

# KNIGHT LETTER

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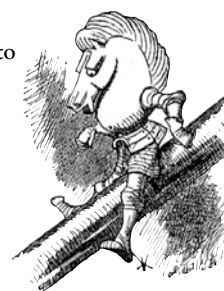
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*On the cover: The White Rabbit by Sergiy Hrapov. See p. 53.*



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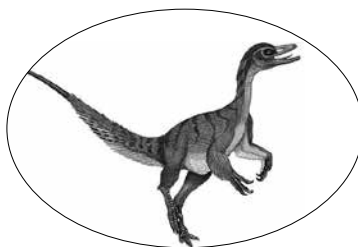
Spring hath sprung and with it, this issue.

Our cover features the work of a Ukrainian artist, Sergiy Hrapov, who managed to find the time to make a wildly humorous drawing in what can only be called horrific circumstances (p. 53).

The Rectory Umbrella section features new insights on the Savile Clarke musical, a statue-esque review of London's famous Orchard House, and a Platonic view of the Tea-Party by David Sansone, classics professor emeritus at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Sadly, two significant Carrollians are remembered in "In Memoriam" columns: George Cassady and David Del Tredici.

And may I give a most sincere shout-out and thanks to the squad of intrepid reporters who contributed to the write-ups of our VirtuAlice monthly meetings and the conference. And thank you to our fine reviewers of illustrated editions: Adriana (*Kelly, Pepperstein, Mitrofanov*), Andrew (*Vatagin, Peluso*), and Yvonne (*Minji* were the *Bour-ogoves*—sorry).

Robert Watkins's two-part article interpreting the *Snark* (and *Sylvie & Bruno Concluded* to boot, forgive the pun) over our last two issues was actually a reduction. You can find a link to his fully updated and expanded article in the "New Carrollian Views" section (under the "Media" tab) of our website.

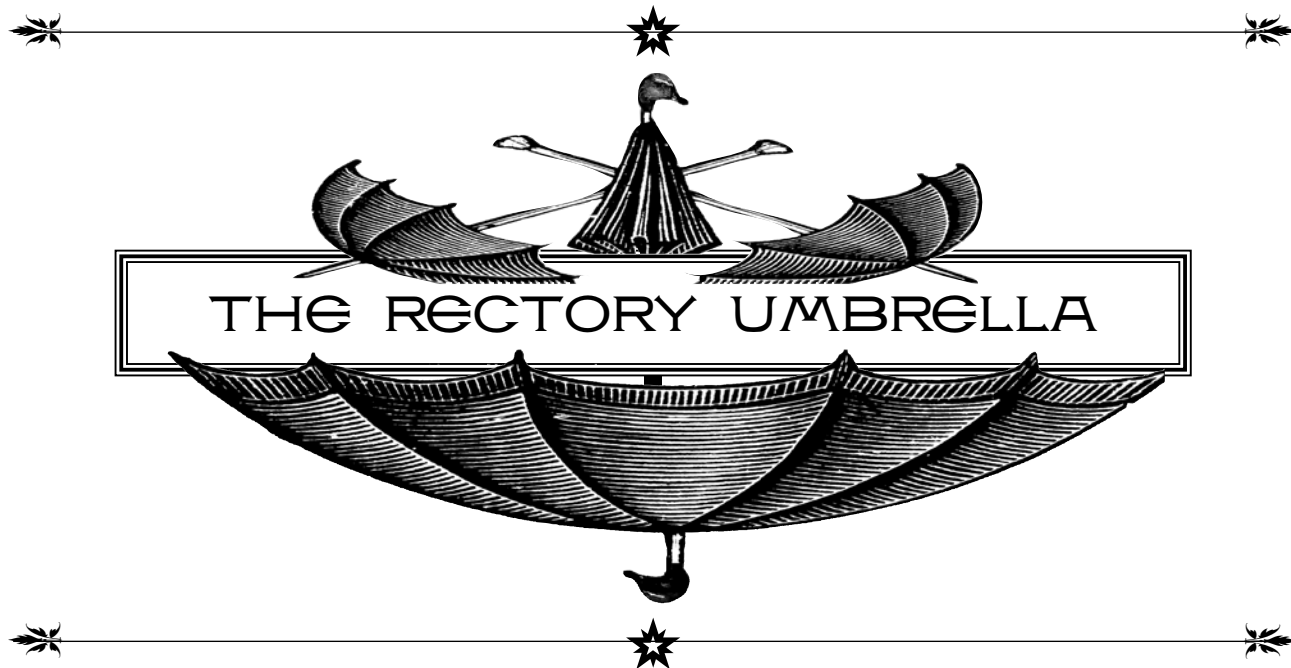


Juan Gabriel López Guix is a Spanish academic and translator whose name is familiar to our readers. He has discussed in our pages the rewards and challenges of translating (*KLs* 79:29, 95:30), not to mention other topics such as "The Gedovius & Other *Snarks*" (*KL* 109:59) and "Alice in Six Languages of Spain & the Mysterious Perfect Horse"

(*KL* 96:16). His fine and completely original translation of *Wonderland* into Spanish came out in "A Classic Illustrated Edition" (art compiled by Cooper Edens, originally published in English by Chronicle Books, 2000) by Ediciones B in 2002. Every year, the Spanish Ministry of Culture gives two prizes related to translation: one for a translator's work as a whole (*Premio a la obra de un traductor*) and the other for a specific book. The Lifetime award for 2022 was won by Guix and will be formally presented to him by the King of Spain, Felipe VI. Our sincere congratulations!

Didja know? *Borogovia* (above) is a troodontid theropod dinosaur genus that lived during the Late Cretaceous Period (84–66 million years ago) in what is now southern Mongolia. It belongs to the group of dinosaurs that evolved into birds; its discoverer, paleontologist Halszka Osmolska, named it after the avian "Jabberwocky" creature in 1987.

MARK BURSTEIN



# A Field Guide to Wonderland ... And Beyond!

## PART ONE: FAUNA

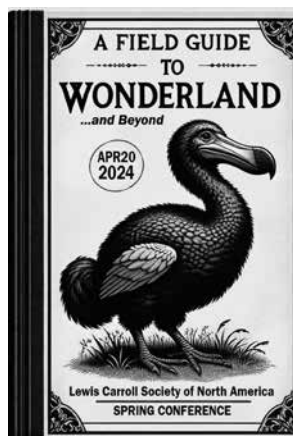
What better way to begin our April 20, 2024, Spring conference's trilogy on Carrollian fauna, flora, and a menagerie than with a talk on Oxford University Museum's iconic dodo? Mark Carnall, curator of five hundred thousand specimens of the over seven million held in the Oxford University Museum of Natural History, did just that in giving us a brilliant, well-illustrated presentation on everything we wanted to know, or almost, about *Raphus cucullatus*, better known as the dodo. The title of his talk was "As Dead as the Proverbial . . . The Dodo Lowdown." First he discussed what we know about the history and nature of the world's most famous flightless bird, how it came to Oxford, and where it might go next.

The dodo, native to the island of Mauritius, east of Madagascar in the Indian Ocean—and only there—was first encountered by Dutch sailors in 1598. From early accounts, many of the Mauritian birds were tame and easily approached, and so easily caught by humans. But the species' rapid decline was probably caused by the dogs, cats, rats, and pigs that the sailors had brought with them. These animals spread across the island, destroying dodo habitats and eating their eggs. One of the original Dutch names for the dodo was *Wal-*

*ghvoghel*, meaning "tasteless bird," but some accounts praised its meat. *De gustibus*.

The last confirmed sighting of a living dodo was in 1688; by the 1700s, they were considered extinct. The original Dutch account of the dodo has been lost, but an English translation has been preserved. Only three dodo specimens from this period exist, despite records of living dodos being brought from Mauritius. One of the three, the so-called "Oxford Dodo" is a specimen that was part of the Tradescant collection, one of the founding collections of the Ashmolean Museum at the University of Oxford. This specimen is first listed in 1656 in a catalogue of that collection as "Dodar, from the Island Mauritius; it is not able to flie, being so big." How the Tradescants, who had been the royal gardeners to Charles II, acquired their dodo specimen is unknown.

Carnall offered five takeaway points about the dodo. First, to repeat, the dodo was endemic to Mauritius. Second, the dodo was a flightless pigeon, and its closest relative is the solitaire on Rodrigues Island in the western Indian Ocean. Third, by the beginning of the eighteenth century, the dodo was likely extinct (a date that keeps shifting as archival research reveals new evidence). Fourth, there are only three known surviving dodo specimens.



Mark Carnall



Fifth, there are, however, many *subfossil* (bone that has not completely fossilized) remains from four-thousand-year-old deposits.

The dodo was one of three hundred species of the family of *Columbidae*, comprising pigeons and doves. In spite of the famous Savery painting of the dodo in the Oxford Museum of Natural History, we don't really know what it looked like, nor a lot more: the color of its plumage, its diet, its procreation method, its locomotion, and so on. Its ubiquity in popular culture is largely due to Carroll's representation (a partial self-portrait) in *Alice*, with a small assist from Disney. As for the future, although there has been a microscopy analysis of a surviving dodo feather and DNA analysis, there is no likelihood of our soon seeing platoons of dodos cavorting on Christ Church Meadow.

Our next presenter, Paul B. Lotz of San Diego, attended art college in Philadelphia, and after a few years found his niche in the sculpting of playfully humorous clay figures, which would be cast in bronze and colored. His talk "A Journey from Wonderland to Whimsical Worlds" was often about his inspirations, the earliest and most lasting being Alice and Dr. Seuss, citing them both as "abstract and bizarre."

Starting in his teens with molding Disney cartoon-based Alice characters in polymer clay, he took a ceramics class in college wherein he sculpted a fine Tenniel Gryphon. He also spent a semester in Rome, taking in Michelangelo and other classical Renaissance artists. Lotz showed us an early series called *I Believe* in which pigs (and dodos, which he called "lumpy balls of feathers and fun") *can* fly—in the basket of a balloon. He's done a lot of other Carroll characters as well, most 12 to 14 inches high. Listening to Bernie Taupin and Elton John's "Mona Lisa & Mad Hatters" stimulated a recent piece, *If I Was a Sculptor*, incorporating nine of their songs.

He first sculpts in clay and then makes a series of silicone molds into which bronze is poured. The rich colors come not from paint, but by a process using blowtorches

and chemicals. Pieces take around three to five months to complete and are released in editions of two hundred.

In a section he called "Beyond Carroll," he showed us some of his more recent pieces and the made-up stories behind them. Highlights included *What's More Fun?* (a barrel of monkeys), *Succumb* (Romeo and Juliet as a seahorse and a fish), *Barrel of Laughs* (also monkeys, but with the faces of old-time comedians), and his current project, *White Rabbit* (incorporating a number of characters specifically from that song).

His website, PaulBLotz.com, has many photographs of his whimsical work as well as listing galleries at which they are available, and how to obtain his book, *A World of Fantasy Cast in Bronze*.

The ever exuberant Carroll (and so much more) maven Brian Sibley, chair of the Lewis Carroll Society in the UK, then took us on a deep-dive into the cultural repercussions of "Jabberwocky," the world's most popular nonsense poem. Brian first traced its development from Croft Rectory in 1855 as a handwritten, single-stanza parody of medieval poetry that 23-year-old Carroll contributed to a family magazine, "Mischmasch," to its



Paul Lotz's  
Dodo on  
the Go

publication in *Looking-Glass*. Carroll's early explanation of his nonsense words was contrasted with its later evolution incorporated into Alice's conversation with Humpty Dumpty. Brian reminded us that the poem takes place on Snark Island, as Carroll revealed in a letter to Gertrude Chataway's mother (December 9, 1875).



*Brian Sibley and  
the Jabberwocky  
jackknife*

Sir John Tenniel's illustration of the diminutive lad wielding his sword against the terrifying beast was voted down as the book's frontispiece because it might horrify children, in spite of ludicrous details such as bat wings, three-clawed boots, a waistcoat, and spats—presumably meant to make the monster seem more silly and child-friendly. Likely inspirations for the creature were contemporary renderings of imagined dinosaurs, dragons, and various other paleontological fantasies like the "life-size" sculptures shown at Sydenham Park in 1854.

The verse itself may have been inspired by regional legends of monster-slayings such as the Lambton Worm or, more likely, the Sockburn Worm. Roger Lancelyn Greene posited that a more likely source of inspiration was a translation of the German folk tale called "Shepherd of the Giant Mountains," about a shepherd boy who slew a terrorizing griffin. Collected by Friedrich de la Motte Fouqué in 1817, it was translated into English by Menella Bute Smedley, a novelist, poet, and cousin of Carroll's. That poem ends, "The prince cried, stooping from his balcony/In gratulating tones/'Come to my heart, my true and gallant son!'"

Since the poem's publication, its popularity has been insanely profuse, as its title, wording, and flavor have directly inspired novels, place names, libations, music, puzzles, tats, advertising, films, TV, music, toys, comics, political and humorous cartoons, magazine names, mystery stories, parodies, and seemingly infinite visual representations that run the gamut from horrific to adorable. Brian capped his presentation by showing off a rare wooden toy in which the characters of the poem are carved, two-dimensional figures that pop up from the opposing pivots of a Swiss-Army-knife-like device. Everybody watching on Zoom wanted one!

Brian's Q&A segment ended with a video of drawings done by a fifth-grade class upon hearing the poem for the first time. Brian was quite tickled by the depictions, which included a Jabberwock being "Rickrolled" to death.

## PART TWO: FLORA

In "The Flora and Fauna of Wonderland," Lillian Murtonen presented to us her winning entry for the Wonderland Awards last year at USC (*KL* 110:29, illustrated with her work). Hugely impressed by Tim Burton's *Wonderland* movie, the young Lillian dressed as his Mad Hatter one Halloween and even created a stop-motion short with her assembled dolls, which made her realize how crucial it is to remain open, childlike, and playful.

It was while visiting an exhibition at USC last year, "The Vanishing Worlds of Audubon," that Murtonen first came to see the repertoire of scientific illustrations, particularly those of John James Audubon, who had a plan to make a complete pictorial record of all the bird species of North America. But the Aha! moment for her happened when she saw images of the dodo in the Cassady Collection: She got the idea to create faux natural history illustrations, just as Victorians played with imaginary creatures like mermaids as museum artifacts, acting in the liminal space of reality, forgery and fantasy, science and art.

In her project, she used the AI program Midjourney, researching source material to use in her prompts, both as word descriptions and image references, with a special place to Audubon's own illustrations. She next generated somewhere between two- and three-hundred images to get the six final pieces, which were then refined using Photoshop.

She showed us her renditions of the Cheshire Cat (*Catticus polyfangus*), Tiger Lily (*Chattero snappadius*), Frog Footman (*Liverous homoamphibus*), Caterpillar (*Cyanous blubberexhaliness*), Toves (*Slythia bongrowabegimblius*), and the Jabberwock (*Avianous antivorpallbladius*).

Murtonen commented on the challenges of experimenting with AI in a net of inexhaustible iterations and variations: how to ascertain the right words for prompts, how to upload and blend images with different sources to obtain totally dissimilar results, how to move toward ideas that surprise you, how to create hybrid creatures, how to manage unknown references or ones that are overwhelming or stereotyped, how to describe and get objects without using the usual names, how to play with portmanteaux in prompting, how to welcome the weird and funny, using the craziness of AI as a plus, and finally, how to deal with taste, repertoire, and concepts to obtain more authorship in the results.

What would Carroll think of AI? To help us visualize this, she created her own charmingly cool picture of Dodgson as he might look today. She believes that he would be interested in AI, since he loved inventions and was an avid photographer and mathematician.

Our next speaker, Laurence Talairach, is a professor of Victorian literature at the University of Toulouse-Jean Jaurès and the author of *Fairy Tales, Natural History and Victorian Culture* (Palgrave Macmillan,

Lillian Murtonen's 21st c. CLD



Laurence Talairach

2014) and many other books. She began her talk, “The Loveliest Garden You Ever Saw’: Lewis Carroll’s Botanical and Horticultural Wonders,” by discussing *Holiday House* and how its protagonist, young Laura, interacts with her garden.<sup>1</sup>

Gardening activities were pervasive in Victorian child-rearing and pedagogy, particularly for girls, who should be properly guided and pruned (sorry) to become caretakers of their own “gardens,” that is, their own households and children. (The term “Kindergarten,” literally “a garden of children” was coined in 1840.) However, Carroll radically subverted this idea in his books, as fantastic gardens trigger Alice’s desire and appetite rather than making her more docile.

The use of botanical and horticultural metaphors and references in contemporary children’s fiction was discussed, along with some controversies in Victorian gardening theory, such as designed artifice vs. natural chaos and the “carpet garden.” The results of the regi-

mentation of the designed garden, and its use of foreign cultivars for specific effects, could lead to a decline of native varieties.

She also spoke about aspects of *Sylvie and Bruno*, particularly, of course, the Mad Gardener. The book, as we all know, sprang from “Bruno’s Revenge,” a story Carroll published in *Aunt Judy’s Magazine*, whose editor, Margaret Gatty, wished to benefit the moral upbringing of children—and was herself a naturalist with a passion for marine botany. In asides, Talairach’s musings ranged from does Pat’s pronunciation of “arrum” recall Arum lilies to whether the Surrey Glass Conservatory in its Zoological Gardens inspired the glass greenhouse in Tenniel’s drawing.<sup>2</sup>

In our next talk, “Curious Collage: Surreal Art Inspired by Wonderland,” Berkeley (CA)–based artist Katie McCann shared with us her artwork stimulated by the imaginary fauna and flora of the *Alice* books. She first showed photos of her studio and some of her artistic process. McCann is an enthusiastic collector of old books and vintage image sources like magazines, photographs, and postcards, which she carefully separates and categorizes into thin flat files housed in an antique wooden archive. From this material, she makes intricate and complex handcrafted collages with just scissors, glue, and a plethora of found material, many times using textured, aged books as physical support.

McCann has mischmasched many different Red Queens and Alices, assembled as daydreamy, oneiric creatures, merging hybrid monsters with metamorphic, fairy-like fauna and flora. Alice’s Victorian heritage gains surreal and grotesque overtones amidst mythological, botanical, and literary references. The artist plays with anthropomorphism, putting human heads on animal bodies and the reverse, intertwining botany with anatomy.





*Collage by Katie McCann*

Collage disrupts the order of things and mounts an attack on the evident reality of the world. In fact, McCann's cabinet of wonders includes a series based on Looking-Glass Land habitants, even insects. As it did for Alice, "Jabberwocky" filled her head with ideas.

Her Alices are in constant metamorphosis, literally becoming fabulous monsters. She establishes a dialogue between the portmanteau words created by Carroll and collages of bizarre animals, creating a forest of hybrid beings. For McCann, collage words become collage monsters, enigmatic beings composed of different species, shapes, textures, medium sources, fragmentations, juxtapositions, and unexpected encounters of contradictory realities that emerge from the deep layers of the unknown within us. She dreams while awake of a unicorn with feathers and butterfly wings, girls with snake necks, fairy monsters and monstrous fairies, curious

creatures in an eccentric and uninterrupted processing of images and words.

As she couldn't be there live, anyone with follow-up questions can reach out to her via [KatieMcCannart.com](http://KatieMcCannart.com) or [@beetleblossom](https://www.instagram.com/beetleblossom) (IG).

Next, our president, Arnold Hirshon, took the "podium" to welcome us and talk a bit about our Society's past, present, and future. These are the subjects of his "Ravings" (p. 36), which contains some particularly important information about our future, so may we strongly recommend you read that column.

### **PART THREE: MENAGERIE**

In "Portraits from Wonderland," illustrator Scott Gustafson proved to be just as charming as his work. Like most of the attendees, he has an Alice origin story; in his case, it was a set of *The Book of Knowledge* encyclopedias that were on his family's bookshelves. He found

Portraits from Wonderland  
© 2021, Scott Gustafson



the Tenniel illustration of Tall Alice creepy, and for him, that strange but intriguing quality of the Tennyels conveyed the quality of the text as well.

Scott had wanted to be an animator, but it turned out that he had come into adulthood at a not very vibrant point in the history of animation, and as illustration work came his way, he found that it suited him better.

*The Night Before Christmas* was his first book, followed by *Peter Pan*. Scott enjoys working with fantasy topics, but it is important to him that they feel believable. He enjoys historical settings and doing research, then working those details into pictures. The utterly believable realism of his fantasy artwork is also grounded in his use of models and sometimes sets and lighting. However, his believability is rooted not just in doing the homework but in his artistic choices about the way his characters react to and participate in the scene.

When Scott was working for the Bradford Exchange on collector plates, they asked him if he was interested in doing *Alice*, and he certainly was. There were some constraints laid on him: Bradford wanted

well-known scenes, recognizable characters, and an approachable style. They had originally wanted a two- or three-year-old Alice, based on their market research, and after Scott pointed out that she really needs to be at least seven for the action of the book, they compromised on a four- or five-year-old Alice, and he did some scenes for them.

That work was done in the early '90s, and then, about twenty years later, Scott came back to *Alice*, because there are so many wonderful characters that he wanted to work with. He decided to create a series of portraits, which are as dynamic as a still picture can be. We get to come face-to-face with Alice holding the Drink Me bottle, the Dodo with a fabulous cravat, a Cheshire Cat in realistic style (a rare choice that we also see in Harry Rountree), the wild-eyed March Hare with splendid waistcoat and jacket and teacup, the Dormouse sleeping on a chair, also beautifully dressed, the Hatter posing with hand on lapel and holding his top hat in his other hand (and an exceptional portrayal where he looks neither silly nor dangerous and yet still

mad), the King and Queen of Hearts holding their flamingos, the White Rabbit with his pocket watch, a very human Caterpillar, the Frog and Fish Footmen, the Cook, the Duchess, Alice with a blissful pig baby, the mournful Mock Turtle, and the fierce yet adorable Gryphon, based on a particularly expressive species of eagle.

During the Q&A, it seemed that participants were hoping that his fine work would be available in books, but at present they will have to content themselves with the prints available at [www.scottgustafson.com](http://www.scottgustafson.com).

Our event's theme, "A Field Guide to Wonderland," might evoke childhood memories of books that were fun and educational, informative, and innocent. "But that is not the whole story," said Dr. Franziska Kohlt before starting her excellent talk, "Something's Bugging Me: Lewis Carroll & Victorian Entomology," with a history lesson. We traveled with her back to the nineteenth century, when Field Guides, also called Natural Histories, were a remarkable literary genre. They belonged to a very competitive, diverse, and influential market, defining a popular conception related to a scientific approach. In this market, there were varied and appealing graphic designs, exciting color prints, and challenging physical formats. The books had an important role in scientific education, notably for children, and were considered highly desirable for their supposed ideological neutrality. But to the contrary, Kohlt showed us, those books were printed mostly by Christian presses, which in some cases caused an estrangement, as the conflict of ideas between religion and Darwinian scientific concepts was strong at that time.

So, when Alice asks, "What is the use of a book without pictures and conversations?" it was, Kohlt argues, a criticism of a certain kind of Victorian publication and demonstrated Carroll's awareness of the book market and the readers' expectations.

Carroll's father was also interested in education. In their household, there were available well-known au-

thors, such as Jane Marcet and Anna Barbauld, whose works struggled in this Christian secular audience territory, depicting scientific themes such as woodlands creatures, seashores, birds and insects, and ways of further exploring them, such as microscopes. Carroll's own library contained many natural history books with emphasis on bugs, including those by the Reverend John George Wood, a bestselling author of natural history in his time.

In Victorian literature, animals are usually teaching opportunities: They may seem to offer a neutral observation of nature, but instead are giving moral judgments about society in a very anthropomorphic approach. Margaret Gatty's parables on science and the metamorphosis of the caterpillar, for example, carried a Christian lesson about the soul after death. As a literature intended to cultivate a child's mind, the texts bore underlying ideologies, notably Christian ideas, taught not by adults but by animals, straight from nature, attesting to their authenticity and truth. The parody of "How doth the little busy bee" in "How doth the little crocodile" is an example of Carroll addressing this Victorian pedagogy and moral literature. This idea of a truth expressed directly by nature's characters allowed people to impose their own ideologies onto it, as exemplified by Kirby and Spence's *An Introduction to Entomology* (1815), also a Victorian bestseller. Even the practice of naming insects had a moral and often prejudicial attitude—for example, moths called "adulterous" due to the exuberant colors of their wings.

Returning to Carroll, it is remarkable how often education is mentioned in both *Alice* books, including direct references to classes of geography, mathematics, and all the poems with a moral to them. This shows Carroll playing with the audience's expectations and interests. Kohlt also remarked that even given this historical context, Carroll innovates with genius, purposing fresh combinations of elements of those books, empowering the child, and all with much humor. Other examples are Carroll playing with the size of typography in the dialogue with the Gnat, and the conventions of encyclopedic format while describing the Looking-Glass insects and their lifestyle. When facing the Wasp in a Wig, Alice is friendly and helpful to an animal that in real life could cause fear and anger. The presence of insects in Carroll's works and writings goes beyond *Alice* books, as they are also present in *Sylvie and Bruno*, and his interest in vivisection also emphasizes his contextualization in the contemporary editorial market for educational and scientific debates.

At the end of her talk, Kohlt spoke about authors who have written adaptations, parodies, and nature-based scientific works. Carroll-inspired authors include Rachel Carson (*Silent Spring*, 1962), Nadine Amadio (*Alice in Rainforest Land*, 1988), Margret Boysen (*Alice*,



Franziska Kohlt



Sooj Tucker

*der Klimawandel und die Katze Zeta* [Alice, The Zeta Cat and Climate Change], 2016), and M. G. Leonard (*Beetle Boy*, 2017).

The final presentation of the day was a taped interview with Arkansas singer-songwriter S. J. “Sooj” Tucker. She and Heather talked about her music, especially her song “Cheshire Kitten.” To Tucker, a self-described “Mythpunk,” literature, folklore, myth, and fairy tales are important resources because they tell us who we are and where we come from. She draws heavily on those sources for her inspiration and likes to ask the question, “What if . . . ?”

Tucker comes from a family of storytellers, and she feels this helps her with writing music. Her process is to take the chosen material, ask the question, and then see where that takes her. In 2005, she pondered, “What if Captain Hook had asked Wendy if *she* wanted to be a pirate?” and so her feminist “Wendy Trilogy” was born. Then around 2008, she wondered, “What if the

Cheshire Cat had generations of descendants, and one of those kittens was not as self-confident as her famous ancestor?” The result is “Cheshire Kitten.” To Tucker, the song’s most important line is “If I leave my grin behind, remind me that we’re all mad here and that’s okay.” She feels that when you lose your “grin,” you lose the core of who you are. (“Don’t forget who you are” were the last words her grandfather said to her.) “Cheshire Kitten” won the Pegasus Award for Best Filk Song in 2012.<sup>3</sup> In addition, it sparked a conversation with the person whom she eventually married!

She hopes that audiences see the love she has for the source material that provides her inspiration. Tucker feels that the love for these stories has to be present, because if you didn’t care, you wouldn’t give it your time. If it’s not written on your soul, why bother with it? After the interview, we watched a taped performance of “Cheshire Kitten,” recorded in Tucker’s studio especially for our Society. Visit her at [SJTucker.com](http://SJTucker.com).

The Field Guide was brought to life, organized, and hosted by our VP, Heather Simmons, who added many welcome flourishes such as an illustrated dodo montage and a “Flora” video set to Miley Cyrus’s hit song “Flowers.” All of these talks—and “a great deal more”—can be found on our YouTube channel, [@LewisCarrollSocietyNA](https://www.youtube.com/@LewisCarrollSocietyNA). Thanks again to Heather and to Alan Tannenbaum for posting them.

### Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> See Morton Cohen’s “Catherine Sinclair and Lewis Carroll: The Changing Landscape of Children’s Literature,” *KL* 77:1.
- <sup>2</sup> As suggested by Rose Lovell-Smith in “The Animals of Wonderland: Tenniel as Carroll’s Reader,” *Criticism*, 45.4 (Fall 2003): 383–415.
- <sup>3</sup> “Filk music is a musical culture, genre, and community tied to science fiction, fantasy, and horror fandom. . . .” – Wikipedia.

Hilary Price, Rhymes with Orange, April 20, 2024



# LCSNA VIRTUAL EVENTS




Our monthly(-ish) VirtuAlice meetings have proven a wild success, as presenters and viewers from all over the globe are able to join “our happy crew.” On August 12, 2023, Dr. Franziska Kohlt presented “Through the Wonderglass: Alice in Science and Medicine in the Victorian Age and Beyond.” As always, she was a joy to listen to. Kohlt spoke of the Victorian market for children’s books and the preoccupations of the public in general with science and technology. At one point, she mentioned Alan Turing and his interest in Lewis Carroll, connecting Wonderland to the supposedly super-rational in English society.

Speaking about some of the science and technology that Charles Dodgson was exposed to, she linked them to both his religious sensibilities and his creativity, as expressed through the *Alice* books. Dodgson was fascinated by ways of seeing. His diaries speak of his experiences with his Uncle Skeffington and his telescopes and microscopes. Dodgson noted how these devices let us “see through” the outer world and “see things for what they really are.” The technology that allowed one to see in different ways were called by the Victorians “philosophical toys.” Examples of these were also zoetropes and “magic lanterns,” the effects of which were known as *phantasmagoria*, a term with which we are familiar. It is only a small step from here to Dodgson’s later spiritualism.

Kohlt described the tea parties at insane asylums that members of the public could attend, for a fee. Asylums were a bit of a Dodgson family business, as Uncle Skeffington was an inspector of asylums for the Lunacy Commission, and friends of his used the newly discovered tool of photography as a means of diagnosing mental illnesses. Photographs would, it was suggested, show a person’s “true nature” and display their true character. We see Lewis Carroll using this in “Hiawatha’s Photographing,” which demonstrates how a family portrait might not display people as they wished to be seen, but instead display their true natures, much to their chagrin.

Insects were a subject of study by the Victorians, and often the behavior of insects would be used to explain the reasons for proper behavior by young English boys and girls. Carroll’s uses of insects include the “Wasp in a Wig” and the entire chapter called “Looking-Glass Insects.”

This integration of Carroll’s scientific interests and religious predilections with his creativity is a valuable study. Too often, people read the *Alice* books and then look at the dull mathematics professor, the apparently middle-of-the-road Anglican, and do not see how these very different aspects could belong to one person. If Carroll was not the creative one, other theories arise as to the source of the *Alice* stories. These do not bear repeating. Looking at the whole person of Charles Dodgson, not only the

	LCSNA Summer School 2023	
	Dr. Franziska E. Kohlt, Tortoise	
	Through the Wonderglass:	
	Alice in Science and Medicine,	
	in the Victorian Age and Beyond	
	(with extras)	
	Saturday August 12	
IIAM Pacific/2PM Eastern/7PM UK		
	<a href="http://lewis Carroll.org/events">lewis Carroll.org/events</a>	

scientist, the letter-counter, the church rector, and the supposed stammerer, but also the puzzle creator, the author of a comic opera for puppets to amuse his sisters, the theater-goer, and the associate of other literary figures of the time, we of course can see the wellspring of creativity and fun that he had within him.

The talk was moderated by Heather Simmons, who is always enjoyable to listen to and who so ably interprets questions from our quirky community for the speaker. It was in the Q&A period that Dr. Kohlt really displayed her love of the subject and the joy she has in it. The Victorian times were very contradictory in their rationalism and their fairy stories, their elevation of the soul and their cruelty and oppression of disadvantaged peoples, and their care for and maltreatment of children. Kohlt showed us the many threads that colorfully connect these traits and bind them together.



On October 28, we Zoomed in to explore the Alice-inspired work of photographer and artist extraordinaire Abelardo Morell. This event proved to be double-the-pleasure for us, given that his interviewer was our own LCSNA board member Diane Waggoner, curator of photography at the National Gallery of Art and author of *Lewis Carroll's Photography and Modern Childhood* (Princeton University Press, 2020).

Cuban-born Morrell is an award-winning photographer (with Guggenheim and Cintas Foundation fellowships) whose work is on display in MoMA, the Whitney, and the Met in NYC. He is best known for his images that utilize the optics of the camera obscura, which he has been exploring since the early 1980s.

He shares with Carroll a delight in conveying multiple realities. But Morrell's wit is expressed through the manipulation of complex visual elements, rather than text on the page. Many of his images are accomplished by essentially turning whole rooms into giant camerae obscurae. This is done by blocking all light entering a

room except for a small opening in the blackout sheeting of a window. The light admitted by this opening projects an upside-down image on the opposite wall and the contents of the room. Morell then photographs the room's changed interior, essentially recording a *photograph of a photograph*.

