



Hobbies and Crafts in Children's Books



A quilt made by Lucy Boston. Photograph copyright © 2014 Lynne Hatwell (dovegreyreader) by kind permission of Diana Boston. See article Patchwork in Lucy Boston's *The Chimneys of Green Knowe* by Pat Pinsent.

Editorial

Did you have a hobby as a child? Stamp collecting perhaps, maybe making something or perhaps you were a railway enthusiast, collecting engine numbers and running your own branch line in the attic. These are perhaps the most obvious ones to spring to mind and may still be a focus for young interests; certainly the specialist magazines displayed on supermarket racks suggest that hobbies are pursued with passion. However, looking at many of these publications, it would seem the audience will be adult. Those aimed at the young tend to feature the collecting of Pokémon figures, painting Warhammer armies or developing Minecraft skills – all in the safety of their own homes.

However, not so long ago hobbies and craft activities could show a singular disregard for health and safety. Nicholas Tucker in his article describes instructions for building a boat for oneself – and not a model but a real craft in which the reader was then encouraged to sail on the sea if not a lake. There are no instructions for making a life jacket! Swimming it was suggested would be a good skill to have if embarking on this particular interest. What the author is recommending is making something, developing a real skill – though there may be more than an element of wishful thinking involved. However, encouraging practical skills is very much part of the ethos of the radical literature aimed at young people in the early twentieth century as Kim Reynolds reveals. Hiking certainly, but also creating a newspaper were activities young people could indulge in with enthusiasm – and did.

If we may look somewhat askance at some of the activities suggested in the books aimed

at young readers, dolls and sewing are still very much part of our world. Susan Bailes and Pat Pinsent explore the role played by dolls and, in the case of Pat Pinsent, patchwork in books for children. In her article ‘Fashioning Dolls’, Susan Bailes traces the way in which dolls and the place they had in the nursery – and out of it – as presented in texts reveal real-life attitudes and ideas about the role, behaviour and position that a girl might be expected to have within society. Perhaps not something of the past as Barbie flourishes – and is now, I believe, allowed to wear a space suit. Patchwork plays a different role in Lucy Boston’s Green Knowe books as Pat Pinsent shows. Here it is the means to establish character and create contact with the past. One is, perhaps, reminded of the Freedom Quilts believed to have been created by slaves as subversive, abstract – but visual – maps of the route to freedom.

Once again, play and a hobby are seen to have a very practical underpinning which is disseminated through the books being published for the young. Nor is this something confined to the past. Maxine March points to the enduring use of patchwork, whether to conjure up a sense of warmth and homeliness or, as for Boston, a way of telling a story itself, while Jemma Westing, herself a practitioner, talks about what motivates her not just to be a creator but to encourage children to create. She may not be encouraging her young readers to build a sea-going craft (or even a raft) but she is encouraging them to harness skills and imagination.

Ferelith Hordon

In this issue

Editorial

Down to the Sea in a Homemade Boat [4](#)

Nicholas Tucker

Political Projects: Hobbies and Youth Activism
in Mid-Twentieth Century Britain [9](#)

Kimberley Reynolds

Patchwork in Lucy Boston's *The Chimneys of Green
Knowe*: Structure and Metonymy [14](#)

Pat Pinsent

Fashioning Dolls: Different Treatments and
Attitudes Revealed in Children's Texts [21](#)

Susan Bailes

Patchwork and Quilting: A Reflection on their
Appearance in Children's Books [34](#)

Maxine March

Out of the Box: Designing Books that Encourage
and Inspire Making and Creating [38](#)

Jemma Westing

*The Sword and the Broom: The Exceptional
Career and Accomplishments of John Mercer
Langston* by Linda Salisbury [44](#)

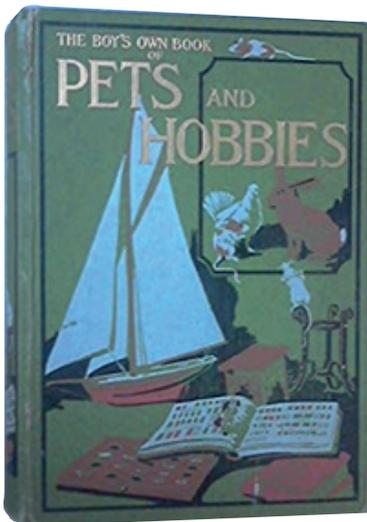
June Hopper Swain

Down to the Sea in a Homemade Boat

Nicholas Tucker has written and broadcast on the subject of children's literature for the last 50 years. He has written a number of books on the subject. His book *Darkness Visible: Philip Pullman and his Dark Materials* published by Icon Books came out in a new edition in 2017.

'**B**oys who love boats will delight in making this serviceable canoe. It is 12 foot long 2 foot 9 wide. It can be used safely on any smooth water.' So E.W. Hobbs, writes in *The Boy's Own Book of Pets and Hobbies* (1912). He was advising on how to construct at home 'a simple canvas canoe'. The very detailed instructions and diagrams that follow are anything but simple, yet clearly seen as no obstacle to what is elsewhere described as 'the soaring human boy'.

Apart from a casual remark about avoiding 'ocean voyages', there is only one other mention of hazards facing those completing this task and then wanting to put it to the test.



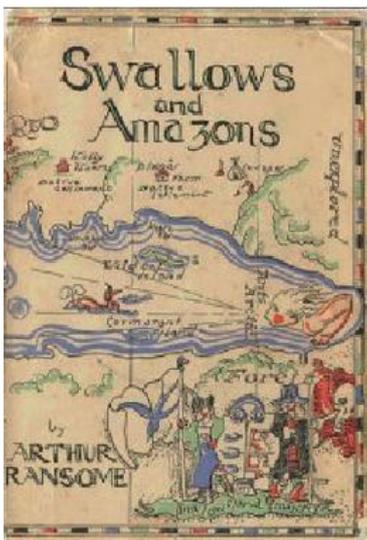
Do not canoe unless you can swim. A canoeist, particularly when racing, thinks nothing of an upset, which to an accomplished hand is merely the loss of a few minutes when, the canoe righted and the owner once more in charge, the prize is still held in view. This, to a non-swimmer, might mean, however, loss of life. Speaking from my own experience, I can assure you that I should not now be writing this if I had been unable to swim, and in no case should canoeing or boating be indulged in by those who have not mastered this necessary and simple art. (pp.337-8)

Sensible advice indeed, albeit delivered as if 'loss of life' was just one of those tiresome possibilities that crop up from time to time. But even moderately proficient young swimmers surely need more warnings about the sea at its most unforgiving.

Here too some years later is Geoffrey Prout, editor and contributor to *Canoes, Dinghies and Sailing Punts* (1934). Writing on 'How to build a sailing "box"', he opines:

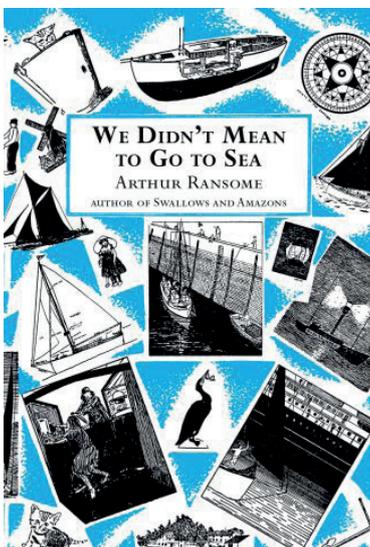
Theoretically, if within swimming distance of the shore, you are as safe as houses. But currents often set strongly offshore; offshore winds might blow one out. There are a hundred and one things which would prove dangerous to an inexperienced sailor of a sneak box. So don't try any channel crossing if you build a sneak box for yourself! (p.91)

But these authors are addressing boys, not men, with an opening advertisement for Bassetts Allsorts – ‘the finest sweets you can spend your pocket money on’ – setting the tone for what follows. In 1938 there were 590 male deaths by accidental drowning in the UK. Could some of these have involved over-confident but under-prepared children, failing to take what little safety advice they might (or might not) have been given?



Eight years earlier saw the publication of Arthur Ransome's first sailing adventure story, *Swallows and Amazons*. In this a family of children, the youngest of whom is seven, take to the water for an extended trip on their own without any safety jackets. Parental assent is provided by their father, absent on naval duties himself, who, when asked by his wife whether she should allow such adventures, cables back 'BETTER DROWNED THAN DUFFERS. IF NOT DUFFERS WON'T DROWN'. 'Hurrah for Daddy!' shouts John, the oldest, on hearing this news. But this would have made uncomfortable reading in a coroner's court had the worst actually happened, always a possibility in real life when lakeside sailing at night with only lanterns for guidance.

Ransome's story was well received by a young audience with parents able to afford hardback novels. Some of these readers may already have sailed themselves. For the rest, as Malcolm Muggeridge pointed out in a review in 1930, 'The book is the very stuff of play. It is make-believe such as all children have indulged in; even children who have not been so fortunate as to have a lake and a boat and an island but only a backyard amongst the semis of Suburbia'.



This typically shrewd point is not one that Ransome would have recognised. A keen amateur sailor himself, his book was based on genuine adventures enjoyed on Lake Coniston with children he had befriended from the neighbouring Altounyan family. *Swallows and Amazons* was initially dedicated to them. But even he seems at a later stage to have had some second thoughts about possible safety implications. In *We Didn't Mean to Go to Sea*, published in 1937, the same children are now found alone on a borrowed



No. 1—Vol. 1. SATURDAY, JANUARY 16, 1910. Price One Penny.

MY FIRST FOOTBALL MATCH.
 I could have kicked him on the head. To be one of the jacked "Elfers," who glory in war to hide the hearts of their kind in the Great Game, had been the boldest ambition of my life. I suppose I ought to be allowed to confess it—over a football club, some say. I received a letter from the boys' club, and I was to play in the match against Owers.



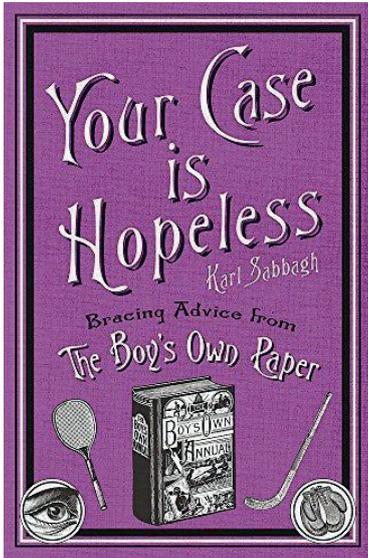
sailing cutter. After a night storm where they lose their anchor they are swept out into the ocean from their berth on the mouth of the river Orwell. Captain John uncharacteristically weeps with relief as his father finally comes to the rescue after his children survive a perilous journey in the fog before ending up in a harbour on the Dutch coast. The underlying advice here is clear: there is only so much immature sailors can manage before the elements at their worst become too much for them.

This story had a particular meaning for me, given that when very young there was a moment when I too didn't mean to go to sea. In 1940 my parents moved into Lane Head, a large house once owned by Ruskin's secretary William Collingwood. Situated on the edge of Coniston Water, it had a fine view of the mountain opposite, always known as Coniston Old Man. It was now owned by a prominent local Quaker who ran it as a commune for kindred souls escaping the blitz. The children's novelist Diana Wynne Jones and her parents were also there, along with other couples, one of whom preferred talking in German because they found the language 'more spiritual'.

