

Lewis Carroll
Revised Edition

Twayne's English Authors Series

Herbert Sussman, Editor

Northeastern University



TEAS 212



LEWIS CARROLL.
Portrait by O. G. Rejlander.

Lewis Carroll

Revised Edition

by Richard Kelly

University of Tennessee, Knoxville

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Lewis Carroll, Revised Edition
Richard Kelly

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About the Author

Richard Kelly received his doctorate from Duke University in 1965. He joined the English Department of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, in September 1965, where he is currently Lindsay Young Professor of English. He is the author of *The Best of Mr. Punch: The Humorous Writings of Douglas Jerrold* (1970), *Douglas Jerrold* (1972), *The Andy Griffith Show* (1981/1985), *George du Maurier* (1983), *Graham Greene* (1984), *Daphne du Maurier* (1987), and *V. S. Naipaul* (1989). He is currently working on a critical study of the short fiction of Graham Greene. His articles on nineteenth- and twentieth-century British literature have appeared in such journals as *College Literature*, *University of Toronto Quarterly*, *Studies in English Literature*, *Studies in Browning*, *Studies in Short Fiction*, *Victorian Poetry*, and *Victorian Newsletter*.

Preface

The number of books and articles that have been written about Lewis Carroll has continued to grow over the years. Derek Hudson's revision of his *Lewis Carroll* (1977); the publication by the Lewis Carroll Society of North America of *The Wasp in a Wig* (1977); Morton N. Cohen's three scholarly and informative works, *The Letters of Lewis Carroll* (1979), *Lewis Carroll and the House of Macmillan* (1987), and *Lewis Carroll, Photographer of Children: Four Nude Studies*; Anne Clark's biography, *Lewis Carroll* (1979); Edward Guiliano's two collections of critical essays, *Soaring with the Dodo* (1982) and *Lewis Carroll: A Celebration* (1982); and Michael Hancher's *The Tenniel Illustrations to the "Alice Books"* are among the notable books that have appeared since my study was first published in 1977.

Despite the excellence of all of these recent works, there still is no single book that offers a broad critical study of Carroll's life and writings. It is my hope that this volume will fill that gap while also indicating the many specialists to whom one might go for more detailed consideration of specific aspects of Carroll's life and writings.

The principal aim of this book is to demonstrate Carroll's mastery of the art of nonsense, a genre that his works practically define. Underlying all of Carroll's writings is his fear of disorder and the void that threatens the sweet reasonableness of his logical and Christian perspective. I view Carroll's nonsense as an elaborate defense against his anxiety about the possible meaninglessness of life and the unthinkable prospect of annihilation after death. For my exploration of this fascinating subtext I am indebted to Donald Rackin for his perceptive and groundbreaking critical essays on this subject.

I have attempted to incorporate all of the recent criticism and scholarship into this revision and have added a new chapter about the illustrations of the *Alice* books. The chapter on Carroll's life, for example, has been expanded to reflect new insights provided by the publication of his letters. Furthermore, many of my critical evaluations of Carroll's writings have been significantly modified. Having enjoyed over a decade since the publication of my book to reflect upon Carroll's work and critical discussions of it, I hope that my judgments about his strengths and weaknesses may now be more mature.

For helping me in this study, I want to thank Professor Morton N. Cohen, who generously made many valuable suggestions for the revision, and Professor Herbert Sussman, whose careful scrutiny of the revision sharpened and stimulated my thinking about this unique and enigmatic author. I am also thankful to the members of the Lewis Carroll Society of North America for helping to enliven Carroll scholarship through its meetings and excellent publications. Finally, I regret that this revision will appear before the publication of Professor Cohen's definitive life of Lewis Carroll, a work all Carrollians eagerly look toward for new inspiration.

