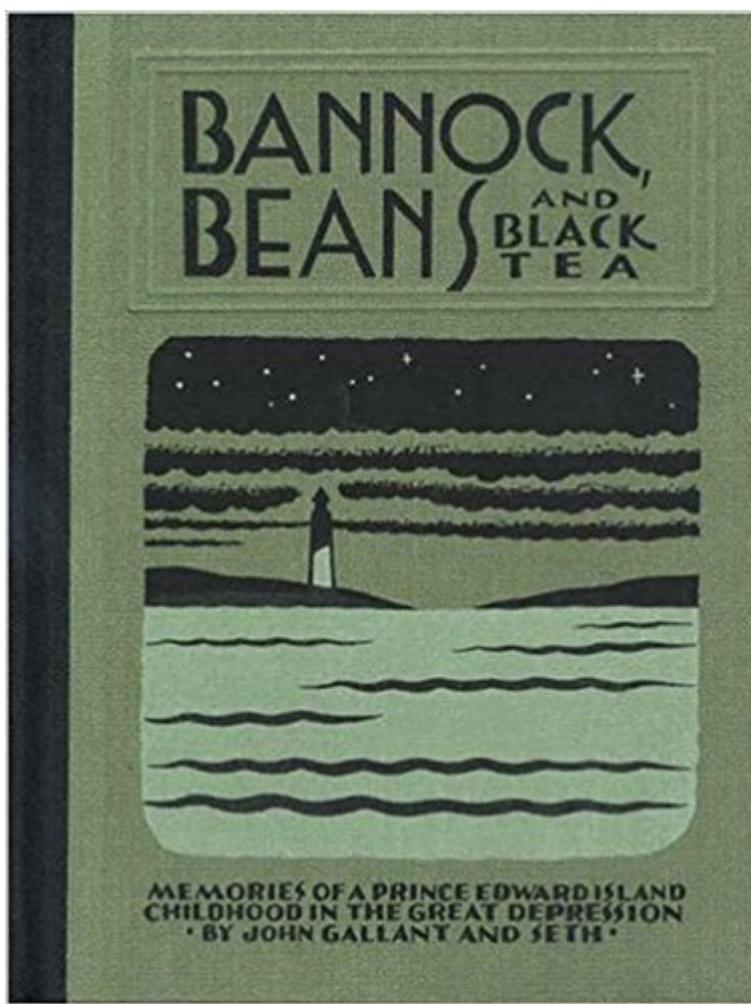


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# Bannock Beans And Black Tea: Memories Of A Prince Edward Island Childhood In The Great Depression



## **Synopsis**

A stark, brutally honest memoir illustrated by one of the world's great cartoonists. This is a gripping and poignant memoir recounting one boy's experiences of deprivation and poverty growing up in a rural farming village during the Great Depression. The short stories are written by John Gallant and illustrated by his son Seth, better known to many as the New Yorker illustrator and award-winning D+Q cartoonist behind the books *It's a Good Life*, *If You Don't Weaken* and the sumptuous *Vernacular Drawings*. Written with a concise honesty and clarity, the stories reveal the sad reality of a boy growing up in brutal social and economic conditions.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

John Gallant lives today in Prince Edward Island, where the stories in this book take place. Seth was born in 1962 in a rural Ontario town. Seth lives in Guelph, Ontario with five cats, a gigantic collection of vintage records, comic books, and 20th century Canadiana, and his very patient wife. He regularly contributes illustrations to *The New Yorker* and *The National Post* and recently provided the entire album artwork for Sony records singer-songwriter, Aimee Mann.

What caught my eye when deciding to purchase this classic book was that it said it describes the life of a child during The Great Depression. As a child I listened to my Mother's stories of these difficult times. If perchance I didn't like what was to eat and complained, I was sure to endure my Mother's tale of what she had to eat during The Great Depression. No for my Mother it wasn't Bannock,

Beans and Black Tea, it was Navy Bean Soup. To this day my Mother wouldn't touch a Navy Bean. On this basis I purchased this classic graphic true tale of life which covers before the Great Depression on into the great economic storm. This labor of love is Mr. John Gallant's stories of his youth on Prince Edward Island. The stark reality of constant hunger, uncaring parents, absence of love and even an unsympathetic Clergy are all obstacles that this youngster had to overcome. His stories are indeed true, stark and all too real. What this child endured makes the novels of Dickens seem like mere child's play. The artwork, illustrations and editing by Seth sets a wonderful tribute to what his Father had to endure. This book is his Father's ultimate legacy. The entire work was indeed Sethesque. Now who has all those Stars??!!

Condition seemed better than described for this used book. My sister really enjoyed reading it.

A must read for all Prince Edward Islanders.

A moving collection of vignettes about life on Prince Edward Island during the Great Depression, as seen through the eyes of a young boy who battled the miseries of starvation and neglect until he was old enough to join the military and escape. For all of us who only associated P.E.I. with the idyllic works of L.M. Montgomery (of ANNE OF GREEN GABLES fame), this little collection of Gallant's is a very sharp poke in the eye. You are not going to find fond reminiscences of golden summer days and cozy Christmases. John Gallant tells about his worthless father who refused to do any work and a brother with a suspiciously "sore back" who was much the same. There are stories concerning the parish priest who, through his greed and mean spiritedness, made Gallant question if believing in a religion was really worth the effort. Since Heaven, for Gallant, consisted of enough food to eat and a warm place to sleep, why believe in what didn't exist? Told in simple terms with honesty and very dry humor, this collection will be sure to please short story enthusiasts, as well as anyone interested in Canada and the Great Depression.

For the millions of North Americans who are descended from the Atlantic Canada diaspora (Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick) this book is a treasure! A century and a half of subsistence livings wrung from the sea and the land, plus large Celtic families, has ensured a constant flow of people from this area out across the rest of the continent. This is a work of love from a talented son, who put together the stories of his father -- raised in P.E.I. during the depression as a "neglected and starving child" -- into an intensely memorable book. It touches deeply this Prince

Edward Island born heart, and speaks to our common human longing for home and rootedness.

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