But while all these high-minded adults were indoors debating pacifism or whatever, as well as quarrelling among themselves, their children, who ate at separate tables and shared a communal clothes basket, were largely left to run wild. A boathouse bordering the lake was the focus for most of our games. One day my older brother, aged six, thought it would be fun to launch me, aged three, into the lake sitting on a wooden raft. Eventually my parents were called, and I remember my father paddling out in a canoe to rescue me, shouting out not to stand up until he got there. After that, Arthur Ransome's stories of super-competent child sailors equal to nearly all challenges never appealed to me. My brother, to be fair, rescued another child a week later from possible drowning. Arthur Ransome himself, who lived nearby, only visited Lane Head once, in order to complain about the noise we were all making while he was trying to write – about high-spirited children who in real life would probably have been making quite a lot of noise themselves.

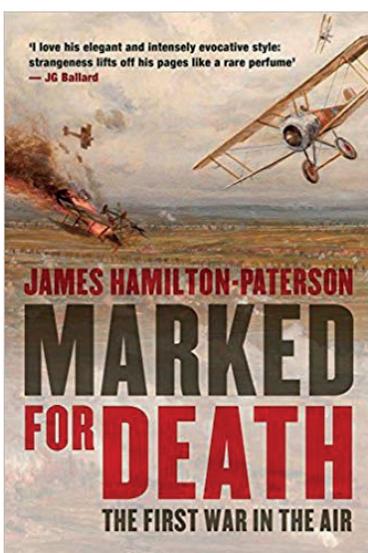
There is no direct link between the benign neglect our parents at the time showed towards the dangers of letting children play unsupervised on a lake and reading any of Arthur Ransome's novels. But the rose-tinted fantasy element in his and other adventure stories fed into a culture that habitually minimised dangers rather than warned

children – and their parents – about what might happen if things went wrong. The same could be said of the maritime hobby suggestions found in back pages of *The Boy's Own Paper* at the same time.



Some readers might well have turned away from such displays of rampant enthusiasm, all too conscious of their own inadequacy as one supremely taxing suggestion follows another. But others, even with no intention of undertaking such tasks for themselves, could still enjoy the idea that they might, just as many adult readers enjoy perusing cookery books without ever getting round to trying out the recipes. Even in fantasy, it could still be nice to be assured by Geoffrey Prout that 'Every boy who likes paddling a canoe, or sailing a boat on river or lake, much prefers to make his own craft if circumstances allow'. Building a 'Canadian cruising bateau', he goes on, is 'Simplicity itself, with costs running at under 25 shillings'. (1939: 112)

And not just homemade boats: there is also a piece in *The Boy's Own Paper*, quoted in Karl Sabbagh's amusing study *Your Case is Hopeless: Bracing Advice from The Boy's Own Paper* (2007) on 'How to make an Astronomical Telescope' (p.252). Another contemporary edition of *The Boy's Own Paper* has the editor telling a correspondent that 'We are indeed glad to hear that you have succeeded in making a very fair and good-toned violin from our articles, as we must confess that it is by no means an easy thing to do. Violin-making requires much patience and ingenuity' (Sabbagh, p.249)



So yes, there always were a few readers then who did manage to construct some of the fiendishly difficult boats and other articles so resoundingly recommended to children over the years. It could also be that the pervasive ever-positive spirit in these hobby pages, along with accompanying, mostly heroic, stories, proved useful in 1939 and after.

James Hamilton-Paterson's study *Marked for Death* (2016), ran interviews with pilots, some of whom in their youth had taken part in the Battle of Britain. Several of these claimed that they had been particularly inspired at the time by having read Captain W.E. Johns' best-selling fiction featuring that audacious and ever-undaunted fighter-pilot Biggles. As part of the general, largely unquestioning 'Can-do' atmosphere so prevalent in writing for older children at the time, could all those highly aspirational if often impractical

hobby suggestions found in *The Boy's Own Paper* and elsewhere also have had some influence here too?

Works cited

The Boy's Own Paper (1879–1967). London: Religious Tract Society (1879–1938); Lutterworth Press (1938–1962); Purnell and Sons Ltd. (1963–1964); BPC Publishing Ltd. (1965–1967).

Hamilton-Paterson, James (2016) *Marked for Death*. Cambridge: Pegasus.

Hobbs, E.W. (1912) How to make a Simple Canvas Canoe. In Morley Adams (ed.) *The Boy's Own Book of Pets and Hobbies*. London: Religious Tract Society.

Hobbs, E.W. (1938) How to Make a Simple Canvas Canoe. In Jon E. Lewis (ed.) (2008) *The Mammoth Books of Boys Own Stuff: A Staggeringly Large Guide to all that a Modern Boy Needs to Know and Do*. London: Constable & Robinson Ltd.

Johns, W.E. (1932–1939) Biggles series of books. Various publishers, many by Hodder & Stoughton and Brockhampton Press.

Muggeridge, Malcolm (1930) Swallows and Amazons Book Review. *The Manchester Guardian*, 30 July 1930.

Prout, Geoffrey (1932) The 'B.O.P.' Canadian Cruising Bateau. *The Boy's Own Paper*, May 1932.

Prout, Geoffrey (1934) How to Build a Sailing 'Box'. In *Canoes, Dinghies and Sailing Punts*. The Boy's Own Paper Office.

Ransome, Arthur (1930) *Swallows and Amazons*. London: Jonathan Cape.

Ransome, Arthur (1937) *We Didn't Mean to Go to Sea*. London: Jonathan Cape.

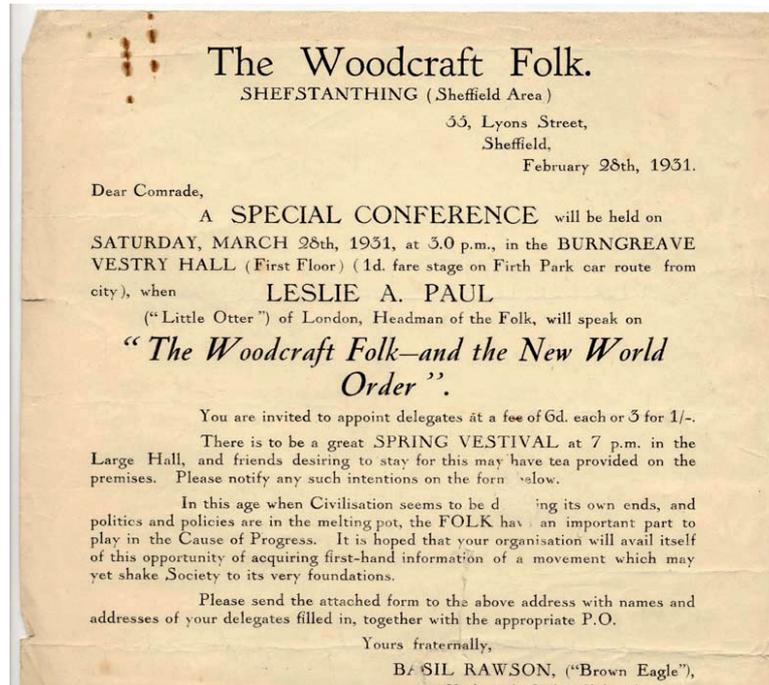
Sabbagh, Karl (2007) *Your Case is Hopeless: Bracing Advice from The Boy's Own Paper*. London: John Murray.

Political Projects: Hobbies and Youth Activism in Mid-Twentieth Century Britain

Kimberley Reynolds is Professor of Children's Literature in the School of English Literature, Language and Linguistics at Newcastle University, UK. She is a past president of the *International Research Society for Children's Literature*, Senior Editor of *International Research in Children's Literature* and in 2013 she received the International Brothers Grimm Award for contributions of children's literature research. She has twice received the Children's Literature Award for Children's Books: *Radical Children's Literature Future Visions and Aesthetic Transformations in Juvenile Fiction* (2009) and *Left Out: The Forgotten Tradition of Radical Writing for Children in Britain, 1910-1949* (2016). She has also a long association with IBBY UK and the University of Roehampton. She is a Chapter One Founder of Seven Stories, the National Centre for Research in Children's Literature (NCRCL) and a founding member of the Children's Laureate steering committee.

This article is derived from a presentation given at the November 2018 IBBY UK/NCRCL MA conference. The presentation was accompanied by many images and extracts from works that cannot be reproduced here. Almost all of them can be found in their entirety in *Reading and Rebellion: An Anthology of Radical Writing for Children 1900-1960* (eds Kimberley Reynolds, Jane Rosen and Michael Rosen, Oxford University Press, 2018).

The first half of the last century saw a turn to the left in British society in which the general population, weary of the series of wars and economic upheavals that had plagued the first decades of the twentieth century, became interested in alternatives to capitalism, nationalism and militarism. Children were inevitably caught up in this shift at the levels of health provision, education and recreation, including hobbies. All of these areas came together in children's reading; especially for children growing up in left-wing households, where emphasis on reading owed much to Lenin's proclamation that the job of youth was to 'read, study and learn'. At a time when print was the main medium for reaching out to children and young people, the kinds of material children of the left were likely to encounter included books in translation (and films with subtitles), plays, poems, lyrics and periodicals.



Conference poster and invitation. Copyright © 1951 Woodcraft Folk.

I wrote about this kind of material, which I call radical children's literature, in a book called *Left Out: The Forgotten Tradition of Radical Writing for Children in Britain, 1910-1949* (Oxford University Press, 2016). In a nutshell, these were works designed both to provide new visions of how the world might be organised and run, and to encourage children to skill themselves up so they could contribute to the work of bringing in and managing a more peaceful and fair future. Examples of these works can be found in the anthology I co-edited with Michael Rosen and Jane Rosen (not related) *Reading and Rebellion*. We decided to put together that volume because almost all the original works have been left out of standard histories and consigned to the library stacks (if they have been kept). To locate them I talked to many people, including Michael and Jane, who had grown up in left-leaning homes and communities. As they talked about what they had read and how they acquired and shared particular books and other publications, it became clear that there were strong links between hobbies in the broadest sense and reading.

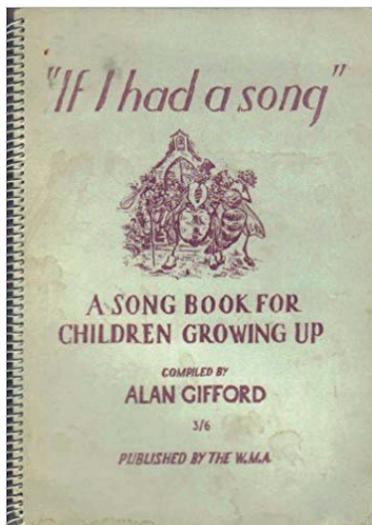
Although many of the activities and books children of the left enjoyed were often the same or similar to those familiar to children growing up in households that did not share their political ideals and aspirations, they were part of a different social context. For children of the left, emphasis was placed on recreation as part of social transformation. Hobbies, then, were based on activities that would teach life skills and help



Tolworth Woodcraft Fellowship group. Copyright © Woodcraft Folk.

children become healthy, well-informed, competent, well-adjusted adults and good citizens. The left's approach to developing children's skills often involved group activities under the aegis of organisations such as the Socialist Sunday Schools (founded 1909), the Young Communist League (founded 1921), or the Woodcraft Folk (founded 1924). These groups combined recreation with education, play with exercise and cultural improvement, and all activities with political development and work in the community. In these groups children were introduced to hobbies which included the art of creating pamphlets and publications, literary appreciation, learning first aid, hiking, camping, group singing and performances, and making banners and posters for demonstrations.