Richard Kelly

University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Chronology

- 1832 Charles Lutwidge Dodgson born 27 January 1832 at Daresbury, Cheshire; son of Frances Jane Lutwidge and the Reverend Charles Dodgson.
- 1843 Reverend Dodgson becomes rector of Croft, Yorkshire, where the family moves.
- 1844–1845 Attends Richmond Grammar School, Yorkshire.
- 1845 Produces the family magazine *Useful and Instructive Poetry*.
- 1846–1849 Attends Rugby School.
- 1850 Studies at home preparing for Oxford; contributes prose, verse, and drawings to the family magazine the *Rectory Umbrella*; matriculates at Christ Church, Oxford, on 23 May.
- 1851 Comes into residence as a commoner at Christ Church on 24 January; mother dies 26 January.
- 1852 Student at Christ Church.
- 1854 Begins to establish himself as a freelance humorist; spends summer with a mathematical reading party at Whitby; contributes poems and stories to the *Oxonian Advertiser* and the *Whitby Gazette*; obtains first class honors in the Final Mathematical School; earns B. A. 18 December.
- 1855 Becomes sublibrarian at Christ Church (holds post until 1857); composes the first stanza of "Jabberwocky," preserved in his scrapbook *Mischmasch*; begins teaching duties at Christ Church as mathematical lecturer (until 1881); contributes parodies to the *Comic Times*.
- 1856 Nom de plume "Lewis Carroll" first appears in the *Train*, a comic paper in which several of his parodies, including "Upon the Lonely Moor," appear; purchases his first camera 18 March; meets Alice Pleasance Liddell 25 April.

- 1857 Meets Holman Hunt, John Ruskin, William Makepeace Thackeray, Alfred Tennyson; photographs the Tennyson family; receives his M. A.
- 1860 *A Syllabus of Plane Algebraical Geometry and Rules for Court Circular.*
- 1861 Ordained deacon 22 December.
- 1862 On 4 July makes a boating excursion up the Isis to Godstow in the company of Robinson Duckworth and the three Liddell sisters, to whom he tells the story of Alice; begins writing and revising *Alice's Adventures under Ground*.
- 1863 Completes *Alice's Adventures under Ground* in February.
- 1864 In April John Tenniel agrees to illustrate *Alice*; on 10 June Carroll settles upon the title *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*; on 26 November sends manuscript of *Alice's Adventures under Ground* to Alice Liddell.
- 1865 Sends presentation copy of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* to Alice Liddell on 4 July; *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* first published in July, withdrawn in August, and remaining copies sent to America; the book's true second edition published in England in November by Richard Clay (erroneously dated 1866).
- 1866 Appleton of New York publishes the second (American) issue of the first edition of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*.
- 1867 Writes "Bruno's Revenge" for *Aunt Judy's Magazine*; tours the Continent and visits Russia with Dr. H. P. Liddon.
- 1868 Father dies on 21 June; moves his family to Guildford in September; in October moves into rooms in Tom Quad, Oxford, where he lives for the rest of his life.
- 1869 *Phantasmagoria* (verse) published in January.
- 1871 Completes *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There* in January; the volume is published in December (though dated 1872).
- 1875 "Some Popular Fallacies about Vivisection" published in the *Fortnightly Review*.

- 1876 *The Hunting of the Snark*, illustrated by Henry Holiday.
- 1879 *Euclid and His Modern Rivals*.
- 1881 Resigns mathematical lectureship (but retains his studentship) to devote more time to writing.
- 1882 Elected curator of the Senior Common Room (holds post until 1892).
- 1883 *Rhyme? and Reason?*, a collection of verse.
- 1885 *A Tangled Tale*, a series of mathematical problems in the form of short stories, originally printed in the *Monthly Packet*.
- 1886 Facsimile edition of his original illustrated manuscript of *Alice's Adventures under Ground*. Theatrical production of *Alice in Wonderland*.
- 1887 *The Game of Logic*.
- 1888 *Curiosa Mathematica, Part 1*, a highly technical analysis of Euclid's 12th Axiom.
- 1889 *Sylvie and Bruno* and *The Nursery Alice*.
- 1893 *Sylvie and Bruno Concluded* and *Curiosa Mathematica, Part 2*.
- 1896 *Symbolic Logic, Part 1*, the last book by Carroll to appear in his lifetime.
- 1898 Dies 14 January at his sisters' home at Guildford and is buried there; *Three Sunsets and Other Poems* published posthumously.

Chapter One

Life and Time

Family and School

Charles Lutwidge Dodgson was born 27 January 1832 in the parsonage of Daresbury, Cheshire. The third child and the eldest son of the eleven children of the Reverend Charles Dodgson and Frances Jane Lutwidge, he was descended from two North Country families with a long tradition of service to church and state. His family tree contains several clergymen and a few military men, and there is even a possible claim to a distant relationship to Queen Victoria. Morton Cohen aptly describes the Dodgsons as “an upper-crust family: conservative, steeped in tradition, self-conscious, reverential, pious, loyal, and devoted to social service.”¹ Despite his good family name, all the world has come to know Charles Dodgson as Lewis Carroll, a pseudonym he chose in 1856 for his fictional and poetical works—he reserved his family name for his academic books and essays.

