

ABC NEWSLETTER

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1997-1998 ABC Calendar

- Sept. 12 "Cuts by Anderson," a slide talk on wood engraver Alexander Anderson by Jane Pomeroy. Connecticut Historical Society, 1 Elizabeth St., Hartford, CT, 7:00 P.M.
- Oct. 1 Baker Library, Special Collections, Dartmouth College, Hanover, N.H. A gallery talk led by Philip N. Cronenwett, Curater of Manuscripts and Chief, Special Collections..
- Nov. 12 Society of Illustrators, New York City, with lunch and tour by SI and ABC member Deborah Pfeiffenberger.
- Nov. 15-16 "Celebrating Children and the Books They Read," The 1997 Connecticut Children's Book Fair, Bishop Center, University of Connecticut at Storrs, CT. 10:00 A.M.- 5:00 P.M. Saturday and Sunday.
- Dec. 10 New York City. Exhibitions at the Morgan Library, New York Public Library and HarperCollins.
- Feb. 4 "Series Books," by Bob Brindamour. The Connecticut Historical Society, 1 Elizabeth St., Hartford, CT, 7:00 P.M.
- March "How to Research a Book," by Rojankovsky bibliographers Polly and Irving Allen . The Dodd Research Center, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT.
- April Norman Chartier Gallery, Brooklyn, CT. Illustrator Norman Chartier will host the ABCs.
- May Trinkla Clarke, a curator of the travelling exhibition "Myth, Magic and Mystery," will talk at Connecticut College, New London, CT.
- June Annual Meeting, featuring members' new acquisitions. Home of Billie Levy.

1997-1998 Book Fairs

Sept. 27	Rochester Internat'l Bk Fr	Rochester, NY
Sept. 27-28	Fort Worth Antiq. Bk & Paper Fr	Fort Worth, TX
Sept. 27-28	Montreal Antiq. Bk Fr	Montreal, Canada
Sept. 27-28	Boxborough Paper & Collect. Fr	Boxborough, MA
Sept. 28	Equinox Bk Fr	Manchester, VT
Oct. 3-4	MARIAB Fall Antiq. Bk Fr	Andover, MA
Oct. 18	Sheffield Berkshire Antiq. Bk Fr	Sheffield, MA
Oct. 19	Amherst Antiq. Bk Fr	Amherst, MA
Oct. 24-25	Scottsdale Bk Fr	Scottsdale, AZ
Oct. 25	Historic York Book & Paper Fr	York, PA
Oct. 25-26	Atlanta Antiq. Bk Fr	Atlanta, GA
Oct. 25-26	Trinity Bk Fr	New York, NY
Nov. 1-2	Long Island Bk Fr	Albertson, NY
Nov. 8-9	Burbank Bk Fr	Burbank, CA
Nov. 8-9	Historic Savage Mill Bk Fr	Savage, MD
Nov. 9	Midwest Bookhunter's Bk Fr	Chicago, IL
Nov. 14-16	Boston Antiq. Bk Fr	Boston, MA
Nov. 15-16	Book & Paper Show (Garage)	Boston, MA
Nov. 15-16	Los Angeles Internat'l Bk Fr	Santa Monica, CA
Nov. 22	Antiquarian Book & Ephemera Fr	Albany, NY
Nov. 30	Fairfield Antiq. Bk Fr	Fairfield, CT
Dec. 13	Paper & Collectible Show	Marlboro, MA
Jan. 31	Paper & Collectible Show	Boxborough, MA
Feb. 7-8	San Francisco Antiq. Bk Fr	San Francisco, CA
Feb. 8	Westchester Antiq. Bk & Paper Fr	Tarrytown, NY
Mar. 6-8	Washington Antiq. Bk Fr	Arlington, VA

Listings by Barbara and Rocco Verrilli

A Brief Account of Alexander Anderson (1775-1870) and His Engravings

Jane R. Pomeroy

Revised from a talk given to the American Book Collectors Society for Children's Literature, September 12, 1997, at the Connecticut Historical Society.

Alexander Anderson was born in New York City in 1775, when the United States was still a colony; he died in 1870, almost ninety-five years old, shortly before the first exhibition of Impressionists in Paris, the invention of the telephone, and what seems even more incongruous, only four years before the birth of Gertrude Stein. His career lasted some seventy-seven years, from 1790, his first known signed engraving, executed when he was fourteen or fifteen years old, until 1867, when he was ninety-two. He lived through a period of extraordinary changes in American culture, social history, and taste. Not to be forgotten were advances in printing technology that would affect his work, and the enormous increase in book production and illustration that occurred in the nineteenth century.

In a very brief autobiography written in his seventy-third year, Anderson described his precocious interest in graphic images of all kinds. As a boy, he experimented, devised a press to print a rolled out copper penny he had engraved, and made himself a graver from the back spring of a pocket knife. He read explanations of engraving and etching processes in an encyclopedia, produced small advertising cuts on type metal that he sold to newspapers, and copied in pen and ink imported copperplate engravings.¹

He wrote a diary that, unfortunately, remains unpublished.² It is a rich document, with daily entries from 1793, before he was eighteen years old, to the middle of 1799, when he was twenty-four. In this way, we're given a chance not only to look in detail at Anderson's character and at his family's life—and these elements would later be reflected in his work, especially in his images for children—but at



*Fig. 1. Portrait of Anderson engraved by A.G. Holcomb. Original size: 6 5/16" (h) x 5 1/16" (w).
(All of the illustrations in this article are wood engravings and, unless otherwise mentioned, are reproduced at their original sizes.)*

the life in New York City that surrounded him. Most importantly, it chronicles the large amount of engraving he did for printers and publishers before 1800.

Anderson's family decided on a medical career for him, apprenticing him to a physician after his fourteenth birthday. He worked during the day for Dr. Joseph Young, to whom he was apprenticed, compounded medicines and delivered them, accompanied Young on his rounds, at the same time following lectures in medicine at Columbia College. His diary reveals that he read voraciously in all fields, wrote prose and poetry for periodicals, was a friend of contemporary artists, viewed their prints and paintings, played the violin. He continued his early practice of reading how-to manuals on painting and engraving, and he engraved constantly, selling his work to both newspapers and book publishers. All during the diary, he spoke of tending his mother, of whom he was very fond, and of her occasional fits of what the family thought was madness³ At times the fits were so severe that Anderson said, "'twas as much as we could do to hold her."⁴ He suspected that he too was similarly touched and that he was going mad. It is not surprising that the subject of his medical dissertation was insanity.⁵ Benson J. Lossing's biography of Anderson includes a large relief engraving entitled *What He Saw in the Fire*, a writhing fantasy of demonic, contorted animals and insects. It was not only a reflection of his experience, but reveals a taste for grotesque images that remained with him all his life.

The choice of medicine by his parents appears to have been caused by his interest in copying engravings from medical books. While students at art schools learned anatomy from imported plaster casts, Anderson learned from his examination of anatomical illustration and a first-hand knowledge of the human body. His engravings would later be distinguished by good drawing of figures, surely an advantage gained by his early study of anatomy.

He married a year after obtaining his degree in medicine from Columbia College, and, bowing to pressure, began a practice, giving up engraving, abstinence that lasted for over a year. He commented, "The thoughts of Engraving have occupied my mind today; I could not help looking back to the pleasures of that art, like the Israelites to the flesh-pots of Egypt.—I had even resolv'd to indulge myself now and then in engraving on wood, and cut several patterns for tools which I propos'd to have made, but the dread of being 'unstable as water' deterred me, and I laid by the patterns."⁶

In the autumn of this year, he opened a bookshop dedicated to selling only children's books, the "Liliputian [*sic*] Book-store," as he called it. He engraved illustrations on boxwood for four books for the shop, but none of these titles, unfortunately, has survived. His advertisement for the bookshop appeared in the September, 1797, issue of the New York newspaper, the *Argus* (fig. 2).⁷ Minerva, the goddess of wisdom, is holding out a book in one hand and a spear in the other; she's attacking a devil who has been causing a fight between the four little boys. The cut expresses the belief that learning can control and inform the passions, a contemporary view and one that was close to Anderson's own ideals. Anderson's shop was very short lived, he was broke and his expenses had mounted; however, his may have been the first bookshop in this country to sell only children's books.

By early autumn in 1798, he had lost his wife, infant son, mother, father, brother, mother- and sister-in-law in that summer's yellow fever epidemic, one that covered the East Coast and went as far north as Lake Champlain. For a man from a close-knit and apparently affectionate family the loss must have been overwhelming. His mother had once written to him, "I have often thought that we seem like a famely [*sic*] by ourselves—or like a Body so closely united that no one Member can enjoy happiness without all the rest partaking of it."⁸ Also, she signed a letter to him, "from she who is as much your friend as Mother."⁹ Yet, there was a positive aspect to his loss. Less than two weeks after his family's deaths, no longer pressured to continue a career that was not his first choice, he gave up medicine as a profession in favor of engraving. He never again practiced as a doctor, except, it is said, to help the poor.