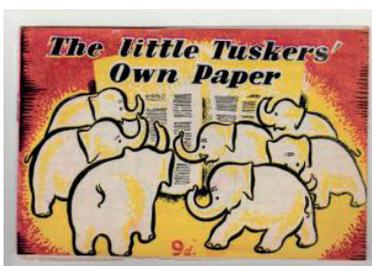
A flavour of the purposeful nature of their activities – and the enjoyment young people got from them – is found in the log books they kept. Extracts from Woodcraft Folk log books from these years (available on the official Woodcraft Folk website) show children running meetings, taking minutes, organising activities such as reading groups, camping holidays and hikes. For instance, a log book from 1930 records details of a hike undertaken by a group of youngsters who walked for 14 miles on the outskirts of London.



The Open Road: Sunday 10 Oct

Sunday the 10th October, the first hike of the season was held, eight people turning out. Hike started at 10:45, and our first path was up the Chalk Cliff. Climbing up and down hills, we walked to Romney Street and South of Kingdown, & then to Stansted at 12:45. We stopped one hour for Dinner. The sun was shining brightly and everyone was in good humour

Every group and most gatherings included singing; learning a repertoire of folk songs and how to accompany themselves on guitars was a must for any self-respecting young activist. It is important not to underestimate how deeply singing helped embed ideas and attitudes. Michael Rosen gathered a number of songs and performances associated with the left in a section of *Reading and Rebellion* and as we have been promoting the book, audiences have spontaneously joined in singing some of them, many decades after they were first learned. These include ballads about famous rebellions, songs that celebrated freedom, peace, comradeship and the spirit of internationalism, and a part of the script for *The Big Rock Candy Mountain*, first performed at the Theatre Royal, Stratford, London in 1955-1956.



Going to the theatre may not be considered a hobby, but mounting performances was a popular activity in left-wing groups that involved many hobby activities. Like singing, putting on plays and constructing tableaux were also an effective way of disseminating political lessons. Between the wars left-wing performances by children which spread ideas about political, social and economic reform could reach thousands of people. For instance, *The Dawn*, a play performed by children of the Co-operative Movement, is a parable about bringing industry and democracy together to 'moralise' the economy. In a single year it was performed by children in at least 11 groups to an estimated audience of 4,500 adults and children.

The most ubiquitous and enduring pastimes were reading and writing. Books were passed around between group members and discussed in meetings, on hikes and while camping. They were so valued that often they were kept, collected and passed down in families. As Lenin's injunction about reading makes clear, for those growing up on the left, reading was part of acquiring the vocabularies and skills needed to argue their case, not least in print. Groups and summer camps regularly generated bulletins, wall

newspapers and other publications. Even very young children were encouraged to learn how to put together publications. For instance, the Daily Worker circulated a pamphlet called *The Little Tusker's Own Paper* (1945), a cartoon-style feature that shows a little elephant learning how to produce a newspaper. Newspapers here are presented as a fun way to stay in touch with friends; a kind of early form of social media for young activists.

Older children and teenagers were more ambitious. Probably the most ambitious youth publication of the interwar years was called *Out of Bounds*, created by pupils from many elite public schools in 1934 to challenge the establishment and spread left-wing ideas. It was produced to a high standard, had a print run of 3,000 and even attracted advertising. This example captures the way reading helped children and young people step outside the established structures and assumptions of British society and to experiment with ways of making life better for all. And that is the essence of radical children's literature, whenever and wherever it is produced.

Works cited

Reynolds, Kimberley (2016) *Left Out: The Forgotten Tradition of Radical Writing for Children in Britain, 1910–1949*. Oxford University Press.

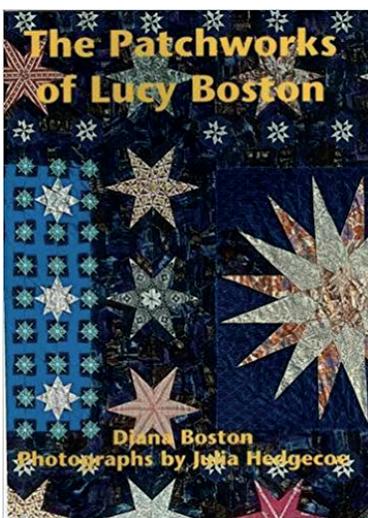
Reynolds, Kimberley, Jane Rosen and Michael Rosen (2018) *Reading and Rebellion: An Anthology of Radical Writing for Children 1900–1960*. Oxford University Press.

Patchwork in Lucy Boston's *The Chimneys of Green Knowe*: Structure and Metonymy

Pat Pinsent is a Senior Research Fellow of Roehampton University specialising in children's literature, the subject matter of most of her books. She was co-founder of the MA in Children's Literature and also produced the initial MA Distance Learning materials. Her main research interests lie in the diverse ways in which children's literature is currently developing, and the relationship between it and spirituality/religion. She has edited two journals related to children's literature and currently edits another on women and spirituality/theology.

Introduction

Lucy Boston (1892-1990) was one of the writers whose work created what has sometimes been termed 'the second Golden Age of Children's Literature'. During the 1950s, a remarkable number of distinguished writers, such as Philippa Pearce, Alan Garner, Rosemary Sutcliff and William Mayne, together with Boston, showed that literature for the young could equal in quality that written for adults. But if you look Boston up on the internet you will find as many references to her creative and original patchwork as to her Green Knowe novels: this combination of handicraft and creative writing surely makes her a most appropriate subject for this issue of *IBBYLink*.

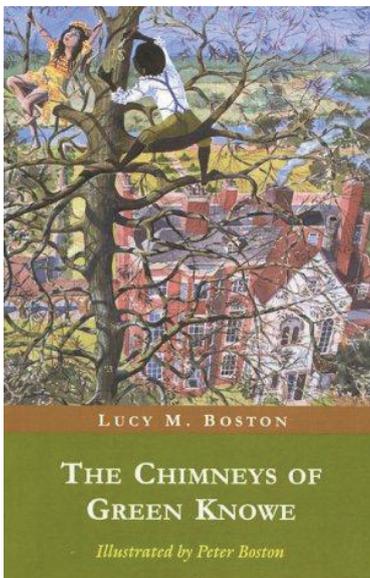


The sequence of novels takes as its setting the manor house in the fenland village of Hemingford Grey. Shortly before the Second World War, Boston bought this ancient property, which is one of the oldest inhabited dwellings in England. As well as spending time and money restoring it, she created what can justly be described as its own mythology, featuring stories about children from the house's imagined past. These children are encountered by Tolly, the great-grandson of the fictional mid-twentieth century owner, Mrs Oldknow, when he stays at the house Boston named 'Green Knowe'.

After Lucy Boston's death in 1990, her daughter-in-law Diana (the wife of Lucy's son Peter who illustrated her books) not only opened the house, by appointment, to

those interested, but also published a collection of reproductions of 22 of her mother-in-law's needlework creations, entitled *The Patchworks of Lucy Boston* (1995). The second volume in the series was *The Chimneys of Green Knowe* (Faber, 1958). The book features patchwork as the craft favoured by Tolly's great-grandmother, Mrs Oldknow. The old lady also uses the pieces of material with which she is repairing an ancient quilt as stimuli for the stories she tells Tolly. These stories feature a blind girl, Susan, and Jacob, a black boy brought home from his voyages by her sailor father, Captain Oldknow. The patchwork materials are derived from the clothes and furnishings belonging to the people who dwelt in the house during the late eighteenth century, and some of them also serve as a concrete illustration of the racism manifested towards Jacob (though Boston's treatment of this subject inevitably reflects the period in which the book was written). A related artefact which also has a structural role in the story is a picture of the house embroidered by Susan's mother, Maria Oldknow.

Structure of the novel



Chimneys is the second in the Green Knowe series, and when Tolly goes there for the Easter holidays, he expects to meet Toby, Linnet and Alexander, the seventeenth-century children whom he encountered in his Christmas visit to the house. But the painting which evoked their presence is away at an exhibition, replaced on the wall by a representation of the house as it was in the eighteenth century – embroidered by the then Mrs Oldknow, Maria, using hair from the family and servants of that period.

In her own sewing, twentieth-century great-grandmother Mrs Oldknow is repairing 'one of the old patchwork quilts [that] were used as curtains' (p.15), and beside her is a basket containing cut-out pieces of 'bright cotton materials' (p.16). Not only does she explain to Tolly the link between each of the pieces and the relevant members of the family, but she also conveys something of their characters: Maria 'was a vain and silly woman' (p.17) and the footman Caxton, whose yellow and black apron provides some other pieces, 'was a nasty man' (pp.17-18). Tolly locates a piece of bed curtain belonging to the blind girl, Susan, by using the 'magic' of spreading his fingers on the cloth and calling her name. But the wearer of the 'bright emerald green and scarlet' pieces of a thick material remains at that point a mystery to him and to the reader. Thus Boston creates the

expectation that Mrs Oldknow will assuage our and Tolly's curiosity - the patchwork provides a framework for the novel.

A key point of the narrative is Mrs Oldknow's story about the green and scarlet pieces of material, which derive from clothes made for Jacob on the orders of Susan's brother Sefton, in malicious imitation of the 'green coats and red trousers' (p.81) worn by the monkey belonging to an Italian man playing the 'hurdy gurdy' (barrel organ). The black boy puts on the suit, but Nanny Softly is aware of how Sefton is ridiculing him. Nanny is however more indignant about the indecency of the suit having a hole at the back for a monkey's tail than about the cruel joke at Jacob's expense. He is soon provided with clothes which are 'proper' in all senses, the monkey clothes being given to the poor, but the tailor's surplus material has provided the pieces Tolly has seen in the quilt.



A quilt example. Photograph copyright © 2014 Lynne Hatwell (dovegreyreader) by kind permission of Diana Boston.

The other artefact relating to the story is created by Susan's mother, Maria Oldknow; when her jewels go missing after a fire destroys the newer part of the house, a gypsy tells her that to recover them she must embroider it, using hair obtained from each of its occupants, reciting every time she inserts the needle the words, 'Great Moloch, Lord of Fire, put a pearl on this point' (p.172). The picture provides the stimulus for Tolly finding the jewels, stolen by the dastardly footman, Caxton.

Portrayal of characters

I am using the term metonymy, less familiar than metaphor, because the pieces of cloth which serve to illustrate something about the characters associated with them are indeed 'there' as far as the novel is concerned. I think Boston's work is 'magic realism' rather than fantasy as such: as the critic David Lodge observes, 'Realistic fiction relies principally upon symbolism ... in which the primary signified is introduced into the discourse according to the metonymic principle of spatial or temporal contiguity' (1981: 22-23). Here we see how parts of the wearers' clothes both remind us of what people actually wore in the past, and either directly or indirectly represent their personality or, in Jacob's case, something of how they were treated. Thus pieces from the clothes of Caxton the footman (whose hostility could be said to resemble a marauding insect) lead Tolly to say, 'like a wasp'. The personality of Susan's unpleasant brother Sefton is indicated by the number of patchwork pieces from his clothes - his fine shirt, his dressing gown for lounging in, his riding coat with a primrose lining. The vanity of Maria's character too is signified by the abundance and quality of her clothes. By contrast, Jacob's character certainly does not metaphorically resemble the clothes associated with monkeys that he is forced to wear; rather these clothes signify the way he is regarded, especially by the hostile Sefton.

