FROM PETER (SLOVENLY) TO POTTER (HARRY)

HIGH SPOTS OF COLLECTIBLE CHILDREN'S BOOKS REDUX

It is hard to believe that 20 years have gone by since 100 Years / 100 Books: High Spots of Collectible Children's Books was written, yet at the same time it seems like a lifetime ago. It would be an understatement to say that much has changed in the last 20 years, One thing that hasn't changed is that children's books still continue to be one of the most popular categories in the collectible book world so it is time to revisit the list. In revising the list, I have removed some titles that I don't feel are at the highest level of importance. One of the shortcomings of selecting 1963 as the cut off date on the first list is that it necessitated omitting some highly sought after books. This has been rectified in this new list. Thus it will come as no surprise that many of the changes from the first list are most apparent in the age of the books included. As times change and younger collectors enter the market, many of the titles they collect were published after 1950. Correspondingly the demand for some of the older books has softened. This is due in large part to collectors' lack of exposure to the older material. The "chicken or the egg question" factors in here. In pre- internet days, what people collected was reflected in dealer catalogues while at the same time it was dealer catalogues that in part determined what people would collect. If enough people asked a dealer about a certain illustrator / author, more of their books would begin to be offered in catalogues. Then if a dealer believed that a certain illustrator / author's body of work deserved more attention, their books would begin to appear more regularly in catalogues. Eventually a body of reference material might emerge to help collectors and dealers identify the scope of an illustrator / author's work and to facilitate determining edition points. The internet has thrown a wrench into that process. When my first list was compiled in 1992, the book world was a different and much smaller place. Most collectors knew most of the dealers in their areas of interest and the number of children's book specialist dealers was not large so that many of the collectors knew us and visa versa. Because collectors can now search millions of books on-line, many of those dealers who have survived the shake-up no longer find it economically viable to issue catalogues. They simply load all of their descriptions to an on-line data base so that today, collectors are buying books from all over the world without ever meeting or speaking to the book seller.

People assume that the internet has been a boon to the collector. But the down side to this increased access has actually made collectors work harder to build their collections. On paper, one description of a book might look just as good as another. Collectors have to wade vary carefully through possibly hundreds of descriptions of the same book to make sure that what is being offered is the copy that they need. Then it would behoove them to try to determine if the dealer offering the book has the knowledge and competence to assess a book's condition and edition. The changes that the internet brought to the collecting world, to

dealers and collectors alike, have blurred the lines that define what it means to be a dealer and also what constitutes a “collectible“ book. (Even the most basic definition of a “book” has been challenged with the widespread use of Kindles and other tools that offer paperless written material.) When someone copies descriptions of books from an experienced dealer and then lists those children’s books for sale on line, does that person qualify as a dealer? Is a former library copy of a book collectible if copies repeatedly sell for substantial money even when a better copy can easily be found? Should the 30th printing of a book that is technically still a first edition be described as a first edition? Should a legitimate dealer have a buyer beware policy that refuses to accept returns for any reason? In the collecting world in which I and my ABAA and ILAB (Antiquarian Bookseller’s Association of America) colleagues conduct business, the answer to all three questions is “NO!” The isolating nature of on-line transactions means that a collector can spend significant money on books that are not what they are described to be, but this discrepancy may only come to light sometime down the road when the collector tries to sell his books with no success. All of these issues are meant to remind the reader of the High Spot of Children’s Books List that if they use the list as a buying guide, it is more important than ever to take great care in selecting from whom they choose to buy.

Eighty years ago in his book “Peter Parley to Penrod”, the noted bibliographer Jacob Blanck published his list of the best American children's books. Today the two books that comprise his title: " Peter Parley” [“Tales of Peter Parley About America” by Samuel Goodrich] and “Penrod” by Booth Tarkington don’t make my current list at all. Furthermore, you might be hard pressed to find any collector who is familiar with many of the other entries in his book. The current list of High Spots represents the titles that I’ve observed to be consistently sought after, coupled with titles from authors or illustrators whose work has been critically surveyed. I’ve tried to strike a balance between picture books and young adult books, 19th century titles with 20th century titles, Award winners with popular favorites. It is not meant to be a scholarly list inclusive of every important book that would deserve mention. That would make the list just too unwieldy. By beginning with a book published in 1848, such titles as German Popular Stories by the Brothers Grimm (1823-6), Wonderful Stories for Children by Hans Christian Andersen (1846), and A Book of Nonsense by Edward Lear (1846) are just a few titles that are not included. In addition to the publishing date, other historically important titles are not included for a variety of reasons. Some books were omitted because it is unlikely that most collectors will ever have the chance of ever seeing or acquiring a copy (i.e., Johann Comenius’s 1659 first edition in English of the first picture book for children: Orbis Sensualium Pictus – the Visibile World … Most Suited to Children’s Capacities). Others are not listed because they are not in English (Hans Christian Andersen’s 1835 first book of fairy tales told for children - Eventyr: Fortalte for Born) and finally others because they may be less widely known outside their country of origin (Edith Nesbit’s 1899 Treasure Seekers). You will notice that some classic titles are listed twice, first in its year of appearance and later in