He married his first wife's sister in 1800 and during the years before her death in 1815, six children were born. He continued to live in New York City, modestly and, from what we know, quietly. In 1810, he was elected to the precursor of the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts; to the American Academy of Fine Arts in New York in 1816; and was one of the founding members of the National Academy of Design in 1826. We feel cheated because we have no first-hand account from him during the years when he was producing his best work, that is, from the end of the diary in June of 1799 to early in 1836, when he wrote the first of a series of extant letters to one of his daughters.¹⁰ The letters mostly talk of family and friends, there is little about engraving. He outlived all but three of his children, dy-

Fig. 2. Minerva and the devil, advertisement in the New York Argus for Anderson's "Liliputian Bookstore."

ing in the house of his youngest daughter and her husband in Jersey City at the age of almost ninety-five.

What, now, of Anderson's work? And I'll talk here only of his relief engraving; he produced copperplates until about 1820, but never in the same quantity as wood engravings. The intaglio medium didn't seem to fully satisfy his interest nor

were the results as impressive as his work in relief; and there were other competing copperplate artists working in New York, Philadelphia, and Boston. No doubt Anderson worked on copper partly because it was better paid than relief work and because the use of wood blocks for illustration was not yet generally accepted. His relief engraving until 1794 was at first almost exclusively confined to work on type metal, the conventional material used for relief engraving at the time. A thin plate was cast from the same alloy as that used for letter type, the plate then being attached by nails to a block of wood that brought it up to the same height as letters used in text printing. The advantage was that both text and image could be put through a book press at the same time, which was not true of copperplates. The disadvantage was that the type-metal block wore fairly quickly, in the same way that letter type wore from repeated use.

The preparation of a thin sheet of copper used for copperplate engraving was time consuming and the finished product had a relatively short life. Copper is soft, after several hundred impressions the plate shows wear. It was therefore not a durable method for repeated printing of graphic images and it was not as economical to prepare, to ink and print as were type-metal or boxwood blocks.

As early as 1793 Anderson had used boxwood, the preferred wood of wood engravers, for a set of geometrical figures and for tobacco stamps. In this country, boxwood was used for printing designs on fabric, for stamping letters on bales, for furniture inlays and tool handles, but, as far as we know, it had not yet been used for book illustration before Anderson's first attempts. In 1794 he began twenty-six end-grain boxwood blocks for a children's book, *The Looking-Glass for the Mind* by Arnaud Berquin, published the next year by William Durell in New York. Anderson's work was after John Bewick's illustrations for the same title. John was the brother of Thomas Bewick, the prominent English wood engraver, who, from the late 1770s had developed, but not invented, the art of engraving on end-grain boxwood. How Anderson decided to use the same material and the same technique is unknown. His diary doesn't say. One might think that it was an easy step from engraving letters on tobacco stamps to engraving book illustrations. But it appears that Anderson had to convince his publisher, Durell, of the viability of wood blocks in lieu of engraved type-metal blocks. Printers tend to be suspicious of change. Type was habitually washed with lye and water to remove the ink; subject-

ing a block made of wood to the same treatment risked spoiling the block by warping it. Printers were skeptical of wood blocks because even under normal conditions wood blocks warped, and they had a tendency to crack and split from quick changes in temperature or improper handling on the press.

Why engrave on boxwood rather than type metal? Thomas Bewick spoke of a boxwood block that had passed through the press 900,000 times and was still serviceable. Boxwood had the advantage of being extremely durable, much more so than type metal, and so close grained as to be almost grainless, providing the engraver with a smooth, excellent surface for his tools. As well, burrs tend to be raised when engraving on type metal, the resulting impression sometimes looking scratchy. Boxwood blocks were cut to the same height as type; they were generally small, the trunk of the boxwood tree seldom exceeded 6" in diameter. Like the type-metal plate mounted on wood, they could be put among letter type and printed in a conventional book press. The use of end-grain boxwood for relief illustrations was the beginning of a new era of economical book illustration in this country. It led, later, to the huge double-paged spreads in newspapers, made up of many boxwood blocks bolted together across the back and engraved by many hands, such as the illustrations by Winslow Homer or Thomas Nast in the late nineteenth-century weekly periodicals.

Anderson talked in his diary of using only boxwood when he resumed engraving in September of 1797, after succumbing once again to the flesh pots, as he said. But the most important event in his career during the diary years, and perhaps in his career as an engraver, was doubtless in 1795. In August of that year he saw Thomas Bewick's illustrations for his *General History of Quadrupeds*, first published in England in 1790. Anderson wrote, "The beautifull [*sic*] specimens of Bewick's work have been the means of stimulating me to improve in the art of Engraving on wood." He adopted Bewick's white-line method of engraving, of making forms more by the juxtaposition of black against white than of drawing, then cutting away from each side of lines that would be left black when printed. The contrast of solid, vivid blacks against whites produced a strong, dramatic, and satisfying image. He also began to copy the Bewick school's designs, from the tailpieces he'd seen in the English edition of *The Looking-Glass for the Mind* and in Thomas Bewick's *General History of Quadrupeds*.

Beginning in 1800, when Anderson began a full-time career as an engraver, he made a startling leap forward in his engraving skills. Almost all of this early work was after English designs, and often after the Bewick school. In these years, his tailpieces were traded from publisher to publisher in New York and in Philadelphia; one can turn them up fairly frequently when examining books of the era. He was learning his craft by copying, as many artists do and have done and the results were often impressive, such as his illustrations for *The Farmer's Boy* by Robert Bloomfield, published in New York in 1801, after illustrations by English designers and engravers.¹¹ His name appeared on the title page as illustrator; as far as I know, it was the first use on a title page of an American illustrator's name. His work was already so much more sophisticated than any contemporary relief engraving that it's not surprising that he was quickly recognized and praised. In 1803 he was cited in Samuel Miller's *Brief Retrospect of the Eighteenth Century*.¹² Miller, a respected educator and author in the New York area, cited Bewick and his pupils and added the name of Anderson, "who has much signalized himself by his genius for the same art."¹³ Yet, even so, business for him was said to be slow, partly perhaps because of distrust of his use of wood blocks and partly because the demand for illustrated books was not yet strong.

It's interesting to watch his increasingly perfunctory copies of Bewick tailpieces and his engravings after English illustrations depicting elegantly dressed children, such as those he supplied for *The Looking-Glass for the Mind*. Differing from this stilted work, from the English "Age of Elegance" as it was called, one sees the kind of vigor that he expressed in his 1797 devil and Minerva cut used for his bookstore advertisement. I'm thinking of *The Present: A First Book for Children*, published in New York by George Jansen in 1807. Here, children are seen with amusement, playing, being naughty, caught with stolen apples with their trousers wet from wading in a pond, looking like children, not small, overdressed adults. It was the kind of representation that made him the most appealing illustrator of children's books into the 1840s. Some of these delightful cuts were for the children's publishers Samuel Wood and Mahlon Day in New York, John and Sidney Babcock in Hartford and New Haven, and for the juvenile tracts of the American Tract Society headquartered in New York. One might argue that these were American designs, down to earth, without pretensions in dress or behavior. They engaged Anderson's sense of

humor, his ability to engrave bodies and faces expressively, and showed an enthusiasm for what he was depicting (fig. 3). In addition, there were his illustrations for children's books written by Americans, such as Samuel Wood's *Cries of New York*, Mahlon Day's *New-York Cries in Rhyme*, both of which went through at least eight editions; and Avis Howland's 1832 *Tales of Old Times*, whose verses dealt in large part with Indian customs and life (fig. 4).

How can an engraving be credited to Anderson when he signed relatively little of his work? Seventeen volumes of his proof books containing over 10,000 prints made from his blocks have survived.¹⁴ They're an extraordinary archive, consisting of everything from large prints that are examples of what have been called the most masterful in the history of wood engraving, to labels for playing cards and pins and patent medicines, diagrams of machinery, to state coats of arms, cartoons, illustrations for school books, children's books, poetry, literature, belles lettres, history, medical texts. The proof books are also a window on social history for the years he worked, as well as a chronicle of the

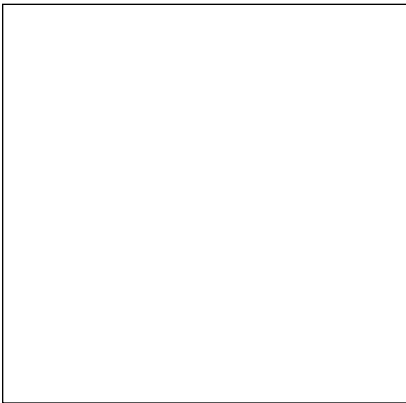


Fig. 3. From *The Primrose* (New York and Baltimore, 1822).