Probably the most obvious way in which Boston uses metonymy is in portraying great-grandmother Oldknow as both literally assembling a patchwork of pieces from the past and a storyteller who performs the same process with the stories that comprise the novel. Inevitably, in doing so, she also becomes a figure for the author Lucy Boston herself and the creative process in which she is engaged - thus Boston was a patchwork creator in more ways than one. In Lodge's terms, this is an instance of 'metonymic signified I

[the patchwork creation] metaphorically evok[ing] signified II [the story]' (1981: 22-23).

Otherness and race

As indicated above, Boston introduces the character of the black boy Jacob by reference to the lurid colours of the 'monkey-suit' that Susan's unpleasant brother Sefton provides to ridicule the boy. But this trick instead creates a negative reaction against Sefton's racist attitude. Although Captain Oldknow has explicitly ordered that the boy be well treated (p.64), Sefton intends to expose Jacob to ridicule when he wears the suit; at the same time this incident also reveals both the boy's endearing respect for the Captain and his desire to fit in:

Jacob went up to his room ... to put on the clothes that were going to make him like everybody else. It was a solemn moment for him. But the suit was not at all what he has expected, not like English boys' clothes. However, he was sure the Captain would give him what was right (p.83)

A further attempt to demean Jacob occurs when Sefton is out shooting and claims to have 'winged a mallard' which may have fallen down one of the chimneys. Despite Jacob's reluctance, Sefton sends the boy up the soot-laden chimney to look for it, telling him,

'You're the right colour already. Why, it won't even show. You won't have to wash afterwards, if it's washing you don't like.'

They seized him as if it were a great joke and frog-marched him into the house, Sefton laughing and showing his splendid teeth, and his friend sniggering

'Off with his coat and trousers! Send him up in his drawers.' (p.101)

The language, including a little later the use of the 'n' word, makes it very evident that Sefton is in the wrong. Boston is enlisting the child reader's sympathies towards Jacob and showing the evil of Sefton's attitude to him - enhanced, no doubt, at this point only 11 years after the end of the Second World War, by the similarity of the young man's behaviour to that of the Nazis.

Perhaps it is inevitable that a book written more than 60 years ago and touching on the always tendentious subject of the portrayal of black characters should seem somewhat

politically incorrect from today's perspective. Jacob's position as an outsider to the traditionally English heritage of Green Knowe is emphasised by his stereotypical inability to speak English grammatically, despite presumably having been taught it by the standard-English-speaking sea captain. His characteristic inability to master the syntax of English verbs is displayed in all his utterances, typically when he objects to being sent up the chimney in search of the bird that Sefton claims to have shot: 'I stay look after Miss Susan. Captain say I not your servant. I not go up chimney' (p.100). It is unsurprising that at the end of the novel Tolly learns that Susan goes on to marry her tutor Jonathan, despite Jacob's important role in her happiness and the many exploits they have shared. Neither Mrs Oldknow nor Tolly make any comment about the fact that Jacob, as she narrates,

chose himself a wife from his own people, and brought her back with him. And he lived happily too. His wife was Nanny to Susan's children, and he and Susan were devoted friends. As for the children, whether black or white, they could never leave him alone. He grew into a very big man, and they loved him as much as you would love a gentle, playful lion. (pp.185-186)

These are the final words of the novel, but rather than seeing them as indicating that Boston would have deprecated 'a mixed race union such as this [Susan and Jacob]' as Dulcie Pettigrew (2011: 55) suggests, I think that they merely reflect Boston's mid-twentieth-century unquestioning acceptance of the then current view of eighteenth century mores.

There are certainly limitations in Boston's view of heritage, which, as Clive Barnes (2011: 43) indicates, 'was coloured by a sense of class and intellectual superiority and ownership,' but I don't think that these lessen the value of the books. Although they portray the 'other', such as Jacob here and the Chinese boy Ping in *The River at Green Knowe* (1959), as outsiders, these outsiders are shown as deserving of respect. The books can in fact be seen as an early contribution to the process of understanding what might be termed the 'patchwork' of our society, both in the past and today.

Works cited

Barnes, Clive (2011) 'Where you belong is what you are': aspects of heritage, identity, class, magic and childhood in Lucy Boston's Green Knowe novels. *Journal of Children's Literature Studies*, vol.8, no. 3: 22-46.

Boston, Diana (1995) *The Patchworks of Lucy Boston*. Tintern: Colt Books.

Boston, Lucy (illus. Peter Boston) (1958) *The Chimneys of Green Knowe*. London: Faber & Faber.

Boston, Lucy (1963) The author as the maker of the personal myth. *Hornbook Magazine*, June 1963. Reprinted in Margaret Meek, Aidan Warlow and Griselda Barton (eds) (1977) *The Cool Web: The Pattern of Children's Reading*, London: Bodley Head, 216–221.

Lodge, David (1981) *Working with Structuralism*. London: Routledge.

Pettigrew, Dulcie (2011) Identity in Lucy Boston's Green Knowe stories. *Journal of Children's Literature Studies*, vol. 8, no. 3: 47–57.

Websites

The Patchworks of Lucy Boston at The Manor, Hemingford Grey. https://dovegreyreader.typepad.com/dovegreyreader_scribbles/2014/06/the-patchworks-of-lucy-boston-at-the-manor-hemingford-grey.html.

Fashioning Dolls: Different Treatments and Attitudes Revealed in Children's Texts

Susan Bailes has taught in secondary and preparatory schools for 36 years and retired from a headship in Surrey after 13 years, in August 2012. She has always enjoyed English literature and drama, adapting and writing productions for pupils, and obtained her first degree from London University and her PGCE at Goldsmiths' College. Whilst a deputy head, she was one of the early postgraduate students to obtain an MA in Children's Literature at Roehampton University and continues to carry out research. She very much values serving on the committees of IBBY UK, the Children's Books History Society and, more recently, IBIS, the Imaginative Book Illustration Society and regularly reviews books for these organisations. She has a particular interest in doll literature and all it reveals about the historical context in which it appears, along with illustrators. She now has a large, relevant collection. Her most recent talk 'Kathleen Ainslie (1858-1936): A Forgotten Female Edwardian Illustrator of Children's Books' was published in *Studies in Illustration*, no. 66, Summer 2017

Making use of a range of primary sources, I propose to explore the treatment of needlecraft and fashion in a selection of children's doll texts. Many eighteenth-century paintings remind us of how the dolls that appear in portraits were expensive items, an indicator of class, the majority associated with females. John Wollaston's portrait of Mann Page and his sister Elizabeth (ca. 1757) is one such example. The artist shows them both smartly attired, happily gazing out at the viewer. A living red parrot is perched on the boy's left hand, whilst his right hand carefully holds onto a leash. His sister holds an inanimate object, a doll, beautifully clothed in finery, a golden, silk, full-length dress closely resembling her own attire with the same square neckline. (See Figure 1.)

Dolls in this period carried associations with the fashion trade and were chiefly targeted at the female gender.

Figure 1
John Wollaston *Mann Page and His Sister Elizabeth*. Original portrait in the collection of the Virginia Historical Society, Richmond, Virginia. (Virginia Historical Society, Accession no. 1973.16). This is a faithful photographic reproduction of a two-dimensional, public domain work of art, courtesy of the Virginia Historical Society.



Antonia Fraser in her *History of Toys* (1966) explains how the fashion doll was an eighteenth-century phenomenon even though as far back as the fifteenth century European royal houses and nobilities ordered fashion dolls on a regular basis. Dolls called 'Pandoras' were sent out by French fashion houses to the continent for their details of dress and coiffure as fashion magazines and plates were not available as a source of information at that time. Dressmakers illustrated their skills in miniature for their clients. In addition, human-sized versions of the fashion doll came into existence.

Aristocratic and bourgeois women started collecting the dolls. Moreover, the dresses were often taken off the doll upon its arrival and worn by the recipient. The dolls were even granted diplomatic immunity during the Wars of the Spanish Succession (1702-1714). Native English fashion dolls travelled to America as newspapers at the time report.

There was little to distinguish the dolls used to display the latest fashion from those used as toys. Women viewed them with the girls who played with them and girls could see, with the dolls dressed in adult styles, pictures of womanhood, and imagine themselves grown up. In the painting by William Hoare of *Christopher Anstey and his Daughter Mary* ca. 1776-1778, we see the potential waywardness of girls. Anstey the poet gazes aloft in concentration, whilst his daughter, smiling, tugs at his coat, urging him to look at her doll. This diminutive object epitomises extreme eighteenth-century fashion. We notice the very tiny waist, the exaggerated towering high hairstyle added to with jewels and feathers. (See Figure 2.)



Figure 2
William Hoare *Christopher Anstey and his Daughter Mary* © National Portrait Gallery, London.

Apart from conveying the latest fashion trends, it is important to note that dolls played a significant part in female education. A good wife needed to master sewing and dressmaking. Like samplers, dolls functioned as study tools, and exemplars of accomplishment. If a girl had an undressed doll she could make outfits for it, thus learning sewing and garment construction.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau in *Emile's* (1762) last chapter entitled 'Sophy, or Woman' deals with her education as she is to be Emile's wife. Rousseau writes of girls' education in the world of dolls and clothing. Love of finery was the defining characteristic of 'even the tiniest little girls' and revealed true feminine nature as 'the art of pleasing' through appearance. A girl playing with her doll epitomises women. There are warnings. Female attention to clothing should not be excessive. A girl's interest in dolls should be encouraged as it presaged a woman's natural concerns about pleasing men and learning subservience.

Observe a little girl spending the day around her doll, she is constantly changing its clothes, dressing and undressing it hundreds and hundreds of times, continuously seeking new combinations of ornaments well- or ill-matched She is hungrier for adornment than for food She is entirely in her doll She will not always leave it there. She awaits the moment when she will be her own doll. (p.367)

The English are credited with the next significant development as they invented paper dolls which were much more readily accessible and which replaced the fashion dolls. Paper dolls have remained popular ever since and are playthings today.

Joseph Highmore's portrait of his daughter Susannah (ca. 1740–1745) beautifully captures this significant shift to paper dolls. We see her holding up a miniature depicting a woman in Turkish dress which appears to be taken from the portfolio or scrapbook of paper dolls lying on the table. (See Figure 3.)

Children's literature associated with playing with paper dolls soon followed. Between 1810 and 1816 the London toy firm S. & J. Fuller ingeniously produced a series of little books which they sold at their shop, Temple of Fancy at Rathbone Place. Each set was packaged in a small sheath and made up of a black-and-white moral history of a young person, often in poor verse, divided into scenes. Accompanying the text were a number of hand-coloured cut-out images printed separately on card, showing costumes plus a single hand-coloured cardboard head which slotted into the different costumes with hats added.

Figure 3
Joseph Highmore *Susanna*
Highmore c. 1740–1745 oil on
canvas 91.5 × 71.1 cm
National Gallery of Victoria,
Melbourne, Felton Bequest, 1947
(1741–4).



These books were tasteful and attractive but expensive to produce. The cheapest of them retailed at five shillings and the most elaborate one, *Young Albert or the Roscius* (1811) based on young Betty, the boy actor, cost eight shillings, so they would have been marketed towards the upper class.

One extremely popular example is *The History of Little Fanny* (1810). (See Figure 4.)