During his sixteen years at Daresbury, the Reverend Charles Dodgson established a Sunday School, arranged lectures, and served the poor of the parish. In addition to his strenuous duties as a clergyman, he published a translation of Tertullian and wrote several books on theological and religious subjects. His austere, puritanical, and authoritarian personality helped to mold the public character of his son who was later to become a quiet, reserved mathematician. There was, however, an equally important side to the Reverend Dodgson's character that helped to inspire his son's creative genius. The following excerpt from a letter he wrote to Carroll at age eight reveals his unique sense of whimsy and nonsense, a sensibility that foreshadows some of the absurdities of Wonderland:

you may depend upon it I will not forget your commission. As soon as I get to Leeds I shall scream out in the middle of the street, *Ironmongers, Ironmongers*. Six hundred men will rush out of their shops in a moment—fly, fly, in all directions—ring the bells, call the constables, set the Town on fire. I WILL have a file and a screw driver, and a ring, and if they are not brought directly,

in forty seconds, I will leave nothing but one small cat alive in the whole town of Leeds, and I shall only leave that, because I am afraid I shall not have time to kill it. Then what a bawling and a tearing of hair there will be! Pigs and babies, camels and butterflies, rolling in the gutter together—old women rushing up the chimneys and cows after them—ducks hiding themselves in coffee-cups, and fat geese trying to squeeze themselves into pencil cases. At last the mayor of Leeds will be found in a soup plate covered up with custard, and stuck full of almonds to make him look like a sponge cake that he may escape the dreadful destruction of the Town.²

Years later Carroll would refine this violent and destructive theme to help shape his own nonsense. Pigs and babies would be brought even more closely together, a lizard instead of women would rush up a chimney, a dormouse and a teapot would replace the geese and the pencil cases, and the White Queen in her tureen would replace the mayor of Leeds and his soup plate.

Mrs. Dodgson has been described as “one of the sweetest and gentlest women that ever lived, whom to know was to love. The earnestness of her simple faith and love show forth in all she did and said: she seemed to live always in the conscious presence of God.”³ Although this sketch of her is obviously exaggerated, Carroll’s love and affection for his mother was exceptional. It has even been suggested that because of his all-embracing love for his mother Carroll was never able to displace her and develop mature feelings for another grown woman and thus was never able, it seems, to gain reasonable confidence in himself as a man.⁴

Carroll’s self-confidence may also have been diminished by his habit of stammering, a childhood affliction that persisted throughout his life. It is possible, but unproven, that this disability may have been caused by attempts to correct Carroll’s left-handedness, a condition, Florence Becker Lennon observes, that “may have produced a feeling that something about him was not ‘right’”⁵ Throughout his life Carroll was fascinated by peculiar symmetries and odd reversals, including mirror-writing, looking-glass worlds, and spelling words backwards (Bruno, in *Sylvie and Bruno*, exclaims that “evil” spells “live” backwards). In 1856 he wrote the following lines, which later became part of “Upon the Lonely Moor”: “And now if e’er by chance I put / My fingers into glue / Or madly squeeze a right-hand foot / Into a left-hand shoe.”⁶ The White Knight, who sings this song, is the prototype of the left-handed man in a right-handed world. “If Charles was reversed,” Lennon argues, “he took his revenge by doing a little reversing

himself.”⁷ In any event, Carroll was disturbed enough by his stammer to seek professional help. In 1860 and 1861 he went for therapy to James Hunt, one of the foremost speech therapists of his day. Despite Hunt’s assistance Carroll’s stammer stayed with him for the rest of his life. Less than two weeks before his death he wrote to a Guildford friend to explain why he could not assist as a reader in church: “The hesitation, from which I have suffered all my life, is always worse in *reading* (when I can *see* difficult words before they come) than in *speaking*. It is now many years since I ventured on reading in public.”⁸

Little is known about the years Carroll spent at the parsonage in Daresbury. A poem written in 1860, however, offers evidence that Carroll recalled those early years with great pleasure: “An island farm, mid seas of corn / Swayed by the wandering breath of morn— / The happy spot where I was born.”⁹ In any event, after having lived in that secluded pastoral town for eleven years, Carroll was removed to the rectory of Croft, just inside the Yorkshire boundary, where his father proudly assumed his new duties as rector, a position awarded him by Sir Robert Peel.