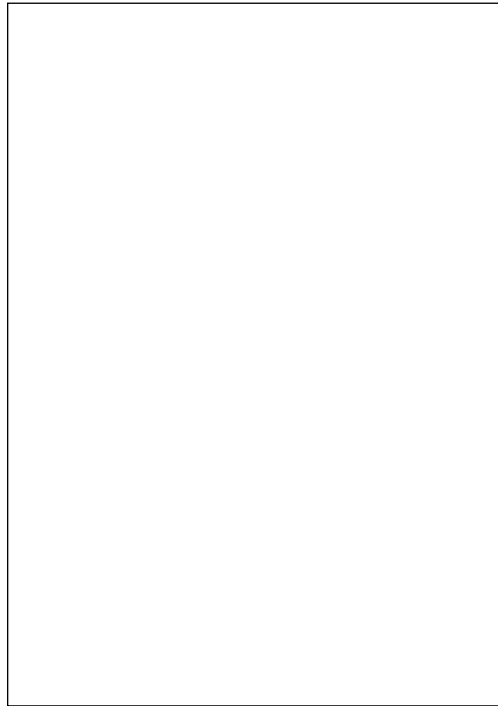


Fig. 4. Frontispiece for Avis C. Howland, *Tales of Old Times* (New York, 1832).



Fig. 5. Summer, from James Thomson, *The Seasons* (New York, 1802).

with both copperplates and delicate wood engravings of flowers; Washington Irving's 1807 to 1808 edition of *Salmagundi* and later editions with copperplates;¹⁸ five different series of cuts for the fables in Webster's spellers;¹⁹ *Mother Goose's Melodies*, published by Munroe and Francis, containing Anderson's humorous caricatures for the nursery rhymes, beginning in the ca. 1837 edition (fig. 6). The eminent nineteenth-century English wood engraver and art historian, William J. Linton, called Anderson's two large wood engravings, published as separate prints, *Waterfowl* and *Returning from the Boar Hunt*, masterpieces of the wood engraver's art (fig. 7).²⁰ And not to be forgotten, are Anderson's illustrations for children's books.

What now of the statement one often hears that Anderson was

changes in style in relief book illustration in nineteenth-century America.

I can't mention here the enormous mass of publications that he illustrated. I have a preliminary list of well over 2,000 titles. Some of the most important books from the point of view of his career and reputation are his 1804 *General History of Quadrupeds*,¹⁵ after Thomas Bewick's cuts; his work for various editions of James Thomson's *Seasons*, beginning in 1802¹⁶ (fig. 5); Langhorne's *Fables of Flora*, 1804,¹⁷

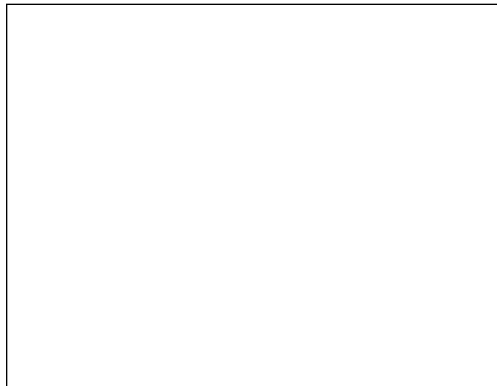


Fig. 6. For the nursery rhyme, "There was a mad man / And he had a mad wife." From *Mother Goose's Melodies* (New York and Boston, ca. 1837).



Fig. 7. Returning from the Boar Hunt, after Johann Elias Ridinger. Original size: 12 ³/₁₆"(h) × 8 ³/₄"(w).

merely a copier of English illustrations and specifically, of the work of the Bewick school? Samuel Griswold Goodrich, better known as Peter Parley, the popular author of nineteenth-century children's books, and, in his early career, himself a publisher, wrote in his *Recollections of a Lifetime* that the successful booksellers of the country "were for the most part the mere reproducers and sellers of English books. It was positively injurious to the commercial credit of a bookseller to undertake American works, unless they be Morse's Geographies . . . or other utilitarian works."²¹ Did publishers direct illustrators to copy the English cuts just as the text was copied, often page for page, wanting to make their books as close to the English original as possible and therefore salable? I've not found contemporary criticism of Anderson's copying others' designs, reproduction of English or European designs was the expected method of making sophisticated graphics available, of providing a civilized tone to a young book industry. For example, a review in the *Medical Repository* stated that "Bewick's figures of the four-footed creatures, and the striking illustrations and ornaments [i.e., tailpieces] which accompany them, have been finely copied in New-York. Our American Anderson has imitated most beautifully his manner of engraving upon wood. He may be said to have equalled in most respects, and even in some to have exceeded, the spirit and execution of his British original."²²

We should remember that the only way to reproduce graphic images at this time, before the advent of lithography in the 1820s, was by relief or intaglio, meaning copperplate, engraving. For us, surrounded on all sides with images from magazines, television, newspapers, signs, and now, computers, it's hard for us to understand a world that was relatively devoid of images. In 1795, the publishers of an eight-volume work, *The World Displayed*, placed an ad in the Philadelphia newspaper the *Aurora*, asking for a portrait of Columbus, "if they would oblige them [the publishers] with it for a few days to copy from—The greatest care will be taken not to soil it," the ad ran.²³ It seems that portraits of even Columbus were a rarity.

That Anderson did copy English designs is undeniable. Was it because of the economic reasons I've already mentioned and, in the early decades of the century, the public's distrust of American products, or because any illustration in a book at that early era was a comparative novelty, and the originality didn't matter, it was enough to "embellish" the book, as the saying went? Due to its awkward drawing

and execution, relief engraving in this country hadn't been accorded a high status. As I've said, the publishing and merchandising climate encouraged the aping of British products. Without placing a low value on originality, we must also understand that copying at that era must be looked at differently than we do now. Not to be forgotten, of course, were intaglio copies of paintings, allowing Americans to become familiar with European art; they were an important addition to culture and aesthetic education.

Was Anderson merely a copier? A glance at the 10,000 cuts in the proof books disproves that statement. As already mentioned, I have indeed found examples of the English originals and matched them to Anderson's work. This occurs more often in his early work than by the 1830s, a time when confidence in American literature, art, and culture was beginning to grow. There's an interesting comment in his handwriting in a proof book at the Boston Athenaeum that contains mostly illustrations for the American Tract Society. He wrote, "all the cuts with this mark AA were engrav'd and many of them design'd by Alex.r Anderson." His initials appear in pencil below each engraving that he had executed, and he provided literally hundreds of wood engravings for the Society. Joseph Alexander Adams, one of the most accomplished nineteenth-century wood engravers, and who knew Anderson, stated in a letter that Anderson "made his own designs or adapted others' rude ideas and put them in proper shape on the block."²⁴ In his 1885 Brief *Catalogue of Books Illustrated by Alexander Anderson*, Evert A. Duyckinck, whose father had published Anderson-illustrated books early in the nineteenth century, mentions publications with original designs. In turn, Anderson's work was often copied by American engravers. The 1790 copyright law covering maps and graphic images was habitually ignored. Due to our twentieth-century attitude toward copying, once we've seen one case of copying, we tend to distrust the copier, believe that his entire product is plagiarist, and belittle him for that reason.

As far as Anderson always copying Bewick, examination of the proof books will show only a tiny percentage of designs taken from Bewick. Anderson did adopt the Bewicks' white-line technique. It was a method that seemed to come naturally to him and it's evident in his most successful engravings. As early as 1794, before Anderson had apparently seen any of Bewick's work, he supplied a frontispiece to Gessner's *The Death of Abel* which in some aspects echoed the Bewicks' white-line

style.²⁵ Thomas and John Bewick and others close to them formed a school of engraving, just as Impressionist painters belonged to a school. Anderson admired Bewick all his life and engraved after him not only as a young engraver, but also in his old age. We may never know enough to make an informed assessment of the originality of Anderson's designs. Certainly, later in the century originality began to be noted and stressed as a selling point. In any case, he made his illustrations his own, by his vigorous treatment and his particular, seductive, handling of light and dark (fig. 8). I suspect that his work for children's books was usually original, more than that for volumes of literature and poetry that had to meet the public's and merchants' desire for a sophistication approaching English standards of book making. In inexpensive children's books he had greater freedom and it is in some of these that we find some of his warmest and most spontaneous engravings.

