Sea Fishing* includes a chapter on knots and a frontispiece illustration of a fishing vessel "designed by the author's father" (ie LLH).

The Haslope home (Highbury House) at Woodlane Crescent (also known as Alma Crescent) in Falmouth was located about 1 km from the docks. LLH emulated his father's long voluntary service to the Methodist Church. For many years he was secretary of the Wesleyan Missionary Society in Falmouth. This Society met at the premises of the Royal Cornwall Polytechnic Society, of which LLH was also a member. The RCPS was established to showcase the ingenuity of local workers, and it provided foundation exhibits for what later became the National Maritime Museum Cornwall. Unfortunately, the archives of these institutions have yielded nothing direct on the topic of LLH as an author or knot tyer. We may be reasonably sure that he is also the author of *Repoussé Work for Amateurs* (<https://archive.org/details/repoussworkforam00hasl>) as he submitted items of this art to RCPS exhibitions.

From the pages of the *Cornishman* and *Royal Cornwall Gazette* newspapers, LLH was also 'a capital amateur fisherman', a long-serving committee member of the Royal Cornwall Sailors' Home

(alongside sea Captains and other officers up to the rank of Rear Admiral), and a contributor to many other worthy causes in the region.

In *Work* Vol. III pp. 523, 603, in replies to a question about a “ship’s splice” on a mast; and again in *Work* Vol. IV p. 61, in reply to a question about “working cordage”; we learn that the author of these articles (L. L. H.) is from Falmouth. Thus there is overwhelming circumstantial evidence that Lancelot Llewellyn Haslope of Falmouth was the Lancelot L. Haslope who wrote the articles on *Knotting, Splicing and Working Cordage* in *Work* magazine of 1891-1892. Unless during his lifetime someone else adopted the nom de plume Lancelot L. Haslope of Falmouth, an extreme proposition for which there is no evidence, it is unequivocal that Lancelot Llewellyn Haslope was the author.

The speculation that Lancelot L. Haslope was a pseudonym of Paul N. Hasluck seems to be based on nothing more than the coincidence in the first four letters of their surnames. Hasluck lived in Surrey, London and Kent, but apparently never in Cornwall. He was a prolific and skilled editor, with a good eye for what might interest readers in book form, resulting in more than 100 books on diverse technical topics ([www.librum.us/hasluck.htm](http://www.librum.us/hasluck.htm)). He never claimed to be author (as distinct from editor) of most, including *Knotting and Splicing Ropes and Cordage*. In early printings of this book, Hasluck’s preface states that it contains information “scattered over more than twenty thousand columns of *Work*” (eg <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=nyp.33433008208948>). The material on hammocks is substantially edited from an article by G. E. Bonney in *Work* Vol. II pp. 425-427. Some other descriptions of ropework, eg some of the lashings and ladders, have not been found in *Work*, though not all issues are currently available. The origins of such descriptions are unknown. Illustrations on six-strand wire rope resemble those from manufacturers at that time. Poor indexing and abstracting, perhaps derived from the editor’s or publishers’ failure to credit the authors, has sometimes listed Hasluck as author rather than editor of such books.

In Volume III of *Work* magazine, Haslope’s contributions on knotting may be found commencing on pages 6, 65, 137, 139, 199, 244, 309, 361, 468, 523, 535, 551, 603, 613, 676, 715, 725 and 775. Those who take the trouble to read these original articles will be rewarded with anecdotes of how he came to learn some knots, how he approached their description and illustration, and other material edited out of the books based substantially on his articles.

If anyone has further evidence, perhaps it can be shared through IGKT *Knotting Matters*.

Many thanks (without implying that they agree with the conclusions) to:

John Stock for genealogical research ([www.stockfamily.me.uk/g0/p46.htm#i2958](http://www.stockfamily.me.uk/g0/p46.htm#i2958));

David Pooley for research in the National Maritime Museum Cornwall ([www.nmmc.co.uk](http://www.nmmc.co.uk)) and elsewhere;

Michael Carver for research in the Falmouth History Archive (<http://thepoly.org/collections/falmouth-history-archive>);

All who digitize, archive and make available historical works of interest to knot tyers (eg <https://archive.org>).

Other references cited:

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**Day CL** (1947) *The Art of Knotting and Splicing*. Dodd, Mead and Co. Inc., New York. Later editions updated and published by Naval Institute Press, Annapolis. The 4th Edition (1986) is ISBN 0 870 210 629.