**See Fanny here, in frock as white as snow,
A sash of pink, with long and flowing bow,
Shoes that sit tight and closely to her feet,
Her whole appearance tidy, clean, and neat;
And in her arms a favourite doll she bears,
The only object of her hopes and cares;
Fanny with books will ne'er her mind employ
For play's her passion, idleness her joy. (pp.2–3)**

Figure 4
Paper doll bodies in costumes, to
be paired with doll heads. From
The History of Little Fanny.



Fanny's fall from grace involves clothing. Her mother refuses to let her wear recently bought finery in inclement weather but Fanny persists and goes out, with serious consequences. Her costume changes to that of a beggar. Seeing Fanny in all her finery, a beggar has snatched the girl and forced her to roam the streets, tattered and torn. Various episodes follow, until, fortunately, she is sent on an errand, wearing a modest coloured frock, to her own home and is forgiven by her mother and happily restored, having learnt her lesson. Instead of holding a frivolous doll, the final illustration accompanying the text, shows reformed Fanny holding a book.

**She's now no longer idle, proud, or vain,
Eager her own opinion to maintain;
But pious, modest, diligent, and mild,
Belov'd by all, a good and happy child. (p.15)**

The moral is in keeping with thoughts expressed by the Edgeworths in *Practical Education* (1798) who praise the doll as follows.

**A means of inspiring girls with a taste for neatness
in dress, and with a desire to make those things for
themselves, for which women are usually dependent
upon milliners, we must acknowledge their utility; but a
watchful eye should be kept upon the child, to mark the
first symptoms of a love of finery and fashion. (p.10)**

Ironically, although the text may present values of obedience, respect for elders, modesty, cleanliness, intellectual pursuit, whilst deploring a love of finery and fashion, the moral can be ignored. Indeed, the structure with the separate costume items allows the child reader to decide

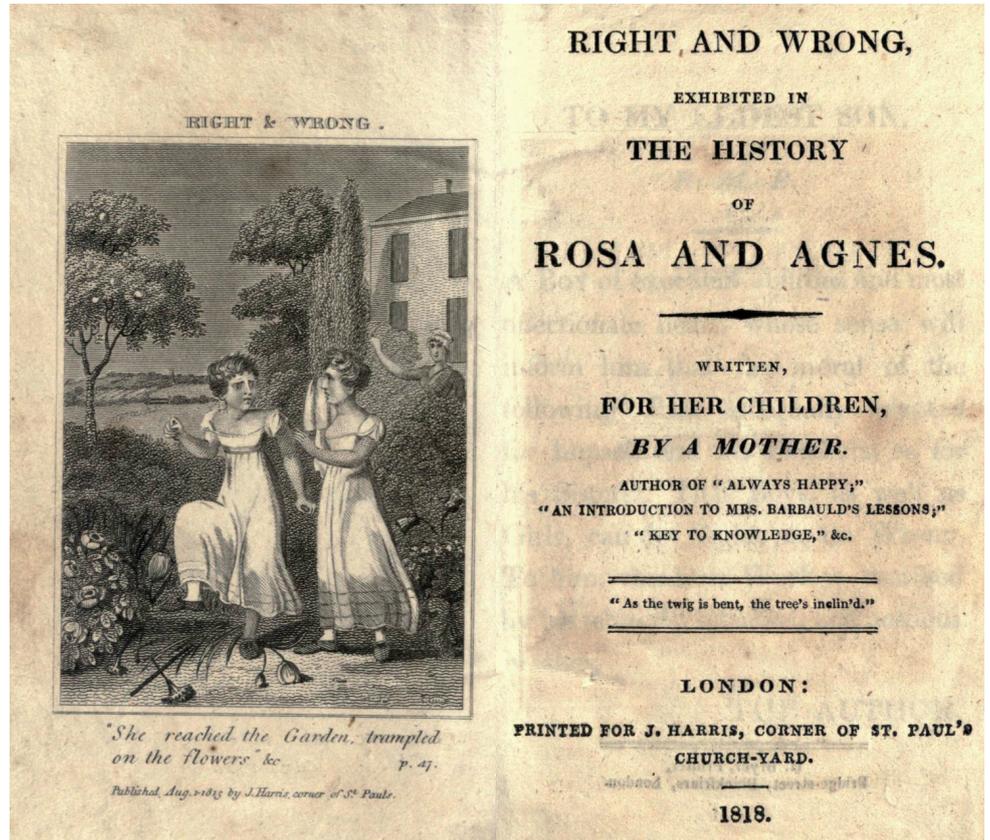
what is important with the result that surviving copies often have pristine texts accompanied by grubby, worn, and even missing, costume items.

Another early doll narrative using dolls as vehicles for improvement is Maria Elizabeth Budden's *Right and Wrong Exhibited in the History of Rosa and Agnes* (1815) (see Figure 5), which combines instruction with delight. In Chapter VI two sisters, Rosa and Agnes, are each given a large, unclothed female doll so the girls will gain from the employment of making their dolls clothes using the materials provided in accompanying boxes.

Rosa asks for her mother's advice for her doll's clothing but chooses to ignore it completely as she believes the process is too time-consuming. Her mother remarks 'Done very quickly, Rosa, but I fear not done very wisely' (p.103). Meanwhile, Agnes follows the advice and takes great pleasure in her achievements. When Rosa uses a pin to fix the flimsy shift, she pricks her finger and blood appears on her sarsnet (a fine, soft fabric, often of silk, made in plain or twill weave and used especially for linings). Younger children beg to see the dolls but there is danger that they may damage or derange their dress. Agnes is not concerned as she had made her clothing carefully but Rosa 'knew it was so carelessly dressed, that one tug would draw off all the clothing, and the silk, once dirtied could not easily be cleaned again' (p.109). Adding further moral points we learn that Agnes chose plain materials for her garments which are easily laundered.

This moral tale continues with the author denouncing Rosa as she would not be the dutiful child, kind sister or faithful friend. She therefore lived despised and died unlamented. Her impatience is held up for reprobation, whereas Agnes' perseverance is rewarded. As the concluding chapter emphasises 'Each duty was performed in its right place, and at its appointed time Thus one virtue leads to more. We need no prompting in reply to the question "Reader! which will you be? Rosa, giving way to wrong. Agnes, persevering in right?"' (p.171)

Figure 5



In Julia Charlotte Maitland's *The Doll and her Friends or Memoirs of Lady Seraphina* (1852) the doll narrator states that she 'belongs to a race the sole end of whose existence is to give pleasure to others', adding 'some may attribute to our influence many a habit of housewifery, neatness, and industry' (p.8). She is bought for a little girl, Rose, who states 'I only want a sixpenny doll not dressed' (p.30). In the final chapter the family must leave for Madeira so Rose gives the doll to her niece Susan, who has no money to spend on toys, and very little time to play with them, Rose's dressmaking skills are not up to Susan's high standards, who scorned all makeshifts. Everything was scrupulously finished. The newly created doll's wardrobe is proudly displayed by Susan's mother and generally admired. One day Sarah, the family's housemaid arrives and explains the family requires white calico shirts for Rose's brother Willy. Susan's mother is not well enough to undertake this enormous task, but

Sarah took me up, and turned me from side to side. Then she looked at my hems then at my seams then at my gathers, while I felt truly proud and happy, conscious that not a long stitch could be found in either. (p.79)

The satisfying outcome for Susan's careful needlework is the reward that she is good enough to help her mother and be paid much needed money. (See Figure 6.)

Figure 6



Making dolls' clothing became universal and was highly regarded as appropriate for young girls, even Princess Victoria, the future Queen, undertook this task. My edition of *Queen Victoria's Dolls* (1894) was published with her approval and shows her amazing collection of small, five- or six-inch wooden dolls usually dressed from some costumes she saw either in the theatre or private life. One hundred and thirty-two dolls are preserved and the Queen dressed no fewer than 32 herself. (See Figure 7.)

Frances H. Low writes in the introduction:

The workmanship in the frocks is exquisite; tiny ruffles are sewn with fairy stitches; wee pockets in aprons are finished off with minute bows - little handkerchiefs not more than half an inch square are embroidered with red silk initials. (p.70)

Figure 7
Examples of Queen Victoria's
Dolls. From *Queen Victoria's
Dolls*. Lady Arnold (left) and Lady
Bulkley (right).



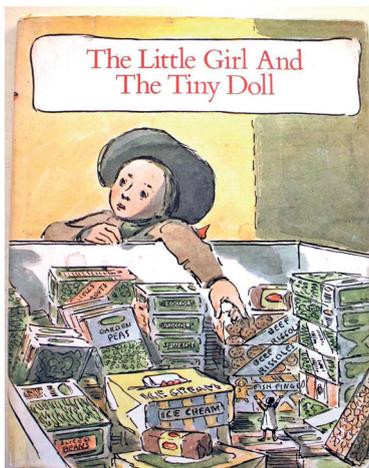
Unsurprisingly a burgeoning number of publications in the nineteenth century were issued such as *Dolly's Dressmaker* published in London in the early 1860s, which contained patterns and hand-coloured pictures for doll's clothes. Competitions to dress dolls to be given away to the poor were popular.

It is important to see how fashion and clothing dolls have been dealt with differently in children's doll texts over time and developed in interesting ways. Illustrations in doll texts used details of the period and are highly entertaining. One example is the work of the Edwardian illustrator and author Kathleen Ainslie (1858-1936). Sadly, like many female illustrators her work is not well-known. Her books about the doll heroines, Catharine Susan and Me, give details of the period, including the latest inventions and even the Suffragette movement in a most entertaining, charming manner. Figure 8 cleverly shows the extremes the dolls, implied young females, go to for style and appearance as they prepare to be debutantes.

Figure 8



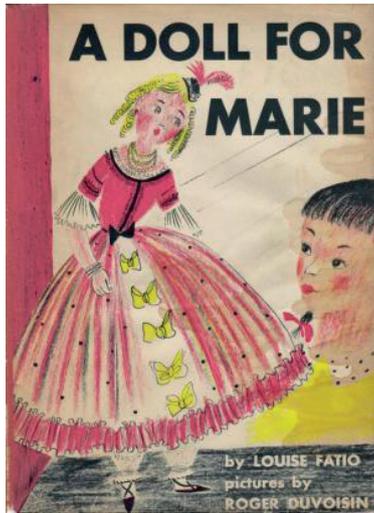
A more recent short doll text (1966) *The Little Girl and the Tiny Doll*, illustrated by Edward Ardizzone with text by his daughter-in-law Aingelda, involves a girl making clothes for a doll, but this time the emphasis is on how this handiwork demonstrates love and care, mirroring the relationship of parent and child.



'There was once a tiny doll who belonged to a girl who did not care for dolls so her life was very dull' (p.9) the story begins. And we learn that one day when the little girl was shopping in the supermarket with her mother, she threw the tiny doll into a deep freeze. So the tiny doll had to stay there, cold and lonely, and frightened by people shuffling all the food round her.

Another girl sees the doll looking so cold and lonely but dare not pick her up because she had been told not to touch things in the shop. However, she felt she must do something to help the doll and quickly set to work to make her some warm clothes, beginning with a warm bonnet made out of a piece of red flannel and daily delivering more items to the delighted doll. The warm clothing has a practical purpose for the doll in a freezer and immediately enhances the doll's quality of life. Happily her mother asks the shopkeeper if her daughter can have the doll and the doll is taken to her home where she is much loved and played with a great deal. The care shown for the doll's clothing is evidence of the care bestowed on the doll, just as a parent cares for a child. The focus is no longer fashion or vanity but love and consideration.