In surveying books illustrated by Anderson it's interesting to note that he

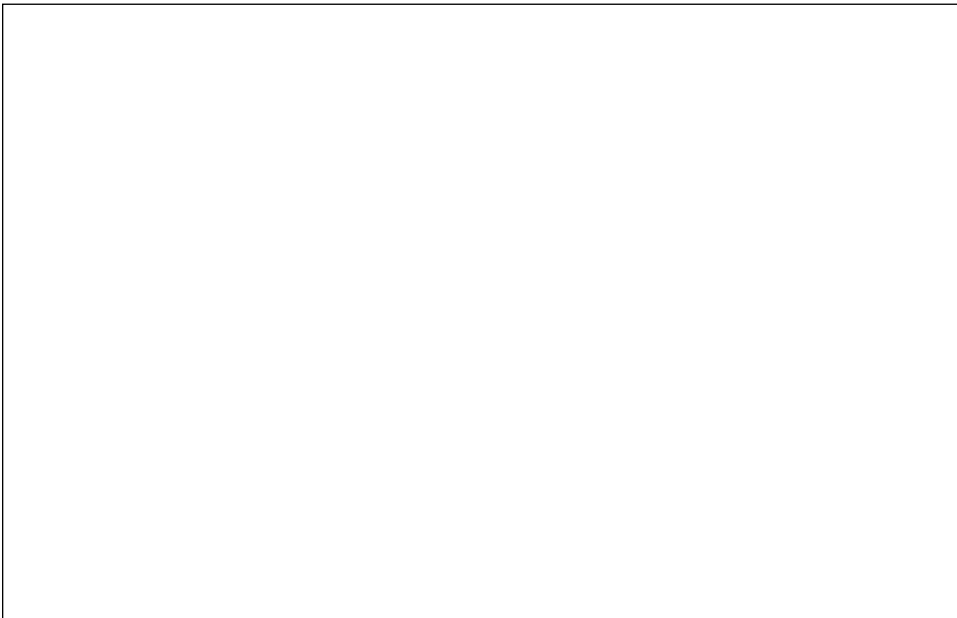


Fig. 8. Spring, from Christopher Sturm, Reflections on the Works of God in Nature and Providence (New York, 1824).

worked differently for different publishers. In other words, he tailored his product to his audience. For the American Tract Society, especially in the early years, from about 1824, he engraved with sturdy, relatively thick lines. The composition was simple, the meaning and evangelical emotions easily understood. And that was appropriate to the mission of the Society. Also, thick lines were needed for printing on the sturdy paper used for the Society's earlier tracts, fine lines would not take on the rough surface.

I have some of Anderson's blocks, many of them made for the early New York publisher of children's books, Samuel Wood. Printed on modern presses with some care, they come out crisp and clear. The thick, coarse paper of the early decades determined the way a block was handled. Under pressure in the press, dampened paper curved itself over the edges of the lines, picking up extra ink, swelling the lines. It's disappointing to see some of Anderson's early work engraved with delicate, graceful shading turn out muddy and indistinct on the page. On the whole, the printers couldn't meet his best efforts. Mathew Carey, the successful Philadelphia publisher, early in the century, told Anderson that his printers weren't able to get a good impression from his blocks when the lines were too fine.²⁶ To make a good impression from a wood engraving, the surface of the paper must be smooth. India paper, a thin, smooth, wove paper was sometimes used successfully for good printing of wood engravings, but it was an added expense. It must be remembered, too, that printing offices must have been cold in winter, that ink doesn't spread and cover well when very stiff, and that the wooden presses in use, if not well adjusted, weren't good instruments for careful printing. As the century went on, smooth-surfaced paper that didn't need dampening, and better presses and ink, could produce good impressions from wood blocks. Artists began to shade with thin lines, cut the block as though sketching with a pencil point and see their work well reproduced. This newer style with its gray tones was an attempt to imitate the excessively fine lines in steel engraving, lending a more luxurious aspect to book illustration. Thus, advances in technology allowed a revolution in the style of wood engraving. Anderson, too, followed this trend but with less success artistically. The vigor went out of his work when he could no longer use strong, vibrant blacks set against white.

A facet of wood engraving that has been little touched on is the use of stereo-

typed images made from wood engravings, as offered in type foundry specimen books. Stereotyping is a process by which, in simplest terms, plaster of Paris (and later, papier mâché, or flong) is laid over a page of type or on the face of a wood engraving, hot type metal then being poured into the matrix once it has been removed and dried; thus, a facsimile is made from the original. The advantages are obvious, type for popular books wouldn't have to be constantly reset or tied up and put out of use, and expensive type would avoid being worn by repeated use. Stereotyping as a method of reproducing pages of text is thought to have first occurred in this country in 1813. Very early, Anderson engravings were offered in type foundry specimen books. Elihu White, type founder in New York, in 1817 included Anderson's work, particularly six octagonal cuts depicting children or story images that would be used all over the country throughout the nineteenth century. By the 1830s dozens of Anderson's engravings were offered as stereotypes by many foundries, most displaying the same cuts. A country publisher had only to order them from his foundry for \$1 or \$1.25 when he bought new letter type, clearly an easier and less expensive way of illustrating his books than ordering from a wood engraver. Several of Anderson's designs were particularly popular and are found wherever children's books, in particular, were published. And, of course, the publication of children's books was a burgeoning market. Anderson's stereotypes were included in type foundry specimen books as late as 1859.

Among other images, Anderson supplied blocks for geography and school books. There are many engravings of foreign countries and of notable buildings and exotic animals. He seemed particularly to enjoy engraving country and farm scenes (fig. 9). They display an innocence and simple sweetness, nostalgia for a way of life that was already changing. He was able to express the tenderness between a parent and child, or between siblings or friends (fig. 10). As one publisher went out of business, Anderson's blocks were sold to another. Samuel Wood blocks from 1808 turned up in Northampton, Massachusetts, in the 1840s and went on to Troy, New York, in the 1850s, so that the appeal of his engravings endured. I have seen his cuts on present-day menus in country restaurants, on almanacs, and in advertisements.

His work went to the West Indies, and to Mexico and South America through

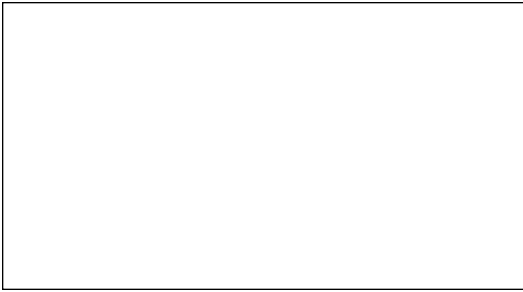


Fig. 9. From *Ann (Taylor) Gilbert and Jane Taylor, Rural Scenes, or, A Peep into the Country for Children* (New York, 1823).

the Appleton firm. Religious engravings, sometimes quite large, were shipped as stereos. They didn't seem to be available in this country. His engravings travelled through the world to Burma and Hawaii, and to Canada in missionary society publications. He engraved for publishers in Cincinnati, St. Louis, Charleston, South Carolina, and New Orleans, as well as all over the East.

It's disappointing, even bewildering at times, when studying the proof books and their vast assortment, to see that Anderson could do hasty engraving that was unworthy of him. Awkward scenes for geography text books, and some of the later readers and spellers, are an unpleasant surprise when placed against his best work. He always worked alone. His four apprentices, one of them his daughter Ann, set up on their own after he had taught them. He never joined a shop nor directed one. Perhaps it's for this reason that being rushed, he could produce weak illustrations. Also, one has the impression that he was sometimes bored with the cuts he was given to do, that he lacked enthusiasm for the work. But it shouldn't be forgotten that he had six children to support. As well, it hasn't helped that work has been attributed to him that could not have been his.