the year that the most collectible edition was published. For instance Charles Kingsley's fantasy tale of the Water Babies was first published in 1863, but from my experience the first edition illustrated by Jessie Willcox Smith is the most sought edition, so Water Babies will also appear in 1916 as the first edition with illustrations by Jessie Willcox Smith. (My personal favorite of the title is Warwick Goble's 1909 edition, but because it is not as well known, it isn't included). I have restricted the list to books in English except when the English language version appears much later. For instance Pinocchio will appear in 1892, the year of the first edition in English instead of in 1883 the year of the Italian first edition in book form, but the 1896 French edition of Boutet de Monvel's Jeanne D'Arc was chosen because the first edition in English was much later and different in format.

In some cases, and for the sake of brevity, I am not including every title by an author / illustrator even if it might deserve a place. Traditional "series" books like Nancy Drews are omitted because although they are children's books, they fall into a class of their own. Several of the titles listed have a "story" attached to them regarding printing histories, issue points and tricky first edition determinants. Often, the only place to hear these stories is to start with a specialist or knowledgeable dealer in the field. For instance, you would wait a long time to find an 1865 British "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland" but then you'd need that time to accumulate the funds to afford it. However a collection can do just fine with the American printing from the British sheets or with the 1866 British "first published" "Alice" and that is where expert guidance can help. If you're just beginning, you will also need advice on criteria that determine collectible condition, including the importance or unimportance of dust wrappers. As a general rule, children's books must be in very good to fine condition, but the same rigorous standards used by dealers in modern literature are really not applied here. Many of these titles are perfectly collectible without dust wrappers and if they do have dust wrappers, the fact that the wrapper may be chipped, torn or incomplete might not be of great consequence. In other words, if you find a first state of Baum's "Wonderful Wizard of Oz" but the dust wrapper is soiled and worn, don't wait around for a "better" copy - just grab it and run! However, if you are offered a first edition of "Charlotte's Web" without dust wrapper, take a pass. Without beating a dead horse, a children's book specialist or another knowledgeable dealer will have had the experience to know which books are collectible in any condition and which need to be mint to have value.

Finally, if it can be said that there is a "problem" with collecting children's books, it is that the field is so broad and varied that one might not know where to begin. Hopefully this list of High Spots will help to address that challenge. It can be used as an end in itself or it can be used as a jumping off point to collect in any of the thousands of directions to which it may lead.

HERE'S THE LIST

1848	English Struwwelpeter or Pretty Stories by Heinrich Hoffmann (Slovenly Peter first English language edition. 1st German edition was 1845)
1852	Uncle Tom's Cabin by Harriet Beecher Stowe. 2 volumes Boston: John P. Jewett
1855	Little Red Riding Hood (pop-up). London: Dean & Son. (Number 1 of Dean's New Scenic Books. An early pop-up with 8 pop-up plates).
1863	Water Babies by Charles Kingsley. London: Macmillan
1865[6]	Alice's Adventures in Wonderland by Lewis Carroll. London: Macmillan
1865	Hans Brinker or the Silver Skates by Mary Mapes Dodge. New York: James O'Kane (Thomas Nast illustrator)
1868-9	Little Women by Louisa May Alcott. 2 Volumes. Boston: Roberts
1869	A Visit From St. Nicholas by Clement Moore. NY: McLoughlin Bros.
1870	In Fairyland Illustrated by Richard Doyle. London: Longmans, Green & Co.
1871	At the Back of the North Wind by George Macdonald. London: Strahan & Co. (First Edition in Book Form)
1874	Beauty & the Beast illustrated by Walter Crane. London: George Routledge (plus his numerous other toy books published from 1865 – 1876)
1876	Adventures of Tom Sawyer by Samuel Clemens. Hartford: American Pub. Co
1877	Black Beauty by Anna Sewell. London; Jarrold and Sons. 2 volumes (First American edition published in 1890)
1878	House That Jack Built by Randolph Caldecott [Plus] the 15 Books in the Set. London: George Routledge
1878	Under the Window Illustrated by Kate Greenaway. London: George Routledge
1881	Uncle Remus His Songs and Sayings by Joel Chandler Harris. New York: D. Appleton
1883	Merry Adventures of Robin Hood by Howard Pyle. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons
1883	Treasure Island by Robert Louis Stevenson. London: Cassell & Co.
1884	Heidi by Johanna Spyri. 1st English Ed. 2 Vols. (Heidi's Early Experiences and Heidi's Further Experiences). (1st German ed. 1880-1881)