His curious manner of layering reality upon reality revealed a natural affinity for the imaginative world of Carroll. In 1998, Dutton Children's Books published Morrell's illustrated *Wonderland*. This work employed black-and-white Tenniel characters, many used like cut-out "puppets" staged in his own 3-D constructions. The architecture of the planes created in these miniature theatrical sets plays with perspective and the duplication of visual elements through the use of mirrors; the cropping of Tenniel's illustrations results in Picasso-esque visual fractures.

The overall result is a fantasy world of implied space and dimensionalities, dreamscapes that often create a sense of disorientation, and an elevation of the everyday to a state of the magical. It must be stressed that Morrell creates this magic with no use of computer-assisted image processing; he insists relies on the materiality of primitive optics to achieve his effects.

In 2020, as our outer pandemic world turned topsy-turvy, Abelardo decided to penetrate Looking-Glass Land and embarked on the crafting of another series of images. This world was now envisioned in technicolor, and many of the new images have a kaleidoscopic element, containing backgrounds of small, repeated designs he calls "wallpaper." The resulting sense of constricted space creates an air of claustrophobia, perhaps influenced by the sheltering-in-place lifestyle. He also enjoyed creating images that explored a Humpty Dumpty-like sense of instability, suggesting the "impossible motion of an object" and carnival mirror-type distortions.

Morrell is currently in search of a publisher for *Looking-Glass*. His latest work will also be touring



the U.S. from April 2026 through March 2031 in a show, *Finding Alice*, put on by the Mid-America Arts Alliance. Carrollians interested in purchasing prints of his work may contact the Edwynn Houk Gallery in NYC.



On December 10, Heather Simmons hosted our Fourth Annual Show & Tell. First up was Simon DaVison, creator of the more-than-fabulous feature film of the *Snark* (KL 110:2–3), who showed us his new eight-page booklet about the film, available for free download as a PDF from psychopomp.co. Taking off from a photo of the actress who portrayed Gertrude Chataway in the film, Simon spoke about Carroll's "pilgrimages" to Sandown on the Isle of Wight, where he first met nine-year-old Gertrude in 1875. Their friendship lasted until his death, far longer than his friendship with Mrs. Hargreaves, and in 1893, an adult Gertrude stayed with him in Eastborne. Simon read parts of her famous letter to him.<sup>1</sup> Sandown was also the place where Carroll's cousin and godson, the twenty-two-year-old Charlie Wilcox, died from tuberculosis, which is said by some to be an inspiration for the poem.

Rebekah Blaser (KL 108:12) next returned to us with Fit 2 of "Tiny Alice's Adventures," displaying her self-designed, handsewn fabric figurines, generally in the ¾- to 1½-inch range in height, in various stages of completion. Aside from the Usual Suspects of characters, she has done or will be doing likenesses of such things as the Pudding (to whom we were introduced), rosebushes, oysters, the puppy, and Bill. To give an idea of scale, the White Rabbit's pocket watch was a single sequin.

Til Turner, a professor of children's literature in Virginia, then showed us how one of his classroom assignments was for students to "jump into the conversation" by creating songs, poems, objects, videos, or whatever, based on the *Alice* tales. As an example, he showed

us a miniature rendition of the Hatter's hat that he had made of Super Sculpey.

Next, our president, Arnold Hirshon, showed us some of his recent acquisitions: the original art from Grahame Baker-Smith's "Mouse's Tale" (KL 108:36); teapots, plates, cups, and saucers, which his wife, Janice, collects without regard to Alice, although one did feature Rory Dobner's Alice art (recently bought from Fortnum & Mason); two sculptures by Ron White: a March Hare and a bust of Carroll (KL 111:3); and Maryline Poole Adams's accordion-style flip book (aka Jacob's Ladder) of "Jabberwocky."

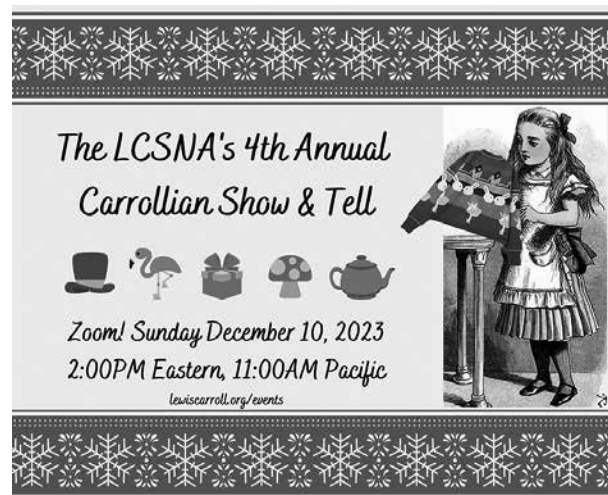
Composer/guitarist Vaughan Burton, who previously participated in a pop-up theater event (KL 108:11), updated us about *Croquet*, a rock opera that had premiered in a concert version in 2021. He described it as a "stages of life," coming-of-age, and spiritual adventure, based of course on *Wonderland* (plus "Jabberwocky"). He's working on a sequel, *Looking-Glass World*, from which he played his demo of a song he thought was perhaps influenced by the Moody Blues.

Our last presenter was Mark Richards, who told a fine tale. When he was but fifteen and a fiend for games and puzzles, he grabbed his brother's copy of John Fisher's *The Magic of Lewis Carroll* (Nelson, 1973), which became his introduction to the Carroll-verse. He claims he is the only person on the planet who read *Euclid & His Modern Rivals* before *Alice in Wonderland*. Then almost a half-century later, he was in the Chris Beetles Gallery in London for an opening and in walked John Fisher! Fisher signed his copy of *Magic* and later sent Mark a signed copy of *La magia di Lewis Carroll*, its Italian translation.



On February 3, 2024, Matt Demakos presented "Six Impossible Things." Demakos is "curiouser and curiouser" in all senses of the phrase; his interest in Lewis Carroll is as eclectic as his research is meticulous. Matt, a frequent contributor to *The Knight Letter*, entertained us with a discussion about his new series of six ten-minute-long videos. During an interview with Heather Simmons (our host), Matt gave a brief description of each. Using Zoom's poll option, viewers were then asked to pick two that they wished to see live, knowing that all six would soon appear on our YouTube channel. The two that were chosen were "John Tenniel's Method: The Jabberwock Explains" and "Alice's Flight from Looking-Glass Castle: An Alternative Ending Revealed."

The first was an illustrated discussion of how Tenniel transferred his intricate drawings to wood blocks so they could be engraved and printed.<sup>2</sup> The illustration of the Jabberwock revealed how and why Tenniel had a change of heart and decided to alter the direction the Jabberwock was facing. Instead of coming from right to left (as it appears in the sketch and tracing), it comes left





to right (as in the book). Matt explained that, artistically speaking, this is a more natural direction, and one that would also put the beamish boy's vorpal blade in his stronger right hand rather than his weaker left, thus allowing readers to identify with him. The weaker left-handed pose belies his firm-footed stance. To reverse his initial idea, Tenniel likely burnished his original tracing onto another sheet of paper (not the wood block), then took the new sheet of paper and used it to burnish the image onto the block. Even though it wasn't a first-generation tracing, it worked.

The second video chosen was perhaps the most audacious. Here Matt discussed a new ending in which the Red (not the White) Queen falls into the soup tureen, and Alice shakes the Red King (not the Red Queen) awake. The justification for this notion is that Carroll's child friend Rose Wood claimed in 1932 (when she was seventy-five years old) that Carroll told her, "I cannot decide what to make the Red Queen turn into."<sup>3</sup> Matt argued that old ladies may misremember events and that the implied notion in her statement—that Alice would shake a *red* piece that would turn into a *white* kitten—was inherently absurd and could never have been a possibility in Carroll's mind.<sup>4</sup>



[For the sake of completeness, the four videos that were not chosen will now be reviewed here.]

The first was "The Carpenter's Paper Hat: How to Fold and Not to Fold." Matt first researched the cap worn by the Carpenter when he was working on his *The Annotated Walrus*, an excellent work that will be available to our members for downloading later this year. This hat was also worn by printers and other laborers. It appeared in many contemporary illustrations, including several from *Punch* by Tenniel. There appeared to be several styles: some square, some round, some puffed on top, some

flat. Matt at first used John Fisher's *The Magic of Lewis Carroll* as the source for his hat pattern; the same fold is found in *The Other Alice* by Christina Björk. However, further research proved that Fisher's and Björk's design was incorrect and perhaps not Victorian at all. Using HathiTrust, a website filled with tens of thousands of books and other printed material, Matt found the true method that Victorian tradesmen used to make their paper hats. Indeed, there were different shapes, but the basic fold was the same, with a double-folded bottom edge that formed a band to make the cap firm.<sup>5</sup>

In "Looking Glass Chess: The Blunders and Blunders," Matt told us we didn't need to know much about chess to understand the moves in *Looking-Glass*; Carroll provided a chart and the schema of the chess game. In the video, Matt reviewed the chess moves in the story that appear to be the most "boneheaded." The operative word is *appear*. For example, was it a blunder for the Red Knight to threaten Alice, calling out "Ahoy! Ahoy! Check!" when he could easily be captured by the White Knight? At first glance, it does *appear* so.<sup>6</sup> Matt has a talent for making amusing collages of the Tenniel illustrations—here he added a sleeping Red King (behind a tree) to the battle scene.

Matt used his famous research skills—and tech talents—on "About That Mysterious Prelude in the *Alice Operetta*." The prelude appears in the operetta *Alice in Wonderland: A Dream Play for Children*, which opened at the Prince of Wales Theatre in 1886. Act One was *Wonderland*; Act Two was *Looking-Glass*, with a mirror scene that separated the two. [Details can be found in his article on p. 14.] This video was a real treat—not all of us have heard this musical, and certainly not in full, or with the original orchestration. Using his musical knowledge and the only known score, found in the National Library of Australia, Matt produced a London Philharmonic performance of the prelude. (In truth, the London Philharmonic supplied his music notation software





with samples.) He argues that the untitled piece (which is why it is mysterious) must have once been used for the deleted scene where a wide-eyed Alice steps through the Looking-Glass. One can hardly disagree.

The last video Matt recorded was “Widener’s Lost *Wonderland*: An Open Letter to the Current Owner.” In this letter, read aloud, Matt politely requests permission to study a long-lost specially bound edition of *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*. The only hitch is that he doesn’t know where it is! There were ten copies of *Wonderland* and *Looking-Glass* that were called “extra-illustrated” editions: first editions, often rebound in morocco, with letters, original art, artists’ proofs, and the like, bound into them. John Tenniel gave his nephew Arthur Calkin (who worked in the family book bindery, Riviere) artwork that would be bound into special editions to be sold to wealthy collectors. This missing *Alice*, bound in green Morocco leather with the discarded cover bound in the back, has forty drawings and tracings, portraits of Carroll and Tenniel, letters, and artists’ proofs; it is similar to an *Alice* that is now in the Harvard library. The last time it was mentioned was in the Rosenbach catalogue of the valuables at the Widener home, Lynnewood, in Pennsylvania, in 1944. (The Wideners were among the founding benefactors of the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC.) Its current location is an enticing mystery.



On March 23, “*Où est ma chatte?*” focused on French translations of Carroll’s works. Justine Houyaux, whose book *Alice au Pays des merveilles, traduction et illustrations de René Bour* is reviewed on p. 64, gave a talk about three French translators of Carroll in the Interwar Period: Louis Aragon, Marie-Madeleine Fayet, and René Bour. Aragon translated *The Snark*, not an *Alice* book.

In addition to comparing the different approaches of these three translators, Houyaux gave background de-

tails about their lives, which was particularly interesting in the case of Bour, about whom so little was known before. Bour not only translated *Alice*, but also illustrated it himself, and Fayet’s book was published with superb illustrations by Jean Hée. Houyaux finished by discussing the surrealist connections to *Alice* and showed graphs demonstrating how many French translations were actually done by known members of that movement.

The second speaker was Douglas Kibbee, who taught French linguistics for many years at the University of Illinois. His passion is analyzing different aspects of French translations of *Alice*. In this talk he presented 51 different ways in which the phrase “curiouser and curiouser” has been rendered in French! He explained the different linguistic structures used and the grammatical and ungrammatical ways that different translators have dealt with that phrase, such as using correct French or not, given that the English phrase is deliberately ungrammatical.

Kibbee noted that translation is not necessarily a loss, but can instead be a gain, when translators add different layers of meaning that were not present in the original. He finished with a wonderful Italian phrase: *un traduttore è un traditore* (a translator is a traitor).

In the Q&A section at the end, there was a discussion of whether the different translations influence the corresponding illustrations. We see such examples all the time in Russian and Spanish editions, where the Caterpillar is portrayed as female, as that is its grammatical gender in those languages. In French one can avoid the problem of the female *la chenille* by calling the character Monsieur Chenille.

*Contributing to this report were Mark Burstein, Linda Gray-Moin, Yvonne Kacy, Ray Kiddy, and Cindy Watter.*

#### Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> *The Life and Letters of Lewis Carroll*, pp. 379–80.
- <sup>2</sup> This process is discussed in great detail in his article “Sketch—Trace—Draw”: Part 1 is in *KL* 104:1–9; Part 2 in *KL* 105:10–18; Part 3, “Cut—Proof—Print,” is available on our website.
- <sup>3</sup> Rose L. Wood, Letter to *The Times*, 15 Feb., 1932, quoted in Cohen’s *Lewis Carroll: Interviews and Recollections*, pp. 197–98.
- <sup>4</sup> This video is an expansion of footnote 17 in Matt’s article “Bounding Brooks and Hopping Hedges” (*KL* 109:13).
- <sup>5</sup> To date, his five videos range from 60 to 150 views. This one, however, has been watched over a thousand times!
- <sup>6</sup> This video derives from, but also expands on, his article “Bounding Brooks and Hopping Hedges” (*KL* 109:13).



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# The Newly Identified 1887 Score for the *Alice* Operetta

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MATTHEW DEMAKOS

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## ALL THREE DATES ON THEIR PLATES

When the Walrus and the Carpenter declare the need for “Some butter and a loaf of bread” and “Pepper and vinegar besides,”<sup>1</sup> the four foodstuffs appear with their own musical themes. The Butter enters to the sound of tight, lush harmonies, which express its rich creaminess; the Bread appears with a melody incorporating a Middle Eastern raised fourth, which gives it a tang of the exotic; the Pepper receives diminished chords, which aptly depict its inherent dissonant nature; and the Vinegar, also fittingly dissonant with diminished chords, receives a series of four repeating sixteenth notes, which musically emulates its swirling about in the bottle.

The above scene derives, of course, from Lewis Carroll’s *Through the Looking-Glass*, the sequel to *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*. Readers may have noticed, however, that it is not from the page; it is from the stage. Carroll was greatly involved in the first two productions of the operetta *Alice in Wonderland: A Dream Play for Children*, as staged by Henry Savile Clarke and scored by Walter Slaughter. He wrote many letters to Clarke suggesting changes, and most famously created a scene where the ghosts of the oysters take revenge on the gluttonous Walrus and Carpenter. But did Carroll, who attended the operetta many times, hear the tight, lush harmonies of the Butter’s theme and the exotic melody of the Bread’s theme? One would suppose he did, as these tunes *do* appear in the printed piano-vocal score published in 1906.<sup>2</sup>

To find the definitive answer to the question, however, we must “fall right *through* the earth,” as Alice thought she might, “and come out among the people that walk with their heads downwards!” That is, we must visit the Land Down Under, or more specifically, The National Library of Australia. The library holds the only known score, a document that has never, to date, been referenced by scholars. True, the pages are discombobulated, confounding, ambiguous, and miscatalogued. But once they are properly organized (with specialized knowledge and, at times, keen observation), they begin to have clarity and a story of their own, one unrelated to Alice and her dreams. As will be shown, this story emerges from the fact that there were as many as twelve

different copyists writing out the parts in three different time periods. If one diligent copyist with a beauteous calligraphic hand had created the whole score—from the fairies who find Alice asleep to the royals who drink her health—its story would have been washed down the very river on which she was born. The literary detective would have no case.

It is only through a proper dating of the Australian score—the subject of this paper—that we can understand, to a greater degree than ever before, the differences among the various early performances of the operetta. More specifically, there are three *keynote* dates—1887, 1900, and 1906—that will help us determine if Lewis Carroll’s one and a half ears ever heard the sixteenth notes that swirl out the Vinegar’s dissonant theme.



Figure 1. Walter Slaughter in His Conservatory,  
from *The Sketch*, February 1, 1905.

# FATHER WILLIAMSON

The score is part of The National Library of Australia's J. C. Williamson Collection of Performance Materials. James Cassius Williamson (1845–1913) was a character actor and comedian in the States before becoming Australia's leading theatrical impresario, with a dominant production company that would last into the 1970s.<sup>3</sup> The collection, acquired in 1978, consists of 578 boxes along with seven cartons (not including various items that were transferred to other collections). The most extensive part of the collection is the 339 boxes that comprise typescripts, playscripts, libretti, and various manuscript material.<sup>4</sup> Two of these boxes contain the *Alice in Wonderland* operetta. According to the library's catalogue, box 1 contains a piano score, a vocal score, and a conductor's score; box 2 contains the fourteen part scores, that is, for the violins, oboe, trombone, and so forth, with only the harp part missing. But these details are in part incorrect or misleading, as we will see.

For the purposes of this paper, the following productions, which include two from Williamson, are of importance:

♦ 1886 London	First Libretto
	Revised Libretto (1887)
♦ 1888 London	Modified Libretto
♦ 1898 London	Lyric Book (only)
♦ 1900 London	—
♦ 1900 Newcastle	—
♦ 1901 Sydney, Aus.	—
♦ 1906 Sydney, Aus.	—

Carroll attended the first three productions: the original, the revision, and the revival. (For ease of discussion, we will often speak of the revision as if it were a new production.) The 1898 production at the Opera



Figure 2. J. C. Williamson, ca. 1910, State Library, New South Wales, Australia.

Comique was a commemorative, due to his passing. It will play a bit role in our discussion, but the two simultaneous 1900 productions (one in London and one in Newcastle) will play a leading role. Slaughter made many changes for these dual productions, most significantly by adding three songs by Aubrey Hopwood (Clarke had passed away in 1893). As we will see, the fact that these shows occurred simultaneously may likely be the reason the Aussies, and not the Brits, have the story to tell. Lastly, Williamson produced the operetta in 1901 and 1906. The 1906 production was performed entirely by children, a concept Clarke first proposed but Carroll rejected.<sup>5</sup>

## BOX THE FIRST

The first of the two boxes is described in The National Library of Australia's catalogue as having three items (bullet points added):

- ♦ 1 ms. piano score;
- ♦ 1 ms. vocal score;
- ♦ 1 ms. conductor's score.

As we will show, the third item is the conductor's score for Williamson's 1901 Theatre Royal production in Sydney. It ran from December 26, 1901 to February 5, 1902, having as well a tour in New South Wales. This score will be discussed in full in the next section.

The second item, "1 ms. vocal score" is, without a doubt, the conductor's score for the 1906 Her Majesty's Theatre production in Sydney. It ran from December 24, 1906, to January 26, 1907, without a tour. The score is written in a rather neat hand by a copyist who employed green ink for the numbers and the cues, and underscored them with a wavy red line. Most distinctively, however, this copyist wrote all downward-stemmed notes backwards (a habit found in some of the other copyists, as it will turn out).

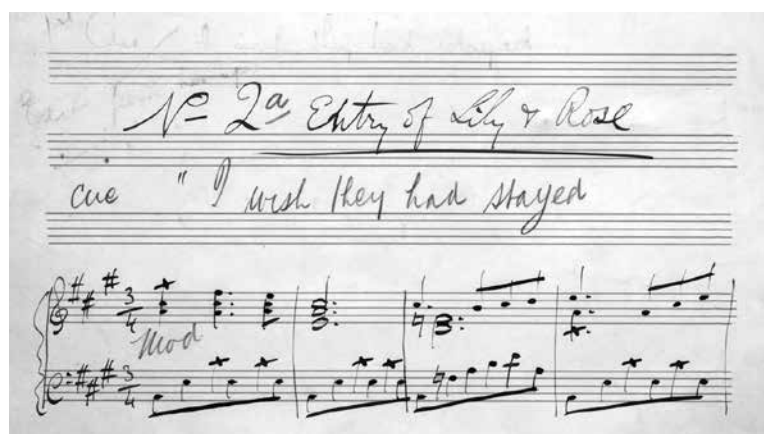
The score obviously derives from the previous 1901 conductor's score. For example, the copyist titles one section "No. 9 Out / Go to Lobster Ballet" and another "No. 11 Out." In the previous score, these are "Beautiful Soup" and "The Voice of the Lobster," both of which are marked "out" in the same hand. (Thus, we learn that what is marked "out" in the 1901 score may actually be unrelated to the 1901 production.)

Unbeknownst to the library, the item referred to as "1 ms. piano score" is not by Walter Slaughter! Though obviously an *Alice in Wonderland* production, this score has a different numbering system and has references for the pianist to "Take over from recording," meaning it must be a more modern piece. In fact, the score is actually William Orr and Dot Mendoza's pantomime of *Alice in Wonderland*. The library holds the Williamson programs for the production for 1961 and 1965.<sup>6</sup> These programs list several numbers, such as a "Humpty Dumpty

**Figure 3.** “The Entrance of White Rabbit” from the 1887/1900 conductor’s score. In Carroll’s day, conductors did not consult a full score nor a professionally printed score, but a handwritten piano–vocal score. This page dates to 1887 and was written out by a copyist who used roundhand, a form of writing characterized by a varying line width and capital letters with ornate curlicues. All images from the score are courtesy of The National Library of Australia.



**Figure 5.** “Entry of Lily and Rose” from the 1887/1900 conductor’s score. This page was written out by a copyist who used a rougher hand, relatively speaking, than the original copyist. His handiwork dates to 1900 when Walter Slaughter is known to have added new material to the operetta.



Ballet” and a song “How Do You Do,” both of which appear in the piano score.

At the time of this writing, the two conductor’s scores are a bit entwined. Parts of the “Overture” are confused, and several pages from the 1906 Walrus and Carpenter scene have found their way into the 1901 score. Many pages of the 1901 score are also out of order.

It is best, however, to actually defend the library for these *miscalculations*. Remember, they received in one fell swoop what would eventually be 578 boxes’ worth of material. To have fully researched all of it was out of the question. Several pages have a huge “Alice” scribbled on them with what appears to be a blue-green crayon. This was, hopefully, not the work of a librarian but some other party who was most likely going through a pile of unsorted documents, trying his or her best to identify each. Though the library lists all as “Alice in wonderland [music] / Walter Slaughter,” at least they had the foresight to show some uncertainty by stating at the bottom of their listing “Possibly a version of Alice in wonderland : a dream play for children....”

#### THE ROUNDHAND AND THE RUFFIAN

Scribbled on the front cover in large letters are the words “Book Post / Registered” and the name “J. C. Williamson Esq.” In smaller letters appears the impresario’s address in Melbourne, Australia, and the name and English address of the sender. In letters twice as large as Williamson’s own and in a fine calligraphic scrawl are the words that compose the title of the document, one with a capital “W” that has more curlicues in it than a Fish-Footman’s wig.

This is the front cover of the score the Australian conductor consulted for their 1901 production of *Alice in Wonderland*. Its initial creator was a copyist who used a type of writing known as roundhand (figure 3), an ornamental style characterized by a varying line width and capital letters with ornate flourishes. The pages have staffs, or staves, either sixteen staves per page or twelve staves in groups of three (imitating piano–vocal scores). As was customary for the time, the score is a short score, not a full score showing every instrument of the orchestra, such as a conductor would use today. Rather, the

orchestra is reduced to a mere piano, or piano–vocal arrangement.

Our roundhand copyist is accompanied by another copyist, one who writes, comparatively speaking, in a ruffian's style (figure 5). As can be seen in Table 1, the roundhand (copyist 1) created the bulk of the document, and the ruffian (copyist 2), as he will be named (and designated), inserted intermittent material. As will be shown, we will be able to date the portion of the score that was created in roundhand to January 1887, when the original production was revised, due, in part, to Carroll's dislike of the Walrus episode. And we will be able to date the portion added by the ruffian to 1900, when Slaughter is known to have added new material to the operetta. That is to say, if we remove the ruffian's pages, what remains are the very pages that rested on the music stand in front of the conductor when Carroll visited the Prince of Wales's Theatre on the first day of February 1887, the day when he first observed the Oysters getting their revenge on the Walrus and the Carpenter.<sup>7</sup>

Before proving this claim, it must be made clear that the roundhand's document is not his own 1886 score with new 1887 material inserted. Rather, the score shows all the signs of being copied anew. One page may contain known new material along with known old material. The new 1887 "Hornpipe," for example, ends on the same page where the old 1886 "Tweedle-dee and dum Dressing Up" begins. That the score was freshly recopied becomes doubly clear when we consider what appears on the verso and recto of each page. This complete re-scribing may have resulted from the sense that the score simply became too *rambunctious* with numerous changes made even during rehearsals, and it needed a complete overhaul.

With the above in mind, there are several reasons to date the score to 1887. First, it contains the new 1887 Walrus material, namely "The Oyster Song," "The Mazurka," and "The Hornpipe." Second, it includes the new 1887 "The Waits," a Christmas carol. Third, the roundhand's score contains "To the Looking-Glass World," not its 1888 replacement "Sound the Festal Trumpets." Fourth, it does not contain the 1888 song based on the Queen's riddle.<sup>8</sup> Lastly, there is simply no evidence, intentionally ignored or otherwise, that can timestamp this material to any other period. Therefore, it must be dated after 1886 and before 1888.

Likewise, there are several reasons to conclude that the ruffian's additions were made in 1900 and not before. First, the 1900 productions were noteworthy for being revised. "The piece was produced at the Opera Comique some years ago, and it was revived last year," reported one paper, "but it has now been considerably altered and partly rewritten."<sup>9</sup> Second, the London playbill listed three new songs by Aubrey Hopwood, all of which appear in the ruffian's hand. They are "Tell Me,

Hatter," "When the Wind Is in the East" (or "Follow My Leader"), and "Song to Rabbits."

After the Hopwood songs, the other main addition is the "Lobster Ballet." Indeed reviewers in 1886 referred to the "lobster quadrille," but this seems to have been part of another song. For example, one 1886 reviewer described the song as "the lobster quadrille, with the chorus, 'Will You Walk a little Faster?'" And an 1888 reviewer described the song likewise, "the droll lobster quadrille, and its accompanying chorus, 'Will you walk a little faster?'"<sup>10</sup> Thus, the ruffian's "Lobster Ballet" is highly likely to be a new piece as well.

With the above in mind, the ruffian's pages must be dated 1900.

As can be seen on Table 1, besides the Hopwood songs and the "Lobster Ballet," Slaughter added many entrance and exit pieces for the characters. He created such themes for the Duchess and the Cook, the Executioner, Lily and Rose, and the Red Queen, and even wrote sixteen bars for a piece called "Hatter's Entrance on Hobby Horse."<sup>11</sup> Perhaps a tad too obsessed with the concept of entrance music, Slaughter even composed such music for inanimate objects. Yes, it was at this time in 1900 that he created themes for the Butter, the Bread, the Vinegar, and the Pepper. Alas, Carroll did *not* hear the luscious grand theme of the butter, the exotic theme of the bread, nor the dissonant-sounds-for-dissonant-tastes themes of the Pepper and the Vinegar.

Thus, our first and second *keynote* dates are 1887 and 1900. But more importantly—how (if not through a rabbit hole) did the 1887 conductor's score land in Australia? This may be due to the fact that there were two simultaneous productions in London and Newcastle. Clearly, Slaughter and the copyists needed to produce two scores, including two conductor's scores. Evidently, they added pages to the old 1887 score, and created a fresh score as well. One went to Newcastle, and one stayed in London. When the Australians came calling, the Brits were happy enough to provide the Aussies with the old *cobbled-up* score and keep the fresh one for themselves. As stated earlier, the other score, if written afresh, would have a far less detailed story to tell.

## BOX THE SECOND

The second box contains the music for the musicians, the pages that appear on their music stands during a performance. The musicians' scores are reduced to only their parts, but occasionally, for clarity, another part is displayed as a guide. The parts are outlined in the National Library of Australia's catalogue (bullet points added):

- ♦ [strings] leader, 1st violin, 2nd violin, viola, cello and bass (shared part), basso,
- ♦ [wind] flute, oboe, clarinets A and B-flat (shared part), bassoon,

**Table 1** The Australian Score: Copyists, Instrumentation, and Select Performances

Conductor's Score			Strings						Winds				Brass			Others							Syd-	
No.	Title		Ld	1s	2d	Va	Vc	Db	Fl	Ob	Cl	Bn	Hn	Ct	Tm	Dm	Hp	London					1901	1906
																		1886	1887	1888	1898	1900		
Act I																								
	Overture	②	3	3	5	6	3	3	8	8	6	9	6	10	9	6	6	—	—	—	●	●		
	Opening Chorus	1	3	3	5	6	3	3	8④	8④	6	9	6	10	9	6	6	●	●	●	●	●		
1bis	Entrance of White Rabbit	1	3	3	5	6	3	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	○	●	●	●	●		
2	I'll Try, How Doth the Little...	1	④	①①	5	6	3	3	8	8	6	9	6	—	—	—	—	●	●	●	●	●		
	Song to Rabbits Alice	②	3	3	5	⑦	3	3	8	8	6	9	6	—	—	6	—	—	—	—	—	●		
3	Father William	1	3	3	5	6	3	3	8	8	6	9	6	10	9	6	—	●	●	●	●	●		
	Entry of Duchess and Cook	②	3	3	5	6	3	3	8	—	6	9	6	—	—	6	—	—	—	—	—	●		
4	Song Duchess [Spk Roughly]	1	3	3	5	6	3	3	8	8	6	9	6	—	—	6	—	●	●	●	●	●		
5	Alice and Cat	1	3	3	5	6	3	3	8	8	6	9	6	—	—	6	—	●	●	●	●	●		
5bis	Entrance of Dormouse...	1	3	3	5	6	3	3	8	8	6	9	6	—	—	—	—	○	●	●	●	●		
6	So They Say	1	3	3	5	6	3	3	8	8	6	9	6	10	9	6	—	●	●	●	●	●		
	March of Cards	1	3	3	5	6	3	3	8	8	6	9	6	10	9	6	—	●	●	●	●	●		
7	Gavotte of Cards	1	3	3	5	6	3	3	8	8	6	9	6	10	9	6	—	●	●	●	●	●		
	Entrance of Executioner	②	3	3	5	⑦	3	3	8	8	6	9	6	10	9	6	—	—	—	—	—	●		
8	Executioner Chorus	1	3	3	5	6	3	3	8	8	6	9	6	—	9	6	—	●	●	●	●	●		
8bis	Enter Gryphon	1	3	3	5	6	3	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	○	●	●	●	●		
	Enter Mock Turtle	1	3	3	5	6	3	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	●	●	●	●	●		
	— [Beautiful Soup]	1	3	3	5	6	3	3	8	—	6	9	6	—	—	—	—	—	●	●	●	●		
10 1/2	Lobster Ballet	②	3	3	5	⑦	3	3	8	8	6	9	6	10	9	6	—	—	—	—	—	●		
10	Gryphon [Will you walk...]	1	3	3	5	6	3	3	8	—	6	9	6	—	—	—	—	●	●	●	●	●		
11	The Voice of the Lobster	1	3	3	5	6	3	3	8	8	6	9	6	—	—	—	—	●	●	●	●	●		
	[Flourish at End of Song]	*	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	10	—	—	—	●	●	●	●	●		
11bis	March	1	3	3	5	6	3	3	8	8	6	9	6	10	9	—	6	○	●	●	●	●		
11x	Entry of Cook	②	3	3	5	6	3	3	8	—	6	9	6	—	—	6	—	—	—	—	—	●		
12	Finale [Hurrah]	1	3	3	5	6	3	3	8	8	6	9	6	10	9	6	6	●	●	●	●	●		
	Entr' Acte [Alice and Cat]	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	○	●	○	○	—		

The table lists the musical pieces in the Australian scores (with some additions) and the copyists (numbered 1 through 12) who wrote out the scores for the conductor and the musicians. On the far left, the table indicates which productions performed each of the selections. The numbers and titles derive from the Conductor's Score, ignoring later amendments. Titles in brackets are added for clarity.