By this time Lewis Carroll was very fond of inventing games for the amusement of his brothers and sisters. He constructed a crude train out of a wheelbarrow, a barrel, and a small truck, and arranged “stations” at intervals along the path in the rectory garden. Some of Carroll’s rules for the railway indicate the boy’s rich imagination:

- Rules I. All passengers when upset are requested to lie still until picked up—as it is requisite that at least 3 trains should go over them, to entitle them to the attention of the doctor and assistants.
- II. If a passenger comes up to a station after the train has passed the next (i.e. when it is about 100 m. off) he may not run after it but must wait for the next.
- III. When a passenger has no money and still wants to go by the train, he must stop at whatever station he happens to be at, and earn money—by making tea for the station master (who drinks it all hours of the day and night) and grinding sand for the company (what use they make of it they are not bound to explain?).¹⁰

Carroll’s lifelong delight in number and logic and his interest in meticulous and well-ordered detail are already in clear evidence. Later he was to devise for the King in *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* “Rule Forty-two. *All persons more than a mile high to leave the court.*”

While at Croft Carroll also amused his family by putting on home

theatricals. With the help of a village carpenter he made a troupe of marionettes and a theater for them to perform in. Carroll wrote most of the plays himself, the most popular being *The Tragedy of King John* and *La Guida di Bragia*. A burlesque of *Bradshaw's Railway Guide*, *La Guida* is a further example of Carroll's interest in rules and orderliness, and Bradshaw's speech at the close of the drama looks toward the nonsense of *The Hunting of the Snark*: "I made a rule my servants were to sing: / That rule they disobeyed, and in revenge / I altered all the train times in my book."¹¹ Carroll extended the world of play into the various magazines the Dodgson family produced for their own entertainment. The first of these magazines was *Useful and Instructive Poetry*, composed for Carroll's younger brother and sister. It contains several pieces that anticipate his mature nonsense: "A Tale of a Tail," with a drawing of a very long dog's tail, suggestive of "The Mouse's Tail," is a poem about someone who, like Humpty Dumpty, insists upon standing on a wall but who eventually falls off, and there are numerous morals that sound like those of the didactic ugly Duchess of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*.

He also edited and wrote for some other family magazines, the most important of which are the *Rectory Umbrella* and *Mischmasch*. It was the plan that all members of the Dodgson family should contribute; but as their enthusiasm waned, Carroll was left with the whole task. He furnished all the material for the *Rectory Umbrella* and all but two poems for *Mischmasch*. One of the more interesting pieces in the *Rectory Umbrella* is "The Vernon Gallery," a series of caricatures of popular English paintings of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Carroll's parody of Sir Joshua Reynolds's "The Age of Innocence" replaces the young girl in the painting with a hippopotamus. His caption reads: "'The Age of Innocence,' by Sir J. Reynolds, representing a young Hippopotamus seated under a shady tree, presents to the contemplative mind a charming union of youth and innocence."¹² Curiously, Reynolds's young girl exhibits an artificiality in her frozen posture of innocence that uncannily anticipates Carroll's own songs of innocence and numerous photographs that sentimentalize young girls.

Most of the sketches and comments in "The Vernon Gallery" caricature the anecdotal paintings of the Victorian period, especially those that depict scenes from everyday life. "The Scanty Meal," for example, attributed to "John Frederick Herring," makes fun of the sentimental pictures showing the hard times experienced by the poor. In this caricature the serving man announces to a middle-class family seated at

the table, "Please'm, cook says there's only a billionth of an ounce of bread left, and she must keep that for next week!" In cartoon-balloon fashion, each member of the family responds to the dire news with a concern for the mathematics of the occasion rather than for their hunger. A spectacled old woman exclaims, "I must really get stronger glasses, this is the second nonillionth I've not seen" (13). The other members join in the mathematical discussion prompted by the servant, thereby feeding their minds instead of their stomachs.