Anderson's work not only reflects his era, its buoyancy, myths, desire for virtues that it wanted established and perpetuated in the new Republic, in art, as well as in all facets of life, but it also reflects his personal history and values. He is often transparently revealed in his engravings by the treatment he gives his subjects; it is due to this that his work has a vibrancy and meaning beyond the ordinary. The loss of his family when he was twenty-three may have encouraged his predilection for the grotesque, a half-bitter sense of the unpredictability of life and of tragedy that was beyond his control. Anderson's frequent scenes of family groupings seem to point back to the years when he enjoyed the love of his own family. As late as 1857,

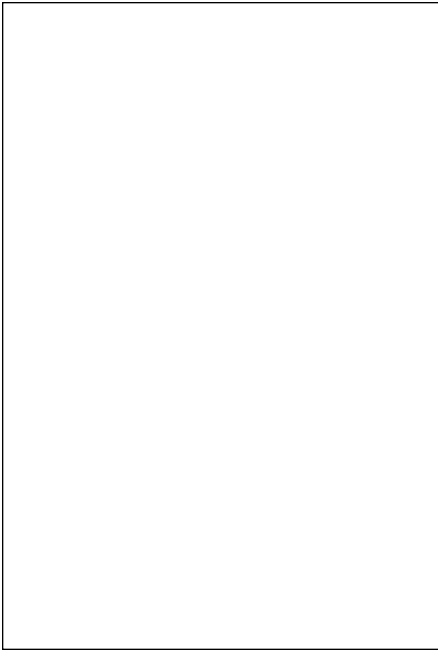


Fig. 10. From [Goold Brown], Little Richard
(New York, ca. 1827)

in a letter to his daughter, while talking about Washington Irving whom he had known as a boy, Anderson commented that both he and Irving had “met with severe afflictions in early life, I by the loss of all my near relations, and he by the death of a young lady to whom he was engag’d—but he took the wisest course, to mix with the world, while I undertook to shun it and led an almost solitary life, the cause of many evils.”²⁷ The almost unreal innocence and joy shown in some of his cuts, especially the earlier ones, can be placed in the context of his era, but can also be seen as an affirmation of what he had lost and prized. It was as though he was making sure by means of graphic images that these values would survive, whatever bad cards fate dealt out. And all through his career, early and late, he had a taste for caricature. Even in

engravings not meant as obvious caricatures, this element is often present, a canny, humorous appraisal of his subjects.

At his best, Anderson was a master, and known and respected in his own times as such. Through him and his pupils, those he helped and those who copied him, engraving on end-grain boxwood and the white-line method were introduced to America. And it must have been due to his achievement that American wood engraving set a high standard in the years after he became established. W.J. Linton, the English engraver already mentioned, who blew hot and cold about many artists, depending on the point he wanted to make, said that “even in Anderson’s rudest work every line is the line of an artist, a line with meaning.”²⁸ And again, from Linton, “two American wood engravers, Anderson and Adams [Joseph Alexander], claim place beside the Masters of our art and may not have their claims gainsaid.”²⁹

Notes

1. The best account of Anderson's life (hereafter, AA) is by Benson J. Lossing, *A Memorial of Alexander Anderson, M.D., the First Engraver on Wood in America* (New York: For the Subscribers, 1872). Frederic M. Burr's biography, *Life and Works of Alexander Anderson, M.D., the First American Wood Engraver* (New York: Burr Brothers, 1893), includes excerpts from AA's diary, but adds little to Lossing's account. Both works include AA's short autobiography, and both are illustrated with some of his engravings. Information on his life is drawn from these sources and from AA's diary.
2. The three volumes of the diary, "Diarium Commentarium Vitae," January 1, 1793 to June 23, 1799, are in the AA Papers, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University. A microfilm of the original document is available.
3. A modern (tentative) medical diagnosis given to me suggested that AA's mother suffered from chronic porphyria, a metabolic disorder that frequently causes neurotic episodes.
4. Diary, July 8, 1793.
5. *An Inaugural Dissertation on Chronic Mania* (New York: T. & J. Swords, 1796).
6. Diary, July 18, 1797.
7. The advertisement appeared from September 4 to 15.
8. Sarah to AA, October 23, 1795, Thirty-Eight Letters from Sarah Anderson to Her son, August 27 to November 2, 1795, AA Papers, Rare Books and Manuscripts Division, The New York Public Library.
9. *Ibid.*, Sarah to AA, September 15, 1795.
10. AA to Julia Malvina, Eighty-Four Letters from AA to His Daughter, 1836 to 1869, AA Papers, Manuscript Collection, New-York Historical Society.
11. Published by George F. Hopkins.
12. New York: T. & J. Swords, 2 vols.
13. *Ibid.*, I: 420.
14. Print Collection, Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations.
15. New York: G. & R. Waite.
16. New York: George F. Hopkins.
17. New York: D. Longworth.
18. New York: D. Longworth. The 1814 edition, also published by David Longworth, contained added tailpieces and copperplates by AA.
19. The first set appeared in Jacob Johnson's edition of *The American Spelling Book*, concurrently with a Hartford set of the same year.
20. *Waterfowl*, after David Teniers the (?)Younger, is dated 1818. *Returning from the Boar Hunt* is after a copperplate by Johann Elias Ridinger. Both are approximately 12" high.
21. New York and Auburn (N.Y.): Miller, Orton and Mulligan, 1857, 2. vols. 2: I10-I11.
22. 2d hexad. I (November, 1803–January, 1804): 404.
23. June 19, 1795, as quoted in Rosalind Remer, *Printers and Men of Capital* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, c1996): I71, n. 28.

24. Adams to Linton, November 20, 1879, William James Linton Correspondence, Wood-Engraving in America, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.
25. Salomon Gessner, *The Death of Abel* (New York: S. Campbell, 1794).
26. Carey to AA, October 16, 1800, Lea & Febiger Letter Books, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.
27. AA to Julia, November, 1857, Box 1A, Slavery Manuscripts, Manuscript Collection, New-York Historical Society.
28. *The History of Wood-Engraving in America* (Boston: Estes & Lauriat): 31.
29. *The Masters of Wood Engraving* (New Haven: Residence of the Author; London: B.F. Stevens, 1889): 196.

1997 *Boston Globe-Horn Book Awards*

Fiction and Poetry

The Friends, by Kazumi Yumoto

Honor: *Lily's Crossing*, by Patricia Reilly Giff

Honor: *Harlem*, by Walter Dean Myers, illus. by Christopher Myers

Nonfiction

A Drop of Water: A Book of Science and Wonder, written and illus. with photographs by Walter Wick

Honor: *Lou Gehrig: the Luckiest Man*, by David A. Adler, illus. By Terry Widener

Honor: *Leonardo da Vinci*, written and illus. by Diane Stanley

Picture Book

The Adventures of Sparrowboy, written and illus. by Brian Pinkney

Honor: *Home on the Bayou: A Cowboy's Story*, written and illus. by G. Brian Karas

Honor: *Potato: A Tale from the Great Depression*, written by Kate Lied, illus. by Lisa Campbell Ernst

News from the California ABC Chapter

Carol C. Jacobs

The Northern California Chapter of ABC of Children's Books is envious of all the interesting activities that are available to those of you living in the East. However, we have been encouraged with the increasing activity of events relating to children's literature in the Western part of the United States. Our group has endeavored to take advantage of as many as possible. The ongoing activity this year has been the study of the Caldecott and Newbery award winning books. At each monthly meeting we have enjoyed discussing the books, as well as the lives of the authors and illustrators. We have almost completed this project and are contemplating the study of other winning categories such as the *Boston Globe-Horn Book Award* or the International Board on Books for Young People list. Additional yearly activities include a luncheon visit to the famous California gourmet restaurant Chez Panisse of Berkeley, and a lovely Christmas high tea at the home of one our members.

Some of our members have been fortunate enough to attend "Picturing Childhood," a wonderful exhibit of illustrated books and toys from the University of California Collections at the Armand Hammer Museum of Art in Los Angeles. Other members have enjoyed a weekend of book browsing and a tour of the Hearst Castle on the central California coast.

We have all regretted the loss of our National Book Award winner, Eleanor Cameron, whom we have enjoyed so much. One of the highlights of our meetings was the evenings we spent with Mrs. Cameron, who so very graciously entertained us in her home with champagne cocktails before dinner and fireside conversation after. Her lively wit and provocative discussions are sorely missed.

The Northern California Chapter of ABC of Children's Books is especially privileged to have the opportunity to become familiar with some of the 10,000 children's books in the Mary L. Schofield Collection in the Special Collections, Rare Books Department at Stanford University, California. Miss Schofield was our friend, and until her death she enjoyed personally showing us some of her favorites,

such as the privately printed first edition of *Peter Rabbit* and the gorgeous illustrations of the artist Kay Nielsen.

Perhaps the greatest benefit of our forming the chapter of the Northern California ABC has been the lasting friendships that have resulted. We all look forward to “our next meeting” and especially look forward to the time when we are fortunate enough to meet with the Connecticut Chapter of American Book Collectors of Children’s Books.