## THE SCRIBES

- 0 Uncircled numbers represent the original copyists
- ① Circled numbers represent copyists who inserted material
- 0 Black backgrounds represent the Australian copyists
- Dashes represent an instrument tacet (silent)

## THE STRINGS

Ld: Lead Violinist	Fl: Flute	Hn: Horns in F	Dm: Drums
1s: First Violins	Ob: Oboe	Ct: Coronets	Hp: Harp
2d: Second Violins	Cl: Clarinets	Tm: Trombone	
Va: Violas	Bn: Bassoon		
Vc: Violin Cello			
Db: Double Bass			

NOTE: The part for the violin cello is for "Cello and Bass," a staff each, however, there is a separate score for "Bass" alone. Also, the coronets are in B-flat and A, and the Flute doubles as piccolo.

## INCLUSION IN A PRODUCTION

- Black circles indicate that the piece was performed
- Dashes indicate that the piece was omitted
- Empty circles represent uncertainty
- S S stands for a substitution (see right)

## SPECIAL MATTERS

Opening Chorus, Act 1, Flute and Oboe: A section of this multisectional piece was added by copyist 4, perhaps accidentally omitted by copyist 8, or intentionally tacet at some point in time.

I'll Try, How Doth the Little Crocodile: Copyist 3 accidentally omitted the song in the lead part and likely copied that mistake over to the first violins. The error was corrected by copyists 4 and 11.

[Flourish at End of Song]: The title is from the cornet part. The flourish is the three blasts by the Herald, though the second blast is ornamented. The tune is scribbled into the Conductor's Score.

Tweedle-dum and -dee, Trombone: The part was originally marked "Tacet," but a score is added in with pencil by an unknown hand.

Hatter's Entrance on Hobby Horse and Tell Me Hatter [1] and [2]: Versions [1] were copied out by the original copyists for each part, and by copyist 2 in the Conductor's Score. Versions [2] are re-orchestrations by the Australians. The cellos and basses shared the same score.

March of Cards: The 1906 Australian production substituted this march

Conductor's Score			Strings						Winds				Brass			Others						Syd-				
No.	Title		Ld	1s	2d	Va	Vc	Db	Fl	Ob	Cl	Bn	Hn	Ct	Tm	Dm	Hp	London				1901	1906			
Act I																			1886	1887	1888	1898	1900			
	—   [Curtain Music]	1	3	3	5	6	3	3	8	—	6	9	—	—	—	④	—		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	—
1	—   [Opening Chorus]	1	3	3	5	6	3	3	8	8	6	9	6	10	9	6	6		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
2	Aria [Jabberwocky]	1	3	3	5	6	3	3	8	—	6	9	6	—	—	6	6		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	—
2bis	Exit of Alice and Red Queen	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—		o	•	•	•	—	—	—	
2	Entry of Lily & Rose	②	3	3	5	6	3	3	8	8	6	9	6	—	—	—	—		—	—	—	—	•	—	•	
2b	Ent. and Exit of Red Queen	②	3	3	5	6	3	3	8	8	6	9	—	—	—	6	—		—	—	—	—	•	—	•	
	[Waltz: Alice and Flowers]	—	3	3	5	6	3	3	8	8	6	9	6	—	—	6	—		—	—	o	•	•	—	•	
	[1] Hatter's... Hobby Horse	②	3	3	5	6	3	3	8	8	6	9	6	—	—	6	—		—	—	—	—	•	—	•	
	[1] Song—Alice [Tell Me Hatter]	②	3	3	5	6	3	3	8	8	6	9	6	10	9	6	6		—	—	—	—	•	—	•	
3	Tweedle-dum and -dee	1	3	3	5	6	3	3	8	8	6	9	6	—	—	+	6	—		•	•	•	•	•	•	•
4	—   [Here... Mulberry Bush]	1	3	3	5	6⑦	3	3	8	8	6	9	6	10	9	6	—		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
4 1/2	Change of Scene	②	3	3	5	6	3	3	8	8	6	—	—	—	—	—	—		—	—	—	—	•	—	•	
5a	Walrus and Carpenter	1	3	3	5	6	3	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
5b	Give a Hand to each	1	3	3	5	6	3	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
5c	Entrance of Butter	②	3	3	5	⑦	3	3	8	8	6	9	6	—	9	—	—		—	—	—	—	•	—	•	
	Bread	②	3	3	5	⑦	3	3	8	8	6	9	—	—	—	—	—		—	—	—	—	•	—	•	
	Pepper	②	3	3	5	⑦	3	3	8	8	6	9	—	—	—	—	—		—	—	—	—	•	—	•	
	Vinegar	②	3	3	5	⑦	3	3	8	8	6	9	6	10	9	—	—		—	—	—	—	•	—	•	
	very good indeed	②	3	3	5	⑦	3	3	8	8	6	9	6	10	9	—	—		—	—	—	—	•	—	•	
5c	Eating Oysters	1	3	3	5	6	3	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
5d	ate them all but one	1	3	3	5	6	3	3	8	8	6	9	—	—	—	—	—		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
	—   [Oyster Revenge Song]	1	3	3	5	6	3	3	8	—	6	9	6	—	9	—	—		—	•	•	o	•	—	•	
	Mazurka	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—		—	•	•	•	—	—	—	
	Hornpipe	1	3	3	5	6	3	3	8	8	6	9	6	10	9	6	—		—	•	•	•	•	•	•	
6	Tweedle... dressing up	1	3	3	5	6	3	3	8	8	6	9	6	—	—	6	—		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
	Gollywog Song & Dance	②	3	3	5	⑦	3	3	8	8	6	9	6	—	—	6	—		—	—	—	—	o	—	o	
	[2] Hatter's... Hobby Horse	—	⑪	⑪	⑪	⑪	→	⑪	⑪	⑪	⑪	—	—	⑪	⑪	⑪	—		—	—	—	—	—	—	•	
	[2] Song—Alice [Tell Me Hatter]	—	⑪	⑪	⑪	⑪	→	⑪	⑪	⑪	⑪	—	—	⑪	⑪	⑪	—		—	—	—	—	—	—	•	
7	Humpty Dumpty's Entrance	1	3	3	5	6	3	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
8	Humpty Dumpty['s Fallen...]	1	3	3	5	6	3	3	8	8	6	9	6	10	9	6	—		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
9	Entrance Lion & Unicorn	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—		•	•	•	•	—	—	—	
9 1/2	Lion and Unicorn	1	3	3	5	6	3	3	8	8	6	9	6	10	9	6	—		o	•	•	•	•	•	•	
	Melos Hatter's Entrance	②	3	3	5	⑦	3	3	8	8	6	9	6	—	—	—	—		—	—	—	—	•	—	•	
	When the Wind... East	②	3	3	5	⑦	3	3-	8	8	6	9	6	10	9	6	—		—	—	—	—	•	—	•	
	Change of Scene	②	3	3	5	6	3	3-	8	8	6	9	6	10	9	6	—		—	—	—	—	•	—	•	
10	The Waits	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—		—	•	•	—	—	—	—	
	[I'll Tell Thee Everything...]	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—		—	—	—	—	•	—	o	
11	March	1	⑪	⑪	⑪	⑪	→	⑪	⑪	⑪	⑪	—	—	⑪	⑪	⑪	—		•	•	•	•	—	—	•	
	[To the Looking-Glass World]	1	⑪	⑪	⑪	⑪	→	⑪	⑪	⑪	⑪	—	—	⑪	⑪	⑪	—		•	•	•	—	—	—	•	
	[Sound the Festal Trumpets]	—	3	3	5	6	3	3	8	8	6	9	6	10	9	6	—		—	—	•	•	•	—	•	
	[Fish Riddle Song]	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—		—	—	•	o	—	—	—	
12	Finale "Drink Alice's Health"	1	3	3	5	6	3	3	8	8	6	9	6	10	9	6	6		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•



**Figure 6.** The full score for “The Entrance of the Butter” by Walter Slaughter as engraved by the author. At some point in his creative process, Slaughter would have created a full score, where all the instruments are placed atop one another as shown here. To date, however, no such score has been found.

Slaughter’s Butter theme plays with two dimensions. Vertically, it has close harmonies shown by the split strings. In other words, instead of playing one common note, the second violin players separate and play two notes, as do the viola players and the cello players. The resulting sound adds richness to the harmony, a richness that appropriately matches the richness, or creaminess, of butter itself. Horizontally, the melody imitates the serving of the butter. The long half note (as shown in the flute, for example) represents the scooping of the butter, and the short eighth note represents the “plipping” of it onto the plate. This is repeated three times for three scoops: Scoooooo-plip, scoooooo-plip, scoop-plip. Note that the last spoonful (in the third measure) is shorter. This is an apt portrayal—as with sugar or chocolate powder as well—of how we often indulge ourselves with one more scoop but control ourselves as well by making it a wee bit smaller than the others.

*Tempo di Mazurka*

- ♦ [brass] horns 1 and 2 (shared part), horns 3 and 4 (shared part), cornets,<sup>12</sup> trombone,
- ♦ [percussion] drums. [. . .]
- ♦ harp part missing although included on parts list handwritten on cover of lead violin part.

Some of the parts need clarification. The part labeled “leader” was for the concert master, or lead violinist, and was likely shared with another violinist. The “cello and bass” part had both a staff for the cello and for the contrabass, though there was a separate score titled “basso” that was strictly for the contrabass. At the time, “drums” was the term used for the percussionist’s part. He had such toys as tambourines, triangles, timpani, and gongs, along with a bass drum and cymbal (a single combined instrument). Lastly, the harp part is *not* missing; unbeknownst to the library, it is the “horns 3 and 4” part. On close inspection, the cover’s label shows a faded rectangle around the words “Horns 3 and 4.” No doubt a strip with the word “Harp” was once pasted atop the words. It follows, of course, that the operetta was scored for two horns (not four), as would have been usual.

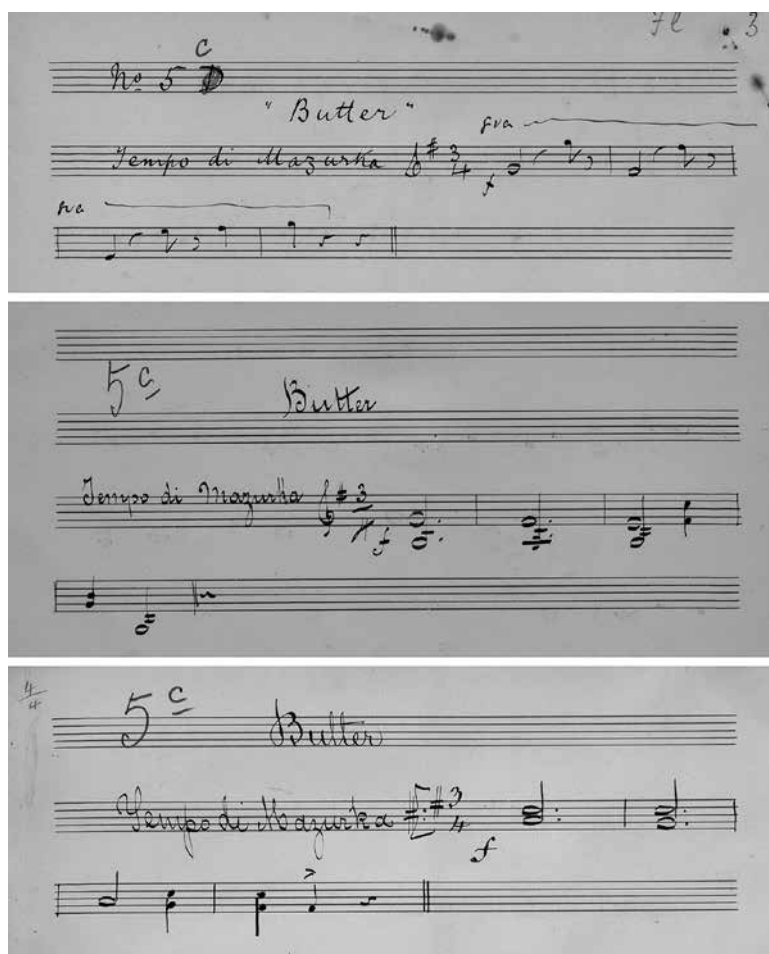
As shown in Table 1, the fifteen parts were written out by six copyists, some having written out more than one part. One could easily confuse copyist 3, who wrote

out four of the six string parts, with copyist 1, since both used roundhand. However, copyist 3’s bass clefs, time signatures, segnos, and capital *A*s and *N*s, for example, show noticeable differences from those of his counterpart. Copyist 8 (flute and oboe) and copyist 9 (bassoon and trombone) had two of the less elegant hands, and appropriately enough, both wrote their downward stem notes backwards! (This was a habit of copyist 11 and the copyist for the 1906 conductor’s score as well. But they had an excuse—they were Australian.)

The fifteen scores were, no doubt, created in 1900, our already-mentioned second *keynote* date. There are two main reasons for this rather obvious claim. First, there were no shows between the new revised production and the Australian production. Second, the Hopwood songs, and all the other new material, appear cleanly integrated—that is to say, the new material does *not* stand apart as if inserted, but flows along with all the rest of the material in one continuous stream. The new songs often appear on the recto or verso of the old songs.

Most telling, however, is the viola score. It has one main copyist (copyist 6), and a secondary copyist (copyist 7), as shown in Table 1. All copyist 7’s additions, barring one,<sup>13</sup> were for the pieces Slaughter added to the op-





**Figure 7.** The part scores for flute, second violins, and violas for “The Entrance of the Butter” by Walter Slaughter.

The flute part was written out by copyist 8, who also wrote out the part for the oboe. Notably, he wrote his downward-stemmed notes backwards, a not-uncommon practice.

The second violin part was written out by copyist 5, who did not write out any other parts.

The viola part was originally copied by copyist 6, who also wrote out the parts for the clarinet, horns, drums, and harp. However, “The Entrance of the Butter,” along with many other 1900 additions, was written out for the viola by copyist 7. This fact confirms that the part scores derive from the 1900 productions and that they were not merely copied out for the Australians but given to them.

retta in 1900. These additions also appear on the recto or verso of the original copyist’s work. Thus, the scores were not only created in that year, but they were the original copies, not cleanly written-out copies for the Australians. In short, the Australians received the actual 1900 part scores.

There is an obvious *disconnection* between the conductor’s score and the fifteen part scores, and an obvious *connection* among the different part scores. Apparently, the conductor’s score derives from one full score, and the part scores from a different full score. This is evident, for example, in the first act, where the Mock Turtle and the Gryphon show Alice the “Lobster Ballet” in the conductor’s score but the “Lobster Dance” in all fifteen part scores. Also, all the part scores have the “Lobster Dance” before “Will You Walk,” an obvious error that must have been in the original full score. These two large full scores (scores that have a staff for each instrument) are nonextant.

#### THE SCRAWLER OF 1906

Copyist 11, who wrote in a rather scrawly hand (figure 8), interspersed new music amid Slaughter’s own. These pieces were what the Australians called “specialties,”

songs, routines, and performances appended to but detached from the show proper, to give the audience more bang for its buck. These *interruptions* only appear in the part scores (and are not represented in Table 1).

Consequently, before the Cook enters to begin the first act’s finale, the scrawler—the copyist will be so dubbed—slipped in “Keep on the Sunny Side” (Jack Drisland and Theodore Morse) and “Children of the U. S. A.” (unknown). Before “Humpty Dumpty’s Entrance,” he inserted “Under a Panama” (Vincenty Bryan and J. B. Mullen), a song with racist language, and “The Scarecrow Dance” (unknown), a tune associated with an act by the then-popular John Coleman, which a cast member emulated.<sup>14</sup> And before the second act finale, he added “Nursery Rhymes,” as he titled the many tunes associated with “Little Jack Horner,” “Little Bo Peep,” “Cinderella,” and the like. After the second act finale, he scrawled “What is the Use of a Penny?” (T. F. Robson and William Hyde), and lastly, somewhere—it is difficult to discern where—three members of the orchestra played the “Crescendo Galop” (Crispiniano Bosio).<sup>15</sup>

Since three of these numbers were only mentioned in 1906 reviews, and the known specialties for 1901 that were mentioned in reviews<sup>16</sup> are fully absent, it must be

**Figure 8.** “Hatter’s Entrance on Hobby Horse” from the part score for flute, doubling as piccolo, 1906. This page, shown in part, was written out by a copyist whom we affectionately refer to as the scrawler. The tune appears twice in the score, once as orchestrated by Slaughter, and once as re-orchestrated by the Australians. It is followed by “Song—Alice” (“Tell Me, Hatter”), a typical ambiguity found in the scores. The scrawler’s main job, however, was to write out the “specialties” for all the part scores. Specialties were songs, routines, or acts inserted into the performance that were not part of the operetta proper.



concluded that the scrawler was set loose in the later year. Thus, our third *keynote* date on our slate is not 1901 but 1906.

But the scrawler did not copy out only specialties, he also copied out four of Slaughter’s *Alice* tunes, as shown in Table 1. The first two (“Hatter’s Entrance on Hobby Horse” and “Tell Me, Hatter”) are actually re-orchestrations of Slaughter’s originals, and, oddly enough, appear twice in the score. The second two (“March” and “To the Looking-Glass World”) were pieces that were removed from the 1888 production and almost certainly the 1900 productions. As stated above, “Sound the Festal Trumpets” took the place of “To the Looking-Glass World” (the later piece even has a reworked stanza from the original).<sup>17</sup>

There is a logical explanation for these oddities. It seems the creators of the 1906 Australian production worked from the earlier 1900 conductor’s score to build their own 1906 score. (As mentioned above, penciling in the former suggests this to be the case.) After becoming set in their ways, and perhaps even after piano rehearsals, they realized that the “March” and “To the Looking-Glass World” were not scored in the parts. Therefore, they were hastily scored.<sup>18</sup> Since “Hobby Horse” and “Tell Me, Hatter” were removed from their expected position, someone likely failed to find them in the score, and they were promptly—and needlessly—orchestrated afresh. This explains both the duplication and the fact that they have completely different orchestrations.

Although we had some fun calling him the scrawler, it must be admitted that copyist 11 has a known name. For whatever reason, someone indicated on the trombone part for the “Crescendo Galop” that it was “copied by Giovanni Gresti.” My apologies, Signore Gresti.

#### UNRESOLVED CHORDS

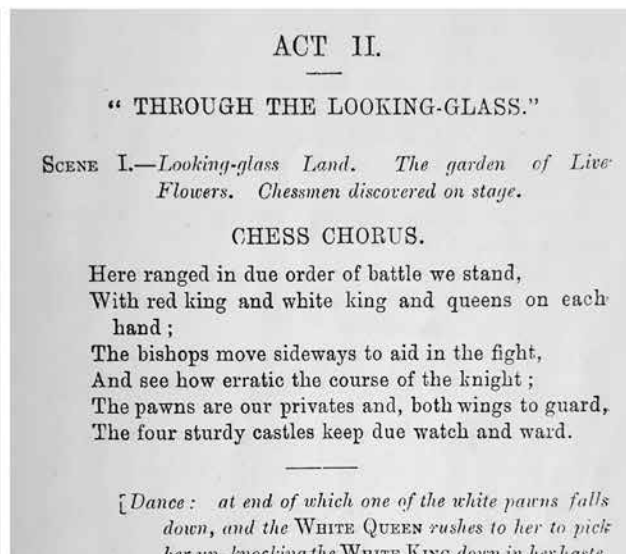
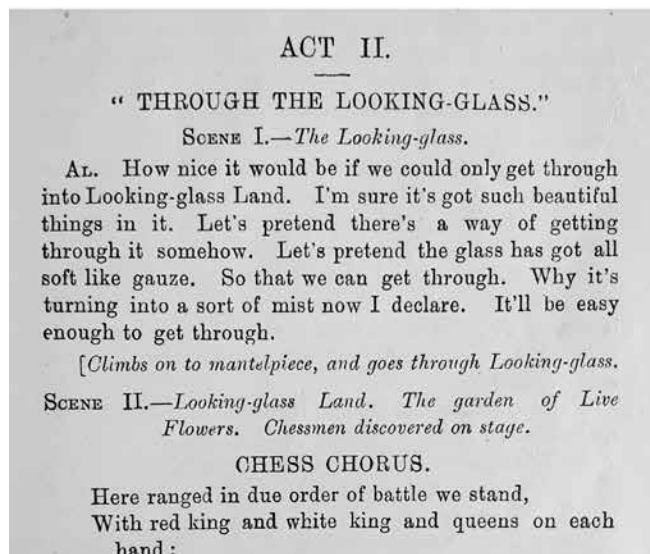
Combining the information gathered from these newly dated Australian scores with the information found in published programs and newspaper reviews, we can now more accurately build a “track listing” for the early pro-

ductions of the operetta. This information is presented on the right side of Table 1, where a bullet point represents inclusion in the production, and a dash exclusion. Regrettably, the table also shows an empty circle, an admission that some question remains in the matter. Some of these *unresolved chords* are addressed below. (For ease of discussion, unless otherwise noted, the table assumes that the simultaneous 1900 productions were equivalent and that the Australians emulated them. Though this was not necessarily the case, it is our best guess at this time.)

**BIS:** As shown on the table, the roundhand copyist added “bis” or “1/2” to six numbers. The “Entrance of the White Rabbit,” for example, is numbered 1bis. That they were not given round numbers (necessitating changes to all numbers thereafter in the fifteen part scores and all else related to the production) indicates that they were added any time between the late rehearsal stage and the date the roundhand copyist created the document, in early 1887. Therefore each is given a round circle for the premiere production, indicating their shady beginnings.

**ENTR’ACTE:** This piece of music is actually a version of “Alice and Cat” and appears in the conductor’s score, written out by the roundhand copyist in 1887. It does not appear in the part scores and thus seems to have been dropped by 1900. It is impossible to know if it was performed as an entr’acte in the premiere and the revival. Given that there is no direction to turn back pages, however, and that it is a version of, not the same as, “Alice and Cat,” we will declare this *entr’cat* astray in 1900 and onwards.

**CURTAIN MUSIC:** Although the “Curtain Music” was seemingly used in all the productions (barring the last in our table), it seems to have served two different purposes. At first, it represented the scene where Alice passes through the mirror. The music begins with the high strings shimmering a vibrato and the cello playing a tune



**Figure 9.** The first pages of the second act, from *Alice in Wonderland: A Dream Play for Children*, 1886 Premiere edition and [1887] revision, Henry Savile Clarke. In the original opening of the second act (left), Alice passes through the mirror to enter Looking-Glass Land. In the revision (right), the scene and Alice herself were removed. Evidently, Alice observed the “Chess Chorus” (the “Opening Chorus” in the second act listed in Table 1) in the original, but in the revision she remained offstage.

in their higher register. In the leader and first violins, the players are told to “Repeat till Cue: Something on the Other Side.” At this point—at the exact moment, no doubt, that Alice passes through the mirror—the woodwinds take over and sound a long-held, eye-opening A major chord—aaaahhhh—to the dings of the glistening triangle. The winds were directed to play “at forte only,” meaning they come in comparatively loud as wide-eyed Alice beholds the brilliant new scene, complete with real-life ambling and scrambling chess pieces. The clarinets’ part has the cue “I don’t believe in fairies,” a likely indication of Alice’s stiff stance on elfdom before her grand enlightenment.

Since the mirror scene was in the premiere and removed for the revision and the revival (figure 9), its inclusion in the revision score and the designation “Curtain Music” in the 1888 prompt copy<sup>19</sup> indicate that it was repurposed for those productions. But we do not know how. The piece returned to its original function in 1900 when the mirror scene was reinstated. The scene was different from the original, however; it now had Alice joined by the Cheshire Cat and two body doubles on the other side of the looking-glass mirroring their movements.<sup>20</sup>

**ALICE AND FLOWERS:** “And I’m sure the (rather flat) Rose and Lily scene would be much brightened up by a song.” Such was Lewis Carroll’s opinion of the flower scene during the 1888 revival, a suggestion given to the likely exasperated Henry Savile Clarke, who had to heed

the author’s many whims. Though Carroll did not get his song, and though Slaughter is not known to have added music to the 1898 show, it seems “Alice and Flowers,” a dance, was indeed added at that time. “There is a charming dance for Alice and two clever little children,” wrote one reviewer, “who personate a Rose and a Lily in the enchanted garden.” Another reviewer repeated the observation.<sup>21</sup>

There is the off chance that “Alice and Flowers” derived from the production ten years before. Clarke and Slaughter may have added the dance, not to appease Carroll’s desire for a song, but to fix the “rather flat” scene nonetheless. The evidence for this is that the only other piece of music found in the parts score but not to be in the conductor’s score is “Sound the Festal Trumpets,” which is known to date to 1888.

**OYSTER’S REVENGE SONG:** Oddly enough, it is not clear if the Oysters got their revenge in the 1898 production. It is certainly absent from the published lyric book.<sup>22</sup> True, the program lists “The Fate of the Oysters,” and one reviewer wrote about two Oysters “sitting on the Carpenter’s chest,” an action described in the lyrics to the song. However, at least three reviewers implied that the song was skipped. “The story of the misdoings of Walrus and Carpenter is fully illustrated,” wrote the reviewer for *The Irish Times*, “the surviving Oyster promptly celebrating its escape from the jaws of death by executing a vigorous hornpipe” (*italics added*). “But the gem in this act is the song of the Walrus and the Car-

*"The Mad Hatter & His Pets," an extraction from a larger illustration by Ray Potter, from The Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News, December 29, 1900. The Hatter is being portrayed as singing "When the Wind Is in the East" (Slaughter and Hopwood), a song also known as "Follow My Leader." As can be seen by the inclusion of the Lion and the Unicorn, the Hatter also appeared in the second act, or the Looking-Glass portion of the operetta. In the song, the protagonist encourages the animals to follow him:*

*Cocks and hens, and the owl and crow  
Flap their wings and away they go!  
Up the passage and down the stairs,  
Over tables and under chairs,  
Pigs and puppies and polar bears  
They follow their leader round.*



THE MAD HATTER & HIS PETS

penter," wrote another reviewer. "When this was over one of the oysters cast its shell, and came and danced a hornpipe." The final reviewer simply mentions "the sad sea-shore where the unfortunate oysters meet with their pathetic fate."<sup>23</sup> Carroll's "effective ending"<sup>24</sup> might not have appeared.

MAZURKA: "As first ghost, she dances a mazurka with one of the Lockets." This statement from Lewis Carroll's diary, about his child-friend Dorothy d'Alcourt in the 1888 revival, is the lone direct reference to the Mazurka in any production, for any year, in any document, published or otherwise. There is an *inuendo* in the stagehand's 1888 prompt copy of the libretto for the First Oyster's Mazurka and the Third Oyster's Hornpipe, which follows it: "after dance of 1<sup>st</sup> + 3<sup>rd</sup> oysters gas up full."<sup>25</sup> The music appears in the roundhand copyist's 1887 score, but does not appear in the 1900 part scores. Since it seems to have been drowned out by the breathtaking success of the Hornpipe, we'll confidently give it a bullet point for 1887 but a doubtful circle for 1898. Of course, the lack of part scores in 1900 means it was dropped by that year.

THE GOLLYWOG SONG: The inclusion of "Gollywog Song + Dance," as it is fashioned in the conductor's score, is one of the more intriguing discoveries found in Australia. There is no mention of this piece in any document or review related to the 1900 and 1901 productions. Although it is labeled a "song," the ruffian (copyist 2) did not provide words, which was his usual practice. Since the Gollywog doll caricatures people of color, we should consider ourselves fortunate if it was dropped during rehearsals.

The tune is not the same as the "Lullaby" Slaughter wrote for "My Gollywog," a children's scena created and danced by Will Bishop. (The lyrics, happily devoid of racism, are by Roland Carse.) The scena was first performed in 1905, but the dance was already popular and highly celebrated, having been created in 1899.<sup>26</sup> Bishop

almost certainly danced to the scena's music when he brought the act to the *Alice* operetta in 1906 and 1907, but our "Gollywog Song + Dance"—composed several years before, and performed without Bishop—remains a mystery.

I'LL TELL THEE EVERYTHING I CAN: Although it was never a part of Henry Savile Clarke's original operetta, three verses of the White Knight's Song were evidently recited in the 1898 Opera Comique performances. The lyric book specifically described the verses as a "Song" for the "White Knight."<sup>27</sup> But were the words musically intoned? In 1900, in a show based on the Opera Comique's production, a reviewer stated that these lines were "given simple *elocutionary* significance"<sup>28</sup> (*italics added*). Three years later, in a show based on the 1900 version of the operetta, another reviewer wrote that the Hatter "*said off* a poem about an old man and a gate with such *declamatory force* that Sir Henry Irving himself would have felt it utterly outside his powers"<sup>29</sup> (*italics added*). Despite not being a song proper, it is represented in the table for the sake of completeness. Presumably, it was performed in the new 1900 and 1901 productions (by the Hatter, however) but simply ignored by reviewers for being *elocutionary* only.

Incidentally, this does not mean that Sir Henry Rowley Bishop, who *invented* the tune the White Knight sings to Alice, is not represented in the operetta. In the Opera Comique's production, a chorus of oysters "sing a scale and a verse of 'Home, Sweet Home' to the delight and astonishment of Alice."<sup>30</sup> The song, written by Bishop (to a lyric by John Howard Payne) was likely an a cappella piece only performed for this one production, which does not seem to earn it the right to appear on our grand table.

## THE RECREATIONS OF LAST TIMES

Finally, with “all three dates on *our* slates,” we now have the ability to recreate, with some *unresolved* issues, what Carroll himself witnessed in his outings to the theatre. For these productions, we have the three librettos, the programs, and the aggregate reviews on *Lewis Carroll Resources* to aid in the recreation. For the final year, we even have the stagehands’ prompt copy of the operetta. Musically, however, we are lacking a few orchestrations, most importantly, the “Mazurka,” “The Waits,” and “To the Looking-Glass World.” These are minor issues and can be rectified easily by a modern-day orchestrator. True, not even the melody survives for the “Fish Riddle Song” from the revival. (But who wants to hear it, anyway—“the song is not an effective one,”<sup>31</sup> some rather keen critic once noted.)

Such a recreation may gratify the stodgy historian, but Slaughter’s own revision in 1900 is the wiser show for the common people. Unlike the former productions, it lacks a libretto and a prompt copy. However, the earlier librettos can be easily modified and extended, and staging and lighting are expected to be original anyway. At least musically, unlike the former productions, it has the advantage that all of Slaughter’s tunes and orchestrations are available.<sup>32</sup>

The 1900 revision, by the way, was not Slaughter’s last contribution to the operetta. For the London production in 1906, he composed the music for “Flowerland,”<sup>33</sup> a song with an unknown lyricist. Sadly, the song reeks of great grandma’s dusty old poetry book:

Lillie-flow’rs your sweetest perfume bring  
Tulips o’er the ground your colours fling...

Coincidentally, the song fulfills Carroll’s desire to give his friend Edith Barnes, who was playing Rose in the revival, a song to sing. According to Carroll, she “has a very pretty voice. . . . Somehow, *do* let Edith sing!”<sup>34</sup>

Indeed, *do* let the Rose sing, along with the Hatter and the March Hare, the Mock Turtle and the Gryphon, Tweedledum and Tweedledee, and of course Alice herself. Over the years, they have been singing in many productions, but there is little reason not to have them carol and croon the original tunes above the original orchestration once again.<sup>35</sup> Let’s hope that some day soon we will be able to hear what Carroll himself heard—all those years ago—when he attended Walter Slaughter and Henry Savile Clarke’s *Alice in Wonderland: A Dream Play for Children*.

