

THE LEWIS CARROLL SOCIETY

OF NORTH AMERICA



Visit to Wye Plantation

On May 3, 1975, the Lewis Carroll Society, at the kind invitation of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur A. Houghton, Jr., visited the Houghtons' home, Wye Plantation, near Annapolis, to view the Houghton Lewis Carroll collection, which is housed in a room of its own in the library wing. In addition, an exhibition of specially selected items from the collection had been set up in an adjoining room, in observance of the Society's visit.

The collection is one of extraordinary variety and extent, containing numerous first editions both of the *Alice* books—including *The Nursery Alice*—and of Carroll's other works; many of the translations of the *Alice* books; copies of Dodgson's pamphlets, including some of the rarest; and copies of a remarkable number of books which either parody *Alice* or which imitate the *Alice* books' style and structure in order to amuse while teaching (e.g. *Alice in Orchestra-Land*). Some of the rarer items include several of Tenniel's original pencil sketches for the *Alice* books\*, some of Furniss' sketches for *Sylvie and Bruno*, Isa Bowman's copy of the stage *Alice*, with annotations in Carroll's hand, sheet music for songs in the *Alice* books, an *Alice* tea caddy of the period, and an antique mechanical Hatter.

The Houghton collection also includes some unusual personal items: Lewis Carroll's pocket watch, his copy of the Bible (inscribed to him by his parents), a little ring which belonged to Alice Liddell, and a china figure of a large (nearly life-size) russet-colored cat curled up asleep and remarkably life-like, which once belonged to Alice Liddell. Placed on a cushion in the center of the main exhibition table, it was virtually the first object one saw on entering and immediately set a charming and informal note to the visit.

Mr. Houghton invited the members of the Society to examine and peruse any or all of this material at their leisure, and for several hours the members enjoyed a feast of Carrolliana unlike any other, browsing and exploring shelves, each intent on his/her individual adventure.

The exhibition of specially selected materials had been set up by Mr. Bud Folts, librarian of the Washington Cathedral, who is thoroughly familiar with the contents of Mr. Houghton's rare book collection, including the Lewis Carroll material. Mr. Folts, who had been mainly instrumental in arranging for the Society's visit, gave an introductory talk on the Carroll collection and greatly enhanced the value and enjoyment of the Society's visit by putting his extensive bibliographical knowledge at the members' disposal, answering the many questions put to him throughout the visit with patience and interest.

As an expression of appreciation, the Society presented Mr. Houghton with a framed copy of the introductory verses to *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, done in calligraphic script by Alice Berkey, one of the Society's members.

The Society's consensus was that it, too, had had a golden afternoon long to be remembered.

J.H.

\*A number of others, belonging to the Berg Collection of the New York Public Library, had been on view in New York City earlier in the year.

*Note:* The Society voted unanimously to make Mr. Houghton its first honorary member, and a letter apprising him of this was sent to him shortly afterwards.

New York Times, January 22, 1898

#### First Edition of Lewis Carroll's Books

The early works of "Lewis Carroll" Dodgson are much rarer than one might suppose, the first edition of "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland," 1866, being especially scarce. Copies of that delightful book in the original cloth, with John Tenniel's illustrations, are much sought after by collectors, and have been sold privately for as high as \$60 and \$75. Charles B. Foote's copy, bound by Stikeman, with an autograph letter inserted, brought \$57.50 in this city on February 20, 1895.

"Through the Looking Glass," 1872, is not as rare as "Alice," though it seldom occurs for sale. Mr. Foote's copy, in a Stikeman binding, sold for \$15, and Maxwell's and Bierstadt's, both in the original cloth, for \$10.50 and \$11. "Phantasmagoria," 1869, is scarce, but not valuable, Foote's going for \$2.25 and Bierstadt's for \$2.75, while the other Carroll books, from "The Hunting of the Snark," 1876, down to Sylvie and Bruno Concluded," 1893, bring at auction from \$2.75 to \$2 each. "Rhyme and Reason," 1883, is perhaps an exception, for Foote's copy brought \$4.25, and Bierstadt's \$6.

#### Society Publication Program to Begin in Fall

This fall the Society will begin publishing a series of occasional chapbooks dealing, in accordance with our purpose, with aspects of the life, work, time and influence of Lewis Carroll. Each chapbook will contain several thematically related articles and will be handsomely designed and printed in a limited numbered edition. The first number will be devoted to studies in Carroll bibliography and will contain three pieces: a textual study of "Three Sunsets," utilizing the Houghton manuscript copy, by Bud Folts, Jr.; an annotated 1974 Carroll bibliography by Edward Guiliano; and assuming the New York University Library is able to cooperate, an assessment of the Alfred C. Berol Collection by Warren Weaver.