Welcome to New ABC Members

Mr. Walter Albert
7139 Meade Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15208

Ms. Susan M. Anderson
5699 North Delaware
Indianapolis, IN 46220

Ms. Lois Auriemma
307 Saint Louis Avenue
Point Pleasant Beach, NJ 08742

Ms. Irene H. Brown
6521 Crown Lane
Zionsville, PA 18092

Ms. Barbara Elleman
1884 Somerset Lane
Northbrook, IL 60062

Ms. Nora Lee Fingleman
4810 De Milo
Houston, TX

Ms. Judith Janowitz
164 56th Avenue
Kenosha, WI 53144–1042

Ms. Greta D. Little
6310 Goldbranch Road
Columbia, SC 29206

Mr. Richard S. Loomis, Jr.
Sumner & Stillman
P.O. Box 973
Yarmouth, ME 04096

Ms. Barbara A. Lyons
The Bookhouse
21506 Ventura Blvd.
Woodland Hills, CA 91364

Ms. Margery Wilder
72 Hillcrest Avenue
Port Townsend, WA 98368

Polly Cologne: A Mystery Story

Janice Dohm

The first mystery for me was my conviction that I had read *Polly Cologne* by Abby Morton Diaz (1821–1904) ages ago and had enjoyed it tremendously, but when I recently bought a copy to add to a doll collection, I had no recollection of even seeing it before. It is indeed enjoyable, but is much more than a doll story; it is equally a people story and a mystery. It concerns the disappearance of Polly Cologne, Annette Plummer's tiny doll, but also features a large cast of country and city folk of all ages who seem like old friends by the end of the story, and are quite as important as Polly herself. Other delightful characters include Annette's twin brothers, the Jimmyjohns, and her other rag-baby dolls.

The book opens with an unusual catechism: questions and answers explaining the importance of Polly—who is Annette's only rag-baby with feet and proper hair, face and clothing—and describing the human inhabitants of the Land of Ease, who all become involved in the search for Polly after Rover, Annette's dog, loses her in the woods. Following the catechism, the story drives along at a great pace, and though there are many diversions, each has some bearing on the fate of Polly Cologne. The Plummer children's adult friends—especially Funny Man, the Umbrella Mender, and Mr. Tompkins, the Lobster Man—take time out of their busy lives to help in the hunt. Another important character is Botanist, who finds Polly and absent-mindedly puts her in his button-hole while gathering plants, but loses her on returning to the city. Fourteen-year-old Juliana finds her, then exchanges her with a cousin in a variety of ingenious ways—in a pail, a cake, a hat, etc., and even takes her to a City Ball, where she is brought ice cream in a nutshell. Juliana surrenders her to a bed-bound slum child, Mary Hunter, whose love of flowers eventually provides a link with the Botanist. Letters sent by Juliana and several unknown teen-age girls supply information about both Polly and Rover, who begins to send notes to the Plummer boys, identical twins known as the Jimmyjohns as no one can tell them apart. Not yet five, they range the countryside and shore in search of both doll and dog and the misadventures caused by their similarity always end with an-

other clue to the puzzle. When they carry the remaining dolls in a hamper over a brook and drop them in, they return home and in each other's clothes but with gentians in their hats, the gentians that will bring the Botanist back to the Land of Ease. Most of the residents take part in a very successful "Mutual" at which everyone performs, when news comes that the Botanist has been sighted. A suspenseful chase ensues before the Botanist, ignorant of their existence, takes a coach back to the city. His name is now known, however, and four separate visits are made to his boarding-house in the city by strangers wanting to know about the little doll seen in his buttonhole months earlier. When the last visitor arrives, a little street musician who saw Polly brought to Mary Hunter has come for flowers for Mary, commissioned by Juliana, and the end seems in sight.

A second disappearance gives Rover time to return from sea, and at the Plummer's grand Christmas party he runs in with Polly in his mouth in a most satisfactory finale. By then the reader had learned about quite a variety of people, about the flora of New England, even a bit about lobsters (the children cut up the feelers to make coral beads for the dolls and the baby is given a claw to suck), and of course about the dolls themselves. All are rag-babies, but their hair is made of stocking-ravellings (Polly's fair is floss-silk), and their features are put on with charcoal. They have no feet and are larger than Polly, especially Joey Moonbeam (female), who is half a yard high and has to sleep outside the Baby-house. But they do have interesting names: Dorothy Beeswax, Jenny Popover, Susan Sugar spoon, Betsey Ginger and Eudora N. (for Nightingale) Posy, are much loved, though Polly Cologne is the most special. The feeling for the dolls is well conveyed, and so is the feeling for plants and flowers, lobstering, umbrella-mending, farming and botany. It is Mary Hunter's response to them, initially fed by flowers on scraps of calico provided by Tink the street-urchin, then by real blossoms from the Botanist, which Juliana has commissioned, that leads to the final resolution.

The slum scenes are not unduly sentimental (Mary's mother is "kind. . . when she has not been drinking" and works hard as a washerwoman); all the adults are visibly busy at some trade or task, taking crops to town, mending umbrellas, selling lobsters, researching plants, but all have time to try to find Annette's Polly Cologne. There is just enough period and regional detail to agreeably flavor the whole, and the author's irrepressible high spirits make the reader feel he is hearing the story

from one of the participants rather than reading it all.

Because *Polly Cologne* was such a pleasure to read, I thought I'd try *The William Henry Letters*, perhaps the best known work of Mrs. Diaz in her lifetime; it was even put on the stage, though it's now difficult to see how. With a much larger proportion of period and regional detail and a rather confusing multiplicity of viewpoints (not only "Billy" but others write letters, and there is a framework provided by a visitor who met the family while gathering clothing for the Freedmen in the South that seems totally irrelevant), the book is a rambling affair with little plot or shape. William Henry's school has no discernible size or curriculum and little is said about staff or living arrangements. The main concerns of his letters are boyish enough—mainly friends and food (some *very* mysterious treats were popular in the 1870s,) but his writing style is rather similar to that of his elders and both boys and adults made grammatical errors acceptable in that time and place but jarring today. So it was mainly because of Polly that I sought out information on Mrs. Diaz. She rates only a short entry in *The Oxford Companion to Children's Literature* and even less (usually nothing) in other standard reference books on children's authors; so most of the following comes from books on adult authors or notable women.

Abby Morton Diaz (1821–1904) was a "notable woman" because she was a pioneer in women's causes and social reform, beginning when she was still a child, following her father's lead as an abolitionist. Mr. Morton was a descendant of the Pilgrim father who wrote *Mourt's Relation* (the only first-hand account of the Mayflower voyage) and fought for many good causes, the Brook Farm Association amongst them. Although a trustee, he did not stay long in the community, which he found too impractical, but Abby taught the infant school for several years until the experiment ended. One account speculates that her husband, Manuel (or Emanuel) Diaz was one of the Cubans who came to Brook Farm to be tutored and suggests that the marriage ended in separation (perhaps he was forced to return home when the farm dissolved?) One account states he died, but most simply note that Abby was "left" with two young sons (a third had died). She was 40 before she became an author and in the meantime worked as a teacher and nurse. At one point she had a singing school in her father's kitchen; at another (possibly even the same, as she seemed very energetic) she ran a successful dancing school (which may explain the surprising importance of dancing classes in William Henry's life, with exercises,

steps and dances even more peculiar than his favorite treats).

Her first story was for adults and she didn't expect it would be accepted by *The Atlantic Monthly*. When it was, she immediately decided to live by her pen and sent stories and articles to a wide range of magazines, discussing her many social concerns and entertaining both children and adults. Presumably her own sons and memories of growing up with five younger half-brothers provided ideas for *The William Henry Letters* (1870). She assumed *Our Young Folks* would publish the first letters in one issue, but they were spaced out over several and won a great following. Theodore Roosevelt read them as a boy in bound volumes of the magazine and is quoted on the dust-jacket of my copy, (inscribed 1925) claiming it was one of the three favorite books of his boyhood (the other two are forgotten: *Cast Away in the Cold* and *Good Old Times*, which rather weakens the endorsement. He felt the letters taught "manliness, decency and good conduct, but presumably responded most to the author's energy. There were two sequels, *William Henry and His Friends* (1871) and *Lucy Maria* (1874), and several collections of articles for adults were published that same decade. (I have used the L.C. First Union Catalog dates, although they do not list everything: the dates vary elsewhere, and there is some confusion over periodical and book publication dates.)

Polly Cologne first appeared in *Wide Awake* magazine, and was published in book form by Lothrop in 1881, but her family had already been introduced in *The Jimmyjohns and Other Stories* in 1878, and a story about the Jimmyjohns is listed in the *St. Nicholas Index* for its first 27 volumes, along with 11 other stories, a poem and two plays. The illustrator for *Polly* and some of the other books was uncredited but signed his name "Boz": his real name was Morgan J. Sweeney, and his work, while not outstanding, is more than adequate, giving a good idea of the background and bustle of the story.