*This paper is greatly dependent on the previous work of Catherine Richards, much of which is on the website Lewis Carroll Resources. All performance dates, reviews, and much else given in this paper derive from this website. My greatest thanks to Catherine. Likewise, my findings could not have been made without the educa-*

*tion that Robin Gordon-Powell has given me regarding Victorian musical scores. Robin is the music librarian at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden; a freelance conductor; and a specialist on Arthur Sullivan. Thank you, thank you, Robin.*

*I would also like to thank Clare Imholtz for her help with the Henry Savile Clarke letters, and the staff of the National Library of Australia, who were most patient with my countless requests.*

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Henry Savile Clarke, *Alice in Wonderland: A Dream Play for Children* [libretto], with music by Walter Slaughter (London: The Court Circular, 1886 [premiere]), p. 43. The three versions will be sourced as “1886 Premiere,” the “[1887] revision” (it was misdated 1886), and the “1888 revival.” Minor variations are not relevant to this article.
- <sup>2</sup> Henry Savile Clarke and Walter Slaughter, *Alice in Wonderland: A Dream Play for Children* (London: Ascherberg, Hopwood & Crew, 1906), pp. 68–9.
- <sup>3</sup> Kurt Gänzl, *The Encyclopedia of the Musical Theatre* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1994), p. 1559.
- <sup>4</sup> From The National Library of Australia’s website (accessed September 2023): Collections/Guide to selected collections/Williamson Collection.
- <sup>5</sup> Carroll to Clarke, September 2, 1886, Berol Collection (box 3, folder 208), New York University.
- <sup>6</sup> The pantomime premiered at the Phillip Street Theatre, Sydney, on December 14, 1956.
- <sup>7</sup> Lewis Carroll, February 1, 1887, in Edward Wakeling, *Lewis Carroll’s Diaries: The Private Journals of Charles Lutwidge Dodgson* 8 (Clifford, Herefordshire: The Lewis Carroll Society, 2004), p. 316. As pointed out by Catherine Richards (in a proofreading of this paper), the conductor’s score could have been written out at a later time, such as after the break between the London shows and the provincial tour.
- <sup>8</sup> Clarke, *Alice in Wonderland* [1887] revised, pp. 40–41, 50–51, and 52–3; and 1888 revival, pp. 54–5 and 56; Carroll, February 1, 1887, in Wakeling, *Diaries*, p. 316 (for Hornpipe).
- <sup>9</sup> *Glasgow Herald*, December 20, 1900, p. 7.
- <sup>10</sup> *Reynold’s Newspaper*, December 26, 1886, p. 8; and *The Scotsman*, December 27, 1888, p. 6. As Catherine Richards notes (privately), the character of the Lobster first appeared in 1898 but became more important in 1900.
- <sup>11</sup> There is a second piece of entrance music for the Hatter entitled “Melos Hatter’s Entrance,” which is actually the tune “Three Blind Mice.” *Melos* is simply a fancy Greek word for “melody.”
- <sup>12</sup> The cornet part also contains a part for “Cornets – (as Horns with hat).” This part, written out by copyist 11, is unrelated to Slaughter and was likely written out to replace a missing horn player. It ends halfway through the second act.

- <sup>13</sup> The one exception is where copyist 7 inserts an encore to “Here We Go Around the Mulberry Bush,” a concept that could have been a later development.
- <sup>14</sup> *The Daily Telegraph*, December 25, 1906, p. 5.
- <sup>15</sup> “Crescendo Galop” may have been used for Signor Antonio’s dog and monkey act, said to have been performed between acts (as stated in many 1906 reviews). Other pieces that are scribbled down or appear in sheet music are: “Violettes Waltz,” Op. 148 (1876) by Emile Waldteufel; “Hippolyte Galop” by Hippolyte Bonnisseau; the “Club’s Waltz,” “Mon Reve / fairy ballet,” the “Maori Poi Dance,” and the military ballet from André Messager’s *Les p’tites Michu*. The latter two were mentioned in the 1906–1907 reviews.
- <sup>16</sup> The papers for the 1901 production mention the following specialties: “Mollie Grey,” “Dolly Gray” (perhaps the same song), “The Honeysuckle and the Bee,” and “Tell Me, Pretty Maiden.”
- <sup>17</sup> Clarke, *Alice in Wonderland*, “1886 Premiere,” p. 52, and “1888 revival,” p. 54. The choruses of “To the Looking-Glass World” follow Carroll’s original. The chorus to “Sound the Festal Trumpets” rewrites Carroll’s original as “Come, and fill up all the glasses just as quickly as you can, / Sprinkle everyone that passes with the buttons and the bran.” The awkward articles in the last line are enough to question why a rewrite was necessary.
- <sup>18</sup> There is the chance that they asked Slaughter for the score and it was sent in full score, with copyist 12 simply separating it into the parts.
- <sup>19</sup> Clarke, *Alice in Wonderland*, 1888 revival, prompt copy, Richards Collection. This is a special version of the 1888 libretto with printing on the recto only, leaving all versos blank. It contains handwritten notes on readying actors, entrance locations, music cues, lighting, curtains



“Tweedledum and Tweedledee,” an extraction from a larger illustration by Ray Potter, from *The Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News*, December 29, 1900.

- and backdrops, and other matters, so as to run a smooth performance. It is the only known prompt copy for the operetta.
- <sup>20</sup> *Jackson’s Oxford Journal*, February 28, 1903, p. 8. This review, written three years after the 1900 productions, is the first review known to have mentioned the Cheshire Cat’s involvement with the mirror scene. However, Catherine Richards writes, “this production was derived from the Hicks/Terriss Vaudeville productions” of 1900 (private email, September 28, 2023). “I was puzzled as to how the looking-glass scene was managed,” the reviewer admitted, “until just as it was over I detected the reflected Alice running off into the wings. . . .”
- <sup>21</sup> *The Yorkshire Post*, December 23, 1898, p. 2, and *The Glasgow Herald*, December 23, 1898, p. 5.
- <sup>22</sup> Henry Savile Clarke [and Lewis Carroll], *Alice in Wonderland: A Dream Play for Children* [lyric book for the Opera Comique Theatre production], with music by Walter Slaughter (London: Richard Clay and Sons, [1898]).
- <sup>23</sup> *The Irish Times*, December 23, 1898, p. 6; *The Gentlewoman*, December 31, 1898, p. 40; and *The Pall Mall Gazette*, December 23, 1898, p. 2.
- <sup>24</sup> Carroll, February 1, 1887, in Wakeling, *Diaries*, p. 316.
- <sup>25</sup> Clarke, *Alice in Wonderland*, 1888 revival, prompt copy, p. 43.
- <sup>26</sup> *The Music Hall and Theatre Review*, January 22, 1909, p. 54; *The Globe*, December 21, 1906, p. 5; ArthurLlyod.co.uk (accessed September 30, 2023). See “A Very early Variety Programme for the newly built London Coliseum.”
- <sup>27</sup> Clarke [and Carroll], *Alice in Wonderland* [lyric book], pp. 19–20.
- <sup>28</sup> *Eastbourne Gazette*, August 15, 1900, p. 8. To be clear, this was a provincial tour in the summer of 1900 that took place before the new 1900 additions in the upcoming London production.
- <sup>29</sup> *Jackson’s Oxford Journal*, February 28, 1903, p. 8. This was produced by the same company as above but now based on the new 1900 production.
- <sup>30</sup> *The Glasgow Herald*, December 23, 1898, p. 5 (quoted), and *The Sporting Gazette*, December 24, 1898, p. 10.
- <sup>31</sup> Carroll to Clarke, January 25, 1888, Berol Collection (box 3, folder 284).
- <sup>32</sup> Authenticity be damned! Let’s scrap the Hopwood songs and kick the Hatter out of the second act. Let’s also reintroduce the White Knight into the second act and give him back both “Jabberwocky” and his song “A-Sitting on a Gate.” And while I’m at it, let’s have Carroll’s lyrics to “To the Looking-Glass World” and not Clarke’s abominable rewrite!
- <sup>33</sup> Clarke and Slaughter, *Alice in Wonderland* [piano–vocal score], pp. 91–94.
- <sup>34</sup> Carroll to Clarke, January 8, 1889, Berol Collection (box 3, folder 279).
- <sup>35</sup> It was last staged in a proper theatrical run (with Slaughter’s orchestration) from December 20, 1926, to January 8, 1927, at the Hippodrome, Golders Green, London.

# THROUGH THE MARBLE ARCH & WHAT ALICE FOUND THERE

CATHERINE RICHARDS

Marks & Spencer, Lyons Tea Rooms . . . what could be more British? When they are combined with Lewis Carroll, of course!

Orchard House, at the corner of Orchard Street and Oxford Street, London W1, is the home of the Marble Arch flagship store of that British institution Marks & Spencer. Positioned on the canted corner, just beneath the clock, is the head of the White Knight chess piece, carved in Portland stone. What is the history of this piece of sculpture?

Orchard House, situated alongside Selfridges, was commissioned by The Portman Estate,<sup>1</sup> designed by architectural firm Trehearne and Norman, and constructed by builders Thomas and Edge Limited, during the years 1929 and 1930. The Portman Estate had acquired a block of buildings in the area enclosed by 456/468 Oxford Street and 28/32 Orchard Street, which they proposed to demolish and replace with a new building “for office and trade purposes.”<sup>2</sup> Architects Alfred Trehearne (1874–1962) and Charles Norman (1884–1925) formed a partnership in 1906, and by 1929 the firm had already designed buildings on London’s Kingsway (where they were based) and Regent Street. Orchard House was a six-story (plus basement) block of shops and offices, faced in Portland stone—typical of London at that time. It was designed in the “Neo-Grec” style (a variant of classicism that was one of the precursors of art deco).<sup>3</sup> It resonated with the adjacent, but much more elaborate, Selfridges building that had first opened in 1909, although it underwent a series of extensions until 1928. The architectural plans were officially approved by the London County Council in October 1929 and the building completed within a year.

What was unusual about Orchard House was the decorative features: It had five second-floor stone balconies,<sup>4</sup> each adorned with a sculptured head on an octagonal panel, all based upon Sir John Tenniel’s origi-

nal *Alice* illustrations. Two were at the front of the building (along Oxford Street), bearing the White Rabbit and the White Queen. On the right side of the block (Orchard Street) were the Red Queen and the Walrus. A single balcony at the rear (then Granville Place) featured the Carpenter (there was no balcony at the far-right corner, where the services were sited). In addition, the head of the White Knight styled as a chess piece was placed on the keystone above a first-floor window at the canted corner of Oxford Street and Orchard Street;<sup>5</sup> the head of the Gryphon was in the equivalent position at the rear canted corner.<sup>6</sup> These decorative carvings were made by A. T. Bradford of E. J. and A. T. Bradford, a firm of architectural sculptors based at 62 Borough Road, London Borough of Southwark. The firm did a great deal of work in South London, producing sculptures and memorials for churches and other public buildings.

In April 1929, the architects submitted preliminary drawings for the proposed new building to the London County Council. They stated that the third, fourth, and fifth floors had already been let by their clients to “a well-known firm” (J. Lyons Company Limited, the British restaurant and hotel chain, who used the site as offices for staff training);<sup>7</sup> the first and second floors were not yet let; and the

ground floor and basement would be for shops (either partitioned or let as a single area). A plan dated April 1929 does not show any balconies,<sup>8</sup> but the full plans, which were submitted in June and July, clearly show the five balconies on the second floor.<sup>9</sup> The balconies each projected two feet six inches and were twenty-eight feet above pavement level; described as “architectural features,” they were approved together with the rest of the building.<sup>10</sup> The accompanying elevations for Oxford Street,<sup>11</sup> Orchard Street,<sup>12</sup> and Granville Place all depict the balconies,<sup>13</sup> each with a central raised roundel bearing a relief carving of indeterminate design, projecting



*The White Knight below the clock  
on the corner of Orchard House.*



slightly higher than the balcony rail. The canted corners at each end of the Orchard Street elevation both have a keystone above the first-floor windows only (i.e., at the level of the second-floor balconies), although no sculpture is shown on the keystone at this stage. These drawings indicate that by May 1929 Trehearne and Norman planned a series of sculptures to adorn the balconies, although the subject matter may not have been determined at that point.

It is uncertain whose decision it was that Lewis Carroll's *Alice* should be used as inspiration for the sculptures, and why. The narrow balconies were essentially decorative features, on a floor that was to be occupied by a variety of small leaseholders; neither J. Lyons nor Marks & Spencer used the second floor. It would appear highly unlikely that the leaseholders had any input into the choice of sculptures.

The freeholder was The Portman Estate, the signatory for the paperwork being Captain Gerald Berkley Portman of 22 Portman Square W1 (later 7th Viscount Portman of Bryanston).<sup>14</sup> "Lewis Carroll" had a very wide social circle that included the aristocracy, and even royalty, but there is no known connection between Charles Dodgson and the Portmans (nor with Alice or her family), that might have prompted the use of *Wonderland* characters. Furthermore, neither the correspondence between Viscount Portman and his agent, Furmedge, nor the Estate Board minute books make any reference to the decoration of the building.<sup>15</sup>

Following Dodgson's death in 1898, *Alice* became firmly established as "public property" and took on a life of her own. Around the time that Orchard House was built, there would have been increased public interest in the *Alice* books, generated by publicity from the auction of the original manuscript of *Alice's Adventures*

*Under Ground* in April 1928. The British Museum was outbid, and the manuscript spent the next 20 years in the USA before being "returned to the British People" as a symbol of thanks for their role in the Second World War. Were those sculptures on Orchard House symbolic of reclaiming *Alice* as the property of the British public?

Awareness of the forthcoming 1932 centenary of Dodgson's birth may also have served as inspiration. Photographs of the seven sculptures were reproduced in *The Builder*, 7 October 1932, two years after the building had been completed (three are shown here). There was no explanatory text, but the timing of publication clearly reflected the centenary year. (It is interesting to note that 350 Oxford Street was the site of the centenary exhibition at booksellers John & Edward Bumpus Ltd.) An article in *The Guardian* reporting upon the erection of a monument to Struwwelpeter, to mark the 120th anniversary of the birth of Dr. Heinrich Hoffmann, comments upon a new trend for commemorating children's literary heroes with statues (including the Peter Pan bronze in Kensington Gardens). The author remarks, "Surely, one of these days, Alice and the Rev. C. L. Dodgson will get their statue."<sup>16</sup>

Despite *Alice's* ongoing popularity in the twentieth century, it would still have been an unusual choice to use "children's characters" to decorate a commercial building, rather than a school or a children's hospital.<sup>17</sup> However, it can be argued that, of all "children's books," Lewis Carroll's *Alice* stories (with Sir John Tenniel's *Alice* illustrations) are those that have been most appropriated by adults and adult culture. Indeed, *Alice* had been quoted in the Houses of Parliament and appeared in *Punch* cartoons even in Lewis Carroll's lifetime. She was also considered suitable for more "artistic" applications. During the period that Orchard House was under con-

*Orchard House from Oxford Street, 1957.  
By kind permission of the trustees of  
the Portman Estate.*







struction, the film *Puttin' on the Ritz* (released 1 March 1930) featured a lengthy "Alice in Wonderland" song and dance routine in Technicolor. A few years later, in 1935, sculptor Eric Grate produced his bronze *Alice* panels, a pair of which were part of the decorative scheme for the grand entrance hall at Eltham Palace (on the outskirts of London).

Another possible source that encouraged the use of the *Alice* figures in an adult environment is the play *Journey's End* by R. C. Sherriff.<sup>18</sup> First performed in December 1928, it rapidly became a worldwide phenomenon during 1929–1930, both as a play and then as a Hollywood film. It makes several references to *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (both humorous and serious), which is portrayed as a book suitable for adults, a book to be read by heroes and soldiers who are fighting to protect their homeland.

Carroll's characters as depicted by Tenniel have strong visual identities, and those portrayed on Orchard House were adults and animals, most from *Through the Looking-Glass*. Alice herself was not featured, nor scenes such as the "Mad Tea Party." The overall effect of the sculptures was quite elegant—maturity rather than childishness—and enhanced the otherwise plain balconies.

Regardless of the reason for the choice, the available evidence suggests that the decision regarding the use of such whimsical decorative features came from the architects themselves. Images of the sculptures first appeared in *The Children's Newspaper*, under the title "Wonderland in Stone."<sup>19</sup> The caption reads:

Old Friends Come to London—These sculptures from Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking-Glass are on the new Orchard House in Oxford Street, London. They are from designs by Trehearne and Norman, Preston & Co., the architects of Melbourne House in Aldwych [London], where there are similar keystones of a cricketer and a kangaroo, shown in the C.N. [*Children's Newspaper*] some time ago.<sup>20</sup>

Melbourne House is another Portland stone building by Trehearne *et al.* that had been completed shortly before. The front façade features three decorative keystones on the second floor: a lion (England) and a kangaroo (Australia) facing each other—and between them, the aforementioned cricketer was a wicket-keeper catching the ball behind broken stumps. It would seem that the use of the

*Alice* characters was not the first time that some unconventional decorative details had appeared in their work.

At the time that Orchard House was being built, Marks & Spencer were looking to open a store in Oxford Street. By June 1930 it had been agreed that the company would lease the majority of the lowest two floors for retail, and they opened their branch there on 5 November 1930. Originally, Marks & Spencer occupied just the ground floor and basement (with the exception of the corner, where there was a branch of the National Provincial Bank), and the upper stories were used by other companies for offices, principally J. Lyons Company Limited. Dominating the street-level shopfront, it was Marks & Spencer who stamped their identity upon the building. A gossipy article in *Sunday Dispatch* refers to the "Alice Gargoyles" seen from the top of an omnibus: "the new building, whose majestic columns are adorned in stone with characters from 'Alice in Wonderland'—the king, the queen, the rabbit—and so on, our modern gargoyles" although this is clearly not a reliable source to identify the characters!<sup>21</sup> Most newspaper reports on the opening of the new Marks & Spencer store focused on the length of the counters (over one third of a mile), quality goods at low prices, and the fact that most of the wares were of British manufacture—although *The Guardian* commented on the "building that is oddly decorated on its higher levels with stone heads of 'Alice in Wonderland' personalities."<sup>22</sup>



The "Children's pages" were more enthusiastic (and accurate) in their reporting, under the title "Old Friends":

Last year some very old friends came to London Town, not for a visit, but for a permanent home.

All the old friends we have learned to know and to love in Alice in Wonderland, and Alice through the looking-glass, are to be permanently before the eyes of London. Perhaps you are wondering how this can be, or how it has been done. Well, I will tell you.

In one of London's most important shopping thoroughfares—Oxford-street, where a new building, called Orchard House, has been quite recently erected, it was decided to depart from the very ordinary and everyday humdrum architecture and sculpturings. So it is that our old friends have taken their place upon the vast exterior of Orchard House, and will henceforth look down upon the

millions who have read all about them in the immortal books of Alice.

They are all there—The Red Queen and the old Gryphon; the White Queen and the Carpenter, and, of course, the Walrus not very far away; the White Knight and the White Rabbit, all there to see and be seen. How refreshing to think that some modern business folk can have such a reasonable outlook upon life.

The piece was accompanied by a charming drawing of the White Rabbit checking his pocket-watch.<sup>23</sup>

The sculptures remained in place for over three decades. However, in 1967, Marks & Spencer took possession of the whole building. This was followed by substantial architectural changes, which included remodeling of the ground floor to facilitate the widening of Orchard Street. The Portland stone balconies with their *Alice* carvings were removed, and in 1968–1970 a large extension was added at the back of the building. Only the Knight's head on the Oxford Street corner remains. Now Marks & Spencer has put forward plans to demolish the



building and redevelop the whole site. An application to list Orchard House with Heritage England has been declined (partly because many of the original features have already been lost), but the demolition plans initially approved by Westminster Council in November 2021 have been contested. In June 2022, the Governmental Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) announced

that the plans would be re-examined by an independent planning inspector at a public inquiry later in the year.<sup>24</sup> In July 2023, the Secretary of State, Michael Gove, rejected the plans for demolition and rebuilding, arguing that they would have substantial adverse environmental impact. The White Knight appeared to have a reprieve, but the following month, Marks & Spencer launched a legal challenge against the ruling,<sup>25</sup> and on 1 March 2024, the judge found in favor of Marks & Spencer. Whether DLUHC makes an appeal remains to be seen.

*Thanks for research assistance are due to Dr. Amy Spencer of Bartlett School of Architecture, University College London; Sarah Weal of Trehearne Architects; Alan Powers, Chris Rogers, and Coco Whittaker of Twentieth Century Society; Ben Oakley of SAVE Britain's Heritage; and Sarah Charlton, Archivist of the Portman Estate.*

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Correspondence, 28 August 1929, held at London Metropolitan Archives (LMA).
- <sup>2</sup> Correspondence, 29 April 1929, held at LMA, *ibid.*
- <sup>3</sup> Powers, Alan. *Orchard House, Oxford Street. Comments on the design by Trehearne and Norman*. Orchard House Heritage England consultation 2021. (Essay accompanying the Historic England Consultation Report, 21 October 2021.)
- <sup>4</sup> British notation is retained throughout, to maintain consistency with the archival records.
- <sup>5</sup> Lastoria, Amanda. "Lastoria List of Titles for Tenniel's *Through the Looking-Glass* Illustrations." *The Carrollian*, No. 29, pages 60–68, The Lewis Carroll Society, August 2017.
- <sup>6</sup> The decision by Heritage England to decline the request that the building be listed refers to four balconies, but the original drawings by Trehearne and Norman, and photographs from both the Portman Estate and the M&S archives, clearly show a fifth balcony at the Orchard Street end of the back of the building. This balcony also bears a carving, in addition to a carving on the canted rear corner. This is consistent with the seven published photographs of the sculptures.
- <sup>7</sup> Correspondence, 29 April 1929, held at LMA.
- <sup>8</sup> Trehearne and Norman Architects, Drawing Number 21, Floor plan of Second Floor, held at LMA.
- <sup>9</sup> Trehearne and Norman Architects, Drawing Number 4, Floor plan of Second Floor, held at LMA.
- <sup>10</sup> 29 July 1929 Report by the Superintending Architect of the London County Council, held at LMA.
- <sup>11</sup> Trehearne and Norman Architects, Drawing Number 11 (dated 14.5.29), held at LMA.
- <sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, Drawing Number 12 (dated 14.5.29).
- <sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, Drawing Number 13.
- <sup>14</sup> LMA.
- <sup>15</sup> Personal email correspondence 4 January 2024, from Sarah Charlton, Archivist to the Portman Estate.
- <sup>16</sup> "The Literary Heroes of Childhood," 30 September 1929, p. 6.
- <sup>17</sup> For example, the 1932 "Helpers of Wonderland" campaign raised money for a "Wonderland Ward" at St. Mary's Hospital, Paddington, where majolica wall tiles of *Alice* scenes were used for a children's area of a public building.
- <sup>18</sup> Sherriff, R. C. *Journey's End*, Victor Gallancz, 1929.
- <sup>19</sup> 18 October 1930, p. 9.
- <sup>20</sup> *The Children's Newspaper*, 10 May 1930, p. 4.
- <sup>21</sup> 26 October 1930, p. 4.
- <sup>22</sup> 5 November 1930, p. 5.
- <sup>23</sup> *Evening Despatch*, 11 May 1931, p. 4; *The Sheffield Daily Independent*, 11 May 1931, p. 8.
- <sup>24</sup> *SAVE Newsletter*, Summer 2022, pp. 4–5.
- <sup>25</sup> Lowe, Tom. "M&S launches legal challenge against Gove's Oxford Street rejection." *Building Design*, 31 August 2023.

# ALCIBIADES IN WONDERLAND: Plato's *Symposium* and the Mad Tea Party

DAVID SANSONE

When Alice joins the Hare, the Hatter, and the Dormouse in Chapter VII, the March Hare invites her to have some wine. Apart from the fact, which is pointed out by Alice, that there is no wine on the table, is it not odd for a seven-year-old to be offered an alcoholic beverage? Of course, everything in Wonderland is odd, but this, the only reference to wine in the work, seems especially gratuitous, and it is reasonable to assume that there is a specific point to the disingenuous offer, which Alice characterizes as not very civil. Indeed, the Hare admits that there is no wine, and he immediately changes the subject, charging Alice herself with incivility for sitting at his table without having been invited. David Day acknowledges the incongruity of the offer of wine and proposes that Lewis Carroll is using it to introduce a parody of the Christian Socialist Movement by constructing the tea party as a “mad symposium.”<sup>1</sup> But the symposium Lewis Carroll has in mind is not the unrestrained “Greco-Roman Bacchanalia” to which Day refers, and which he imagines to be “held in celebration of a cult of wild and terrifying nymphs and satyrs who tore human and animal victims to pieces and devoured them” (148). Rather, the classically trained Dodgson, writing for the daughter of one of the editors of Liddell and Scott’s *Greek-English Lexicon*, is thinking in terms of the rule-based communal drinking—which is what the Greek word “symposium” connotes—that was a prominent feature of the social life of upper-class Athenian men.<sup>2</sup>

The symposium with which Dodgson and his academic superior, Dean Henry Liddell, were most familiar by far is the one dramatized in Plato’s dialogue of that name, and it is surely this text that was on the mind of the lecturer in mathematics at Christ Church when in 1865 he published the edition of *Alice* containing his account of the tea party.<sup>3</sup> (The episode is not included in the ur-*Alice*, the earlier manuscript version of *Alice’s Adventures under Ground*.) In both narratives, Plato’s and Lewis Carroll’s, the drinking is already in progress when the main character arrives. Or rather, in the case of the *Symposium*, when the two main characters separately arrive. Socrates had been detained by a fit of abstraction and only joins the gathering when the other diners are in the middle of their meal (174d–175c); Alcibiades, already drunk, bursts upon the scene much later, while

the postprandial drinking and conversation are still going on (212c–d). The welcome accorded these two late-comers could not be more different from that encountered by Alice: Socrates is given a place of honor next to Agathon, the host of the symposium, and room is made for Alcibiades—who arrives, like Alice, uninvited—between Socrates and Agathon (213a–b).<sup>4</sup>

By contrast, Alice is greeted with a conspicuous lack of courtesy. As she approaches the table she is addressed by the assembled company with the patently false, “No room! No room!” after which she is offered nonexistent wine by the host of the party, the March Hare. The Hatter then unceremoniously tells Alice that her “hair wants cutting,” a remark that she characterizes as “very rude,” whereupon he bluntly asks her, “Why is a raven like a writing-desk?” The competitive posing of riddles was a common feature of ancient symposia.<sup>5</sup> It was, however, expected that a riddle should have an answer, and none is offered by the Hatter. There are no riddles asked in Plato’s *Symposium*, but the convention is alluded to in Alcibiades’ encomium of Socrates, which opens by answering the implicit question of why Socrates is like a satyr. All the speeches delivered in the *Symposium* are elaborate, sophisticated encomia, unlike the curt, discourteous remarks addressed to Alice.

In the ancient Greek symposium, which is presented in an idealized form in Plato’s dialogue, the participants were expected to display their wit and breeding by competing with one another in a systematic fashion, the order of their participation dictated by their location within the roughly circular seating arrangement. Their mental acuity was put to the test under the strain of well-regulated consumption of large quantities of wine, in the course of which they were asked in turn either to tell edifying stories or recite poems or solve intellectually challenging puzzles.<sup>6</sup> All of these are present in Lewis Carroll’s narrative in variously mangled fashion. The Dormouse begins to tell a story about three sisters, but he falls asleep before he is well into it. The Hatter recounts his experience of singing “Twinkle, twinkle little bat” and being cut off by the Queen’s unexecuted order that he be beheaded. And, as we have seen, the Hatter poses a riddle so difficult that, when asked what the answer is, he replies, “I haven’t the slightest idea.”

The perverse world into which Alice has intruded presents us with a teetotal gathering in which little makes sense, virtually the mirror-image of the Platonic setting. In the *Symposium*, the topic of irrational *eros* is subjected to reasoned philosophical analysis on the occasion of a celebration of Agathon's victory in a competition for dramatic poets, held in honor of Dionysus, the god of wine. When Alice arrives at the tea party, one of the participants, the Dormouse, is asleep; at the end of Plato's *Symposium*, only one participant, Socrates, is still awake (223d). In the *Symposium*, Alcibiades boisterously demands that he be admitted to the party so that he can crown the already festooned head of Agathon with vegetation, the traditional symbol of victory in the dramatic competition (212e).<sup>7</sup> By contrast, Alice approaches the table in silence and, on her own initiative, seats herself at one end of the table, eventually helping herself to some tea and bread-and-butter. For his part, Alcibiades is warmly welcomed by all the symposiasts, and Socrates has to make room for the newcomer. Alcibiades reclines between Socrates and Agathon on a couch normally occupied by two (213a–b), and then complains that everyone present seems to be sober; he demands that more wine be served, summarily appointing himself *arbiter bibendi* (213e).

The seating arrangements, which are described in considerable detail by both Plato and Lewis Carroll, serve further to highlight the contrasting treatment of the schoolgirl and the charismatic fifth-century BC playboy. The rules of the ancient symposium require that each participant undertake a task performed by the person to his left, until the task has been performed by all, and Alcibiades proposes that each symposiast give a speech in praise of the person to his right (214c–d). After Alcibiades has delivered his praise of Socrates, Agathon changes places so that he is to the right of Socrates and thus can be praised by him. Alcibiades protests and asks Agathon to recline rather to his right, but Socrates reasonably points out that this would be unfair, as Socrates would then be praised twice, causing Alcibiades to complain that Socrates has gotten the advantage of him by robbing him of the opportunity to recline next to the attractive Agathon (222e–223a).

At the home of the March Hare, there is no change in the order in which the participants in the tea party are seated, but at one point the Hatter declares that he wants a clean cup, and so he moves one place over (to his left, if the illustrations by John Tenniel accurately

convey Lewis Carroll's intention), with the others following him in order. The result is that "the Hatter was the only one who got any advantage from the change," as he alone had a clean place setting, and "Alice was a good deal worse off than before," having inherited the place of the March Hare, who "had just upset the milk-jug into his plate." At this rate, no one but the Hatter will have an advantage, and Alice, who sits to the right of the other participants, will always be the worst off. By contrast, the egalitarian arrangement at Agathon's symposium, enforced by Socrates' reasoned strictures, ensures that everyone is to be praised in turn, once, by his neighbor to the left.

The masculine pronoun in the previous sentence is appropriate. Agathon's symposium is an all-male affair, the lone female, initially present for the purpose of playing music for the symposiasts, having been dismissed early in the proceedings (176e). The same is true of the Hare's tea party, at least until Alice intrudes. The Hare and the Hatter are consistently referred to with masculine pronouns, while the Dormouse, generally described as "it," is occasionally referred to as

"he"; Charles Dodgson will have known that the Latin word for "dormouse," *glis*, belongs to the same small group of monosyllabic i-stem masculine nouns as *mus*, "mouse," the declension of which Alice recalls in Chapter II.<sup>8</sup> She has not herself studied Latin, having only seen the declension "in her brother's Latin Grammar." (Alice Liddell had two older brothers.) Rather, Alice has been learning French, and she quotes, at an inopportune moment, the first sentence of her lesson-book, "*Où est ma chatte?*" where "*chatte*" is feminine, like Alice's cat Dinah. The book has been identified by Hugh O'Brien as *La Bagatelle: Intended to Introduce Children of Three or Four Years Old to Some Knowledge of the French Language*, with no author named but with a preface addressed to "My dear little Girl" and signed "Affectionate Mother."<sup>9</sup> Upper-class English girls might be expected to learn French, while their brothers were required to master the supposedly more demanding Greek and Latin in preparation for the rigors of ruling the Empire. The question of grammatical gender arises explicitly at the tea party when the Hatter corrects Alice's reference to time as "it," for, as the Hatter contends, Time is a "he." (The words for "time" in Greek and French are masculine, but neuter in Latin.) In this way Alice's gender further marks her status as an outsider and underlines her status as the antithesis of Alcibiades, the ultimate insider in fifth-century Athenian society.

