

ALICE IN WONDERLAND

LEWIS CARROLL



EDITED BY DONALD J. GRAY

A NORTON CRITICAL EDITION
SECOND EDITION

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LEWIS CARROLL
ALICE IN WONDERLAND

SECOND EDITION

AUTHORITATIVE TEXTS OF
ALICE'S ADVENTURES IN WONDERLAND
THROUGH THE LOOKING-GLASS
THE HUNTING OF THE SNARK

BACKGROUNDS

ESSAYS IN CRITICISM

Edited by

DONALD J. GRAY
INDIANA UNIVERSITY



W · W · NORTON & COMPANY

New York · London

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Printed in the United States of America.

The text of this book is composed in Electra, with the display set in Deepdene.

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data
Carroll, Lewis, 1832-1898.

[Selections. 1992]

Alice in Wonderland / Lewis Carroll ; authoritative texts of
Alice's adventures in Wonderland, Through the looking-glass, The
hunting of the snark, backgrounds, essays in criticism ; edited by
Donald J. Gray. — 2nd ed.

p. cm. — (Norton critical edition)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

1. Carroll, Lewis, 1832-1898—Criticism and interpretation.
2. Children's literature, English—History and criticism. I. Gray,
Donald J. II. Title.

PR4611.A4G7 1992

823'.8—dc20

ISBN 0-393-95804-3

91-12533

W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 500 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10110
www.wwnorton.com

W. W. Norton & Company Ltd., Castle House, 75/76 Wells Street, London W1T 3QT

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PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

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Second Edition

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Preface

In the second edition of the Norton Critical Edition of the *Alice* books, I have again included matter that suggests the important contexts out of which Lewis Carroll's best-known, and best, books were written. Principally, the *Alice* books, and even the mysteriously disturbing *The Hunting of the Snark*, are stories told to and written for children. Carroll mocked the conventions of nineteenth-century children's writing, and his books helped to change them. But for those very reasons, much of his playfulness depends for its point and effect on a familiarity with writing for children like that which Carroll's contemporaries, adults as well as children, would have brought to the reading and hearing of these stories. Carroll also appropriated some of the practices of popular comic entertainments of his time. He loved the theater, including the fairy-tale burlesque and fanciful transformations of theatrical pantomime, and all through his life he imitated, and eventually he greatly elevated, the verse parodies and language play that filled the mid-century comic magazines to which as a young Oxford tutor he occasionally contributed.

At Oxford, and as Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, Carroll was a tutor in mathematics, a kind of popular lecturer in logic, and a clergyman who never took the final step of ordination but who occasionally preached to university congregations. Both his mathematics and his religious beliefs were conventional, dogmatic, and out of touch with the most interesting speculations of his time. He was serious about using jokes and puzzles to teach logic to young people. But he seems not to have gotten past thinking of logic itself as a game, as a delightful demonstration of the treacheries of language and the procedures of thinking, and not as an instrument to refine them.

When Carroll took his religious convictions and his knowledge of mathematics and logic to the wonderlands of his writing for children, however, they all became freshly and profoundly interesting. Word and number games, and the amusing logic that moves with cool inexorability to nonsensical conclusions, become charms by which Carroll at once raises and holds at bay grave matters that deeply engaged his contemporaries: the predatory character of natural existence, the possibilities of extinction and of a void at the center of things, the impossibility of human reason and language ever to make satisfying sense. These are the themes that engage Carroll's twentieth-century adult readers, who are now probably most of his readers. But their resonance is most fully heard when they are listened to not

just as anticipations of modernist skepticism and nihilism, but also as the night thoughts of a man whose intelligence and sensibility resided just as authentically in the axioms of Euclidean geometry and the charities of a providential deity.

To help readers hear that resonance, I have in this edition somewhat enlarged the selection from biographies and from Carroll's diaries and letters. I have also tried to mark the complications of his relationships with children, who were often warmed and dignified by his attentions, suspect as those attentions must be to our post-Freudian awareness. In my selection from the commentary on Carroll's writing, I have included some relatively recent essays that continue and extend the now orthodox interest of twentieth-century readers in the subversive and anarchic qualities of his writing (Auerbach and Rackin). I have also included parts of chapters from recent books that make his writing significant by placing it in the functions and concerns of nineteenth-century social comedy (Henkle) and in the generic meanings of comedy itself (Polhemus).

This second edition enables me to include "The Wasp in a Wig" episode, a recently discovered passage that Carroll excised from *Through the Looking-Glass* when he read the book in galley proof. His decision testifies to his judgment—the passage is not up to the standard of most of the rest of the book—and to the fact that Carroll did not treat the texts of his entertainments with the solemn deference accorded them by many of their critics and commentators.

I am grateful to the authors of the interpretative and biographical commentary reprinted in this edition for their permission to use their writing. As anyone must be who thinks or writes about Lewis Carroll, I am especially indebted to Roger Lancelyn Green for his edition of the *Diaries*, to Morton Cohen for his edition of the *Letters*, to the compilers of the several editions of *The Lewis Carroll Handbook*, and to the biographies of Derek Hudson and Anne Clark.

The texts of the two *Alice* books are those of an edition Dodgson prepared for publication in 1897. The text of *The Hunting of the Snark* is that of the first edition of 1876. The sources of the texts of other writing by Carroll reprinted here are indicated in the notes to each selection.

DONALD GRAY

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The Text of
Alice's Adventures
in Wonderland

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland

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All in the golden afternoon
Full leisurely we glide;
For both our oars, with little skill,
By little arms are plied,
While little hands make vain pretence
Our wanderings to guide.