The same consideration is shown in *A Doll for Marie* (1957) by Louise Fatio with pictures by Roger Duvoisin. The Parisian

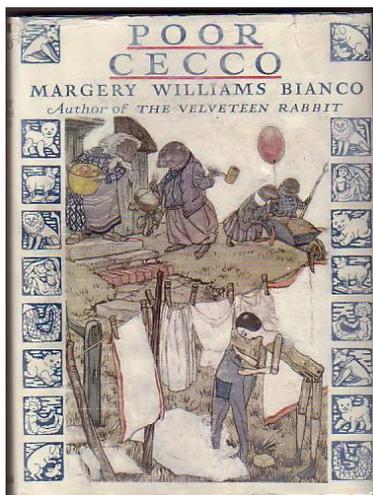


antique doll is lonely until, one day, Marie the postman's daughter sees her but is too poor to buy her. A lady does buy her but not for children, instead she adds her to her collection, somewhat like the antique shop, and places her on top of the piano. A cat smells her feather and knocks her onto a sleeping dachshund which seizes her roughly and carries out onto the pavement where she is fought over by a terrier and then abandoned in the gutter. 'The antique doll lay on the pavement in her underwear, a most horrible situation for a princess of a doll.' Marie spotted her and took her home, 'holding her tight against her heart'.

The focus has clearly shifted from girls learning needlecraft skills to become accomplished women to that of love and the relationship between doll and child owner, which parallels that of mother/father and child. As time has passed the doll's relationship with clothing has also altered, just as the role of the female in society has changed. More and more dolls, like Rumer Godden's doll heroine, Impunity Jane, in the book of the same name first published in 1955, are played with by boys, in this case Gideon and a gang, as well as girls.

She is described here.

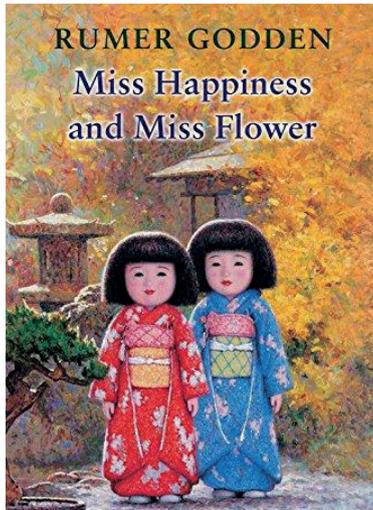
She was four inches high and made of thick china; her arms and legs were joined to her with loops of strong wire, she had painted blue eyes, a red mouth, rosy cheeks, and painted shoes and socks Her wig of yellow hair was stuck on with strong firm glue. She had no clothes (p.7)



Dolls like Impunity Jane and Jensina in *Poor Cecco* (1925) by Margery Williams Bianco seek a life of adventure and excitement, freed from the constraints of the doll's house and the stays and corsets of fine dresses.

Children's crafts and skills are encouraged in a completely different way. Godden's *Miss Happiness and Miss Flower* (1961) concerns two dainty little Japanese dolls who live in England with Belinda and Nona. Nona is missing her home in India and spends her time doing things to keep the dolls happy. Consequently she sets about making a Japanese house and the reader learns about Japanese culture and traditions. Indeed the accompanying text allows the reader to play and carry out the instructions for him/herself.

In 'Toys' in *Mythologies* (1972) Roland Barthes appears to endorse Rousseau's earlier argument as he argues that toys



are essentially 'a microcosm of the adult world' and a girl's doll is 'meant to condition her to her future role as mother'. I believe the doll texts I have discussed here achieve far more.

Works cited

- Ainslie, Kathleen (ca. 1906) *Catharine Susan's and Me's Coming Out*. London: Castell Brothers.
- Anon. (1810) *The History of Little Fanny*. London: S. & J. Fuller.
- Anon. (early 1860s) *Dolly's Dressmaker*. London: A.N. Myers & Co.
- Ardizzone, Aingelda (illus. Edward Ardizzone) (1966) *Little Girl and the Tiny Doll*. London: Longman Young Books.
- Barthes, Roland (trans. Annette Lavers) (1972 [1957]) *Toys. In Mythologies*. New York: The Noonday Press.
- Betty, William Hen West (1811) *Young Albert or the Roscius*. London: S. & J. Fuller.
- Bianco, Margery Williams (1925) *Poor Cecco*. New York: George H. Doran.
- Budden, Maria Elizabeth (1815) *Right and Wrong Exhibited in the History of Rosa and Agnes*. London: J. Harris.
- Edgeworth, Maria and Richard Lovell Edgeworth (1798) *Practical Education*. Publisher unknown for first edition. Later editions by Cambridge University Press.
- Fatio, Louise (illus. Roger Duvoisin) (1957) *A Doll for Marie*. Whittlesey House/McGraw-Hill.
- Fraser, Antonia (1966) *History of Toys*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson.
- Godden, Rumer (1955) *Impunity Jane*. London: Macmillan.
- Godden, Rumer (illus. Jean Primrose) (1961) *Miss Happiness and Miss Flower*. London: Macmillan.
- Low, Frances H. (illus. Alan Wright) (1894) *Queen Victoria's Dolls*. London: George Newnes.
- Maitland, Julia Charlotte (illus. Hablot Knight Browne and W.T. Green) (1852) *The Doll and Her Friends or Memoirs of Lady Seraphina*. London: Grant and Griffith.
- Rousseau, Jean-Jaques (trans. Allan Bloom) (1991 [1762]) *Emile or On Education*. London: Penguin Books 1991

Patchwork and Quilting: A Reflection on their Appearance in Children's Books

Maxine March – Education: BA Hons in English, PGCE, Masters in Children's Literature, City and Guilds in Patchwork and Quilting. Member of National Trust, English Heritage, Victoria and Albert Museum, Tate Gallery, Art Fund, Textile Society, Quilters' Guild. Current pastimes: film and theatre, quilting, reading, exhibitions.

The 2018 IBBY UK/NCRCL MA study day at Roehampton University with its theme of 'Craft and Hobbies in Children's Books' brought together for me two of my interests, first in textile crafts, specifically patchwork and quilting, and secondly in children's books. So I was looking forward especially to hearing Pat Pinsent's talk on 'Patchwork in Lucy Boston's *The Chimneys of Green Knowe: Structure and Metonymy*'. Patchwork is an important signifier in Lucy Boston's Green Knowe books, emphasising the importance of heritage and the moral quality of thrift. Patchwork drives the plot in *An Enemy at Green Knowe* (1964), as outlined by Ann Gibson in her paper 'Patchwork: An Illustrated Literary Tale' (2013). Lucy Boston herself was an accomplished quiltmaker.

My interest in children's literature stemmed from years as a primary teacher, and was honed by an MA in Children's Literature as a pioneer student on the course at Roehampton. On completing this, I embarked on a City and Guilds course in Patchwork and Quilting. Having acquired sufficient skills to make a quilt, my interest then turned to research and collecting. My attention was caught by the numerous quilts made by Canadian women during the Second World War and sent to Britain for civilian relief. Over half a million of these quilts were made and dispatched in a project coordinated by the Canadian Red Cross. Each quilt had a small label sewn on, which read 'Gift of the Canadian Red Cross'; hence these quilts are generally referred to as Canadian Red Cross quilts. In Britain, they were distributed to families who had lost their possessions through bombing raids, and to hospitals, convalescent homes, orphanages, evacuees, refugees, Women's Land Army recruits and maternity homes.

I have been intrigued by the values that are portrayed

in stories for children that reference patchwork and quilting. Ann Gibson's paper looks at the various ways that patchwork is used as a signifier in books for children published mostly in the first half of the twentieth century. She identifies 'Patchwork as a signifier of security, warmth and a congenial usefulness'. These qualities were echoed by one of my correspondents, Peggy, who as a 17-year-old, barely out of childhood, joined the Women's Land Army. In her first billet, she was given a Red Cross quilt, which she kept for the duration of the war. She said it represented for her not only warmth, colour, comfort and the kindness of strangers, but excitement and adventure as it had come all the way from Canada.

Some of these quilts sparked the imagination of children who received them. One of two sisters who slept under one such quilt remembers imagining she could choose from the patchwork fabrics and have dresses made for her. Another correspondent, a child in the East End of London, whose home was destroyed in the blitz and her mother killed, was sent to an orphanage in North Wales. She described the children as sleeping in dormitories, each bed having a Red Cross quilt on it. She told how at night the girls would take it in turns to make up stories about designs on their quilts 'and the stories usually ended with a prince coming to rescue them'. Many of these quilts included novelty fabrics which had images of people and objects. These would have provided a rich source of invented narrative for children starved of stories.



Novelty fabric on a Canadian Red Cross quilt. Copyright © 2019 David March.

One of the quilts in my collection is a cot quilt which was given to an institution in Dumfriesshire. Originally a Poor Law Institute, it became a hospital and children's home during the war. As with most of the Red Cross quilts, the patchwork top is made from scraps of fabric, and includes two appliqué pictures, a teacup and a boat. It is easy to imagine a child making up stories about these fabric pictures.

Canadian Red Cross cot quilt.
Copyright © 2019 David March.



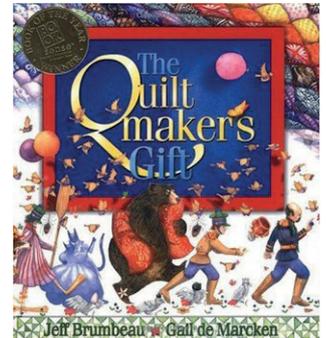
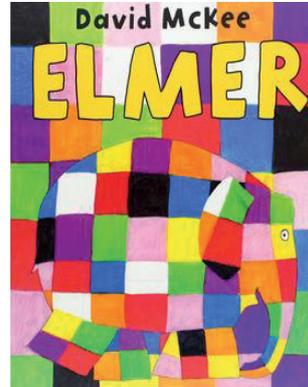
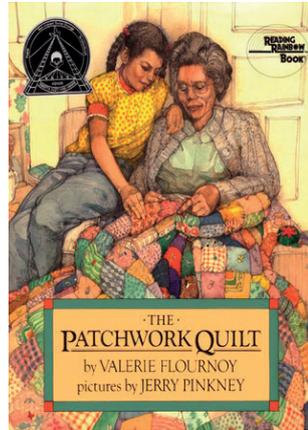
The 1970s saw a revival of interest in patchwork and quilting as a pastime in North America and Britain, and children's literature soon reflected this, sometimes using the same themes as occurred in earlier books.

The Patchwork Quilt by Valerie Flourney and Jerry Pinkney (1995) shows Tanya's grandmother making a quilt from cast-off clothing, and during the making of it Tanya becomes aware of her heritage.

Detail of appliqué on the cot quilt: a teacup (edge of on right) and a boat. Copyright © 2019 David March.



In *The Quiltmaker's Gift* by Jeff Brumbeau and Gail de Marcken (2001), an old woman makes quilts and gives them away to the poor. The king orders her to make him a quilt, but she refuses until he has given away all his possessions. The illustrations are exquisite. Each stage of the story is referenced by a different quilt block.



Probably the best-known books for children using patchwork as a motif are the Elmer the Patchwork Elephant series, introducing another theme, that of diversity.