1885 A Child's Garden of Verses by Robert Louis Stevenson. London: Longmans Green

1885 Adventures of Huckleberry Finn by Mark Twain (Samuel Clemens). NY: Charles L. Webster and Co.

1886 Little Lord Fauntleroy by Frances Hodgson Burnett. NY: Charles Scribner's Sons

1887 Brownies: Their Book by Palmer Cox. New York: Century

1888 Happy Prince by Oscar Wilde. London: David Nutt [Also Issued in Deluxe Edition]

1889 Blue Fairy Book by Andrew Lang. London: Longmans Green (plus the 10 Other "Color Fairy" Books 1890 – 1910)

1892 Story of a Puppet, or The Adventures of Pinocchio by Carlo Collodi. London: T. Fisher Unwin. First edition of Pinocchio in English (the first edition in book form was the 1883 Italian Avventure Di Pinocchio)

1893 Goblin Market by Christina Rossetti. 1st Ed. With the Illustrations by Laurence Housman. London: Macmillan [Also Issued in Deluxe Edition] [1st Is 1862]

1894 Jungle Book by Rudyard Kipling. London: Macmillan [with its sequel the Second Jungle Book published in 1895]

1896 Child's Garden of Verses by Robert Louis Stevenson Illus. By Charles Robinson. London: John Lane, the Bodley Head (this is the first illustrated edition, also issued in a deluxe edition. See 1885 for first edition)

1896 Jeanne Jeanne D'arc by M. Boutet De Monvel. Paris: Plon Nourrit [Also Issued in Deluxe Edition]

1897 Mother Goose in Prose by L. Frank Baum. Chicago: Way & Williams, illustrated by Maxfield Parrish

1899 Story of Little Black Sambo by Helen Bannerman. London: Grant Richards

1900 Goops and How to Be Them by Gelett Burgess. New York: Frederick Stokes

1900 Tale of Peter Rabbit by Beatrix Potter - Privately Printed Ed. (Trade Edition First Published in 1902. London: Warne)

1900 Wonderful Wizard of Oz by L. Frank Baum. Chicago: George M. Hill

1901 Denslow's Mother Goose by W.W. Denslow. New York: McClure Phillips

1902 Adventures of Uncle Lubin by W. Heath Robinson. London: Grant Richards

1904 Poems of Childhood by Eugene Field Illus. By Maxfield Parrish. New York: Scribner

1904 Story of Pocahontas and Captain John Smith by E. Boyd Smith. Boston: Houghton Mifflin

1906 Peter Pan in Kensington Gardens Illustrated by Arthur Rackham. London: Hodder & Stoughton

[Also Issued in Deluxe Edition]

1906 Roosevelt Bears Their Travels and Adventures by Seymour Eaton. Philadelphia: Stern

1908 Anne of Green Gables by L.M. Montgomery. Boston: L.C. Page

1908 Hole Book by Peter Newell. New York: Harper Bros

1908 Wind in the Willows by Kenneth Grahame. London: Methuen

1910 Sleeping Beauty Illustrated by Edmund Dulac. London: Hodder & Stoughton (Also Issued in Deluxe Edition)

1911 Peter and Wendy by J.m. Barrie. London: Hodder & Stoughton

1911 Secret Garden by Frances Hodgson Burnett. Both 1911 editions - NY: Frederick Stokes illustrated by Maria Kirk and London: Heinemann illustrated by Charles Robinson

1911 Treasure Island Illustrated by N.C. Wyeth. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons (see 1884 for original first edition)

1914 East of the Sun and West of the Moon Illustrated by Kay Nielsen. London: Hodder & Stoughton [Also Issued in Deluxe Edition]