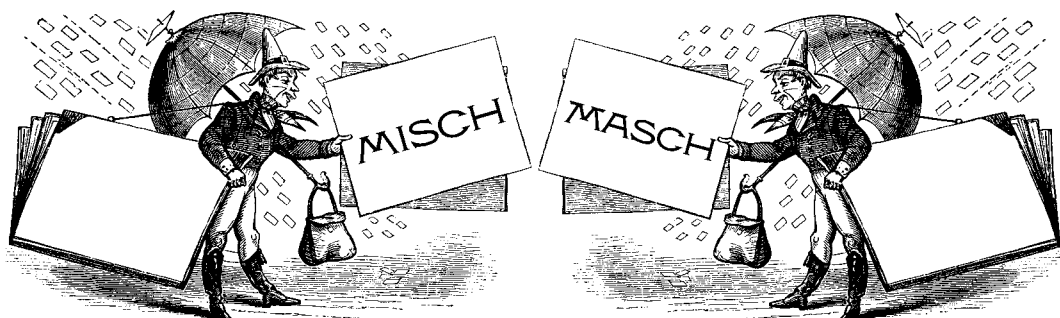


## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> D. Day, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland Decoded* (Doubleday Canada, 2015) 140. For Day, the Mad Hatter “was” or “is” variously Charles Kingsley (140), Robert Fludd (146), Duns Scotus (156), and the god Dionysus (148), and he “personifies” Father Time (154); the other tea drinkers are decoded in similarly diffuse fashion.
- <sup>2</sup> See the papers in O. Murray (ed.), *Symptotica: A Symposium on the Symposium* (Oxford, 1990).
- <sup>3</sup> It is disconcerting that “the auction catalogues of the contents of Lewis Carroll’s personal library do not list any Greek or English editions of Plato” (A. A. Imholtz, Jr., “Plato in Wonderland or ‘Beautiful Soup’ and Other More Philosophical Ideas,” *Classics Ireland* 7 [2000] 61–71, at 67) but, as Imholtz goes on to note, the catalogues are not exhaustive. Percy Bysshe Shelley’s translation of the *Symposium*, “The Banquet,” was published by his widow in the first volume of *Essays, Letters from Abroad, Translations, and Fragments* (Edward Moxon, 1840); Dodgson owned a copy of the four-volume *Poetical Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley* published the previous year (C. Lovett, *Lewis Carroll Among his Books* [McFarland, 2005] 280, no. 1829). It is most unlikely that Lewis Carroll was unfamiliar with so influential a text as Plato’s *Symposium*, and it is hoped that the present contribution constitutes evidence of his familiarity.
- <sup>4</sup> The Athenian Alcibiades, whose name is an anagram of “is bad Alice,” after distinguishing himself for valor during the Peloponnesian War, defected later in the war to the enemy Spartans to avoid prosecution for impiety in Athens. Later still, he fled Sparta, allegedly after having seduced the wife of King Agis.
- <sup>5</sup> See K. Ohlert, *Rätsel und Rätselspiele der alten Griechen*, 2nd ed. (Mayer & Müller, 1912) 60–82; T. J. Leary, *The Aenigmata: An Introduction, Text, and Commentary* (Bloomsbury, 2014) 10–12 (“Symphosius,” the pseudonymous author’s name, alludes to the connection with the symposium, the intrusive aspiration being an occasional occurrence among speakers of Latin when rendering Greek words or names).
- <sup>6</sup> R. Hunter, *Plato’s Symposium* (Oxford, 2004) 56.
- <sup>7</sup> It is perhaps merely coincidental that the March Hare, at whose house the tea party is held, is depicted by Tenniel with straw on his head, allegedly a sign of madness; see M. Hancher, *The Tenniel Illustrations to the “Alice” Books*, 2nd ed. (Ohio State University Press, 2019) 67–74. In any event, the association between madness and poetic inspiration is widely attested; according to Plato (*Laws* 719c), it is found already in an “ancient myth.”
- <sup>8</sup> The complete declension of *mus* is given, in the order in which Alice recites it, in Alfred Barrett, *Latin Exercises for the Lowest Form* (Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1854) 130. She omits the ablative, which in Barrett follows the vocative (= “O mouse”), the form for which she was searching. See KL 82:39 for a further discussion.
- <sup>9</sup> H. O’Brien, “‘Alice in Wonderland’—The ‘French Lesson-Book,’” *Notes and Queries* 10 (1963) 461.

Liniers, Macanudo, December 23, 2023





Slothrop is just settling down next to a girl in a pre-war Worth frock and with a face like Tenniel's Alice, same forehead, nose, hair . . .

*Thomas Pynchon, Gravity's Rainbow, Viking, 1973*

Nimitz was not a nervous man, but his responsibilities were enough to generate insomnia in Alice in Wonderland's dormouse.

*Gordon W. Prange, Miracle at Midway, McGraw-Hill, 1982*

"She's an attractive girl."  
"I'm not denying it, but girls aren't Frankie's scene. Everyone knows he's a poof."  
"He only does it to annoy, because he knows it teases."

*Michael Gilbert, The Long Journey Home, Penguin, 1985*

"Begin at the beginning and go on until you come to the end, then stop. Who said that?"  
"You did," Genet said.  
"The King in 'Alice in Wonderland,'" Shiva said, "page ninety-three. Chapter twelve. And you missed four words and two commas."

*Abraham Verghese, Cutting for Stone, Alfred A. Knopf, 2009*

She felt like the big sister who fell asleep in the long grass and awoke to find Alice gone. Off down a hole in the ground, chasing after a white rabbit who would turn out to have teeth.

*Mick Herron, This Is What Happened, Soho Crime, 2018*

On the way back home, she and Sarah enjoyed the caricaturists. Tichborne as the Jabberwocky [*sic*], Kenealy as the Hatter, Hawkins as the Rabbit, and Bogle as the Dormouse.

*Zadie Smith, The Fraud, Penguin Press, 2023*

"Helter Skelter" – A lot of people in the US still don't know what a helter skelter is. They think it's a roller coaster. It's actually another fairground fixture—conical, with a

slide around the outside. We went on them lots of times as kids. You'd walk up the stairs inside, and you'd take a mat—just like a doormat—and you'd sit on it and slide down, and then you'd walk up again. I used that as a symbol of life. One minute you're up, next minute you get knocked down. You're feeling euphoric, then you're feeling miserable. Such is the nature of life. The verses are based on the Mock Turtle's song from *Alice in Wonderland*:

Will you, won't you, will you, won't you, will you join the dance?  
Will you, won't you, will you, won't you, won't you join the dance?

John and I both adored Lewis Carroll, and we often quoted him.

*Paul McCartney, The Lyrics: 1956 to the Present, Liveright, 2023*

She [*actress Juno Temple*] once lamented not being cast as Alice in Tim Burton's *Alice in Wonderland*, but now it made sense to her. "I'm already in the rabbit hole! I need to play the Queen of Hearts one day."

*Anna Russell [no, not that one], "London Postcard: The Underpants Method," The New Yorker, December 18, 2023*

Here, the celebrated *plasticienne* Valérie Lesort has created a concept (apparently modelled on the cards and chess pieces of Tenniel's *Alice* illustrations) that imprisons most of the performers in stiff costumes, removing at a stroke all those human sentiments that make *La Périchole* what it is, or ought to be.

*Christopher Webber, reviewing a DVD of a 2022 Opéra Comique production, Opera/Opera News, February 2024*

My favourite book[s] growing up [were] Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-Glass*. Naturally, Alice herself bored me, but the other characters felt like the friends and neighbours I should have had, rather than the people I did know. It took me some time to realise that, secretly, some of the dull folk in my workaday world were actually members of that divine cast of lunatics,

and were doing their damndest to hide it. My music teacher was definitely a White Knight, one of our priests was a Mock Turtle and, for a while there, the love of my life bore a striking resemblance to the Cheshire Cat.

*Interview with John Burnside, winner of the 2023 David Cohen prize for literature in recognition of a lifetime's achievement, The Guardian (online), February 2, 2024*

The original manuscript of *Alice in Wonderland*, by Lewis Carroll, has been given to the British Museum as a gift of the American people. Presentation was made recently by Luther Evans, librarian of Congress, to Sir John Forsdyke, director of the museum, at a simple ceremony in London.

The manuscript, owned for many years by Alice Middle Hargreaves, was bought at public auction in London by a New York dealer who outbid the British Museum. Later the manuscript was acquired by the Library of Congress at a New York auction.

*Hobbies—The Magazine for Collectors, February 1949*



Slothrop here's been dreaming about Llandudno, where he spent a rainy furlough once drinking bitter in bed with a tug skipper's daughter. Also where Lewis Carroll wrote that *Alice in Wonderland*. So, they put up a statue of the White Rabbit in Llandudno. White Rabbit's been talking to Slothrop, serious and crucial talk, but on the way up to waking he loses it all, as usual.

*Thomas Pynchon, Gravity's Rainbow, Viking, 1973*

A man with a white beard dressed in the finest red gown was coming towards them along the platform. "He looks just like the King in my set of playing cards," thought Alice. It was the Red King.

*Peter Lawrence, Alice's Adventures on the London Underground, Signal Books, 2023*

Yesterday's story doesn't mean anything. Because I am not what I was yesterday.

*Back cover of Minji Kim's AW (p. 63), obviously back-translated from the Korean rather than using the original English text*

Ishika Agrawal  
Brittani Allen  
Nathalie Argueta  
Kara Baer  
Jan Bassi  
Adalie Burton  
Matthew Clark

Carolyn Culley  
Lauren Cyrus  
Will Domke  
Michael Gessel  
Gina Giacomo  
Caitlin Giustiniano  
Elijah Granet  
Ally Guo  
Shelby Hanson  
Grace Henry

Taylor Jesse  
Hobart  
Justine Houyaux  
Peizhuo Ji  
Braden Johnson

Seth Karp  
Douglas Kibbee  
Joyce Lee  
Mike Maddux  
Yitian Mei  
Abhay Narasimhan  
Ellis Nelson  
Abitha Nunis  
Anita Riley  
Angelina Rocchio

Ruth Sanderson  
Olivia Sheldon  
Olivia Siu  
Robyn Stone  
Lauren Turner  
Amy Wu

# Ravings from the Writing Desk

OF ARNOLD HIRSHON

This year is the fiftieth anniversary of the Lewis Carroll Society of North America. Anniversaries are occasions to look back, to consider where we are today and where we wish to go. Unfortunately, nearly all of the Society's eighteen founding members are no longer with us,<sup>1</sup> but I have no doubt that if they were here today, they would be justly proud of what their early efforts wrought.

## CONFERENCES

Since 1974, our Society has held an astounding ninety-seven conferences in nineteen states and in one Canadian province. The states in which we met most frequently were New York (which hosted 32% of the conferences) and California (20%). A review of those meetings attests to the rich array of topics we explored, led by a who's who of highly respected writers, historians, artists, illustrators, and creators from the worlds of literature, theater, film, music, and dance.<sup>2</sup> The pandemic disrupted all societies and associations such as ours, but the LCSNA responded quickly and boldly. In fall 2020, we held our first virtual conference. Thereafter, and throughout the pandemic, we held three more virtual conferences. In November 2022, we resumed holding in-person conferences, meeting in Gainesville, Florida. Post-pandemic, we took the opportunity to review our programming in response to changes in people's travel preferences (and budgets). As a result, we discontinued the prior practice of holding two in-person conferences per year, shifting to one in-person and one virtual conference each year. This year, our virtual Spring conference on April 20 and our Fall in-person conference that we will hold in Boston on November 1 and 2 are a testament to the continuing resilience of the Society and our members.

## VIRTUAL PROGRAMS

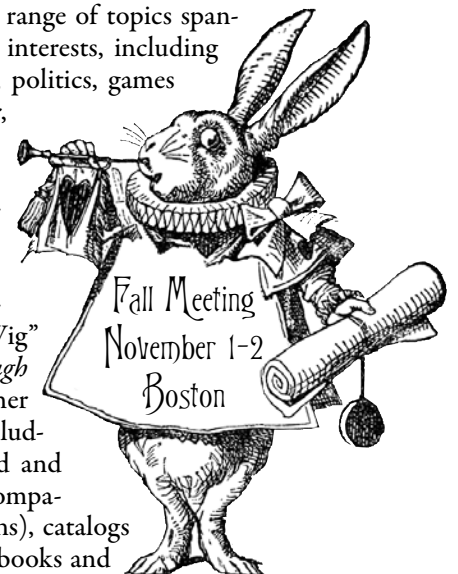
In addition to our virtual conferences, in 2020 then-president Linda Cassady nimbly launched our now-on-going series of virtual events throughout the year. Thus far, we have had twenty-nine programs, all of which were organized and hosted by the creative and engaging Heather Simmons, with help from the virtual events

committee. These virtual programs both immediately and dramatically expanded the number of programs we could provide, and it enabled us to reach an international audience. Recordings of many of our conferences and virtual programs have been preserved on our YouTube channel @LewisCarrollSocietyNA, which currently provides access to over 110 videos that have been viewed 52,000 times.

## PUBLICATIONS

Since the earliest days, the Society has maintained a robust publishing program. Twice a year, we issue the *Knight Letter* (KL). Under the exceptional editorship of Mark Burstein, the KL mixes critical essays that represent the best in the field of Carroll studies with in-depth reports about our conferences, updates about Carroll-related events, books, ephemera, and reviews of new editions of and about Carrollian works. Today, LCSNA members can download as a PDF a comprehensive and searchable archive of all KL issues since 1974.<sup>3</sup>

Our publications extend beyond our splendid journal to include groundbreaking books. Over the years, we have published fifty pamphlets and books, with more forthcoming. For example, the six volumes in the *Pamphlets of Lewis Carroll* series provide an essential scholarly resource on a range of topics spanning Carroll's personal interests, including mathematics and logic, politics, games and puzzles, theater, religion, and science. Other LCSNA books became seminal publications, such as the 1977 first-ever publication of the thought-lost "The Wasp in a Wig" chapter from *Through the Looking-Glass*. Other books we published included Carroll's uncollected and unpublished verse (accompanied by new illustrations), catalogs of exhibits of Carroll's books and





ephemera, bibliographies of articles and books about both Carroll's works and his circle of friends, conference proceedings, and other scholarly or entertaining works.

The Society also published other essential texts in association with others, such as the multi-volume sets of *Alice in a World of Wonderlands*, the first set about *Alice* books in translation, and the second about the books published in English. Today we continue our efforts to publish important monographic works. We have two books scheduled for publication in 2024: *Charles Lutwidge Dodgson (Lewis Carroll): A Bibliography of Works Published in His Lifetime* (edited by Charlie Lovett), and *Lewis Carroll: Collections and Collectors* (edited by Edward Guiliano). In 2025, we will publish *Lewis Carroll's Letters to Henry Savile-Clarke: The First Alice Playwright* (edited and annotated by Clare Imholtz). In addition, we expect to publish some shorter e-books over the next two years.

#### SOCIAL MEDIA

To stay in touch with you, our members, we maintain a robust website with news of Carrollian collectibles, books, media, events, and scholarship at [www.LewisCarroll.org](http://www.LewisCarroll.org). We also publish the latest information on Facebook @lewiscarrollsocietynorthamerica, Instagram @lewiscarrollsocietyamerica, and X @AliceAmerica. Thus far, over 3,500 enthusiastic social media followers have interacted with us through these platforms, and the number continues to grow.

#### AND MORE!

This recitation covers only some of the services and programs of the past and today. For example, since 1996, the Maxine Schaefer Memorial Readings during our in-person conferences have resulted in the distribution to elementary school students of hundreds of copies of *Alice*, which inspired new generations of *Alice* lovers. Our website also provides links to research and educational resources about Carroll, and our blog provides updates about new and recently published illustrated editions of the *Alice* books and other interesting developments in the world of Carrolliana.

#### WHAT WILL THE NEXT TWENTY-FIVE YEARS BRING?

In 1999, Stephanie Lovett wrote that "the next twenty-five years will indeed be different for the LCSNA. . . . [t]hose of us who will celebrate our fiftieth anniversary will have a very different quarter-century to look back on. . . . I have no fear that in the future the Society will lose the facts of its history; I hope its history will also have flavor." As the summary of our accomplishments above

attests, the flavors remain rich, and our Carrollian appetites remain voracious.

As president, I am mindful of the strong legacy of accomplishments of my predecessors. Yet, I am concerned that if we are to celebrate another anniversary twenty-five years from now, we must assess our current situation and make some adjustments. Specifically, we must address decreasingly sufficient financial resources. The aging of our members and post-pandemic changes have caused us to lose more members over the past five-to-ten years than we have gained. We have gone from 350 members in 1999 to 310 in 2020, 270 in 2023, and 236 thus far in 2024. These declines equate to a revenue loss since 2020 of \$3,000 annually. Exacerbating this membership loss are the growth of our programs and the effects of inflation. We have much more extensive and expensive programs than in 1974, or even 1994. For example, conducting in-person conferences can be very costly. In our early days, we could depend upon the sponsorship and provision of free space; no longer. As for inflation, the Society's annual dues of \$10 in 1974 would be equivalent to \$63 when adjusted for inflation, but our current dues stand at \$42. Combining program growth and inflation creates a major problem. For example, the *Knight Letter* in the 1970s was a four- or five-page newsletter that was inexpensive to mail. Today, the *Knight Letter* has matured into being a robust journal that is usually over seventy pages, with commensurate increases in printing and postage costs.

For the Society to thrive over the next twenty-five years, our revenues will need to better align with our real costs. With hard work and with the combined support of our many loyal members and the leadership of our Board of Directors, I am confident that we collectively can ensure that our next fifty years will be as glorious as the fifty years we celebrate today.

#### Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Happily, some founding members are still with us: Alice Berkey, Edward Guiliano, Michael Patrick Hearn, Justin Schiller, and Raymond Wapner.
- <sup>2</sup> A .pdf of a complete list of all the programs over the years is available for download on the "Past Events" page of our website.
- <sup>3</sup> The "Knight Letter" page of our website has links to all previous issues, thanks to the Internet Archive. The most recent three can only be accessed by logging in to the Members Only section, which also contains a downloadable single file that contains every issue!

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# ILLUSTRATOR SPOTLIGHT

## FRANCISZKA THEMERSON

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DANUTA RADOMSKA-FILIPEK

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**F**ranciszka Themerson was born in Warsaw in 1907. Jakub Weinles, her father, was a well-known painter who created art centered around Jewish culture. Her mother, Łucja Kaufman, was a pianist, and her older sister, Maryla Weinles-Chykin, became an illustrator and a pianist as well.

As family legend says, Franciszka was born with a pencil in her hand. She made her first drawing before she could walk. The family home had a huge influence on a talented child; she grew up in a house full of pictures, paints, and brushes.

When Franciszka was only five, she experienced a memorable artistic crisis, possibly one of the factors that later influenced her painting technique. She was sitting in front of a large mirror and was trying to draw her reflection in her sketchbook. Her eyes turned out to be an insurmountable obstacle. As she recalled years later:

I couldn't make my penciled eyes look at me with the same intensity as my eyes in the mirror. So I tried to strengthen them. I made them blacker and blacker. And they became less and less like my own eyes, which were light blue. But I had no

means yet to translate the intensity of a look into a drawing, or even to understand that this was what I wanted to do. So I pressed my pencil harder and harder until two holes appeared in the paper and, exhausted, I burst into tears. Our old cook, hearing my howling, ran from the kitchen, took me in her arms, and, seeing the damage I had done, tried to console me, saying: "Don't cry, sweetheart, I'll buy you another sketchbook." She did not see the work of art. She only saw two holes in the paper. Upon which I cried still more bitterly. This was my first experience of not being understood by the public."<sup>1</sup>

Franciszka's father had a painting studio where he gave lessons to a dozen or so students of various ages, including eight-year-old Franciszka. Many years later, she remembered how she felt anxious and excited sitting in front of an easel with a huge sheet of white paper pinned to it. An academic painter, Jakub Weinles taught his students how to make a rapid sketch of the model's head. Students had to follow a precise procedure. Only after measuring the proportion of the nose and mouth and marking the exact place for the eyes were they allowed



to sketch the details—but only of the right eye. When little Franciszka was leaving the studio, twelve beautifully modeled eyes were staring at her from the easels.

Never has any surrealistic picture made such a strong impression on me as those twelve living, single eyes which inhabited my father's studio. However, the magic vanished when all twelve pictures were finished the following day.

Her life was as unusual as Alice's stories. She first studied at the Academy of Music and then at the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw. She graduated in 1931 and the same year married Stephan Themerson, a writer and experimental photographer. During the 1930s, the Themersons became leaders in a small but vital Polish filmmaking avant-garde, financed in part by a series of inventive books for children. The Themersons made five short experimental films together, most of which are now lost. Stefan wrote various articles for school textbooks. He also wrote at least ten children's books that Franciszka illustrated; *Narodziny liter* (The Birth of Letters) is still in print in Poland.



In 1938, the Themersons left Warsaw for Paris in search of a wider artistic environment. Franciszka was illustrating children's books, while Stefan edited a children's newspaper supplement and wrote poems. A year later, World War II broke out, and the Themersons volunteered for war service. Stefan joined the army in France, while Franciszka managed to get to England and become a cartographer for the Polish Government-in-Exile. The couple had almost no contact. They wrote letters to each other but could not mail them, since they had no way of knowing where their



spouse was at any given time. They each put their letters in a drawer, and they were later published as *Unposted Letters* (Gaberbocchus & De Harmonie, 2015). In them, Franciszka drew pictures of the devastation she saw during the bombings of London.

After two years of separation, the couple was reunited in 1942 when Stefan was sent to join the film unit of the Polish Ministry of Information and Documentation in London. In 1943, he and Franciszka made a short film, *Calling Mr Smith*, to make UK citizens aware of the atrocities committed by the Nazis in Poland and to help stop Hitler's plan to rule the world.

In 1948, Franciszka and Stefan founded their highly original publishing company, Gaberbocchus Press, of which she was the art director. The name "Gaberbocchus" was borrowed from a Latinization of "Jabberwocky" by Carroll's uncle Hassard H. Dodgson. The logo was a drawing of an amicable dragon, often found reclining and enjoying a book; Franciszka reinvented the dragon many times over the years. The couple printed the first two books on a manual press in their flat. Unlike other small émigré publishers of that time, the Themersons' ambition was to introduce British readers to the works of contemporary European writers—Alfred Jarry's *Ubu Roi* among them. For over thirty years of the publishing house's existence, the unique look and feel of Gaberbocchus books were largely due to the Themersons' involvement in the design and production. Gaberbocchus titles show thought, deliberation, and planning. Stefan Themerson described their approach: "When we design a book, what we aim at is a best-looker not a best-seller." Additionally, the Press allowed them to publish their own experimental work in whatever form they chose.

In 1954, they became British citizens. They also founded an art salon called Gaberbocchus Common Room where, on November 28, 1957, Franciszka gave a talk titled "Twelve Living Eyes in My Father's Studio." She talked about her pictorial language: She didn't



think it out; she painted it out. Some people called her an “intellectual” painter, while others asked her what her pictures were all about. According to Franciszka, painting can be the painter’s way of thinking. She once said that “the laws of gravitation have no right in the space of a picture which has its own laws.”

During her life, Franciszka painted, drew, illustrated, designed books and magazines, created theatrical scenery, and lectured at art academies. She had solo exhibitions throughout England and Europe. Her style of figurative painting evolved; she called it “bi-abstract”; one critic described it as “modern cave painting.”

During the war, the publisher Georg G. Harrap commissioned her to illustrate *Looking-Glass*; she finished her drawings in 1946. But then he decided against publishing the book because “the market situation was difficult.” It had to wait until 2001, when her niece, Jasia Reichardt, arranged for its publication (in English) by Inky Parrot Press (*KL* 68:13, 89:5).

The images in Franciszka’s illustrations represent two worlds. Only the three-dimensional Alice, drawn with a black line, resembles Tenniel’s drawings and the real world. The two-dimensional imaginary characters in the *Looking-Glass* world are flat and colorful. The Red Queen and her entourage are red, while the White Queen and her companions are blue.

According to Jasia, Franciszka placed Alice in Carroll’s past, whereas the *Looking-Glass* world is in the abstract future. Small, curious, kind, and sometimes a bit stubborn, Alice is the stimulator of the developing novel; her gaze brings other characters to life.

Franciszka and Stefan Themerson both died in 1988. Jasia Reichardt has catalogued their archive and looks after their legacy. In 2015, the entire archive was deposited in the National Library in Warsaw; the three-volume catalogue was published by MIT Press in 2020. A book-length biography called simply *Franciszka Themerson* was written by Nick Wadley and published by The Themerson Estate in 2020.

The fine-press Inky Parrot edition is pricey and difficult to find. Fortunately, Franciszka’s lovely illustrations are also readily available in trade editions: in Spanish as *A través del espejo: y lo que Alicia encontró allí* (Media Vaca, 2013), in Polish as *Alicja po drugiej stronie lustra* (Fundacja Festina Lente, 2015), and in French as *Alice à travers le miroir* (MeMo, 2022), but has yet to find an English-language trade publisher.

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> <https://muzeumplock.eu/en/wystawa-stala/z-plocka-i-dla-plocka-galeria-ploczan-xx-wieku-galeria-themersonow>.

## In Memoriam



Near the end of 2023, the Carrollian world lost one of our finest minds, a Carroll collector extraordinaire and one of the kindest, most considerate and accomplished people whom I have ever known, George E. Cassady. He died in Los Angeles at the age of eighty-nine, a cherished LCSNA member, someone who was the gracious and amiable host of multiple LCSNA conferences, and a very dear friend. Courteously and courteously, scholarly and witty, George was the kindly opposite of his self-described sobriquet of "curmudgeon." Our ranks are now diminished because his quiet but powerful presence is no longer among us.

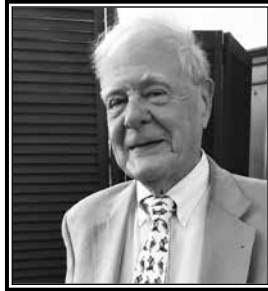
Many of us who knew George first or only through the Society may not have been fully aware of his distinguished professional career. As a clearly gifted child, one of George's early-in-life accomplishments was as a concert pianist, playing Mozart's *Piano Concerto no. 22 in E-flat major* at the Hollywood Bowl, accompanied by the esteemed conductor Leopold Stokowski.

George began his academic career early, starting college at 16. After three years, George left his beloved University of Southern California (USC) in 1958 to matriculate into the Duke University Medical School, doing so before he completed his undergraduate studies. Following graduation, he became a captain in the Navy at the National Institutes of Health, and thereafter his medical career took him to leadership positions at the University of Alabama at Birmingham's medical school; the Children's Hospital and the California Pacific Medical Center in San Francisco; as chief of pediatrics and director of nurseries at St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Boston; and as a special lecturer in pediatrics at Harvard University. Years later, he returned to San Francisco, ostensibly to retire, but instead he continued to teach, learn, and share his knowledge when he joined Stanford University as a clinical professor of pediatrics.

Throughout his life, George was an avid reader and collector of rare books, manuscripts, and signed first editions. He was always quite

George E. Cassady, M.D.  
August 9, 1934 — December 3, 2023

*Remembered by Arnold Hirshon*



fond of the University of Southern California, so when George, together with his beloved wife, Linda, considered places to donate their exceptional collection of over 6,000 items of Carrolliana, they chose USC's Doheny Library. As was typical of George's modesty, he chose not to name the collection after himself, but rather in memory of his father, G. Edward Cassady, M.D., and his mother, Margaret Elizabeth Cassady, R.N. With this incredible donation,

the Doheny Library became one of the outstanding collections of Carrolliana anywhere in the world. The comprehensive Cassady collection includes first editions, translations, artist books, stage and film adaptations, Victorian-era playing cards, pop-up books, letters and manuscripts, ephemera, illustrated editions of the *Alice* books and other works by Carroll, critical and reference works, and the most extensive collection of Japanese materials related to *Alice* housed outside Japan. USC reciprocated, demonstrating their love for George when, late in his life, they awarded him his undergraduate diploma based upon his lifetime of work and accomplishments, as well as naming him a member of USC's Skull and Dagger honor society.

George's love of teaching was not just in matters medical. George taught courses to USC undergraduates in Victorian Literature when he was eighty-five. And ever the practitioner of pedagogy in all its forms, George sought ways to encourage college students to engage with the works of Carroll and the Cassady collection. Thus was born the annual Wonderland Award, an outstanding annual competition for college students to express their ideas about Carroll and his works through any creative form of human expression, from art to writing and everything possible in between, such as drawings, essays, musical compositions, paintings, photography, poems, sculptures, short stories, theater scripts, and videos. The Award is but one part of an enduring legacy demonstrating the values that George cherished and practiced daily, one that will ensure that his

love of Carroll's works will continue to inspire and benefit generations of students yet to come.

While he was quite accomplished throughout his life, perhaps his most important legacy was the love he shared with family and friends. He was an unassuming friend to all who came into contact with him; I shall always be grateful for the opportunities I had to get to know George. When we first met, at an LCSNA dinner, George and I had a charming and informative conversation. George spoke to me about his bibliophilic interests and his work in descriptive bibliography, and he invited me to see his collection. When I was next in Los Angeles, George and Linda kindly spent the day with me as we pulled interesting items from the shelves, and George requested the library staff to retrieve especially valuable items from the vault. For me, this was more than a trip through a biblio-Wonderland. The constant gleam in George's eyes as he shared his enthusiasm and wisdom said everything about what a remarkable human being he was.

Our relationship continued to grow when George agreed to write two essays and to compile one of the checklists for *Alice in a World of Wonderlands: The English-Language Editions of the Four Alice Books*. I was one of the co-editors of this two-volume set. George was endlessly kind

and generous with his time, and I greatly benefited from his considerable expertise. Throughout the years when we were preparing those volumes, George and I were often in contact. He provided wise counsel, and he would commiserate about the tasks at hand. However, what I loved the most were the times George and I just plain shmoozed, and I could bask in sharing some time with this easygoing and affable gentleman. While I might selfishly wish we had far more time together, I count my memories of the times we did spend together as a great blessing. As I harken back to those conversations, I can hear again George's gentle voice making a cogent point, I can smile at being entertained by his impish fine sense of humor, and I will be forever thankful for the time in which our lives intersected.

*Of all the strange things that Alice saw in her journey . . . this was the one that she always remembered most clearly. Years afterwards she could bring the whole scene back again, as if it had been only yesterday—the mild blue eyes and kindly smile of the Knight—the setting sun gleaming through his hair, and shining on his armour in a blaze of light that quite dazzled her. . . .*



David del Tredici

March 16, 1937 — November 18, 2023

*Remembered by Joe Cadigan*

I recently came across a letter that Hungarian composer György Ligeti wrote to his biographer, Ove Nordwall. "Do you really like [David] Del Tredici?" Ligeti asks in condescending shock. "It's just clever film music and very far from *Alice's* magic." He continues, poking fun at Del Tredici's name—meaning "of the thirteen" in Italian—with other numerical monikers:

I would be happy if I could like Del Undici's [11] *Alice*. ... But no matter how many times I've heard it, I think it's bad and "reactionary" music. You can't write in THIS way, in the clichés of dead tonality. ... Thank you very much for copying *Alice* by Del Dieci [10] for me. Please listen again—it's bad music.



Ligeti's modernist snobbery would soften in the decades following this 1982 letter. In the 1990s, he even began planning a Broadway-style *Alice* musical, complete with pop-tinged showtunes. But his attitude toward his American colleague was sadly all too common among many composers. The avant-garde establishment thoroughly misunderstood the brilliance of Del Tredici's music. At his death this past November, he left behind a prodigious cycle of Carrollian settings—an opera and eight concert works for soprano and ensemble, all composed between 1968 and 1996.

As a young man, Del Tredici was indoctrinated into the hyper-intellectualized school of twelve-tone serialism, which dominated American art music in the 1960s. Carroll's nonsense pro-



vided a way out—a means of reconciling compositional experimentation with the mischievously playful side of Del Tredici's character that he had been forced to stifle. In the second movement of his 1971 *Adventures Underground* for soprano and orchestra, one of his earliest *Alice* settings, he recreates the calligraphic typography of "The Mouse's Tale" from *Wonderland*—but instead of words, the pitches of the orchestral accompaniment are laid out in the score in wavy caudal shapes.

While this notational game is essentially inaudible to listeners, audiences will readily pick up on Del Tredici's surrealist collages of existing tunes, which approximate Carroll's poetic parodies. *Vintage Alice* from 1972—a setting of "The Mad Tea Party" chapter for soprano and chamber group—is based on distorted musical quotations of "God Save the Queen" and, of course, "Twinkle, Twinkle." Very often, Del Tredici sets Carroll's verses alongside the original texts they lampoon, as if we were consulting the *Annotated Alice*.

In the mid-1970s, Del Tredici's style took a radically backward-looking shift, as the composer returned to the precepts of tonality—the timeworn system of major and minor keys that modernists largely abandoned in the twentieth century. The lush, neo-Romantic surface of a work like *Final Alice* from 1974–1975 (likely the piece Ligeti heard) can easily be misconstrued as regressive and "reactionary." Scored for soprano and orchestra, this adaptation of the final trial episode from *Wonderland* is based almost entirely on a single theme—a sunny, pleasant tune resembling the kind of "light music" played at Victorian promenade concerts. But Del Tredici subjects this melody to a dizzying array of variations that grow increasingly complex and chaotic as the scene spirals out of control.

Following Alice's climactic "You're nothing but a pack of cards," the preceding madness is swept away, and Del Tredici introduces a long-be-lated second theme. His lullaby version of "A Boat Beneath a Sunny Sky," the acrostic poem from *Looking-glass*, is a melody of supreme, unaffected loveliness—an unabashed expression of nostalgia for a lost childhood.

While Del Tredici indulges in bittersweet reminiscence with his "Acrostic Song," he also seems to acknowledge the impossibility of returning to the idealized past that this theme conjures. In its last measures, *Final Alice* evaporates into a sparkling cloud of percussion, out of which the oboist emerges to intone the tuning pitch A—a

banal musical reminder that we're at a concert hall and not in some enchanted realm. It's a clever take on the moment when Alice's daydreaming sister finds herself pulled back to "dull reality." But this gesture also places a kind of self-aware frame around the work, indicating that while Del Tredici's musical language does indeed look to the past, it isn't simply a naïve reversion to "the clichés of dead tonality," as Ligeti put it.