Article © Maxine March, January 2019

Works cited

- Boston, Diana (1995) *The Patchworks of Lucy Boston*. Tintern: Colt Books.
- Boston, Lucy (illus. Peter Boston) (1958) *The Chimneys of Green Knowe*. London: Faber & Faber.
- Boston, Lucy (illus. Peter Boston) (1964) *An Enemy of Green Knowe*. London: Faber & Faber.
- Brumbeau, Jeff (illus. Gail de Marcken) (2001) *The Quiltmaker's Gift*. London: Scholastic.
- Flournoy, Valerie (illus. Jerry Pinkney) (1995) *The Patchwork Quilt*. London: Puffin.
- Gibson, Ann (2013) *Patchwork: An Illustrated Literary Tale*, *Quilt Studies* 14, 74–100.
- McKee, David (1968–2018) *Elmer the Patchwork Elephant* series. London: Andersen Press.

Out of the Box: Designing Books that Encourage and Inspire Making and Creating

Jemma Westing is an award-winning book designer who works in children's publishing, formerly for Dorling Kindersley and currently for Little Tiger Press. Jemma's mission is to get children engaged, and designs books and kits that are inventive and as globally inclusive as they can be - including reference books with tactile images and braille for visually impaired readers.

Paper enables us to communicate. We cover it with our words; our colours, our paint, our glue and our sticky tape ... and we have done so for centuries. We craft with it to impart knowledge, to create entertainment and to share sentiment. We work with paper in both domestic and commercial environments. The familiarity of the material and its physical limitations are something that most people have knowledge and experience of. We use it at preschool and we use it when we are elderly. Because people of all ages can work with it, you could say that paper is an inclusive material. It is also a material that can be recycled and reused.

It's my full-time job to work with paper and cardboard. I design and make children's books out of it, and I have been doing this since 9 August 2010. With my job, I spend a lot of time creating books that require the reader to interact with the content, and interact because of the content. When designing these books, I am often having to manipulate paper and cardboard in order to create movement and drama, and to create an additional dimension to the work.

The activity of playing with paper and cardboard is what forms the backbone of both my publishing career and my voluntary work with my children's workshop BrilliantBuilds. It is something that I have always done. I guess that I can feel very sentimental about it and then I can also be very practical and objective with it.

Books were not something that has always been part of my world. As a child I did not like books and I did not like reading. I entered the publishing world in reaction to that.

I wanted to help design books that would capture the attention of reluctant readers like me.

Although I didn't like reading by myself when I was little, I was quite happy to have a book read to me. This made the reading a shared and social experience so I deemed it good compensation. Crafting and design activities, on the other hand, always captured my full attention regardless of whether there was the opportunity to get making on my own or in the company of others. I remember sitting around a table with my mum and my granny and we would turn the small cereal boxes from the Kellogg's variety packs into houses, message boxes, statues, factories and monsters. To me this making-time was happy-family time, happy-homework time, and happy-rainy-days-with-friends time. People of all ages liked to see the things that I had made. To see people's positive reactions would give me a great sense of worth and fulfilment. I was a very shy child growing up, and making and drawing would be my way of initiating positive communication. The real world was important to me, and creating a subject likeness became an artistic obsession throughout my GCSE and A level education. It was only when at university did I loosen up again and welcome the abstract input from my imagination.

I took the time on the Illustration degree course to start thinking about what I wished the books from my childhood would have done for me. As a child my imagination would often make the content on the pages move or perform. I wanted that to happen in reality so I taught myself some paper-engineering techniques and then built a graduate portfolio that had lots of folding paper pop-up work in it. With this way of working, I made spiders rise up off a page; I made human-like forms twist out of the centre of books, I made 3-D dinosaurs and I also visualised man-made objects. Designing pop-ups and moveable mechanisms in addition to spread designs appeared to be what I was good at, and publishers liked the idea of employing a book designer who had this additional skillset. Designing non-fiction children's books for Dorling Kindersley was my first publishing job.

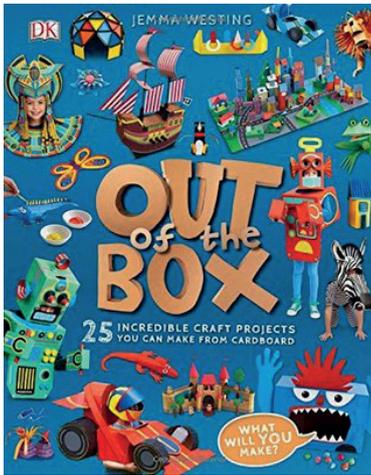


'Hide and Seek' from the DK book *Mindbenders*



'Moving Pictures' from the DK book *Optical Illusions*.

I delivered the closing plenary 'Make-ing it Count: The Value of Making in Play and Publishing' at the IBBY UK/NCRCL MA conference in November 2018. As I use my experience with crafting to inform both my publishing work and my voluntary work, I thought that my exploration of this would be interesting for the audience. I also saw the conference as an opportunity to highlight some of the publishing challenges that book publishers face today. A saturated market and rising printing costs are the known obstacles.



I presented a slide of project visuals to the audience that I had divided up into three separate sections. I highlighted a few examples of my interactive novelty books, which included optical Illusions and DK Braille, we looked at a couple of my model kits - 'Make Your Own T-Rex' and 'Make Your Own Virgin Galactic SpaceshipTwo' - and then we looked at my self-authored step-by-step book, *Out of the Box*.



Make Your Own T.REX.

The common factor between all of the work is the active participation of the reader. The reader has to interact with the content by using their hands. It's not just about turning a page. They might have to build, pull, push, turn, feel or fold something in order to progress, and learn. The actions help to demonstrate or test something. The action might happen directly on top of a book page or it might happen away from the book altogether, which is often the case with a step-by-step craft book.

STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) education and the Maker Movement have done wonders for expanding the community of makers. Hands-on making projects are as popular as ever and the quantity of how-to online media has increased dramatically. Step-by-step books are also doing well. Whilst now is most definitely the time to jot down your crafty ideas on paper, now is also the time to try to be as original and as inventive as you've ever been.



Items made from *Out of the Box*. Copyright © 2017 Jemma Westing.

In 2013 I set up a free crafting workshop called BrilliantBuilds. I wanted to create space where youngsters could sit and make without following rules or time limits. I take the workshop to family-friendly events such as the Glastonbury festival, Latitude festival and BBC Children in Need Carfest. I get there before the general public are allowed in and I gather up all the waste cardboard from the site vendors and make a pile in my tent. When the families come in to the festival, I encourage them to recycle all the boxes and turn them into new things. It's incredibly laid back and the making happens in a very organic way. As I design books for children, I think it is important to spend time with the audience that you are designing for. I gathered up my experiences and observations from running the workshop and I wrote down 25 projects that I thought would be popular, based on what I had seen being made inside the tent. *Out of the Box* was born. I saw the book as a way of sharing BrilliantBuilds with those that hadn't been to a workshop.

A BrilliantBuilds workshop.
Copyright © 2017 Jemma Westing.



During question time at the conference, an audience member pointed out that BrilliantBuilds is a very organic space for making and have I thought about how I could bring that organic way into books. It is an interesting point because with step-by-step books, you often need to guide the reader in a very linear way to the end result. The safest position from a publishing perspective is to assume that the person who is buying the book may have limited or no knowledge whatsoever of how to make or complete the project. This is why you give clear, step-by-step instructions. The point raised has stuck with me and it is a point that I am brainstorming around now. When I come up with a solution, I will let IBBY UK know about it.

Crafting for me remains a positive pursuit, regardless of whether I am working organically outdoors in a tent, or whether I am racing to meet the next book deadline. The positives for me are always magnified when the activity is shared with others. I do what I do because of the positives.

After having now been to an IBBYUK/NCRCL MA conference, I see it as a good space for academics and professionals to share ideas and practices in an environment that considers both the past and present ways of doing things. For the benefit of each delegate's research, I think that is important to hear views from representatives who have both theoretical and practical backgrounds. I look forward to seeing what this year's topic will be.

Works cited

DK (2012) *Make Your Own T-Rex*. London: DK publishing.

DK (2012) *Optical Illusions*. London: DK Children.

DK (2013) *Mindbenders*. London: DK Children.

Dorling Kindersley (2015) *Make Your Own Virgin Galactic SpaceshipTwo*. London: DK Publishing.

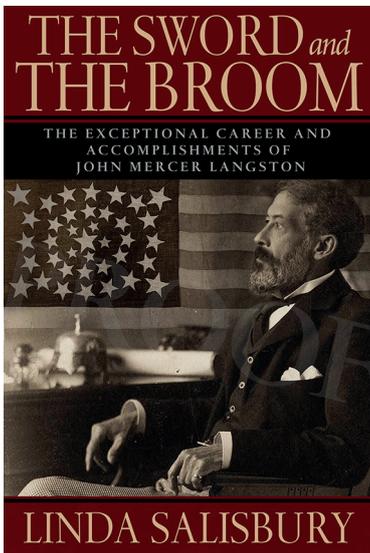
Westing, Jemma (2017) *Out of the Box: 25 Cardboard Engineering Projects for Makers*. London: DK Publishing.

Review

The Sword and the Broom:

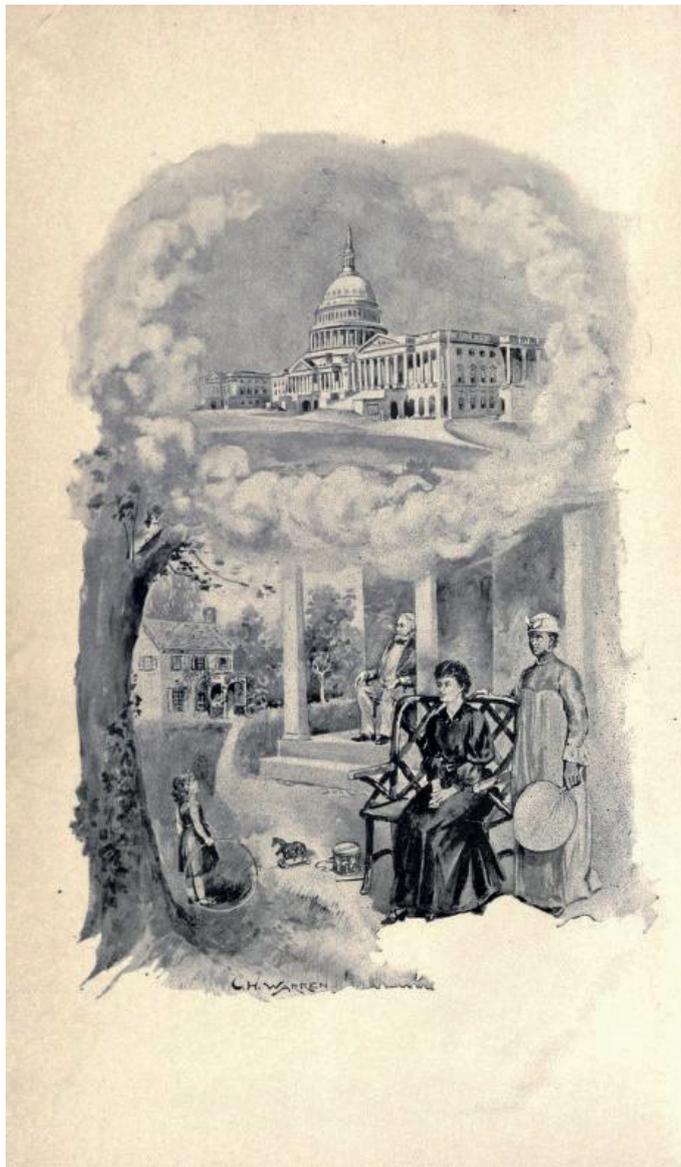
The Exceptional Career and Accomplishments of John Mercer Langston by Linda Salisbury

June Hopper Swain had been writing articles on children's books for several years when she enrolled on the MA Children's Literature Distance Learning Course at Roehampton University with Pat Pinsent as her tutor. She gained her degree in 2004. She has since written papers that have been published in the *Journal of Children's Literature Studies* and the *New Review of Children's Literature and Librarianship*. For IBBYLink she has written short articles, reports on exhibitions and reviews of children's books.