In the 1880s and '90s, Mrs. Diaz was also busy traveling to give lectures on women's rights and problems, temperance, pacifism, and the growing difficulties caused by the influx of uneducated countryfolk into cities already struggling with the underclass bred in their slums, issues still of interest today and some of her ideas are probably still very relevant. She was said to be pretty, though the only portrait I found was rather "schoolmarmish," and she was noted for her pleasure in charades, parties and singing, reflected in the variety of home entertainments de-

scribed in my two samples of her work. Some half-dozen of her other books for children were collections of stories, some of them fairy stories, some on every-day life. Several shorter books may have been excerpted from these and there was a little series of non-fiction nature books written with a co-author. There are some confusions among lists: *King Grimalkin and Pussyanita* was shown as a separate title in one source, but seems to be the sub-title of *The Cat's Arabian Nights* (1881), which was listed in the 1917 Wilson's *Children's Catalog* along with *Polly* and *William Henry*. (None are in the next, 1925, edition.)

In 1930, however, the two latter books were reprinted with the backing of a powerful triumverate: *Polly Cologne*, introduced by Berth E. Mahoney, and *The William Henry Letters*, introduced by Anne Carroll Moore, under the editorship of May Masee. The *Children's Catalogs* included them through the 1946 edition. The clue to these reprints was provided by my most useful source of information; *Notable American Women 1607–1950* (The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1971), and sent me on to *The Three Owls Third Book, 1927–30*, where Mrs. Diaz is hailed as “A gifted storyteller who was years ahead of her day” and William Henry is described as “that first national boy of American fiction.” And there I found a whole article celebrating *Polly Cologne* as “A genuine mystery story,” rather unexpectedly by Eric P. Kelly. He had read it often as a boy and stated, “I am just as much mystified on the 24th reading as on the first,” confirming my feeling that the book is very cleverly constructed. I would have read this article in the '40s, and must have seen the book in both circulating and reading room collections, which hardly explains my feeling I'd read it: I really wish I had, as I could have recommended it to receptive children as a mystery, a family story, a doll story and an enjoyable piece of Americana.

Mrs. Diaz is most honored in reference books today because of her contribution to society and women's causes. She was one of the founders and for many years president of The Women's Educational and Industrial Union of Boston, foremother of most women's clubs in America. I don't know how much her books may be sought out today: *William Henry*, perhaps because he was listed by Jacob Blanck in his rather ridiculous canon as a “possible” choice, but this was the first time I'd noticed Polly in a catalogue, perhaps because it included her picture and description, triggering my false memory. The book would not go on any list of classic children's

books, I'm sure, but it's such an irresistible reading experience I would put it fairly high on the next-ranked group of books which could not be labeled "classic," but once read are not forgotten, and which sometimes get re-read more often than books on the "classics" list. The remaining mystery, then, is why Polly Cologne has been lost for such a very long time. Next time you see her on a dealer's list, snap her up and share her with a favorite child.

Janice Dobm worked in several branches of the New York Public Library in the mid nineteen-forties before alternating jobs in England and her native state of Washington for two decades. While in England she wrote reviews and occasional articles for The Junior Bookshelf and the children's book sections then published quarterly by The Times Literary Supplement.

Children's Book Conferences

Oct. 23–25, 1997 “Stories from North to South,” The International Board on Books for Young People Regional Conference, presented by the United States Board on Books for Young People, Albuquerque, New Mexico. Keynote speaker is Jean Craighead George and others include Karen Cushman and Lois Lowery. IBBY President Carmen Diana Dearden, Venezuela will give the welcoming address along with USBBY President Joan Glazer, Rhode Island. Conference contact: USBBY, Richard van Dongen, College of Education, The University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM 87131–1231; 505–277–7783.

July 2–5, 1998 Children's Literature Association Twenty-fifth Anniversary Conference; joint conference with Institut International Charles Perroult of Paris, Paris, France, July 2–5, 1998. Theme: “Children's Literature and the Fine Arts.” Contact: Barbara Garner, ChLA, P.O. Box 138, Battle Creek, MI 49016-0138, USA; (616) 965–8180; fax: (616) 965-3568; e-mail: chla@mic.lib.mi.us.

de Grummond Collection Receives Grant

Dee Jones

For the second time since 1991, the de Grummond Children's Literature Collection has received a substantial grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. Dee Jones, project director, submitted the proposal for the grant in July 1996 and was informed of the award in April 1997. The \$206,352 will allow for the sorting, arrangement, and description of the original manuscripts and illustrations of 150 women authors and illustrators who have had a significant impact on the changing nature of children's literature.

The arrangement and description of original materials, as well as the cataloging of historical and rare books is a time consuming and exacting undertaking. Funds received through this grant will provide salaries for three staff members for a period of 18 months. Grant staff who began work on September 2 include Chris Peters, Billie Hackney, and Laura Stroud. Chris Peters, manuscript processor, recently received a M.S. in information, specializing in archives and records management from the University of Michigan. Billie Hackney, cataloger, recently received a master's in library and information science from the University of Texas at Austin. Laura Stroud, manuscript processor assistant, received a B.S. in elementary education from Ball State University and is currently a graduate student in the University of Southern Mississippi's School of Library and Information Science. In addition, current McCain Library personnel Dee Jones, Mary Hamilton, and Bobs Tusa will be spending a portion of their time on grant activities.

The collections that will be processed include personal papers, correspondence, drafts, galleys, illustrations, and other related materials. A descriptive register giving a biographical sketch, a description of the materials held in the de Grummond Collection, and a folder-by-folder listing of all holdings will be created for each of the 150 collections. These registers will be available through the de Grummond Collection web page (<http://www.lib.usm.edu/~degrum>) making the full text accessible to researchers throughout the world. In addition to the original materials, more than 3000 books written by these women will be cataloged, and thus made

more accessible. This descriptive cataloging data will be available through a number of internationally accessible databases such as World Cat, OCLC, and RLIN.

The most historic collection to be processed is that of Victorian British illustrator Kate Greenaway. The de Grummond Collection holds more than 300 original illustrations created by this distinguished artist, as well as 150 books bearing her illustrations. The largest collection is the papers of Adele and Cateau de Leeuw, authors whose children's fiction was first published in the 1920s and was still being reprinted in the 1980s. Their papers and other memorabilia fill 115 boxes, nearly 35 cubic feet.

The papers of other prominent award-winning authors and illustrators that will be processed include Marie Hall Ets, Emily Arnold McCully, Tasha Tudor, and Eleanor Estes. Mississippi women include Joan Balfour Payne, Emilie and Marie Stapp, and de Grummond Collection founder, Lena Y. de Grummond.

There are innumerable positive effects of having detailed descriptive registers, cataloged books, and accessible documents for a research collection, as was realized after our first NEH funded grant was completed in 1993. With improved methods of information dissemination and technology now available, we foresee even greater benefits to the research community of children's literature as a result of this grant.

"Lawn Tea" by Kate Greenaway is one of a set of three unpublished pencil sketches.

Edward Ardizzone at Connecticut College

Brian Rogers

Because Edward Ardizzone was one of Helen Gildersleeve's favorite illustrators, it is not surprising that his work is well represented in the Gildersleeve Collection at Connecticut College. The eighty titles in the Charles E. Shain Library comprise nearly half of Ardizzone's life production of over 170 illustrated books.

Ardizzone, who died in 1979, first attracted public notice with *Little Tim and the Brave Sea Captain*, published in 1936 but originally written and illustrated to amuse his own children. The popular "Tim" sea stories continued for many years. Ardizzone is equally admired for his illustrations of the children's stories of others, notably Eleanor Farjeon (six books), James Reeves (seventeen), Eleanor Estes (five), Walter de la Mare (five), R. L. Stevenson (two), Christianna Brand (four), and a volume of Hans Christian Andersen. He illustrated one book each for such adult writers and poets as H.E. Bates, John Betjeman, G.K. Chesterton, Robert Graves, Andre Maurois, Francois Villon, and T. H. White. John Buchan's *The Thirty-Nine Steps* was popular, as was *A Child's Christmas in Wales*. Literary classics by Bunyan, Defoe, Dickens, Thackeray, Trollope, Twain and Shakespeare attracted his attention, as did a number of contemporary writers of books for young people somewhat better known in Britain than in America. A commission involving an unexpected pairing of writer and genre was Grahame Greene's *The Little Fire Engine* (1973); two other Ardizzone-Green collaborations were published the next year.