Indeed, a spirit of experimentalism runs through even the most sumptuous example of his neo-Romantic writing, the monumental *Child Alice*. Composed between 1977 and 1981, this behemoth carries on the tradition of Mahler's world-building symphonies—predecessors that, while tonal, exhibit a proto-modernist treatment of form. As in *Final Alice*, Del Tredici again restricts his melodic palette to just two themes, one for each hourlong half of *Child Alice*. Despite this limitation, the composer manages to generate an atmosphere of uncontainable excess. The constant key changes, decadent orchestrations, and ever-intensifying climaxes disclose a deep, insatiable longing.

In lieu of Carroll's nonsense poems, Del Tredici sets the more personal prefatory poems from the *Alice* books: "Child of the Pure Uncolored Brow" in Part I of *Child Alice* and "All in the Golden Afternoon" in Part II. In the latter, the soprano's forty-five repetitions of "Alice!"—sung on an aching dissonant tritone—convey the same obsession as the orchestra's incessant *idée fixe* theme.

I needn't remind readers of these pages that the sinister rumors surrounding Charles Dodgson's friendship with Alice Liddell have been thoroughly debunked. But for Del Tredici, the Oxford don's alleged pedophilia was a point of resonance with his own forbidden desires as a gay man.

Del Tredici's sense of connection will undoubtedly cause discomfort for both Carrollians, who tire of this myth's perpetuation, and gays, who have long been conflated with pedophiles. However, it's worth noting that, after *Cabbages and Kings* from 1996, Del Tredici abandoned *Alice* and began openly exploring his homosexuality in a series of queer-themed works. This isn't to say that the coded expressions of his identity in the Carroll settings are necessarily "closeted." On the contrary, they are effusive outpourings of creative freedom, representing an artist finally breaking free of both aesthetic and sexual constraints. Such self-realization could only be achieved in Carroll's

world of endless possibility—a dreamland where girl and fawn shed the labels imposed upon them and wander the forest as their true selves.

*Joe Cadagin's 2020 doctorate in musicology from Stanford University was entitled "Nonsense and Nostalgia in the Lewis Carroll Settings of György Ligeti." Joe is presently Audience Education and Communications Manager at Houston Grand Opera, and has been a regular contributor to Opera News, San Francisco Classical Voice, and the Knight Letter. He took top prize at the 2019 Wonderland Awards.*



*David Del Tredici addressed our Society in 1977, 1984, and at Alice150 in 2015. He was a Guggenheim Fellow, a nominee for a 2007 Grammy for "Best Contemporary Composition," and the winner*

*of the 1980 Pulitzer Prize in Music for "In Memory of a Summer Day" (Part One of Child Alice). His Alice works began in 1968, with Pop-Pourri, which combined texts from Wonderland, Looking-Glass, the litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the Lutheran chorale "Es ist genug."*

*Recordings (vinyl and/or CDs and/or cassettes) exist of Vintage Alice (Deutsche Grammophon, 2000); In Memory of a Summer Day (Elektra / Asylum / Nonesuch, 2007); An Alice Symphony (New World Records, 2007); Haddocks' Eyes (New World Records, 2007); Final Alice, with Barbara Hendricks, soprano, and the Chicago Symphony conducted by Sir Georg Solti (Decca, 2008); Child Alice (Boston Modern Orchestra Project, 2017); and the aforementioned Pop-Pourri / Adventures Underground (Albany Records, 2022). Portions or complete recordings are also streamable at [www.daviddeltredici.com/alice](http://www.daviddeltredici.com/alice).*

## ❁❁ QUIZ ❁❁

Where do chickens appear in *Wonderland*? *Looking-Glass*?

(Eggs don't count.)

*Answer on p. 55*







# ALICE IN ADVERTISING-LAND

DAYNA NUHN LOZINSKI



Clara Miller Burd's (1873–1933) training as an artist was extensive and varied. She was a student at the Chase School (founded by American impressionist painter William Merritt Chase) and the National Academy of Design (an honorary society for artists and architects that promoted fine art through exhibitions and education). Like other American female artists of the era who sought more opportunities and further education than were available at home, she traveled to Paris, in 1898, where she was taught by academic painter Gustave Courtois.

After returning to America, Clara Burd learned stained glass design at the Tiffany studios and later worked for two other New York companies, the J. & R. Lamb Studio and the Church Glass and Decoration Company. She designed windows for numerous churches and often painted murals on-site to accompany them. Clara Burd also created numerous covers for magazines such as *Canadian Home Journal*, *Little Folks*, *The Farmer's Wife*, *Holland's*, *The Literary Digest*, *Modern Priscilla*, *Woman's Home Companion*, and *Woman's World*. However, she is best known today for illustrating children's books.

She created two pictures of Alice, but the first one had a longevity and a variety of uses—including advertising—that make it interesting to explore. Her *Alice in Wonderland* illustration was part of a series inspired by children's stories, mostly fairy tales such as *Puss-in-Boots*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Red Riding Hood*, *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*, *Jack and the Beanstalk*, *The Frog Prince*, and *Cinderella*, to name a few. It appears that Burd sold the rights for this series to Knapp, a New York lithographic company, who quickly set to work finding numerous ways to profit from them. The pictures appeared, together and separately, in many places, and it proved challenging to try to track them down and date them. While the *Alice in Wonderland* picture's use in advertising is the most relevant element here, the book *Fairy Tales*, and books influenced by it, are included to show a more complete history.

Possibly the first appearance of Burd's *Alice in Wonderland* illustration was in *Fairy Tales*, published by Stanton and VanVelt, Chicago, IL, in 1918. The hard-cover book featured numerous stories compiled by Rose

Allyn, black-and-white drawings by Violet Moore Higgins, and eight color plates by C. M. Burd. Like many female artists of the time, she used her initials to disguise the fact that she was a woman. Each plate had an illustration with a twelve-line poem underneath, like the one for *Alice* (Figure 1).

Quaint Alice trailed the rabbit, dressed  
So strangely in a coat and vest,  
And at the bottom of the hole,  
Had many more adventures droll;  
By tasting "Drink Me" she grew smaller,  
By sipping something else, was taller;  
She met the Duchess, Cheshire Cat,  
The Mad March Hare and folk like that,  
She stirred her tea and played croquet,  
In court had nothing right to say,  
And when it all began to seem  
Mixed up, discovered 'twas a dream.<sup>1</sup>



Figure 1



Figure 2

The plates are scattered throughout the book to (mostly) go with the corresponding tale. It is odd that the illustrations for *Rip Van Winkle* and *Alice in Wonderland* are included in the book but have no matching stories. Burd also supplied the cover image (Figure 2) of an old woman stirring a cauldron from which various fairy tale characters emerge, including Alice, clasping the White Rabbit.

That 1918 edition may have been the basis for a much shorter softcover booklet titled *Ted and Nan in Fairy Land*, which was used as a promotional giveaway. It had the same cover as *Fairy Tales*, but the contents were quite different. There was a three-page story by Emily Rose Burt, and this time twelve color plates by Clara M. Burd. The plates were the same format as the Stanton and VanViel edition, with the illustration on top and a 12-line poem underneath.

Page one of *Ted and Nan in Fairyland* contains a short, generic message stating that the booklet was free, and explaining the advertisers' hopes that:

If the pictures and the story about the familiar characters that every small person knows, serve to amuse and entertain one of these little people for a single restless hour, a wish for the book will have been fulfilled. And if it incidentally arouses a kindly interest in the service that is given, on the part of the patrons and of those who might become patrons, the sender shall feel doubly repaid.

It almost reads as if Carroll wrote it. Printed underneath was the sponsoring company's name and address. I have two copies: one was the Stationery, Toy, and Notions store in Carson City, NV, and the other was the St. Croix Paper Company in Boston, MA, but many other businesses participated too.

Emily Rose Burt's short story "A Surprise Party" begins with a "M-i-a-o-w!" that seems to come from inside Ted and Nan's favorite red-and-gold fairy tale book. Other voices continue the conversation, one of which belongs to Alice. It is almost Christmas, and the siblings have the measles, so they can't have their friends over for the annual Christmas Eve ice cream party. When that special day arrives, there is a knock on the book's cover and out troop the various characters, prepared to host a surprise party, with Santa Claus as the Master of Ceremonies. They begin by decorating a tree, and Alice goes first. She reaches into her apron pocket and takes out some pieces of a looking-glass. They sparkle like rainbows when placed on the tree. Each character also brings a present. Alice gifts Nan and Ted with the White Rabbit. When the party ends, all the characters return to the book, and the children fall asleep.

In 1926, yet another version appeared, titled *Kiddies Fairy Tales*. The publisher, Cupples & Leon of New York City, used the same cover illustration, but it was made shorter to accommodate the different format of this edition, and the new title replaced the old one. This small, hardcover book has a two-page story, "Molly Gets Acquainted" by Josephine Lawrence. Molly is a little girl who doesn't know any fairy tales. The new next-door neighbor, Nina, lends Molly some books. Nina tells Molly to read the stories and then sleep with them under her pillow. Molly dreams that she meets Alice and Puss-in-Boots, and they drive her around in Cinderella's coach to see the other characters and their homes. In addition to the story, there are eight color plates with just the pictures this time, because of the smaller format. There is no artist credit for Burd. Six new sixteen-line poems, mostly placed opposite their matching illustration, replace the ones found in the other two editions. Illustrations for *Alice in Wonderland* and *Rip Van Winkle* are included in

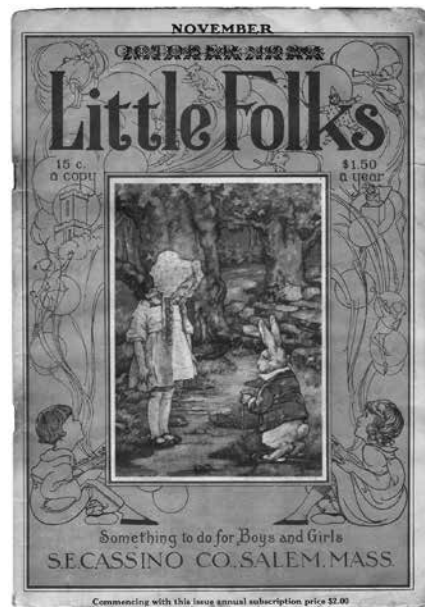


Figure 3



Fralinger's took the easy path by using a stock image and missed an obvious opportunity to tie in their product with the "Pool of Tears" chapter.

I mentioned at the beginning that Clara Burd created two *Alice* illustrations. The second one was for the cover of an edition published by M. A. Donahue around the mid- to late 1920s (Figure 7). The bonnet and blond braids are gone from Burd's earlier version, and Alice's shorter, red hair is held back with black ribbons. Her dress is still blue, but with longer sleeves and a smaller pinafore. She is holding the pig baby in her arms, and we get glimpses of some of the other Wonderland characters such as the Mouse, the Hatter, the Gryphon, the Cheshire Cat, the Queen of Hearts, and the White Rabbit. Burd made the two versions of Alice quite different, but the two White Rabbits are similar, with almost the

identical pose and outfit, replacing the pocket watch with by a fan.

It would be nice to think that Clara Miller Burd made a good living from having her series of fairy tale characters used for so many purposes, but in all likelihood it was Knapp & Co. who were the real financial winners.

*The images used here are from the Nuhn Collection, with the exception of the Little Folks magazine cover from the Malcolm Collection and the cover of the Donahue Alice in Wonderland from the Imholtz collection. I am indebted to Clare Imholtz for bringing to my attention the existence of the numerous Fairy Tales editions, which add an extra layer to the story of the uses of this Alice in Wonderland illustration in advertising.*

### Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> This book and the one published by Stanton and VanVelt had different authors but used the same style of color plates with the twelve-line poems printed under the illustrations. The author of the poems is uncredited but is possibly Rose Allyn. It is probable that Josephine Lawrence wrote the new sixteen-line poems found in *Kiddies Fairy Tales* from Cupples & Leon.

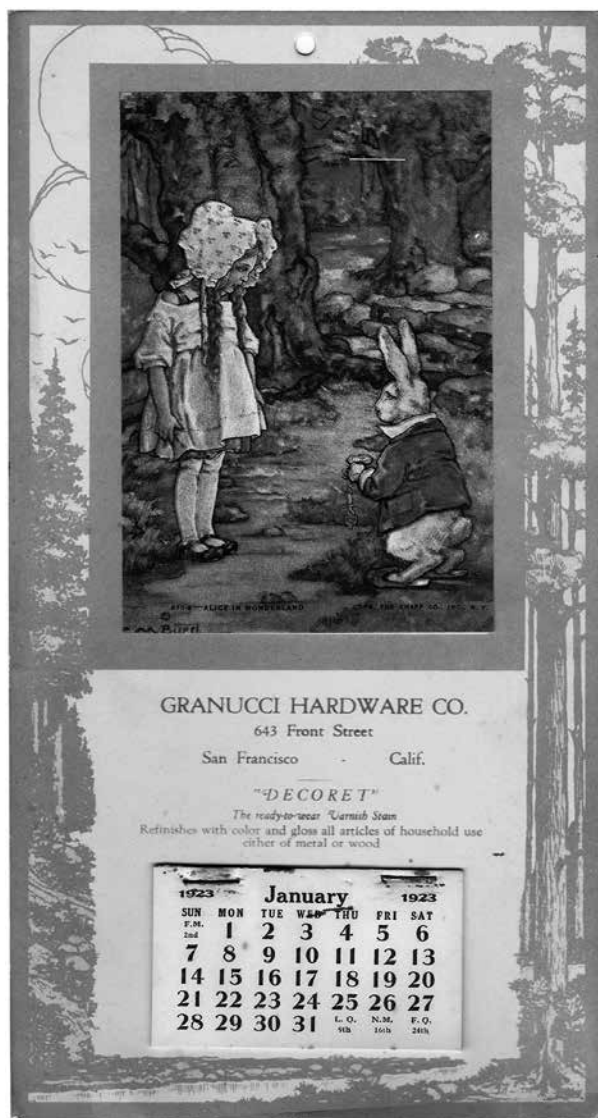


Figure 6



Figure 7

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# ALL MUST HAVE PRIZES

## OXFORDIANA

ANDY MALCOLM



*The secret of this atmosphere of "Alice," if the secret of so delicate a mystery can be guessed, is contained, I fancy, in the word "Oxford." It is the magic of Oxford, I suggest, the dreaming spires, the lazy Cherwell, the strange, pathetic union of youth and age in "the home of lost causes and impossible loyalties" that we feel, when ostensibly we are mesmerised by the Lands of Looking-Glass and the chessboard. If it is so, what more adequate reality from which to build his dream kingdom could the author have had?*

Guy Boas, "Alice," *Blackwood's Magazine*,  
December 1937

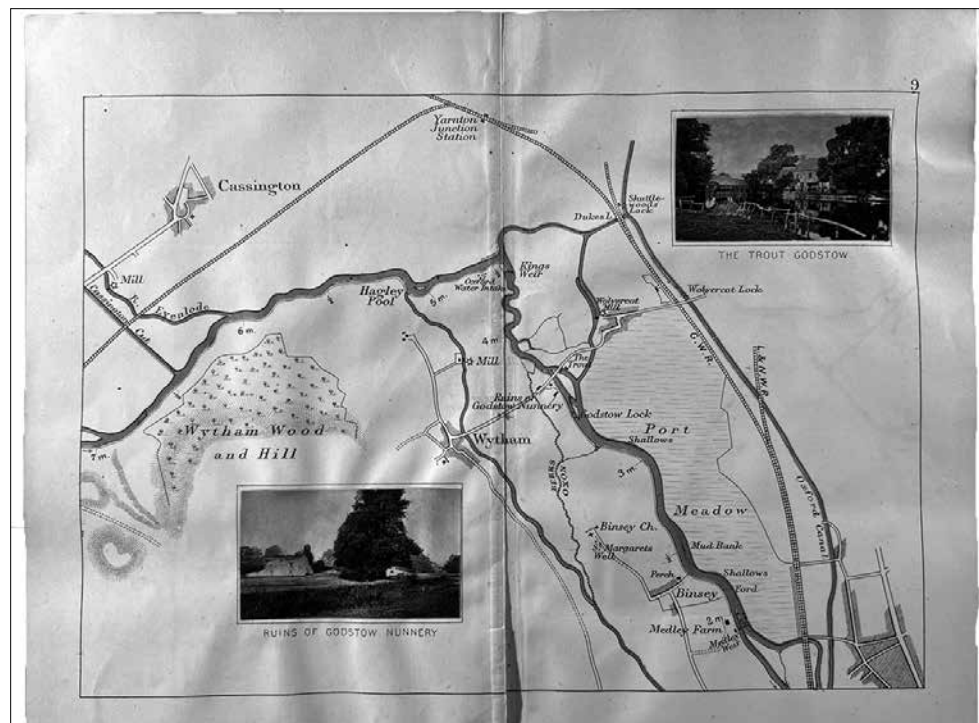
**A**lice's *Adventures in Wonderland* is deeply intertwined with Oxford; the city's landmarks and landscapes inspired many of the book's settings. Collecting vintage photographs, maps, surveys, lithographs, postcards, and guidebooks of Oxford provides valuable insights into the real-world locations and inspirations behind the fantastical settings depicted in the book. These allow for a deeper understanding of how Carroll's surroundings influenced his imaginative storytelling and give us a sense of connection to a place and time that no longer exists except through these archival materials.



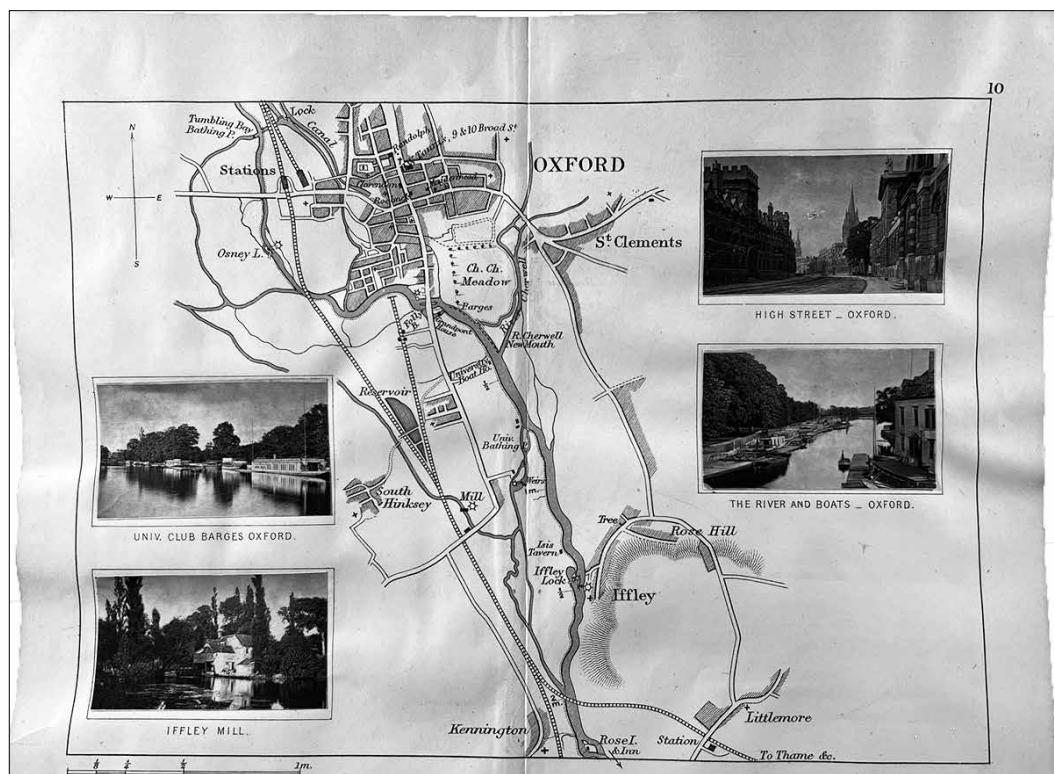
*Engraving depicting bird's-eye view of the City of Oxford in 1843. Notice the landmarks such as Dodgson's college, Christ Church, and its Meadow, the River Cherwell, the Museum of Natural History, The Bodleian Library, the Radcliffe Camera, the Botanic Garden, and Deer Park.*

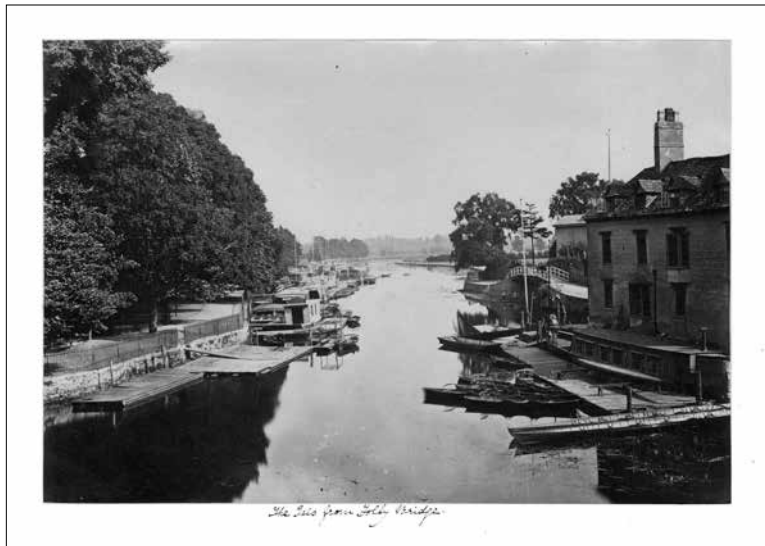


Henry Taunt's "New Map of the River Thames", 1879 showing the picnic location at Godstow where on July 4, 1862, Charles Dodgson entertained his attentive audience. The serene beauty of the river and surrounding countryside likely influenced Carroll's descriptions of the idyllic setting where Alice first encounters the White Rabbit. The map also shows St. Margaret's well at Binsey, known as the Treacle Well in Alice's Adventures in Wonderland.



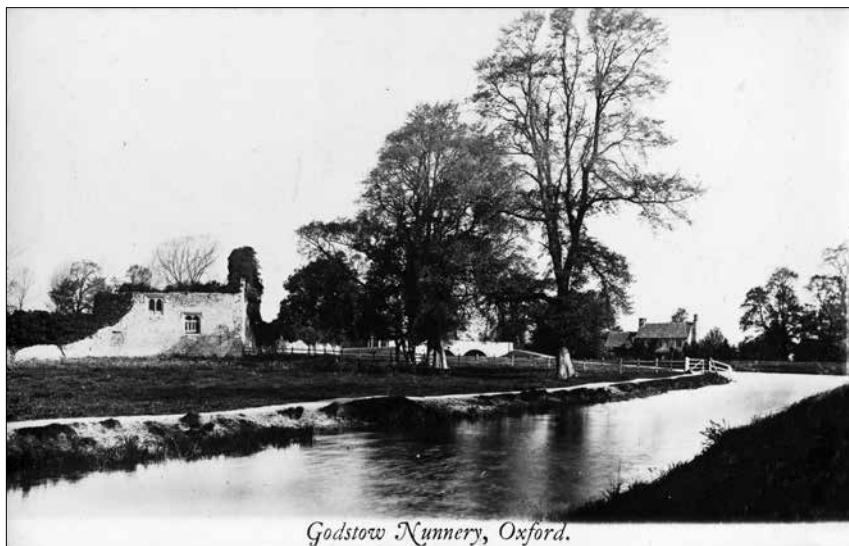
Henry Taunt's Map of Oxford, 1879 showing Christ Church Meadow and Folly Bridge downstream to Iffley.





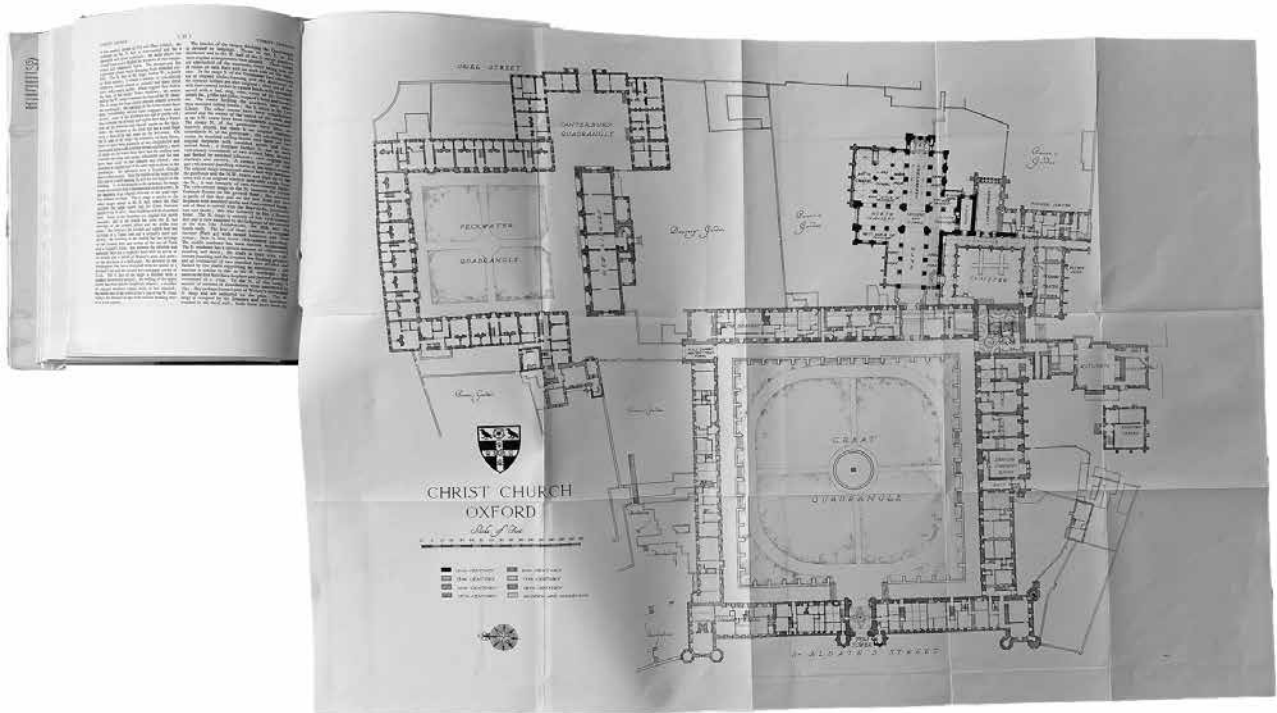
*Photo of Salter's Boat Station from Folly Bridge in the 1860s, showing the spot where the historic voyage began at the edge of Christ Church Meadow.*

*Iffley is the first river lock downstream from Christ Church, here seen as it might have appeared in the 1860s. This was the destination on the first of several outings that Alice is known to have taken on the river with Carroll.*



*Postcard showing the ruins of Godstow Nunnery, as it may have appeared in Lewis Carroll's time.*

*A postcard showing Christ Church where Charles Dodgson lived from 1851 until he died in 1898 at age 65.*



*From the book, City of Oxford: A Survey and Inventory by the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments. A 19th century survey map of the grounds of Christ Church. Dodgson lived in rooms in the Great Quadrangle's northwest corner from 1862 until his death, and directly opposite his staircase, in the northeast corner of the quad, is the Deanery, where Alice lived from the time she was three until her marriage in 1880.*



## COVER STORY

Mark Burstein

I first came across the work of Ukrainian printmaker, watercolor artist, and illustrator Sergiy Hrapov (Сергій Храпов) in the Special Edition of Artists' Choice's (now ironically named) *Russian Alices*. Even then it was a misnomer, as the book included many Ukrainian artists and even some Polish ones. The four signed and numbered aquatints in a folder at the back were all by Ukrainian artists: Sergiy Hrapov, Sergiy Ivanov, Konstantin Antioukhin, and Yulya Protsyshyn. I was immediately drawn to Hrapov's for its witty capturing of the spirit of Carrollian madness and its talented execution.

In writing to him to get permission to print that image on our cover, we began a voluminous email correspondence. He is a wonderful man living in a nightmarish situation, with Russian bombardment. He mentioned that some *bryvnya* (the local currency) would be of great help, so I commissioned the drawing you see on the cover.

He lives in the city of his birth, Lviv, but has had a large number of exhibitions around the world and is the recipient of dozens of major awards. Visit him at [hrapov.com](http://hrapov.com).

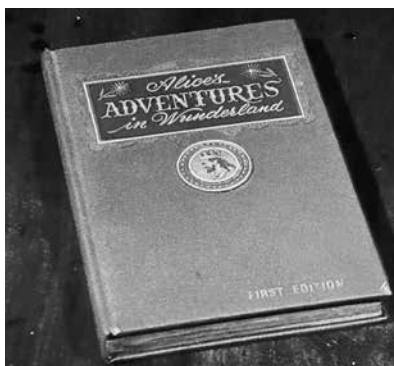
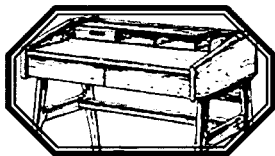


### NO "PROPS" TO THESE PROPS

In the *Columbo* episode "Dagger of the Mind" (s. 2 ep. 4, air date November 26, 1972), Columbo becomes a bit concerned about a book—an expensive one, he notes—that was left open and face down to mark the place where the reader left off. He didn't think the supposed reader would treat such a valuable book so poorly. Clue!! But the book shown was obviously the creation of a prop person who couldn't spell "Wonderland" (!), put an image on the cover that does not look at all like a playing-card king, and thinks book designers would stamp "First Edition" on the cover instead of having it printed on the copyright page. Nope.



## Carrollian Notes



Fast forward three decades. Towards the beginning of "Reunion," an episode of the spy thriller *Alias* (s. 3 ep. 3, air date October 12, 2003), Sydney (Jennifer Garner) and her friend, fellow agent, and would-be suitor Eric Weiss are having late-night drinks in her Los Angeles apartment. (Her prior one had been burned down the previous season.)

**SYDNEY:** The ever-evasive truth is that there are advantages to losing all your stuff in a fire. . . .

**ERIC:** Yes, but there's got to be something that you had and just loved that kills you that you don't have anymore. I mean like a thing . . .

**SYDNEY:** I know what you mean. I used to have a first edition *Alice in Wonderland*. My mother gave it to me for my fifth birthday. Despite my roller-coaster relationship with

her—wherever she is—that was one of the things I sort of loved.

At the end of the episode, Sydney sees an edition of *Alice* on her desk, and is moved nearly to tears. Eric walks up to her.

**ERIC:** It's a third edition.

**SYDNEY:** Thank you.

**ERIC:** I was going to get you a first edition, but it's, like, \$40,000. They hug.

The "third edition" shown was the 1946 Random House with the Kredel coloring, with an obviously faux label slapped on the cover. Well, we appreciate the spirit.

Fast forward two more decades. At least in *The Matrix Resurrections* (2021) the prop book *looked* legitimate (*KL* 107:70), even if it was made up.



### MAESTRO

In keeping with the new biopic, we should remind readers of Lennie's affection for Carroll. "The Bernstein family apartment, situated in the northern part of Manhattan's Hell's Kitchen, houses many of the conductor's books (as well as those of his wife, Felicia Montealegre) on two massive shelving units. . . . A small section holds several works by his favorite author, Vladimir Nabokov, and also present are his most treasured stories, *Alice in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking Glass*" proclaims "Leonard Bernstein's Bookshelf: An Intimate Look" by James Bennett II posted on [wqxr.org](http://wqxr.org), May 2, 2018. It is well known that Bernstein travelled with a copy of the *Alice* books in his trunk library and that his children placed them in the grave with him (Humphrey Burton, *Leonard Bernstein*, Doubleday, 1994). Now, of course, we'd love to know which edition it was. The Leonard Bernstein Collection at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music lists the Odhams

Press edition of *Wonderland/Looking-glass* (which was combined with Thackeray's *The Rose and the Ring*), and a 1989 William Heinemann edition with the Rackham illustrations, but these are obviously not the ones he was buried with.

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### LOOKINGGLASS ALICE

*Cindy Watter*

The play *Lookingglass Alice* was directed by David Catlin and staged by the Lookingglass Theatre Company of Chicago, April 30–July 31, 2022. A video of the nearly two-hour production, hosted by Lindsey Noel Whiting, aired December 15, 2023, on PBS and can be streamed through December 14, 2026.