1914 Jessie Willcox Smith Mother Goose. New York: Dodd Mead

1915 House of Pomegranates by Oscar Wilde Illus. By Jessie King. London: Methuen

1916 Fairy Tales by Hans Andersen Illustrated by Harry Clarke. London: George Harrap (Also Issued in Deluxe Edition)

1916 Water Babies illustrated by Jessie Willcox Smith. NY: Dodd Mead (See 1863 for original first edition)

1918 Raggedy Ann Stories by Johnny Gruelle. Chicago: Volland

1920 Story of Doctor Dolittle by Hugh Lofting. New York: Frederick Stokes

1922 Velveteen Rabbit by Margery Bianco. London: Heinemann

1922 Wonderful Adventures of Little Prince Toofat illustrated by Robert Lawson. New York: James McCann

1923 ABC by C.B. Falls. New York: Doubleday Page (Also Issued in Deluxe Edition)

1923 Ship That Sailed to Mars by William Timlin. London: George Harrap

1924 Poppy Seed Cakes Illustrated by Maud & Miska Petersham. New York: Doubleday Page & Co.

1925 Knave of Hearts Illustrated by Maxfield Parrish. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons

1926 Winnie the Pooh by A.A. Milne. London: Methuen (Also Issued in Deluxe Edition)

1926 Fairyland by Ida Outhwaite. Melbourne: Ramsay Pub. (Also Issued in Deluxe Edition)

1928 Bambi by Felix Salten. NY: Simon & Schuster 1st U.S. Ed.

1928 Millions of Cats by Wanda Gag. NY: Coward McCann (Also Issued In Deluxe Edition)

1928 Willy Pogany's Mother Goose. New York: Nelson (Also Issued in Deluxe Edition)

1929 Pirate Twins by William Nicholson. London: Faber & Faber (Also Issued in Deluxe Edition)

1930 First Picture Book by Edward Steichen. New York: Harcourt Brace

1930 Little Engine That Could by Watty Piper. NY: Platt & Munk

1931 Adventures of Mickey Mouse Book 1 by the Disney Studios. Philadelphia: McKay

1932 Little House in the Big Woods by Laura Ingalls Wilder. New York: Harper Bros.

1933 Story of Babar by Jean de Brunhoff. NY: Smith & Haas (First edition of L'Histoire De Babar was first published in Paris by Jardin Des Modes in 1931)

1933 Story about Ping by Margery Flack illus. Kurt Wiese. New York: Viking

1934 Mary Poppins by P.l. Travers. London: Gerald Howe

1936 Giant Otto & Otto at Sea by William Pene du Bois. New York: Viking

1936 Story of Ferdinand by Munro Leaf. New York: Viking

1936 Little Tim and the Brave Sea Captain. London: Oxford University Press

1937 And to Think That I Saw it on Mulberry Street by Dr. Seuss. New York: Vanguard

1937 Hobbit by J.R.R. Tolkien. London: George Allen & Unwin

1937 Animals of the Bible Illustrated by Dorothy Lathrop. New York: Stokes

1938 Madeline by Ludwig Bemelmans. New York: Simon & Schuster

1938 Pumpkin Moonshine by Tasha Tudor. New York: Oxford Univ. Press

1939 Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel by Virginia Lee Burton. Boston: Houghton Mifflin

1939 Little Toot by Hardie Gramatky. NY: Putnam

1939 World Is Round by Gertrude Stein. New York: William Scott (Also Issued in Limited Edition)

1939 Yearling by Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Illustrated by N.C. Wyeth. NY: Charles Scribner's Sons . (Also Issued in Deluxe Edition in 1940)

1940 Pat the Bunny by Dorothy Kunhardt. New York: Simon & Schuster

1940 Abraham Lincoln by Ingri & Edgar D'Aulaire. NY: Doubleday Doran

1941	Curious George by H.A. Rey. Boston: Houghton Mifflin
1941	Make Way for Ducklings by Robert McCloskey. New York: Viking
1942	Little House by Virgina Lee Burton. Boston: Houghton Mifflin
1942	Little Golden Books. A set of the first 12 books published simultaneously. NY: Simon & Schuster
1943	Little Prince by A. St. Exupery. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock (Also Issued in Deluxe Edition. 1st edition in French appeared the same year)
1945	Stuart Little by E.B. White. NY: Harper and Brothers
1947	Goodnight Moon by Margaret Wise Brown. New York: Harper Brothers
1949	Big Snow by Berta and Elmer Hader. NY: Macmillan
1950	The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe by C.S. Lewis. London: Bles
1950	Pippi Longstocking by Astrid Lindgren. NY: Viking (First edition of the Swedish Pippi Langstrump appeared in 1945)
1952	Charlotte's Web by E.B. White. New York: Harper Bros.
1952	The Borrowers by Mary Norton. London: Dent
1955	Eloise by Kay Thompson. New York: Simon & Schuster
1955	Harold and the Purple Crayon by Crockett Johnson. NY: Harper & Bros.
1957	The Cat in the Cat by Dr. Seuss. NY: Random House
1958	A Bear Called Paddington by Michael Bond. London: Collins
1961	James and the Giant Peach by Roald Dahl. NY: Harper and Bros.
1962	A Wrinkle in Time by Madeleine L'Engle. New York: Ariel
1962	A Snowy Day by Ezra Jack Keats. NY: Viking Press
1963	Where the Wild Things Are by Maurice Sendak. New York: Harper & Row
1964	The Giving Tree by Shel Silverstein. NY: Harper & Row
1970	Very Hungry Caterpillar by Eric Carle. Cleveland:World
1972	Watership Down by Richard Adams. London: Rex Collins. (Also 1976 Limited Edition which is the first edition with illustrations -illustrated by John Lawrence)
1985	Polar Express by Chris Van Allsburg. Boston: Houghton Mifflin
1997	Harry Potter and the Philosophers Stone by J.K. Rowling. London: Bloomsbury