The chapbook program will be administered by the Publications Committee. Booklets will be issued on an irregular basis depending upon availability of funds and suitable articles. Chapbooks will be free to members. Initially the costs will be met through membership dues, sales, and private contributions. It is hoped that the more significant articles can be periodically collected in an anthology. The series will not only advance Carroll scholarship, but will publicize our society and hopefully attract new members.

Members are encouraged to participate in the program by contributing articles, suggestions for articles and chapbooks, and by volunteering to assume responsibility for producing a chapbook in cooperation with the Publications Committee. Our second chapbook will tentatively focus on Alice Liddell. Another article or two is needed.

E.G.

#### Carrolliana

Belt buckles with high-quality reproductions of scenes from the Alice books are being produced by Bergamot Brass Works (origin unknown). Tenniel's "The Mad Tea Party," and "Through the Looking Glass" are two of the illustrations faithfully reproduced. The latter has Tenniel's Alice entering the looking glass on one side of the buckle and his illustration of Alice exiting on the other side. Approximate size: 2¼ x 3 inches. Price: approximately ten dollars.

The Cheshire Cat and the Knitting Sheep are featured in unusual 22" x 28" posters, obtainable at \$3.50 each from March, Milligan & Co., 7315 Wisconsin Ave., Bethesda, Maryland 20014.

One-of-a-kind tie-died and hand-painted T-shirts, one featuring Alice's Caterpillar, are available at \$15.00 each from Saks Fifth Avenue and Bloomingdale's in New York.

...and a plush cut-out pillow, featuring Walt Disney's Alice. Comes from Ameritex Screen Prints, and can probably be purchased at novelty stores.

Alice Berkey, who found the Caterpillar T-shirt above, also sent us illustrations from a 7-piece rubber stamp set made by Multi-print of Milan, Italy. The set is available in toy shops for \$4.25.

#### Notable Carrollian Publications Since February 1975

- Lewis Carroll, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, illustrated by Arthur Rackham (New York: Viking, 1975), 9½ x 7½ in., 162 pp., \$6.95. Handsome edition with excellently reproduced color and black and white illustrations. Includes Austin Dobson's "Proem."
- Lewis Carroll, *The Pig-Tale*, illustrated by Leonard B. Lubin (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1975) 10¼ x 7¾ in., 32 pp. \$4.95. Some stanzas and illustrations appear in *Cricket: The Magazine for Children*, 2, No. 8 (April 1975), 31-35. Handsome edition of the tale taken from *Sylvie and Bruno*.
- Lewis Carroll, *The Walrus and the Carpenter* (New York: Warne, 1975). \$2.95. Paperback, illustrated children's book. Part of nonsense books series.
- Edward Lucie-Smith, *The Invented Eye: Masterpieces of Photography 1839-1914* (New York: Paddington Press, 1975). Carroll discussed in introduction and four well-known Carroll photographs are reproduced.
- John Ciardi and Miller Williams, "A Burble Through the Tulgey Wood," *How Does a Poem Mean?* 2nd ed., (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1975), ch. 2, pp. 14-47. Extended discussion of *Jabberwocky* and brief discussion of *The Crocodile* and *Father William*.
- Joanna Richardson, *Dodgson in Wonderland*, *History Today*, 25, No. 2 (February 1975), 110-117. Flawed and tired discussion. Illustrated with photographs and Tenniel drawings.
- Mary Breasted, *Memorabilia of Lewis Carroll Moves on to N.Y.U. Library*, *The New York Times*, 19 March 1975, pp. 49, 67, col. 1. Discusses Alfred C. Berol Collection recently donated to N.Y.U.
- Alvin C. Kibel, rev. of *Play, Games and Sport: The Literary Works of Lewis Carroll*, by Kathleen Blake, *Victorian Studies*, 18, No. 3 (March 1975), 370-72. Expresses dissatisfaction.

#### Library of Congress Exhibit Concerns Alice Manuscript

At the time of the annual meeting of the Society of May 3, 1975, the Library of Congress mounted a small exhibit for our members. This one-case display consisted of several books, including both the Appleton and Macmillan 1866 *Alices*, the latter containing original Tenniel pencil drawings. Two typewritten items were most interesting. One was a letter dated January 25, 1950 from Sir John Forsdyke of the British Museum thanking Luther Evans, the Librarian of Congress, for the gift of the *Alice* manuscript and for a list of the contributors who paid for the manuscript. This list of contributors, to my knowledge, has never been made public.