I had never heard of this theatre troupe, but after this creative and joyful production, I want to see more of their work. *Lookingglass Alice* evades the typical criticism of “It’s not like the book!” by completely going off the rails. The play’s creators mix up Wonderland and Looking-Glass lands, set them in a high-tech interior instead of an atmosphere of overstuffed Victoriana, have almost all the actors (except Alice) play more than one part (and sometimes musical instruments), and give the production a shot of dell’arte meets the circus.

This is a highly physical production. Alice doesn’t fall down a rabbit hole—she does aerial acrobatics with a hoop, suspended in rope rigging. The Caterpillar, composed of three performers, does a lot of highly coordinated tumbling. The Red Queen/Queen of Hearts (yes, they are conflated, but it works) is at least twelve feet tall, walking on stilts. A slender Humpty (but identifiable because he is on a wall and wearing a white suit with a yolk-yellow shirt) falls off a pretty tall ladder. The Cheshire Cat is practically serpentine, he stretches so much. When the White Knight’s bicycle

disintegrates, it turns into a unicycle and he merrily pedals off.

The wonderfully talented Samuel Taylor, who plays the White Knight, also covers C. L. Dodgson and the White Queen. At the play’s opening, he and Alice are on opposite sides of the mirror. She moves into the alternative universe because, like many children, she is eager to grow up. Near the end of the play, instead of Alice encouraging the White Knight, it is he who encourages her, as she has become a Queen and is on the way to becoming an adult.

Speaking of queens, Taylor’s final scene as the White Queen is hilarious. Another actor is cradling the queen’s head, and the rest of “her” body is enfolded in blankets. This indicates that the Queen has returned to an infantile state as Alice has matured. S/he looks like a cheerful baby. If a baby had a mustache.

Costuming is excellent. The Red Queen’s outfit is a showstopper. Its bright red skirt looks two stories high, and it has a petticoat frame that could be used as a tea table—and it is. Alice wears a blouse, pinafore, striped stockings, and a hairband, so she looks traditional—until she starts swinging upside down from a rope. The Cheshire Cat, the March Hare, and the Hatter mostly wear black, a sartorial choice that reinforces their occasional sardonic humor.

Molly Hernandez is a delightfully adventurous and assertive Alice. At one point, she puts together a tea party for some juvenile members of the audience. I don’t think those children were rehearsed—always risky—but they were having a good time.

The Lookingglass Theatre was founded by actor David Schwimmer when he was a student at Northwestern University. *Lookingglass Alice* was the company’s signature

show, and Schwimmer even took it to the Edinburgh Fringe, thirty-five years ago. The company chose to remount *Alice* for their post-Covid return. Excellent choice.

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### ALICE AT

### THE O STREET MANSION

*August Imholtz*

Walking the few blocks from the Washington DC Metro subway station at Dupont Circle to the Mansion on O Street—a unique museum—Alice and a number of her bronze Wonderland companions, weighing many hundreds of pounds, were getting very tired indeed. The flight in the cargo compartment from England had been bad enough, but the crush of all those people in their version of the “Tube” speaking their version of “English” was almost too much to bear.

After a suitable rest, Alice and her friends were in place at the Mansion for the opening night of the “Through the Looking-Glass” exhibition on Tuesday, November 28, 2023. About a hundred people had gathered in the elegant first-floor rooms of the Mansion for a reception with drinks and hors d’oeuvres when, at 6:00 p.m., Dr. Bernard Demczuk began the proceedings, with a statue of Alice prominently placed in the back. He welcomed us all, with thanks for coming out on such a frigid windy Washington winter evening, and by way of introduction said a few words about the O Street Museum and its founder, H. H. Leonards. Colonel Matt Churchward, in the full-dress uniform of the Royal Marines—to some degree the counterpart of our Navy Seals—spoke as a representative of the British Ambassador, who regretted not being with us.

Ms. Leonards spoke next about how, while in London for a different nonprofit organization’s board meeting, she and her husband visited the Chelsea Flower Show, saw

the sculptor James Coplestone's Alice figures, met with him, and invited him to bring them to this remarkable private museum in our nation's capital. Your humble reporter was then asked to deliver some unrehearsed remarks on Lewis Carroll's life and works beyond his immortal *Alice* books, and read part of the Christmas Greeting. Lastly, we all welcomed the sculptor himself, James Coplestone, and his wife Karen and children. He spoke about how he and his partner of thirty years in the Robert James

Workshop, Robert Ellis, conceived and executed the project, and then answered questions such as on the differences between the cold cast and hot cast bronzes, his reason for basing their work on the Tenniel illustrations, and the like.

The O Museum is a treasure trove of cultural and historic touchstones from the worlds of art, music,

sports, and film. Designed in 1892 by Edward Clark, the architect of the U.S. Capitol, the Big O is a collection of five interconnected townhouses boasting 112 rooms, 32 bedrooms, 35 bathrooms (matching the White House), 16 kitchens, and more than 80 secret doors. Opening its doors to the public in 1998, O Museum in The Mansion is an independent nonprofit museum which "uses the power of the arts and social justice to educate, inspire, and achieve peace through diversity."



*Alice at the O Street Museum*



One of the jurymen in Chapter XII in *Wonderland* was pictured by Tenniel as a rooster. In *Looking-Glass*, chickens are referred to, but not shown: Alice compares the size of a Gnat to one, and later the Lion called the Unicorn one. None of that explains the presence of chickens in three of the five illustrations to a very abridged retelling of the story published by the Samuel Lowe company of Kenosha, Wisconsin, in the 1940s, from which that illustration was taken.

ANSWER

*Alice in a World of Wonderlands:  
The English-Language  
Editions of the Four Alice  
Books Published Worldwide*  
Jon Lindseth, Arnold Hirshon, eds.

ATBOSH Media, 2023

Deluxe Edition

ISBN: 978-1626132511

Standard Edition

978-1626132528 (I)

978-1626132580 (II)

*Stephanie Lovett*

The two volumes of the hardcover Deluxe Edition are beautifully bound in forest green, uniform in size with the 2015 set concerning editions in other languages (*KL* 96:34), but distinct in color from those three navy-blue volumes. (The Standard Edition paperback is a deep royal blue.) One might argue that they should have been done up in brown leather covers with straps and a big brass clasp, because they are an absolute treasure chest of information, pictures, and stories.

These are volumes that you are going to want to curl up with—maybe with a pillow on your lap, because they’re so hefty. (The Standard Edition is lighter in weight, though, and you can also get either or both volumes on your e-reader.) So, there is no reason whatsoever to miss this opportunity to enjoy a rewarding read, not just to acquire an essential reference work.

Volume One is “Essays and Illustrations,” and Two is “Checklists and Appendices,” and both are full of things you will want to know. The amount and variety of information captured in the essays in the first volume will charm all Carrollians, whether new or of long standing, and will stimulate them to carry on with their own collecting, artistic pursuits, or engagement with the books. They constitute an extremely valuable crash course in the books’ origins and publication history and in decades of adventures in collecting and scholarship.

Anyone with any interest in Carroll will be swept away by Mor-



ton Cohen’s priceless tales of an era of scholarship that will never come again, reaching back to charming meetings in country houses with people whose parents were Carroll’s child-friends, and connections with researchers and writers long gone, all recounted in his personal voice. Cohen’s closing reflections on the respect he gained for Carroll over decades of research into the details of his life and work are a profound valediction.

The essays provide an introduction to the many related topics that expand and contextualize a knowledge of the *Alice* books: who Martin Gardner was, what happened with the Appleton publications, how the “Wasp in a Wig” joined the canon, what the ancillary *Alice* books are, and the like. Someone who already knows about the Wasp, for instance, will still very much enjoy—and learn from—reading Edward Guiliano’s account of and evaluation of this lost chapter.

Other pieces of this mosaic are: Selwyn Goodacre putting the English-language books into a worldwide perspective (a hobbyhorse of mine, especially since 2015); George Cassady focusing on the often vexing publication story of *Through the Looking-Glass* in the U.S. and the UK; Michael Everson appreciating Byron Sewell, the illustrator who has had a more substantial run at Alice than probably any other; and Mark Burstein on one of his métiers, Alice in comics. (Full disclosure: One of those essays is mine, and I am very grateful to have been prompted to think through *Alice under Ground*.) We also have Ed-

ward Wakeling to thank for a dandy survey of inscribed presentation copies of all four *Alice* books (*Wonderland*, *Looking-Glass*, *Nursery “Alice,”* *Under Ground*).

The bulk of this volume, though, belongs to Arnold Hirshon, co-editor of this project and someone who has worked for decades on illustrated editions, giving us two hundred lush pictorial pages on *Alice*’s illustrators, both the publication stories and his description of the development of visual interpretations of Alice. The color reproductions and Hirshon’s commentary are a rare opportunity for those without a large collection to see how Alice has been portrayed over the years and to think about why that is, and what it means—and those who do have more volumes will be sent to their shelves to look afresh.

The final portion of Volume One is, perhaps surprisingly, a collection of essays from a number of collectors about their lives as Carrollians. The stories span decades, and no two are alike. Taking them together with the tales in the first part of the volume, we come away with not only a wealth of information about the original and continuing publication of the *Alice* books, the world of book collecting, Lewis Carroll societies, and the ins and outs of Carrollian scholarship, but also with a tapestry of social history that could not have been captured any other way.

Volume Two is the *raison d’être* of this publication—bibliographical checklists of the *Alice* books published in English. The lists (4,400 different editions!) are by title and country of origin and then chronological, with appendices and indices provided for maximum usefulness. The introduction explains the organizational scheme—as many readers will know, cataloguing a group of books with the same author and title is a daunting proposition—and discusses some of the issues around a survey of this particular type, and the evolving nature of

what constitutes a published book. This is a wealth of data that will surely be mined for a multitude of purposes. Anyone who plans to seriously use these books for scholarly/collecting research would do well to supplement their bound copies with the e-books, as they are completely searchable.

As a whole, although the essays and the data bristle with vibrant energy, there is something of an elegiac feel to this work. Not unlike the White Knight, we feel more than a little wistful reading these dynamic, knowledgeable, yet also highly personal words from Carrollians who have already crossed the brook to a square beyond our reach: Morton Cohen, George Cassady, and Edward Wakeling. In his introduction to the section of essays about people's lives as collectors, Jon Lindseth, whose passion project this is, says "None of us can hold back the years." The five volumes of *Alice in a World of Wonderlands* that he willed into being, though, will outlive us all.

All editions can be found through [atbosh.com/books/alice](http://atbosh.com/books/alice).



*Liisan seikkailut Ihmemaassa (AW)*

Translated by Nana Sironen

Hertta Kustannus, 2023

ISBN 978-9524060004

*Markus Lång*

It might be a bit difficult to estimate which one this new Finnish translation of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* is in sequence since the first one in 1906 (*AWW* v3: 266–76). Roughly, this is the fifth one in this language if we count the different editions of Anni Swan's rendition (1906), revised in her lifetime and later (1952, 1958, 1983), as one, and ignore the infamous Kynäbaari edition, published in 1961 and banned in 1967 (*KL* 104:25).

Judging from the ISBN code, the print edition reviewed here appears to be the first book by the new Finnish publishing company Hertta Kustannus, which concen-

trates on children's and adolescents' literature, as well as on fantasy and science fiction for adults. The title is also available as an audio book and as an e-book. Nana Sironen (born 1979) is best known as the translator of "Erin Hunter"'s popular *Warriors* series of middle-school novels.

The new translation uses, again, the localized and *per se* already familiar name of the heroine, *Liisa*, instead of Alice. The word *Ihme-maa* is now capitalized, making it a toponym (place name) in Finnish. The introductory poem ("All in the Golden Afternoon") is missing.

The greatest difference in comparison to most English and Finnish editions of *Alice*, however, is the absence of illustrations. Neither are the drawings by John Tenniel reproduced nor have any new illustrations been created. (Front and back covers do have colorful images by Mia Minerva, an illustrator and jewelry designer from Helsinki.) This solution has some interesting corollaries as well. Now the reader is exposed exclusively to his or her own imagination, and the pictures do not break up the layout or hamper (or fetter) the flow of the text. As the translation is generally of good quality, it demonstrates the fluency of Carroll's writing, and the reading experience was actually new to me—so far I have only read illustrated editions of *Wonderland* in many languages. While reading, my imagination drew mostly from Tenniel's illustrations, from the Disney film of 1951, and from Jonathan Miller's BBC film.

Nana Sironen's translation appears to be targeted at young readers. There is no scholarly preface or afterword or footnotes in the book, and the translation works on its own. The poems are translated in rhyme and meter, and the Mouse's Tale is typeset emblematically.

Most of the puns in the text have been rendered in a clever way.

Sometimes, of course, there may be only one way to create a fitting translation, and if it has already been used by a previous translator, this poses a conundrum for her later colleagues.

One good example is provided by Alice's questions "Do cats eat bats?" and "Do bats eat cats?" Here the sound and the meaning of the words are used to create a humorous impression. For Finnish readers, this challenge was solved ingeniously by Anni Swan in 1906: "*Syökö kissa yökön? Syökö yökkö kissan?*" (Does the cat eat at night? Does the bat eat the cat?). Here the vernacular word *yökkö* for bat (first in the accusative case) creates a marked assonance with a conjugated form of the verb *syödä* for "to eat."

In Sironen's translation, the resolution is a bit flat: "*Söisikö kissa lepakon? Söisikö lepakko kissan?*" No assonance here. Is it possible to find any clever post-Swan solution at all? I could think of using another vernacular word for bat, *siippa*, and start probing: "*Sieppaako kissa siipan? Sieppaako siippa kissan?*" (Will a cat snatch a bat? Will a bat snatch a cat?) One difficulty ensues from the Finnish grammar: When the bat is the object of the clause, it appears in the accusative, but when it becomes the subject, it reappears in the nominative case, and this disrupts the possibility of a pun that imitates the English one perfectly.

As for the poem parodies in the novel, this translation follows the same course as most of previous ones: Sometimes the translator parodies a Finnish poem that might be familiar to young readers, sometimes she renders Carroll's parody as it is. For instance, "'Tis the Voice of the Lobster" turns into a travesty of a famous art song, "*Kesäpäivä kangasalla*" (aka "*Mä oksalla ylimmällä*"), penned in Swedish by Zacharias Topelius in 1853, translated into Finnish by P. J. Hannikainen, and set to music by Gabriel Linsén in 1864. On the other hand,



“You Are Old, Father William” becomes “*Olet vanha jo, Viljo-pappa*” because Robert Southey’s original poem is unknown here (or is only known through its parodies in several former *Alice* translations).

All in all, this new translation is a good addition to the growing selection of Finnish translations of the *Alice* novels. Although the opening poem is excluded and some of the pun renditions appear a bit bland, the book is a page-turner and can be recommended to all friends of literature.

★  
*Lewis Carroll’s Guide  
for Insomniacs*

Edgar Cuthwellis  
Notting Hill Editions, 2024  
ISBN 978-1912559596

When *Lewis Carroll’s Bedside Book: Entertainment for the Wakeful Hours* came out (J. M. Dent / Houghton Mifflin, 1979), the editor was listed as Edgar Cuthwellis, an anagram of “Charles Lutwidge” that Carroll himself had once thought of as a possible pseudonym. Illustrations were credited to “Phuz,” a play on renowned Dickens illustrator “Phiz.” Many British Carrollians knew the true name of the editor, Gyles Brandreth, a broadcaster, writer, comic, former MP and Lord Commissioner of the Treasury, and an extraordinarily remarkable character (check out his Wiki). He is also the creator of a one-man show about Carroll, deviser of a Wonderland board game, and writer of a musical play about Carroll and his photography. With this retitled revision, he has at least credited himself in the introduction.

The book itself is a collection of Carroll’s writings with a nocturnal theme: Pillow Problems, the Nyc-tograph, acrostics, riddles, tangrams (the only thing in the book not by Carroll), Doublets, poems dealing with ghosts, and so on. The new

edition adds only a mini-bio of Carroll; one of “Phuz,” revealing his identity (David Farris); one of Brandreth; an epigraph by Thomas Dekker (1752–1632); and, sad to say, a very standard—and self-serving—longer bio of Carroll that could be used as a soporific if nothing else in the book worked in that capacity (which is doubly sad, as it was written by an out-there and very funny individual). Contrariwise, the book is handsomely printed, humorously illustrated, and a useful thing to have on your night table.

★  
*Alice in Wonderland:  
A Norton Critical Edition*

Fourth Edition  
W. W. Norton, 2024  
ISBN 978-1324059608

One might find it a bit odd that W. W. Norton publishes both *The Annotated Alice* (Definitive Edition, 2000; 150th Anniversary Deluxe Edition, 2015) and its sibling rival *Alice in Wonderland: A Norton Critical Edition* (first edition, 1971; second, 1992; third, 2013; and now a fourth in 2024), but there is good reason. The renowned Donald J. Gray, a distinguished English professor (now emeritus) at Indiana University, regularly updates, annotates, and edits the latter with impressive insight and talent. (He spoke to us on “Carrollian Studies Today” at our Spring 2002 meeting at Princeton.)

Although the Norton Critical Editions (NCE) are comparatively light on annotations, their strength comes from the substantive “Backgrounds” and “Criticism” essay sections and the “Selected Bibliography,” all included at the back. The main text of *AW: NCE* consists of both *Alice* books with the Tenniel illustrations (later editions with the “Wasp in a Wig” chapter) and an unillustrated *Snark*. The three later iterations repeat certain essays, delete others, and add significant new ones, drawing from recent scholarship. Selections from Carroll’s dia-

ries and letters abound in the fourth edition, and authors of the essays new to it are Jan Susina, Robert Douglas-Fairhurst, Dame Gillian Beer, Christopher Hollingsworth, Anna Kornbluh, and Zoe Jaques and Eugene Giddens. Though the *Annotated* and *NCE* have certain inevitable overlaps, the latter is certainly complementary to the former and delves into different territories; it is highly recommended.

★  
*Alice in Wonderland:  
The Adventure!  
The Characters! The Legacy!*  
a360media, 2024

Cindy Watter

Under the editorial direction of James Heidenry and art direction of Nicole Tagliareni, this colorful magazine is billed as “The Ultimate Fan Guide.” As I am the ultimate Alice fan, I had great hopes for it. It reminded me of the Beatles magazines I used to collect, long ago, during my teenybopper phase.

Disney’s animated Alice dominates the cover, which features an enticing misch-masch of Aliciana, including a photo portrait of Lewis Carroll, a teacup, Johnny Depp’s Mad Hatter, Tenniel illustrations, and the like. The interior contains twenty-seven short chapters, including everything from the genesis of the story to the Delacorte statue in Central Park, with stops at Alice’s legacy, Christ Church, Alice in translation, and even tattoos. Some would call it eclectic; by the time



I finished reading the magazine I called it superficial and disorganized.

We cannot expect a reincarnation of Edward Wakeling to concern himself with ephemera of this type, but there are a lot of people on the a360media masthead, and one of them could have at least called in an English literature major for help. These days, I am told, they will work for practically nothing.

For example, the opening pages—in a book, they would be called endpapers—are a full-color photo of the cards from a Victorian Alice-themed card game. Why not identify them as such? The back pages have the story of the Delacorte sculpture in Central Park, identifying it as one of two Alice sculptures. Why not have a picture of the other one?

The first chapter, “Alice by the Numbers,” reports that 1865 is the year in which Alice is published. The illustration for this factoid is of a modern edition, however, and there is the confusing statement that “Carroll used a pen dipped in ink to handwrite the tome and draw 37 illustrations.” This of course refers to the manuscript of *Under Ground*. (There is a reproduction of one of Carroll’s illustrations for the manuscript later, on page 30, but it is not identified as his work.)

John Tenniel has a chapter, and while I salute giving him credit as a brilliant illustrator who was part of the most felicitous artistic/literary team of his era, there is a glaring error. When I read “The first illustration in *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* shows the heroine peering into the rabbit hole, her expression a perfect blend of apprehension and fascination” (page 27), I thought, “Dang, wasn’t the rabbit hole one scene Tenniel *didn’t* illustrate?” I have no idea to which artist the writer was referring, but it wasn’t Tenniel.

There are all sorts of silly errors of this type, but the funniest is when the inevitable quotations from the

Tim Burton movie appear—and they are attributed to the wrong characters.

“Jabberwocky” is cited as an inspiration to, among others, Edward Lear, especially his poem “The Owl and the Pussy-cat.” The only problem here is that “Jabberwocky” was not published until 1871, and Lear’s poem appeared in 1870.

One chapter is devoted to the Salvador Dalí illustrations (good!), and counterculture and pop culture get plenty of ink. A teenage reader might find that entertaining, if only to try to find out why his grandparents are so weird.

To conclude, a serious Carrollian will not enjoy this publication unless s/he enjoys picking out errors (you know who you are). It’s too bad there are so many of those, as the magazine is 97 ad-free pages (except for one, clearly aimed at female teens, on the back cover), and could have been so much better than it is. There is a chance that a youthful reader might pick it up and be intrigued enough to step into Wonderland and through the Looking-Glass. One can only hope.

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★  
*Alice’s Adventures on the  
London Underground*

Peter Lawrence

Illustrated by Andrew Davidson

Signal Books, 2023

ISBN 978-1838463083

*Rose Owens*

It’s a joy to see a modern interpretation of the *Alice* stories, one that a child in the 2020s may gravitate more directly to. This book is firmly ensconced in the London Underground, with all the trappings of a railway station (maps, cafés, transit cards, mad-dash running to your connecting train) included.

Unfortunately, reading this is a bit like riding in a crowded, delayed train that you have finally boarded. For a book that is less than 100 pages, it feels overstuffed. Carroll was a master at building a joke, letting it land, and then allowing space



*Davidson*

to breathe. But similar to being jostled by a bunch of strangers in a small space, the reader is hit by a machine-gun volley of puns, with no time to take a seat and rest. In addition, whether it’s formatting or intentional, most paragraphs often contain multiple characters talking, and it is easy to lose track of who is speaking.

The actual plot—our protagonist (who is “Alice” but not Alice) must get the marooned inhabitants of Wonderland back home—has great potential, but Lawrence himself seems to get lost repeatedly. Characters are brought up, forgotten, and then magically reappear. A cell phone is called, the call is not picked up, and yet we can hear everything on the phone line. The last skirmish with the Red Queen is over before it has even begun, which takes some of the threat out of the whole thing.

The selling point of this book is the gorgeous illustrations: woodcuts by Andrew Davidson. (Somewhat ironically, the author of the book is an engraver himself.) They pay homage to the work of Sir John Tenniel, but also bring to mind the masterful art of Mary Azarian, with whispers of Chris Van Allsburg. In fact, I believe the *Alice’s Underground Portfolio*, a collection of twelve of

the engravings that is advertised at the end of the book, would be a more captivating representation of the concept.

All told, this adventure on the Underground could have led you to a fantastic journey, but it was, per our heroine's musings at the beginning of the book, "rather disappointing. . . . It looks like it might not be an exciting day-trip after all."



*Alice's Adventures in Wonderland:  
The Surreal Treasury Edition*

Kent David Kelly  
Wonderland Imprints, 2023  
ISBN 979-8388826787 pb  
979-8388119032 hc

*Adriana Peliano*

Welcome to a Wonderland created by Colorado artist Kent David Kelly, incorporating AI technology in a great maze. I became enchanted by the dream mood combined with the coherence of style Kelly accomplished in this journey. There is a game between mists of reds and blues, an atmosphere of marvel and fantasy, arcane art history, and a palette of nightmarish encounters. Obscure and metamorphic characters, clocks, and mushrooms are displaced in surreal ways—in contrast to the plausible Wonderland map presented at the beginning of the book—by a dark and mysterious unconscious whose enigmas challenge the impossible. As a practitioner of AI art, I also can bear witness to certain difficulties with keeping consistency in characters' features along the adventure, the challenge of incorporating strangeness and surprises that do not fit in with our previous expectations and screenplays, anatomical imperfections, and the refusal of AI to fulfill complex prompts and even to depict animals such as dodos!

Kelly is an author, poet, graphic designer, game creator, art director, and curator with more than a hundred (largely self-) published credits to his name. All these aspects coexist

somehow when illustrating a book as challenging as *Alice*. I asked him about that multiplicity in action. As a game creator, he "makes the book an exploration, so that the reader can adventure alongside Alice." As an art director, he "tries to create images that evoke nineteenth-century fantasy." As a curator, "my job is to create as many different unusual images without losing a shared style," and, of course, to balance all these aspects. And as a writer, he collected fragments of Carroll's diaries and other historical documents to introduce this edition, followed by a collection of "secrets," incorporating biographical and Victorian data, not to mention, it must be said, his own imagination.

Kelly incorporated different AI-generative tools in his journey. (He believes the current criticisms of the validity of AI echo the arguments between photography and painting that took place in the nineteenth century.) Here he used Midjourney, Affinity, Adobe Firefly, and PowerPoint AIs, with an occasional use of Microsoft Paint. Until now, most AI artists worked basically with "prompts," verbal commands including descriptions, references to styles, parameters, and even associated other images. One can generate an AI image in seconds, but illustrating a full book with AI is not easy; it involves strategies, research, technical competence, practice, artistic sensibility, and a lot of persistence. More than 5,000 images were generated to select and clean up in Photoshop for the 145 present in the book. He avoided including artist names as references in his prompts, preferring instead to focus on aesthetic styles. Kelly integrated pre-Raphaelism, symbolism, and surrealism, with some impressionism or photorealism added, depending on the subject. "Alice was mostly pre-Raphaelite, animals were

photorealist, and complex scenes were symbolist for the most part."

To Kelly, the biggest challenge in this process is in fact making characters look consistent from scene to scene, which, in the current stage of AI technology, is often impossible. But that can be incorporated as a style, he believes, *Alice* being a dream book in which she herself is constantly changing. Hybridism, metamorphoses, an oneiric atmosphere, weirdness and estrangement, vertigo, nonlinear time and space—all of these abound in her adventures and are not easily depicted. I include this book among new explorations of *Wonderland* that open unusual doors in collective dreams, traveling again in this never-ending story much like a Möbius strip (see *Gallery for a sample illustration*).



*Алиса в Стране Чудес  
и Зазеркалье  
в Скульптурах и Рисунках  
(AW/LG in Sculptures  
and Drawings)*

Nikolai Varagin  
Red Steamship, 2015  
ISBN: 978-5914870642

*Andrew Ogus*

Which came first, this book's captivating sculptures or its exuberant paintings? The resulting juxtapositions may suggest *Yellow Submarine*, but they are completely modern.

A sturdy, fearless Alice, both carved and painted, wears a Union Jack (a recurring theme) and a pith helmet as she explores Wonderland. Through the looking-glass, her costume is a take on the now almost traditional blue dress and its original pinafore and long striped socks. Have we ever seen the Mouse's medieval heroes? They are here. When Alice kicks Bill, we see her foot inside the house and the frightened creatures outside on a single spread—and the Lizard has landed on the moon on the next page. Hapless croquet players are nudged toward their doom by the Queen's army. The Lobster Quadrille is a



joyous delight for the dancers and for their viewers. A three-dimensional Hatter faces a painted court; in *Looking-Glass* the Lion and Unicorn fight in a painted boxing ring. The imminently suppressed three guinea-pigs huddle under what appears to be a heavy money bag, surrounded by more sinister soldiers. A tender spot illustration depicts the White King and Queen and baby Lily similarly surrounded. A war elephant is among the King's minions.

Despite all these pleasures, this is a book for adults, full of sardonic touches. The Talking Flowers are bitter prostitutes; the protective tree reads as their pimp. Following the Russian tradition of black rather than red chess pieces has resulted in a few distasteful (racially stereotyped) though lively images. But these caveats are well outweighed by the overall humor and the subtle juxtapositions of the glorious flat paintings and the carved figures, always in harmony when they appear together, but the latter are never missed when absent.

An understanding of Russian would help Western readers to know what has been gained in translation but lost in ignorance of the language. The Tum-Tum tree's sign is clear enough (the sculpture of the poor Jabberwock and his killer is one of the best in the book), and one can decipher the names on the British authors' busts surrounding Humpty-Dumpty, but there seem to be puns made visible that many Western readers can't appreciate. Why does Dinah face a fierce insect rather than a bat? Does who eats whom rhyme in Russian? But we may all happily rejoice in a winged hippopotamus rather than a Rocking-Horse Fly.

The images focus on greatest hits, accompanied by short phrases. Quotations, remarks, and labels in hand-drawn letters fall or float about the two- and three-dimensional figures. The majority of pages have white backgrounds, making

color full-page bleeds doubly effective. In a fascinating combination of purely painted images, Hatta's prison with its barred window is a silhouette of the monstrous crow with a river running along the bottom of the page. The more one looks, the more one sees, and the harder it becomes to choose the carving to acquire if we only could. At least we have this amazing book. (see *Gallery for a sample illustration*).



*Lo specchio attraversò Alice*  
(*The Looking-Glass Through Alice*)

Reg Mastice

Moscabianca, 2023

ISBN: 978-8831982887

Ilaria Cremaschini

*Lo specchio attraversò Alice* is a mysterious book written by Luigi De Carolis and issued in the spring of 1914 by Carcosse Publishing, with contributions from the Croatian illustrator Marcel Ragusatra. This work risked being lost in time, but a few scattered copies have survived the strange misadventures of its publishing history.

We are lucky, in Italy, to have one of the few translated copies (published in 1938 by Tipografie Spadazzi of Bologna), preserved in the Pallacorti library in Bologna.



Mastice

Many mysteries and random, morbidly unusual events lie behind this volume. The surreal murder case involving Alice Deaconess is narrated among its pages: She is found murdered in her room and a part of her body ends up mysteriously behind the mirror, whereupon two Scotland Yard detectives, Tweedledee and Tweedledum, are called upon to solve this thorny case.

A huge number of intellectuals over the years have studied the case and tried to identify who was hiding behind the name of Luigi De Carolis. Conan Doyle himself suggested that it was the name of a medium who had summoned the spirits of Edgar Allan Poe and Lewis Carroll. The result was an *ante litteram* literary blending and an ectoplasmic collaboration that gave birth to this narrative work with high no-sense tones and a strong hallucinatory component.

If you think that this story is unbelievable and you are surprised that this mysterious volume has not already landed on your radar, don't worry, what I have just told you is the fruit of the imagination and graphic mastery of Reg Mastice, who, in creating this *pseudobiblion*, has managed to give it a texture so real that I confess while I was reading it, I went to check if it really was all fiction. I even Googled; sometimes the outcome of these searches turned out so murky that I thought it was all real and I was already trying to figure out how to view the Italian copy.

If the illusory magic created by the author was not enough, I must applaud the skillful drafting of the manuscript "The Looking-Glass Through Alice," which plays with the characters of the Carroll novel recalled by the title: I was surprised to meet through the pages "the wasp in a wig" and "the Walrus Pimander." I confess that it was quite fun trying to catch every little reference, not only in the text but also in the complex illustrations.

Reg created a surreal novel, illustrated with a collage technique of blending illustrations from the chiaroscuro of etchings. This, however, is only the tip of the iceberg—its genius in fact lies in Reg’s deep take on literary and cultural history; he manages to manifest this nonexistent book by creating an editorial history for it, producing essays, newspaper articles, and even advertisements distributed over time to the present day. It’s like a complex system of Chinese boxes, formed by labyrinths where everyone is likely to get lost even though the clues are in full view.

Although the novel is in Italian, the graphic content also allows those who do not know the language to appreciate this splendid work.



*Алиса в Стране Чудес* (AW)

Illustrated by Pavel Pepperstein

V-A-C Press, 2020

ISBN 978-5907183070

*Adriana Peliano*

There is a special spark in the encounter of *Alice* and Pavel Pepperstein’s universe of wordplay and fantasy. His obsession with the *Alice* books began in childhood, and he made his first illustrations for them at the age of thirteen. He says he has reread *Alice* so many times that he has practically memorized it. A storyteller as well as an artist, Pepperstein creates works inhabited by many mysterious creatures in fantastic worlds, revealing that behind ordinary things there is always the unknown, the miraculous, and the magical.

Pepperstein is known as a central and idiosyncratic figure in Russia’s contemporary art scene. One of the founders of the Инспекция Медицинская Герменевтика (“Inspection Medical Hermeneutics”) group in 1987, he is an artist, a writer, a rapper, a freethinker, a filmmaker, and a poet. His works merge fantastical scenes and landscapes with a multitude of cultural and political symbols. Pepperstein’s creations

are deeply connected with history and literature, replete with fantasy themes and fairytale characters entwined with dark historical associations, mixing philosophical subjects with a sense of irony and the visual language of children’s books.