Ah, cruel Three!¹ In such an hour,
Beneath such dreamy weather,
To beg a tale of breath too weak
To stir the tiniest feather!
Yet what can one poor voice avail
Against three tongues together?

Imperious Prima flashes forth
Her edict "to begin it":
In gentler tones Secunda hopes
"There will be nonsense in it!"
While Tertia interrupts the tale
Not more than once a minute.

Anon, to sudden silence won,
In fancy they pursue
The dream-child moving through a land
Of wonders wild and new,
In friendly chat with bird or beast—
And half believe it true.

And ever, as the story drained
The wells of fancy dry,
And faintly strove that weary one
To put the subject by,
"The rest next time—" "It is next time!"
The happy voices cry.

Thus grew the tale of Wonderland:
Thus slowly, one by one,
Its quaint events were hammered out—
And now the tale is done,

1. The three Liddell children, Lorina ("Prima"), Alice ("Secunda"), and Edith ("Tertia"). Alice was ten when the expedition to Godstow during which the story was begun took

place in 1862. She is seven in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, which is set in May; and seven and a half in *Through the Looking-Glass*, which is set in November.

4 • *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*

*And home we steer, a merry crew,
Beneath the setting sun.*

*Alice! A childish story take,
And, with a gentle hand,
Lay it where Childhood's dreams are twined
In Memory's mystic band.
Like pilgrim's wither'd wreath of flowers
Pluck'd in a far-off land.*

Christmas-Greetings

[FROM A FAIRY TO A CHILD]²

*Lady dear, if Fairies may
For a moment lay aside
Cunning tricks and elfish play,
'Tis at happy Christmas-tide.*

*We have heard the children say—
Gentle children, whom we love—
Long ago, on Christmas Day,
Came a message from above.*

*Still, as Christmas-tide comes round,
They remember it again—
Echo still the joyful sound
"Peace on earth, good-will to men!"*

*Yet the hearts must childlike be
Where such heavenly guests abide;
Unto children, in their glee,
All the year is Christmas-tide!*

*Thus, forgetting tricks and play
For a moment, Lady dear,
We would wish you, if we may,
Merry Christmas, glad New Year!*

Christmas, 1867

2. This poem was first printed in *Phantasmagoria* (1869). It was attached to the first Alice book when it was reprinted in the facsimile

edition of *Alice's Adventures Under Ground* (1886), the manuscript book that Dodgson gave to Alice Liddell in November 1864.





Chapter I

DOWN THE RABBIT-HOLE

Alice was beginning to get very tired of sitting by her sister on the bank and of having nothing to do: once or twice she had peeped into the book her sister was reading, but it had no pictures or conversations in it, "and what is the use of a book," thought Alice, "without pictures or conversations?"

So she was considering, in her own mind (as well as she could, for the hot day made her feel very sleepy and stupid), whether the pleasure of making a daisy-chain would be worth the trouble of getting up and picking the daisies, when suddenly a White Rabbit with pink eyes ran close by her.

There was nothing so *very* remarkable in that; nor did Alice think it so *very* much out of the way to hear the Rabbit say to itself "Oh dear! Oh dear! I shall be too late!" (when she thought it over afterwards it occurred to her that she ought to have wondered at this, but at the time it all seemed quite natural); but, when the Rabbit actually *took a watch out of its waistcoat-pocket*, and looked at it, and then hurried on, Alice started to her feet, for it

flashed across her mind that she had never before seen a rabbit with either a waistcoat-pocket, or a watch to take out of it, and burning with curiosity, she ran across the field after it, and was just in time to see it pop down a large rabbit-hole under the hedge.

In another moment down went Alice after it, never once considering how in the world she was to get out again.

The rabbit-hole went straight on like a tunnel for some way, and then dipped suddenly down, so suddenly that Alice had not a moment to think about stopping herself before she found herself falling down what seemed to be a very deep well.

Either the well was very deep, or she fell very slowly, for she had plenty of time as she went down to look about her, and to wonder what was going to happen next. First, she tried to look down and make out what she was coming to, but it was too dark to see anything: then she looked at the sides of the well, and noticed that they were filled with cupboards and book-shelves: here and there she saw maps and pictures hung upon pegs. She took down a jar from one of the shelves as she passed: it was labeled "ORANGE MARMALADE," but to her great disappointment it was empty: she did not like to drop the jar, for fear of killing somebody underneath, so managed to put it into one of the cupboards as she fell past it.

"Well!" thought Alice to herself. "After such a fall as this, I shall think nothing of tumbling down-stairs! How brave they'll all think me at home! Why, I wouldn't say anything about it, even if I fell off the top of the house!" (Which was very likely true.)

Down, down, down. Would the fall *never* come to an end? "I wonder how many miles I've fallen by this time?" she said aloud. "I must be getting somewhere near the centre of the earth. Let me see: that would be four thousand miles down, I think—" (for, you see, Alice had learnt several things of this sort in her lessons in the school-room, and though this was not a *very* good opportunity for showing off her knowledge, as there was no one to listen to her, still it was good practice to say it over) "—yes, that's about the right distance—but then I wonder what Latitude or Longitude I've got to?" (Alice had not the slightest idea what Latitude was, or Longitude either, but she thought they were nice grand words to say.)

Presently she began again. "I wonder if I shall fall right *through* the earth! How funny it'll seem to come out among the people that walk with their heads downwards! The antipathies, I think—" (she was rather glad there *was* no one listening, this time, as it didn't sound at all the right word) "—but I shall have to ask them what the name of the country is, you know. Please, Ma'am, is this New