The second item was four typewritten pages by Luther Evans entitled *The Return of Alice*. In this he tells how, when nursing a case of measles, he saw that the *Alice* manuscript was going to be auctioned by Eldridge Johnson's widow. At that point he had the idea of buying the manuscript and presenting it as a gift to the British Museum. This idea was enthusiastically accepted by Lessing Rosenwald, Dr. Rosenbach and John Fleming. The manuscript was purchased for \$50,000 and, just before its presentation to the British, was almost left in the seat of the London boat train!

Mr. Evans, in his presentation, remarked that the gift was made "by a group of citizens who wanted to perform an act of cultural reparation and also as an act of thanks for the grand defense of Western civilization and liberties of all men from German might and terror while Americans were engaged in arguments over whether international affairs were of any concern to them."

D.H.S.

Notice of the Lewis Carroll Society of North America including mention of the *Knight Letter* and plans for an anthology appeared in member David Greene's column, "Children's Literature Journals," *Phaedrus: A Journal of Children's Literature Research*, 2, No. 1 (Spring 1975), 18.

E.G.

Publications: Looking Ahead

A new edition of *Alice* will be brought out in New York by Thomas Y. Crowell in the fall. *The Hunting of the Snark* with Ralph Steadman's illustrations should be out for Christmas. The New York publisher is Clarkson N. Potter; the British publisher is Michael Dempsey. Steadman is profiled and his *Snark* briefly discussed in *Playboy*, June 1975, p. 168 (see below). In February 1976, Crowell will publish a translation of Jean Gattegno's Carroll biography, *Lewis Carroll: A Life, Fragments of a Looking-Glass*. A review of the Gattegno book and a mixed review of Kathleen Blake's book by Edward Guiliano will appear in the fall in *Children's Literature IV* (Temple Univ. Press). An unfavorable review by Donald Rackin of Blake's book will appear this fall in the *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*. Next spring our anthology, tentatively titled, *The Lewis Carroll Scrapbook: New Essays and Unpublished Works* will be published by Clarkson N. Potter. Potter will also publish a new book by John Fisher in the spring, *The Alice in Wonderland Cookbook*. Yes, recipes for all the food items mentioned in the Alice books are given. Looking very far ahead, Potter will bring out the "lost" second part of Carroll's *Symbolic Logic* in the fall of 1976.

E.G.

Ralph Steadman *pen ultimate*

To look at Londoner Ralph Steadman's book of drawings, *America*, you'd think he'd seen only awful things in this country. "Not at all," he says. "There was a certain shock. But I was looking for something to put my hang-ups on." Steadman, however, swings wildly from enthusiastic praise of some of the qualities he's seen here ("One morning in Brooklyn Heights we missed the garbage men. They were already down the road, but they came back and got our garbage. That knocked me out.") to bitter disappointment with others ("I think people are being dishonest with themselves. If they'd only bloody own up a bit. But instead, it's people grabbing around, it's rats in a corner.") He should know about rats. He was a ratcatcher before he started drawing, which was in 1956. Welsh-born Steadman began as a technical draftsman. After a failed attempt to become a pilot, he learned to draw through a correspondence course and started free-lancing. Though his work had appeared in most of Britain's magazines and newspapers, it wasn't until Hunter Thompson took him to the Kentucky Derby that his drawings became truly deranged. Because Steadman calls his current project an "impossible journey by an improbable crew in search of a creature that doesn't exist," it might sound as if he's headed for more insanity, the same old edge he and Thompson reached for in their *Fear and Loathing* pieces for *Rolling Stone*. Actually, he's illustrating a children's book by Lewis Carroll called *Hunting of the Snark*. "I think Hunter and I did a fairly good number and I also think it was time to wrap it up." At 38, he claims, "Working on the edge all the time can get a bit tiring. Certain things I did in the Sixties I know I couldn't do now. I wonder where I ever found the energy. I think *The Snark* is nicely different. There's no ax to grind. I'm just not vicious and nasty like my drawings. It may be that behind all that aggression is a man a little bit afraid of what he sees. I'd like to do happy things now."

From *Playboy* — June, 1975

Dr. Warren Weaver is preparing a revised edition of his check list of translations, that first appeared in *Alice in Many Tongues*. He would appreciate hearing from members. His address is 40 Lillis Road, RR 3, New Milford, Conn. 06776.

An interesting analysis of the typography and illustration of *Alice in Wonderland* from Tenniel to Dali, by Sarah Ellis, is in *Amphora*, No. 19, journal of the Alcuin Society of Canada. \$2.50 from P.O. Box 89108, Richmond, British Columbia, Canada.

The *Knight Letter* is your publication. We would like to see *all* of our members involved in producing this newsletter, and contributions are eagerly sought and welcomed. The next issue will appear before the end of the year. Please send items of interest to Stan Marx, 15 Sinclair Martin Drive, Roslyn, New York 11576 by *October 15th*.

