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A Flotilla of Memory: Dmitri Nabokov's *A History of Boats*

This paper introduces *A History of Boats*, a little-known children's book created by Dmitri Nabokov (1934–2012) in second grade, soon after the Nabokov family's emigration to the United States. Preserved in the Harvard archives, the manuscript combines Dmitri's crayon and pencil drawings with short English captions he wrote and pasted in, at a moment when English was still new to him. For its planned publication, I undertake a free, adaptive translation that reshapes the fragmentary but vivid child's texts into rhythmic stanzas while preserving their voice. Materially, Dmitri conceived the project as a coherent book, designing covers, stitching pages, and mounting his images on green kraft paper. While his parents may have encouraged the work, *A History of Boats* stands as an early instance of self-directed resourcefulness shaped by migration and bilingualism. Methodologically, the paper joins archival research, translation studies, and childhood creativity to situate this juvenile project within Nabokov studies and material book culture.