During World War II Ardizzone was an official artist (*Diary of a War Artist*, 1974) and later spent a year in India working for UNESCO, beautifully accounted for in the 1953 *Indian Diary*. His art is sympathetically described in a well illustrated book by his brother-in-law, Gabriel White (*Edward Ardizzone*, New York, 1980) and his essay "Creation of a Picture Book" was reprinted in *Only Connect: Readings on Children's Literature*. While creating his highly distinctive vision of the world in a style that hardly changed to the end of his life, Ardizzone now and then expressed

his admiration for the work of other illustrators. To the editors of *Illustrators of Children's Books, 1967-1976* (Boston, 1978) he characterized Maurice Sendak as "tops," and indeed they do strike us as kindred spirits. And after a conversation with Tasha Tudor in 1971 about Louis-Maurice Boutet de Monvel, at her suggestion he wrote Mrs. Gildersleeve asking if she could sell him a copy of *Joan of Arc*. When it arrived in London not long after, he wrote saying "It is a lovely volume and will be treasured," and added "How beautiful is the early chromolithography of the 1900s. I wish we could get reproduction like this now." By this time Helen Gildersleeve was withdrawing from the antiquarian children's book business, and so it was that when the stock of Crossover Books was received by Connecticut College a few years later, it included the excellent 1923 reprint of *Joan of Arc*, but not the 1896 first edition. We may assume that her copy, having crossed the Atlantic twice, now stands on the shelves of Edward Ardizzone's heirs.

Brian Rogers is the special collections librarian at the Charles E. Shain Library.

ARDIZZONE LETTER

USBBY, 1997

Albuquerque, New Mexico

Billie Levy

“Stories from North to South,” the topic for the regional conference of USBBY in Albuquerque, NM in October 1997 was what initially drew me to consider the trip. But then I found an Elderhostel in Albuquerque before the conference that convinced me to try it. Deborah Pfeiffenberger was interested in the USBBY conference and had planned to do some research in Kansas at the May Masseur Collection; so she decided to join me. She doesn’t qualify for Elderhostel because of her young age, but she was allowed to accompany me. The Elderhostel program at the University of New Mexico included “The Navajo and Hopi Connection,” “Shakespeare’s Sonnets and Plays” (we studied *Hamlet*) and “Culture As Seen Through Indian Art,” taught by an anthropology professor, a Shakespearean scholar and an Indian trader’s daughter. The lectures in the morning were followed by field trips to museums, cultural centers and—best of all—to the Acoma Indian pueblo. The mesa tour was led by a traditional Indian who gave us very interesting background on this oldest continuously inhabited city in the U.S. There was outstanding handmade pottery and jewelry set out on tables before each house and many of us couldn’t resist the beautiful wares.

After a week of being immersed in the culture of the region, we had a few days to explore Taos and Santa Fe before USBBY began. We covered five small museums in one day, including the International Folk Art Museum to which Lloyd Cotson is giving a wing to hold his extensive collection of folk art. Evidently he and his wife collected the folk art at the same time they were collecting children’s books from around the world. His collection of children’s books at Princeton is being catalogued and the first exhibit was held recently.

We saw three exhibits of work by Georgia O’Keeffe, including the inaugural exhibition of the Georgia O’Keeffe Museum in Santa Fe. The trip to Ghost Ranch Conference Center at Abiquiu, NM showed us the sources of inspiration for Geor-

gia O'Keefe, who had a house there and painted the marvelous scenery. As there was a two-year wait to tour her home, we had to be content with photographs we bought of it. The Millicent Rogers Museum outside Taos contained some of the most beautiful examples of pottery, jewelry, baskets, paintings and blankets we saw on the trip.

The drive back to Albuquerque along the Turquoise Trail was delightful. We checked into the Marriott for the USBBY Conference on Thursday, October 23 in time to attend the reception and exhibit at the Bardean Art Gallery. Most of the artists were from the Southwest and were doing impressive work. "Telling New Mexico's Stories" on Thursday night provided a sampling of the region's talent. Jean Craighead George started the Friday morning session off with a standard of excellence in her speech, "The Top of the World: Wolves, Whales, and Children," that continued throughout the whole conference. USBBY President Joan Glazer from Rhode Island presented "Our Work Around the World." She now knows about the ABCs and The Northeast Children's Literature Collections.

Shonto Begay, Eleanor Schick, George Ancona and Michael Lacapa were speakers on "Illustrating the Southwest," and Shonto Begay brought many of his original paintings and posters to show and to sell. Of course there were book signings and book selling throughout the conference, which resulted in the shipment of two boxes of books back to Connecticut. The Friday evening address, "Learning to Speak," was by Karen Cushman.

The theme of "Publishing from North to South" on Saturday morning was introduced by new ABC member Barbara Elleman of Chicago, whom I was privileged to meet later in the day and personally welcome her into the ABCs. Speakers included: Alida Cutts, Carl Tomlinson, Joe Hayes, Elena Iribarren, Silvia Castrillon (who spoke in Spanish) and Patricia Aldana, publisher and founder of Greenwood Press in Canada, who said that 75% of the books they published were by foreign authors.

Books had been assigned to be read before the conference so they could be discussed in groups; so we met on Saturday to discuss: *The Great Gilly Hopkins*, by Katherine Paterson; *Parrot in the Oven*, by Victor Martinez; *Confetti: Poems for Children*, by Pat Mora, illustrated by Enrique O. Sanchez; and *My Navajo Sister*, by Eleanor Schick. The discussion was lively and the opinions varied widely, as one

would expect of librarians and teachers.

Jean Little and Katherine Paterson, who now lives in Vermont, had an author's conversation about writing. Both are children of missionaries and obviously are great friends with many hilarious stories to tell. The closing address was by Lois Lowry, which she called "Looking for Elsewhere." This heart-felt speech had most of the audience in tears, as had the other major speeches. These were women who thought and felt deeply and had the talent to tell a superb story.

This was a conference I enjoyed from beginning to end, and I would be tempted to attend the next one to be held in Madison, WI in October 1999. The next IBBY World Congress will be in New Delhi, India, 20–24 September 1998. The theme of this 26th biennial World Congress will be "Peace Through Children's Books." The 27th IBBY World Congress will be held in Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, September 18–22nd, 2,000.

1997 Connecticut Children's Book Fair

Authors and illustrators appearing at the Book Fair in the Bishop Center at the University of Connecticut in Storrs, CT on Saturday and Sunday, November 15 and 16, 1997 include Joseph Bruchac, Ashley Bryan, Normand Chartier, Tomie dePaola and Susan Jeffers on Saturday and Susan Aller, Donald Crews/Anne Jonas, Gerald Hausman, Steven Kellogg and Loretta Krupinski on Sunday. The Book Fair is a project of the Thomas J. Dodd Research Center and the UConn Co-op, in support of the Northeast Children's Literature Collections.

Exhibitions

Sept. 13–
Dec. 28, 1997 “Telling Stories with Pictures: The Art of Children’s Book Illustration,” exhibition of over 200 illustrations produced by 30 New England artists over the last twenty-five years. Included in the show are works by Molly Bang, Leonard Baskin, Maryjane Begin, Marc Brown, Laurent de Brunhoff, Ashley Bryan, Eric Carle, Barbara Cooney, Etienne Delessert, Antonio Frasconi, Edward Gorey, Trina Schart Hyman, Giles Laroche, David Macauley, James Marshall, Holly Meade, Dean Morrissey, Barry Moser, Steven Kellogg, Kathy Jakobsen, Salley Mavor, David McPhail, Ilse Plume, Maurice Sendak, William Steig, James Stevenson, Phoebe Stone, Nancy Tafuri, Alain Vaes and Chris Van Allsburg. The DeCordova Museum and Sculpture Park, Lincoln, MA.

The Northeast Children’s Literature Collections lent original art, and tapes of Steven Kellogg, Etienne Delessert and Barry Moser from Billie Levy’s “Children’s Books: Their Creators and Collectors” TV program are on view.

Sept. 21–
Oct. 19, 1997 “Wendell Minor: An Intimate Look at the Creative Process,” an exhibition of many of Wendell Minor’s drawings, watercolors and finished art for his children’s books and book jackets. The Silo Gallery, New Milford, CT.

Oct. 7–
Nov. 1, 1997 The Western Massachusetts Illustrators Guild, 12th Annual Art Exhibit, an exhibit of new work by members, especially those who work on children’s books. Northampton Center for the Arts, Northampton, MA.

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Although we accept typewritten manuscripts, someone on the newsletter staff must input the material into a computer word-processing program in order for the material to be usable by us. Consequently, it is greatly appreciated when submissions are made on a computer disk. Disks will be returned promptly, but please keep a backup of your file. They may be formatted for the PC or for the Macintosh. Any common word processing program that has word-wrap capabilities may be used, but WordPerfect or Word is strongly preferred. A printout of all submitted files should be included, as well as a note explaining what application was used. To make our job a little easier, please use one space only between sentences, and paragraph indents rather than extra lines between paragraphs.

Send submissions to:

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