This well-researched biography, illustrated with the author's photographs and with archive material, is Linda Salisbury's retelling for young adults of John Mercer Langston's 534-page autobiography *From the Virginia Plantation to the National Capitol, or the First and Only Negro Representative in Congress from the Old Dominion* (1894). Salisbury's book was the Forward INDIES Silver Winner for Young Adult Nonfiction in 2016, and tied for a Bronze Medal in the Juvenile-Young Adult Non-Fiction Category in the 2018 Independent Publisher Book Awards.

Langston's autobiography was written in the third person, perhaps, as Salisbury suggests, 'to imply objectivity about reporting his numerous accolades and praise' (p.6). Her resources, listed at the back of the book, include the several books written about him such as *John Mercer Langston and the Fight for Black Freedom 1829-65* by William Cheek and Aimee Cheek (1989) that gives personal details such as 'how Langston and Carrie [his wife] addressed each other'.



FROM THE VIRGINIA PLANTATION

TO

THE NATIONAL CAPITOL

OR

DuBois

The First and Only Negro Representative in
Congress from the Old Dominion

JOHN MERCER LANGSTON

ILLUSTRATED.

Self-reliance the secret of success

HARTFORD, CONN.

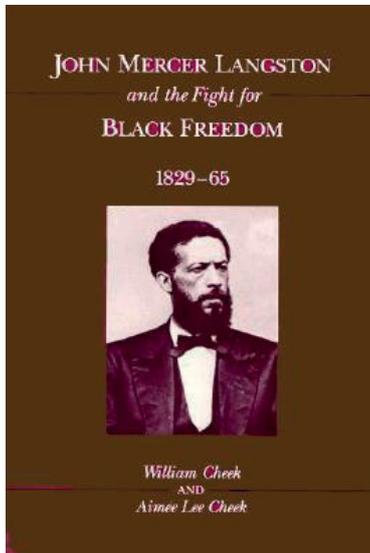
AMERICAN PUBLISHING COMPANY

1894

There are some printing errors, but this is a fascinating account of a courageous and determined man. Langston (1829-1897) was a black American, his father, Ralph Quarles, a wealthy, white landowner and an American Revolutionary War hero, while John's mother, Lucy, was of black and Native American heritage and a slave whom Ralph had set free. Ralph 'owned slaves out of necessity' but treated them well so they never felt the need to run away (p.19). Ralph and Lucy lived together on his Virginia plantation for almost 30 years, the law not allowing mixed race marriages, and their children were 'subject to the laws regarding blacks' (p.16). John had two brothers, Gideon and Charles, and a half-brother, William, and his two sisters.

Born in Louisa County, Virginia in 1834, John, as a bright, barely five-year-old, was orphaned and went to live with a kindly white couple who sent him to a school for white children. Orphaned again, he was moved to Ohio, and it

was here that his professional life as a lawyer, abolitionist, educator and politician would develop. Oberlin College was, in 1835, the first college in the nation to admit a black student and the first to admit women in 1837. John excelled there, graduating with honours. Charles, his older brother who would also become a well-known abolitionist, predicted, correctly, that John would become a great orator.



One episode in Salisbury's biography gives particular emphasis to the plight of black slaves. As a boy, John enjoyed listening to the ghost stories that Uncle Billy, who was the oldest and most respected of the slaves on Ralph Quarles' plantation, would tell him. These were not ordinary ghost stories for the 'ghosts' were fugitive slaves that were running away to Ohio, a free state, while those that helped them by giving them food and shelter pretended not to see them. Years later, one of these 'ghosts' would become a courageous leader and hero in the fight for freedom during the American Civil War.

As this biography reveals, the Southern States ensured that black people were routinely humiliated. Even those who were free, including John and his brothers, were required to carry a copy of their registration at all times in order to avoid captivity, especially when they travelled. The Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 meant that runaways and freed slaves were unsafe even in a free state like Ohio. Slave-catchers kidnapped one young runaway, but inhabitants in Oberlin and Wellington rescued and hid him until he could be taken to Canada.

Salisbury's timeline is helpful as her narrative, following Langston's example, is not always in chronological order. A full and distinguished life, there are particular episodes he recalled in his autobiography, and are retold here, that breathe life into the man and reveal his strength and integrity. For instance, he wanted to study law and the principal of a law school in Ballston Spa, New York State, suggested that he 'edged his way into his law school by pretending to be a Frenchman or a Spaniard from the West Indian Islands in Central or South America' (p.67). Langston, who was a loyal American patriot, flatly refused. He was accepted at Oberlin Theological Seminary, the first black seminary student in the nation, where he gained his master's degree in theology, having developed his ability as a public speaker by giving talks on anti-slavery and by preaching. He subsequently studied law under Judge Philemon Bliss.

Langston, who would, in 1867, be admitted to practice before the Supreme Court, was called to the Ohio Bar in 1854, in each instance the first black American to do so. His clients were predominantly white for, as Salisbury explains, at that time all juries and courts were white under Ohio law. This made black people unsure that they would be fairly treated, especially if their attorney was also black. Throughout his professional life Langston would encounter racial prejudice and he occasionally resorted to blows in order to defend his dignity and honour. Fortunately, judges were invariably sympathetic, feeling that his actions were justified. It is revealing that when, in 1885, he became dean of the law department at Virginia Normal and Collegiate Institute for black students, he could say that it was the happiest period of his professional life.

Also in 1854 Langston married Caroline (Carrie) Wall whose background was similar to his: her father too was a wealthy white plantation owner but unlike Langston's mother, her mother remained enslaved. John and Carrie, always a supportive companion who shared his Christian faith, eventually settled in Oberlin, Ohio and had five children.

Salisbury clearly sets out the escalating unrest in the Southern States over the call to abolish slavery. These states had already withdrawn from the Union when, in 1863, the Emancipation Proclamation was issued by President Abraham Lincoln, recently elected for a second term. The resulting rebellion was the beginning of the American Civil War. Langston helped in recruiting troops for the formation of black regiments and took it personally when so many died.

In 1865, Lincoln was assassinated five days after Robert E. Lee surrendered to General Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox Court House. A black regiment was allowed to carry the coffin of the 'Great Emancipator' to its resting place in the rotunda of the Capitol. Lincoln's successor was Andrew Johnson, but he failed to make an amendment to the Constitution to eliminate slavery as many had hoped.

As Salisbury points out, her narrative, like Langston's, is not so much reflective as episodic. In 1866, the state Constitutional Convention in St Louis, Missouri, met to consider civil rights for freed people to accord with the Constitution of the United States. Here, Langston gave a speech on the 'importance of education, labour, thrift, temperance, morality and economy to promote permanent

progress in freedom' (p.119). In 1867, he was appointed General Inspector of the Freedmen's Bureau. As such he would have to help those freed to deal with the hate and prejudice that they would encounter. The war had ended, but the ill will of those in the states that had left the Union continued. In 1868, Grant, the former Secretary of War, was elected president and in 1871, under Grant's leadership, Langston helped to draft the Civil Rights Bill. Black males were now allowed to vote and gain full citizenship.

Langston became Minister Resident/Consul General of Haiti in 1877 and later, in 1884, Chargé d'Affaires to Santa Domingo. In 1888, he became the first black American to run for Congress from Virginia's Fourth District that had a population in which blacks outnumbered whites but the fraudulent election results delayed his taking up his post for 19 months. As Salisbury comments, Langston was justifiably frustrated and bitter as is reflected in his lengthy account of the election. However, when he at last took up his seat in the House of Representatives, one supporter had left a floral arrangement on his seat. It was composed of a sword and a broom, the sword symbolising Langston's overcoming opposition, the broom of destruction 'with which Good Providence had swept [obstacles] out of his pathway to victory' (p.186).

Salisbury points out the relevance in the USA today of Langston's narrative as 'issues of race and racism ... continue to be part of the national fabric' (p.9). Such issues exist in the UK too. It is a bitter irony that, due to inadequate administration, members of the Windrush generation who arrived in Britain - at Britain's invitation - between 1948 and 1971 should now have difficulties proving their lawful status. This has caused those affected considerable stress and a deep sense of alienation.

Particularly poignant, therefore, were the several exhibitions held in 2018, including Passport to the Motherland - Migration Dreams at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, to celebrate 70 years since those from the Caribbean first arrived in Britain.

John Mercer Langston, who died, it is thought from a heart attack, in 1897 at his home in Washington DC, deserves to be more widely known, and this biography by Linda Salisbury, who understandably has a deep respect for the man, places him at the centre of a pivotal period of America's history.

Works cited

Cheek, William and Aimee Lee (1989) *John Mercer Langston and the Fight for Black Freedom 1829-65*. Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press.

Langston, John Mercer (1894) *From the Virginia Plantation to the National Capital, or The First and Only Negro Representative in Congress from the Old Dominion*. Hartford, CT: American Publishing Company. (A 2013 edition is on Amazon, published by CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform.)

Salisbury, Linda (2017) *The Sword and the Broom – The Exceptional Career and Accomplishments of John Mercer Langston*. Mineral, VA: Tabby House. [Note: Books published in the USA at the end of a calendar year, in this case November 2016, are allowed a copyright date of the following year, in this case 2017.]



"The UK section of the International Board on Books for Young People

The next issue of *IBBYLink* is *IBBYLink* 55 will be on Music in Children's Books.

Articles on other subjects are also welcomed. Contributions to Ferelith Hordon: fhordon@aol.com.

If you are interested in becoming a reviewer for *IBBYLink*, contact Lina Iordanaki: linaiordanaki@gmail.com.

New reviewers are always welcome.

Titles for Review

Publishers and others with books to be reviewed in *IBBYLink* should send them to Lina Iordanaki at Campus London, (Code First Girls), 4-5 Bonhill Street, Shoreditch EC2A 4BX, London; linaiordanaki@gmail.com.

***IBBYLink* 54 Spring 2019**

The journal of the British section of the International Board for Books for Young People (IBBY UK), published three times a year.

Editor: Ferelith Hordon

Associate editor: Jennifer Harding

Reviews editor: Lina Iordanaki

To sponsor a future issue of *IBBYLink*, contact Ferelith Hordon, fhordon@aol.com.

8 Terrapin Court, Terrapin Road, London SW17 8QW.

All material in *IBBYLink* is copyright IBBY UK and of the authors of articles. No item may be reproduced without express permission. Contact the editor in the first instance. IBBY UK reserves the right to reproduce material in other media unless contributors specifically withhold permission.

IBBY UK Section is registered as a company in England and Wales, no. 7892957. Registered office: 71 Addiscombe Court Road, Croydon CR0 6TT. Registered charity no. 1145999.