In Pepperstein’s graphic works, mysterious hybrid worlds are revealed to the viewer. Motifs from ancient mythology encounter avant-garde forms in a style reminding one of El Lissitzky or Kasimir Malevich. His playful gestures break through common sense, mixing Russian traditional icons, avant-garde Russian art, and images from Western pop culture. He promotes encounters between fairytales, philosophy, psychedelia, and science fiction. A plethora of cultural elements occupy a rich field of assembled references, creating a new and recycled reality, questioning the chaos of the world we live in.

This amazing edition is part of a fairytale series from V-A-C Press, designed not by professional illustrators but by important contemporary artists. In the same collection are Oscar Wilde’s “The Remarkable Rocket” and Hans Christian Andersen’s “Thumbelina.”

This special book must have eaten a slice of cake or a piece of mushroom: it stands 12 × 15 inches (30 × 38 cm), with overlapping covers in different kinds of paper. Here Alice journeys into a land of mystery and geometry, like the encounter of dreams and mathematics that fermented Carroll’s imagination, or the conceptual geometry in the challenging and multifaceted works of avant-garde Russian constructivist abstract art and design. When questioned about mathematic presence in his work, Pepperstein quotes Plato: “I have discovered the beauty that is contained in geometric shapes. This beauty exists in itself and it does not depend on the tickling pleasure that other forms of beauty are associated with.”

This book poses an inquiry about the liminal space between reality

and consciousness, opening philosophical conversations among multiple historical and cultural theoretical references and contexts. In both color and black-and-white, the provocative, curious, and unusual drawings dance in graphic compositions, phantomizing an elaborate puzzle. “What if everything around you becomes like a dream? What if we climb into our imagination and observe what is happening there? What if the rules by which everything exists suddenly disappear?” asks Alice through Pepperstein (*see Gallery and inside back cover for sample illustrations*).



AAIW/TTLG

Illustrated by Martina Peluso

Miles Kelly

AW: Illustrated Classic

Edition (2017)

ISBN 978-1786171863

AW/LG: Mini-Classic

Edition (2017)

ISBN 978-1782098430

AW: Children’s Classic

Edition (2020)

ISBN 978-1789891249

AW/LG: Mini-Classic

in Russian (2021)

ISBN 978-5041052316

*Andrew Ogus*

UK Publisher Miles Kelly has released several editions of the *Alice* books with illustrations by Martina Peluso. The large, lavish Illustrated Classic is a generous 8½ × 11-inch trim printed on thick bright paper, compared to the Mini-Classic at 6¼ × 8¼, containing both books and the same pictures, whose softer paper makes the rich color more subtle but less sumptuous. It appears that the pictures were simply reduced in size to fit the smaller trim, making for a few unfortunate spreads. The front covers of both editions prominently display the name of the publisher, to the exclusion or harsh reduction of the illustrator’s, for reasons best left unasked.

The larger cover's oversize, heavily embossed, silhouetted, sardonic heroine does not make for a promising start. Nor does the mixture of oddly sized images from both books on the smaller volume. Peluso's rigid figures first suggest an intention to emulate outsider art. That thought is quickly belied by occasional subtle shadows and an overall sophistication. Her Alice is older than the original (late teens?), skeptical and impassive, with barely moving eyes and a tiny mouth that can be expressive.

Peluso has included some subtle detail. The Rabbit Hole is surprisingly tidy, and chock-full. The Caterpillar's arms lie on the segments of his body at various angles, giving the figure shape and weight. The Duchess's baby, flying toward the viewer, is clad in an adorable onesie and cap. The charming puppy is delighted to have a playmate. A pair of glasses on the shaggy cliff behind the Mock Turtle is a nice touch; if only there were more of them. Alice's enormous hand lifts Bill from the floor by his tail. Her skirt, its lacy border decorated with a heart motif in *Wonderland*, has a pattern of squares and a border of crowns in *Looking-Glass*. Humpty-Dumpty puzzles over the bewildering math problem. A large crowd watches the battle of the Lion and the Unicorn—but the White King has acquired a new crown and a beard since his first ambiguous appearance in *Looking-Glass House*. Or is that a bishop, and the bareheaded figure to the left the puzzling, bare-headed King?

Artistic distortion that shouldn't work but does is often one of the pleasures of handmade art. That is not always the case here. Awkward proportions and insipid expressions, with some faces virtually interchangeable, render the characters inarticulate. The relationship of the oddly cheerful Cook's arms to the soup pot is impossible. The Mock Turtle's forelegs emerge from his chest rather than from between his

shells. The White Knight's horse is well turned out with anti-shark protection, and the cake dish is in a saddle bag, but its hind legs aren't moving. It's unusual to see the Snail, the Whiting, and the Porpoise represented, but stiff red lobsters and stiff real turtles are the only dancers. A more orange red is admittedly an appropriate color for the curiously gigantic baked lobster accompanying Alice's recitation. Did a careless reading or a poor choice of moment put Pat, observed by the White Rabbit, onto an unbroken cucumber frame, or turn the March Hare into one of the jurors?

The frontispiece of the Illustrated Classic (not present in the Mini-Classic, which has only a small spot of a running Alice facing the title page) is a reversed image of the Caterpillar illustration. Perhaps a nod to *Looking-Glass*? Or a belated cost-saving measure? In both, the text (slightly too big in the larger edition) occasionally runs around enormous "spot" illustrations. In both, a few pictures are split across spreads with unhappy results. A wavy blue border (sadly faded in the smaller edition) with diamonds, clubs, spades, and hearts in its corners, which are replaced by chess pieces in *Looking-Glass*, almost cramps every text page. These well-intentioned, uneven versions are not without their moments, but they fill one's head with some regrettable ideas. (See *Gallery for a sample illustration*).

★  
이상한 나라의 앨리스 (AW)  
거울 나라의 앨리스 (LG)

Illustrator: Minji Kim

Indigo, 2022

ISBN: 978-8992632126 (AW)

ISBN: 978-8992632980 (LG)

ISBN: 978-8992632799

(AW in English)

Yvonne Kacy

These two books, originally published in Korea in 2008 and 2015 respectively, are small hard-covers (5 × 6¼ × ¾ in.; 13 × 16 × 2 cm.), richly illustrated, with lovely

washes of watercolor. The beautifully dreamy illustrations have many unusual details, with elements from science fiction and fantasy, like the rabbit-hole with its porthole to the night sky of the galaxy. The Pool of Tears has a window to another dimension, a city with a huge flying Zeppelin-whale that somewhat resembles Darth Vader's Imperial Star Destroyer. "I always imagine the cosmos and space, so I draw things flying in the sky, planets, and starships," Minji wrote to me in an e-conversation.

The unusual details continue with the Caterpillar sitting in his mushroom townhouse, with a steam-powered snail-shell caravan RV behind him. A very plump Gryphon has tiny wings that could never lift his huge bulk off the ground, while the lamenting Mock Turtle has no bovine traits in him at all. "I drew Alice as a dark-haired girl like the real Alice Liddell. I didn't want her to look like a pretty blonde girl. And my daughter influenced me. When I was working on *Through the Looking-Glass*, my daughter was seven years old with short hair. Interestingly, she looked exactly like Alice in my first book." The locales are unusual too: Carrots grow in glass containers outside Rabbit's house, while the court scene shows Alice loafing on a comfy sofa instead of sitting on a hard court bench.

In *Looking-Glass*, the characters alternate from looking like chess pieces to turning into giant cat figures, like the huge Red Queen, whose robe opens to reveal a door, with a kitten sitting inside. *Looking-Glass* land has many neon signs, like bustling downtown Seoul, and the wonderfully inventive banquet scene portrays Alice's palace turned into a chessboard house, and the rest of the scenery disappearing inside the feline Red Queen's mantle, which is open like a welcoming circus tent.

This gently surrealistic vision is a delight from cover to cover, a very welcome addition to the *Alice* pantheon (and *Wonderland* is now available in English).



*Alice au pays de merveilles (AW)*

Illustrated by René Bour  
Presses universitaires de Liège, 2023  
ISBN: 978-2875623676

*Yvonne Kacy*

This French language edition, annotated by Justine Houyaux, presents the work of René Bour (1908–1934), who both illustrated and translated this book before dying of smallpox at the age of 25 in a military hospital. His *Alice* was published posthumously in 1937 by DDB (Desclée de Brouwer) in Paris in an edition of 25, then reprinted in 1951 by Guilde du Livre, Lausanne. This new reissue is a very welcome addition to the canon.

In addition to the story, this edition contains three scholarly sections. The first part discusses the translations of *Alice* from 1869 to the interwar period, and the influence of the surrealists; the second part deals with Bour's life; and the third part scrutinizes his translation choices, the examination of which is continued through the text in the helpful annotations.

The section about Bour himself was particularly interesting. Houyaux has done an excellent job researching Bour's short life, digging through very meager archives: "Bour was a bit of a wunderkind who was interested in everything. Out of curiosity, he even built a guillotine once, which he kept by his bed."

Bour's "traductillustration"—translation and illustration by the same person is rare—offers us a fascinating combination of image and text, something akin to Richard Wagner's *Gesamtkunstwerk* theory.

The book contains more than fifty illustrations, minimalist contour drawings that mostly use the one-line technique, in which a single, unbroken line is used to develop the image. Pablo Picasso, Henri Matisse, Alexander Calder, and James Thurber used this style to great acclaim, as did the *Alice*



*Bour*

illustrators Walter Anderson and Franciszka Themerson (p. 38).

Although Bour's drawings are not all completely unbroken lines, the effect of elegant simplicity is there: Imagine these drawings as being constructed from a string. The more string you use, the more complex the picture. When you pull both ends of the string in different directions, the picture will disappear, like a dream being blown away.

Alice is portrayed with long hair; her dress is transparent, so we can see her limbs and torso. The perspective of her large legs and feet as she sits crying in the Hall of Doors is very effective. The White Rabbit ordering Alice to get his gloves is rather menacing, while the picture of the gardener throwing pebbles at Alice is a marvel of dynamism, showing wonderful flowing movement as he bends down. There is sly humor in the Duchess falling off her stool, the grimace of the Hatter not enjoying his English tea at all, and

the Queen lifting up her skirts to kick awake the sleeping Gryphon.

The group scenes are wonderfully complex, with the animals of the Caucus Race arranged in a jumbled huddle, a brilliant procession accompanying the King and Queen in the garden, and the elaborate court scenes seen from different angles.

As Houyaux informs us, Bour's illustrations were conceived for an audience of adults, not children, and they offer a most unusual and refreshing vision. Together with Bour's witty and imaginative translation, this book is an absolute delight for people who enjoy idiosyncratic artistic interpretations and/or the French language.

[Houyaux's presentation to us on the subject is discussed on p. 13.]



*AI°CE*

Adriana Peliano  
Sociedade Lewis Carroll  
do Brasil, 2024

Adriana Peliano's exhilarating *AI°CE: Reimagining the Alice Books* is a delightful yet haunting romp through *Wonderland*. Quotations from the work occasionally enhance the experience, but the sixty two-page spreads of images are the real story. She is a truly brilliant AI artist who has spent many hours on each one. The journey can be at times light and lovely or dark and disturbing, but always symbolic and surreal. No one who is reading these words is likely to be able to experience *Alice* for the first time, but wandering through this book's pages is probably as close as one can come. Highly recommended. You can get a signed, limited edition hard-cover (\$35) by emailing her at [alice.maravilha@gmail.com](mailto:alice.maravilha@gmail.com), or Amazon sells a Kindle version. You can also see an animation and few pages at [alicedelia.com.br](http://alicedelia.com.br) (also see *Gallery for a sample illustration*).



# Алиса в Зазеркалье (LG)

Illustrated by Maxim Mitrofanov

3-D structures by Oksana Ivanova

AST, 2023

ISBN 978-5171229870

Adriana Peliano

Mitrofanov first illustrated *Wonderland* and *Looking-Glass* for Rosmen in 2010. Both books contained the full text and gorgeous, detailed colored illustrations on each page (his *LG* was reviewed in *KL* 85:51). Now, over a decade later, Mitrofanov revisits the *Alice* books, this time in abridged retellings with sumptuous 3D pop-ups.

“I wanted to go beyond a mere book, so that it’s not just a book: it becomes a Theater, a Stage, a World of Magic & Miracles!” Mitrofanov remarks in an Instagram interview with @SemperLux, which is also quoted elsewhere in this review. I am enchanted by this rare jewel, a companion to his 2022 *Алиса в стране чудес* (*Wonderland*) with the same art crew (ISBN 978-5171105334).

Suddenly, memories of other readings and arcane experiences knocked on my door. When I was five, I got a “magical carousel” edition of *Hansel and Gretel* by the Brothers Grimm—I have never found it again—and from that inspiration, I created sock puppets and built a small house made of sweets and cookies. I wrote and performed a postmodern play reinterpreting the subject at school when I was just twelve. Along the way, I intensely experienced the effervescent idea that books, their inner lands and inhabitants, hold mysteries and surprises that can reach into our everyday world.

The Italian writer Giorgio Man- ganelli said in his brilliant “parallel reading” of the *Adventures of Pinocchio*: “A book cannot be read;

we dive into it. It is, at all times, around us.” And if opening the cover of a book is really like opening a door that never closes again, I revisit in *Looking-Glass* a story that I have delved into, illustrated, and crossed into many times. I meet again with its characters, who rise from the horizontality off of the page and invite me to go through the liminal space where they take on a life of their own.

Eliza, the heroine of the story “The Wild Swans” by Hans Christian Andersen, had a magical picture book, in which everything was alive. The birds sang, and people came out of the book and spoke to the girl and her brothers, but when the pages were turned, they returned to their places, so that everything was in order. In speaking of this tale, philosopher Walter Benjamin discusses whether it is the characters who jump out of the book or the children who immerse themselves in it.

With this magic theater, I would answer that both can happen in imaginary realms. On the one hand, the characters literally jump off the page, as if they wanted to create a life of their own, reminding me of the classics of Brazilian children’s literature by Monteiro Lobato. In Lobato’s works, the characters from fairy tales, stories, and classics like *Alice* escape from their books to live new adventures on the Yellow Woodpecker Ranch, a magical fictional land in the interior of Brazil. I wonder if one of Lobato’s inspirations for the characters’ escape was a book with a pop-up page illustrated by Ada Bowley (*Alice in Wonderland with “Come to Life” Panorama*, Raphael Tuck & Sons, 1921), whose illustrations are also in the first Brazilian *Alices*, adapted and published by Lobato in 1931.

On the other hand, in this case, opening the book is not just going through a door but also, literally, going through the looking-glass: its brilliant cover, which incorporates a reflective silver surface, is full of

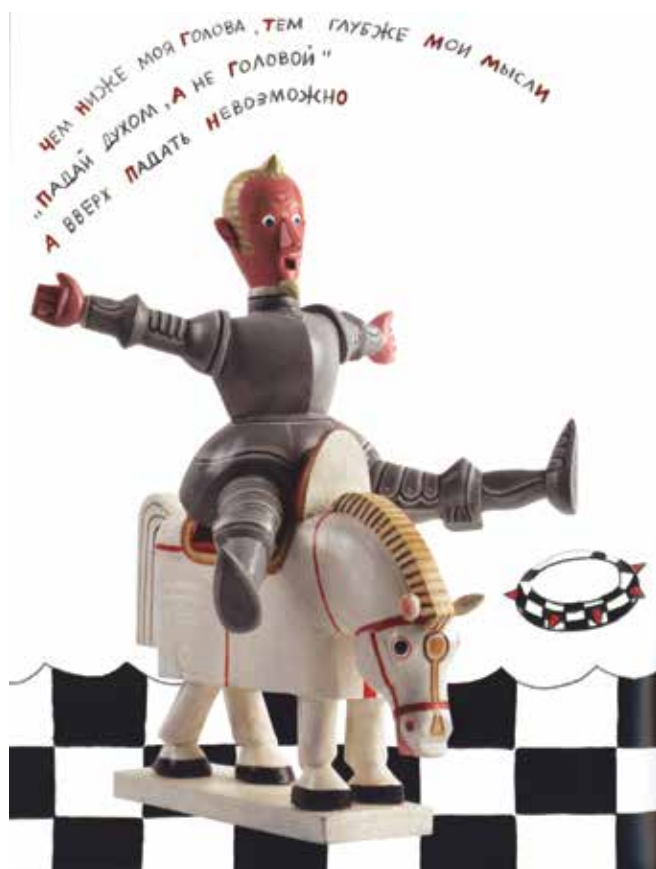
enchantment and ingenuity. One enters the book as if going into a Sheep Shop cabinet of curiosities, unveiling its shelves, which are full of challenges and interactive enigmas, but which become empty when we look at them. According to Mitrofanov: “We used cutouts, pop-ups, moving parts, paper windows, & flaps, & also different materials: mirror-foil, varnish, thread, etc.” Here your eyes play hide-and-seek, your imagination plays once-upon-a-time and crosses unexpected portals. He says, “One element follows another in a specific page layout, creating rhythm & mood. Visually, there must be harmony & symmetry.” At the same time, we also become Alice, interacting with the pieces of the game, talking to them and bringing to life the challenges that Carroll’s text presents and that Mitrofanov and Ivanova invite us to play with, as Victorians did with their paper theaters.

Apart from the paper architecture, holes found in the pages invite us to a multidimensional experience and to an awareness of the magic that happens while turning the pages. The book whispers for us to dance with it. Mitrofanov’s illustrations are vibrant, dynamic, and very alive. We can feel the rabbit running through the book, inviting us to follow him; the pool of tears overflows its pages; we are placed at angles that challenge our balance and gravity so that we participate in Alice’s subtly terrifying transformations, falling through the earth, and so on. They make us feel as if we were inside the scenes.

One can also imagine the characters crossing the little squares to begin new stories. Curious details and unsuspected references can be found in all four of his *Alices*; they are magical cabinets of wonders. (See *Gallery for a sample illustration*.)



# Gallery



Vatagin



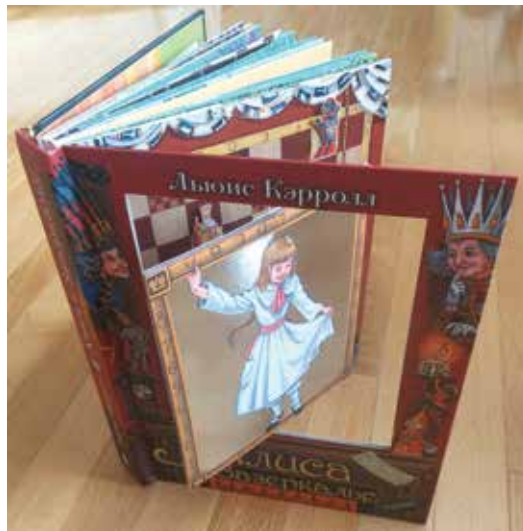
Peluso



Pepperstein



*Peliano*



*Mitrofanov*



*Kelly*



*Kim*

## ART & ILLUSTRATION

David Esslemont's fine-press *Jabberwocky* came out in an edition of forty boxed copies in 2020. The art is mostly color "reduction linocuts," that is, images printed from the same block cut several times. The calligraphic text was drawn with a broad-nibbed pen on linoleum blocks that, when printed, render the letters in reverse, just as Alice found them. The images are stunning, and the box contains a mirrored sheet so one can read the text. Sort of.

James McQueen's 72 × 48-inch mixed-media-and-oil-on-canvas painting *My Name Is Not Alice and We Are Not in \*Wonderland* is for sale for \$43,000 at Castle Contemporary in SoHo. The asterisk replaces a certain four-letter expletive in its present-participial form.



## ARTICLES & ACADEMIA

Laura Helen Marks's *Alice in Pornoland: Hardcore Encounters with the Victorian Gothic* (University of Illinois Press, 2018) contains the chapter "I'm Grown Up Now: Female Sexual Authorship and Coming of Age in Pornographic Adaptations of Lewis Carroll's *Alice* Books." 'Nuff said.

Jan Dirk Blom's "Charles Dodgson and Alice in Wonderland Syndrome" appeared in the journal *The Lancet: Neurology* 20 # 11 (November, 2021).

James Joyce's Carrollian references are mentioned and discussed by Roy Benjamin in his study *Beating the Bounds: Excess and Restraint in Joyce's Later Works* (University Press of Florida, 2023). There seem to be no restraints in this discourse.

Anna Watz edited *A History of the Surrealist Novel* (Cambridge University Press, 2023), and refer-



ences to Lewis Carroll (as one might expect) can be found in the essays "Pataphysics" by Donna Roberts, "Animals and Ecology in the Surrealist Novel" by Kristoffer Noheden, and "Feminist-Surrealism in the Contemporary Novel" by Catriona McAra.

The essay collection *Plants in Children's and Young Adult Literature*, edited by Melanie Duckworth (!) and Lykke Guanio-Uluru (Routledge, 2023), has a whole chapter on the *Alice* books, "Come into the Garden, Alice: Rude Flowers, Dream-Rushes, Aphasic Woods, and Other Plants in Lewis Carroll's Nonsense Worlds."

The essay collection *Beastly Modernisms: The Figure of the Animal in Modernist Literature and Culture*, edited by Saskia McCracken and Alex Goody (Edinburgh University Press, 2023), includes the chapter "The Taxidermic Imaginary in Modernist Literature," in which Paul Fagan uses flamingo croquet mallets and hedgehog croquet balls as an example of "tangled hierarchy of consciousness" and "anthropomorphic taxidermy." At that time, animal corpses (or parts of them) were turned into functional and decorative objects, like lamps, umbrella stands, and inkwells. (One might not wish to ponder this before breakfast.)

"Mad Hatter Tea Party," a feature in the Spring 2024 issue of *Taste* magazine (from BC Liquor in Canada), contains three rather complicated recipes for mixed drinks, "Tweedle Dee-Dum," "Mad as a Hatter," and "White Rabbit." Bottoms up!

*Dickens Studies Annual* vol. 55, no. 1 (2024) contains both Ryan M. Armstrong's "The Parallel Worlds of the Book of Job and *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*" (KL 110:11) and an interview with Jim Kincaid by Edward Guiliano (KL 111:2).



## AUCTIONS

Christie's online auction 22651, which closed on February 2, offered six porcelain menu cards, each hand-painted in ink and watercolor with a character from *Wonderland* or *Looking-Glass*. The provenance is John Tenniel's family, and although they are unsigned, they are presumed to be by him. Estimated at \$10,000 to \$15,000, they did not realize the minimum bid so were not sold.



## BOOKS

For the seven-to-eleven-year-old set, there's *Alice Through the Smartphone: How Safe Is the Internet Wonderland?* by Russell Jeanes,





illustrated by Lia Visirin (Naturenet Books, 2024), “a funny, modern day reimagining of Lewis Carroll’s ‘Alice’ adventures set in a confusing land, full of time-wasting gadgets, which is ruled by a game-playing Queen”; *Children’s Classics: Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland (Easy Classics)*, retold by Gemma Barder and illustrated by Grace Westwood (Sweet Cherry Publishing, 2024); and two *Jabberwockys*: one nicely done in paper cuts by Delaney Holliman (self-published, 2023) and one illustrated by Carolyn Watson Dubisch (Abigail Books, 2023) in their “Scary Stories for Kids” series (the book sports an epigraph by Nietzsche, which one doesn’t often find in kiddie lit).

In the YA category, in Ellis Nelson’s “visionary fiction” *Down the Treacle Well* (Tuxtails, 2023), “two young brothers are whisked back to Victorian England and join C. L. Dodgson in a hunt for the missing Alice, who has vanished into Wonderland”; *Alice and the Gramophone Discovery* (GWiz, 2023), written by Joe Cheal and illustrated by Rob Banbury, “takes Alice’s granddaughter back into Wonderland, and includes an interactive component”; and *Off with Their Heads* (Disney Hyperion, 2024) by Zoe Hana Mikuta is described as a “Korean-inspired *Alice in Wonderland* retelling about two very wicked girls, forever bonded by blood and betrayal.”

Stefano Bessoni’s edgy portraits of Wonderland characters were first seen in *Alice Sotto Terra (Alice under Ground)* in 2012, published by Logos in Italian, Spanish, and English editions. The twenty drawings were accompanied by descriptions of the characters in a bestiary of sorts. The book was glowingly reviewed in these pages (*KL* 91:39), and the article ended with “This is just a first foray into the world of Carroll,

said the author, and he does not exclude expanding his work in the future with other settings and more characters”—a fine prediction, as it turns out. In 2015, Logos published a bilingual edition (Italian and English) with seven new characters in addition to the old ones. And in 2021, a “White Rabbit Edition” appeared, again in a bilingual format, with five new drawings (including one of Lewis Carroll) and all of the prior ones, along with several essays in the back.



#### COMICS & GRAPHIC NOVELS

The comic anthology *Fractured Fables* (Shadowline/Image Comics, 2012) opens with a four-page story “The Silly Statue (Alice in Wonderland),” written by Dara Naraghi and drawn by Grant Bond.

*Out of the Past* (Marvel, 2015) is an official canon graphic novel tie-in to ABC’s *Once Upon a Time*. The fourth and last story, “Tea Party in March,” features a portal-jumping Hatter bopping about Wonderland.



#### EVENTS, EXHIBITS & PLACES

The Yokohama Doll Museum staged a lovely exhibition called *Alice×Dolls* from October 28, 2023, to January 28, 2024, featuring the works of sixteen doll artists. A catalogue is available.

On April 13, a “Mad Hatter’s Tea Party” followed an Alice-themed walking tour of the Old City Cemetery in Sacramento, CA.

The Rabbit Hole is a brand-new, decade-in-the-making museum of children’s literature in North Kansas City, MO, founded by long-married

former bookstore owners Pete Cowdin and Deb Pettid. It consists of 40 picture book-themed dioramas blown up to life-size. Sadly, the only connection with Alice is the name.

“Wonderland: Curious Nature,” which opened May 18, brings a Carrollian experience to the New York Botanical Gardens in the Bronx. It runs through October 27; we hope to have a full review next issue.



#### INTERNET & TECHNOLOGY

The BBC’s Melvyn Bragg radio show *In Our Time* broadcast an episode on March 14 entitled “Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland,” with guests Kiera Vaclavik, Franziska Kohlt, and Robert Douglas-Fairhurst.

Audrey, an app for mobile devices, has just launched their edition of *Wonderland*, with a full-cast audiobook, a chapter-by-chapter guide by Simon Haisell, and illustrations by Lotte Budai.



#### MOVIES & TELEVISION

In Lucile Hadžihalilović’s 1996 film *Le Bouche de Jean-Pierre*, ten-year-old Mini goes to live with her aunt when her mother is admitted to a hospital. While she is unpacking, we see that among the few things she had taken with her is a copy of *Alice au pays des merveilles*.

*Alice, Through the Looking: À La Recherche d’Un Lapin Perdu* is a 2021 British/German political satire/comedy/“meta” film directed by Adam Donen and produced by 12 Battalion and Czar Germany. Vanessa Redgrave narrates, and the legendary Carol Cleveland is the Queen. The film follows Alice, a young student who stumbles into a bizarre version of London after her night with a newfound lover, Rab-

bit, suddenly appears to have never happened. The night in question is the evening of the UK's 2016 referendum on EU membership.

In the 2022 movie *Marlowe*, private detective Philip Marlowe (Liam Neeson) at one point understands that he should not drink the cocktail offered by a criminal, because “knockout drops” have been added to it. He explains: “I remember what happened to Alice in Wonderland when she bit the mushroom.”

### MUSIC

UK composer Stephen Barchan has set “How Doth the Little Crocodile” for solo soprano; it’s on YouTube.

The husband-and-wife/librettist-and-composer duo of Zane Corriher and Amy Scurria, who had taken advantage of the pandemic to write *Alice: An Operatic Wonderland* along with soprano Kelly Balmaceda, spoke to us at the Third Annual VirtuAlice “Carrollian Show and Tell” on December 11, 2022 (*KL* 110:8). The opera, now called *A.L.I.C.E.*, had a fully staged, orchestrated premiere at the University of Utah April 12–13.

### PERFORMING ARTS

Minneapolis, MN, seems to have been enchanted by Our Girl recently. In December, the Ballet Co.Laboratory (sic) presented *Nutcracker in Wonderland* at the Cowles Center for Dance & The Performing Arts, somehow integrating Hoffman’s and Carroll’s worlds with the traditional Tchaikovsky score. Then from March 14 to 31, The Children’s Theatre Company presented their manic version of *Alice in Wonderland*, replete with puppets, stage magic, and music from a one-man band; the Tweedles and the Jabberwock made guest appearances.

*Wonderland: Alice’s Rock & Roll Adventure* played at the Delaware Childrens Theatre in Wilmington from April 20 through May 11.

*Alice, Formerly of Wonderland*, a musical about Alice Liddell and Prince Leopold, runs May 30 – June 16 at the New Vic Theater in Santa Barbara, CA, presented by the Ensemble Theater Company.

### THINGS

Swarovski has pendants, rings, earrings, and even stickers with crystal-encrusted renderings of Disney *Alice* characters.

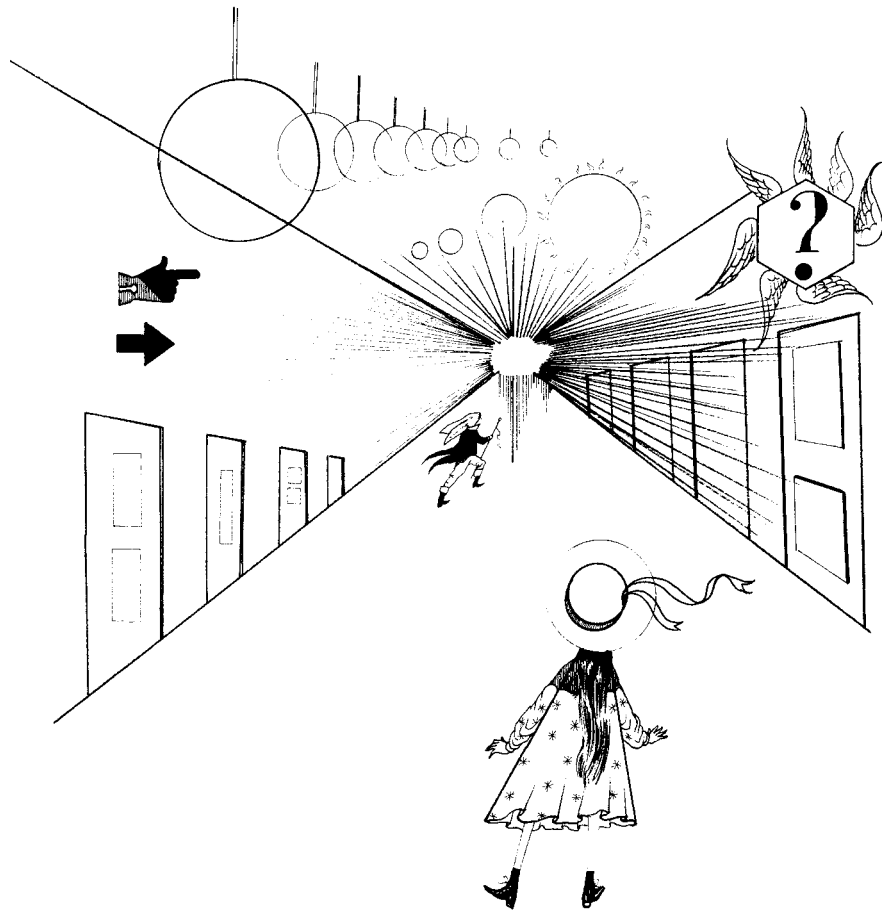
The Chinese company Tone-Cheer sells a rather charming “book nook kit,” available worldwide. Meant to fit between books on a shelf, the 184-piece paper-and-wood 3D puzzle depicts two scenes from *Wonderland*. The finished piece is 9.6 × 7.1 × 3.1 inches; assembly time is given as 3½ to 5½ hours. Batteries (for the lights) not included. In a similar vein, Rolife sells a “DIY Miniature House Kit” of Alice’s Tea Store (7.7 × 6.9 × 6.9 inches).

UK artist Dominic Murphy’s *AW* playing cards were mentioned in *KL* 106:55, but he has now made a set of *AW* Tarot cards. Available from [dominicmurphyart.co.uk](http://dominicmurphyart.co.uk).

The *Go Ask Alice Oracle & Tea Party Game* (“Answers to Questions & Guidance for Life’s Adventure”) pack consists of 64 cards with droll black-and-white pen-and-ink illustrations and a softcover book with oracle meanings, meditations, and tea-party instructions. You can do a sample reading or purchase the set at [goaskaliceoracle.com](http://goaskaliceoracle.com).

Bill Holbrook, Kevin & Kell, May 10, 2023





*Pepperstein*