The animal world always held a fascination for Carroll. In a series of sketches called "Zoological Papers," printed in the *Rectory Umbrella*, he displays a whimsical bestiary suggestive of the zany animal creatures of Wonderland. The first paper deals with pixies: "the best description we can collect of them is this, that they are a species of fairies about two feet high, of small and graceful figure; they are covered with a dark reddish sort of fur; the general expression of their faces is sweetness and good humour; the former quality is probably the reason why foxes are so fond of eating them" (15). Carroll's typical wit is seen in the equation of a sweet appearance with a sweet taste and in the outrageous idea that these legendary sprites are devoured by foxes. Carroll's later writings are filled with references to creatures eating one another in a Darwinian, matter-of-fact way.

These early works make it clear that Carroll's brilliant genius for nonsense did not spring up full-blown with the *Alice* books. It appeared in his childhood games at Croft and, more developed, in his creations for family magazines. As Florence Milner points out, "it was through editing these little magazines and doing most of the work upon them himself that he made his first semi-formal approach to literature and art."¹³

At age twelve, Carroll began his schooling at the Richmond Grammar School, ten miles from Croft. His classmates at first delighted in playing tricks upon him, some of which are recorded in a letter to his two eldest sisters: "they first proposed to play at 'King of the Cobblers' and asked if I would be king, to which I agreed. Then they made me sit down and sat (on the ground) in a circle round me, and told me to say 'Go to work' which I did, and they immediately began kicking me and knocking me on all sides."¹⁴ Forced to assert himself, he soon adjusted to his new environment and was able to write that "the boys play me no tricks now." Having advanced sufficiently in his Latin and mathematics, he left Richmond at the end of 1845 and entered Rugby at the start of the following year.

Rugby was one of the great English public schools, brought into prominence during the headmastership of Thomas Arnold from 1822 to 1842. Carroll recorded in his diary his impressions of the years spent at Rugby: "During my stay I made I suppose some progress in learning of various kinds, but none of it was done *con amore*, and I spent an incalculable time in writing out impositions—this last I consider one of the chief faults of Rugby School. I made some friends there . . . but I cannot say that I look back upon my life at a Public School with any sensations of pleasure, or that any earthly considerations would induce me to go through my three years again."¹⁵ Nevertheless, Carroll worked hard at his studies and won several prizes in mathematics and classics. His true joy, however, still lay at home in Croft, which must have seemed the land of lost content. After recovering from a severe attack of whopping cough he enjoyed a pleasant interlude entertaining his brothers and sisters once more with the railway games in the rectory garden. His mother recalled the moment in a letter: "At the *Railroad* games, which the darlings *all delight* in, he *tries and proves* his strength in the most persevering way."¹⁶ And, indeed, Carroll's strength was to persevere in the ways of a child for the rest of his life.

Oxford

Toward the end of 1849, after nearly four years at Rugby, Carroll returned to Croft where he prepared himself for Oxford. He matriculated at Christ Church on 23 May 1850, and went into residence as a commoner (a student who is not dependent upon a foundation for support) on 24 January 1851. Only two days later he received the shocking news of his mother's death and returned home for the funeral. Archdeacon Dodgson was left with his family of eleven children, the youngest of whom was only five years old. His wife's sister, Lucy Lutwidge, came to take charge of the family and remained with them for the rest of her life. Carroll's undergraduate years thus began most unhappily. Derek Hudson wrote that "if there was one lesson above others that he brought away from Croft, it was that he could never in future, so long as he lived, be without the companionship of children. They had already become a necessity of his existence."¹⁷

Handicapped by a lack of money and an embarrassing stammer, Carroll kept largely to himself. Although he took a mild interest in sports, he delighted more in taking long walks or making expeditions on the river. Two months after the opening of the Great Exhibition in May

1851 Carroll and his aunt visited the splendid Crystal Palace. "It looks like a sort of fairyland," he wrote. "As far as you can look in any direction, you see nothing but pillars hung about with shawls, carpets, etc., with long avenues of statues, fountains, canopies, etc."¹⁸ He continued to work conscientiously at his studies, in 1851 winning a Boulter Scholarship and in 1852 obtaining first class honors in mathematics and second class honors in classical moderations. Dr. Edward Pusey, Oxford professor of Hebrew, acknowledged his success by nominating him to a studentship (a fellowship) of Christ Church. In 1854 he took his "Greats" examination; he was placed in only the third class because philosophy and history were difficult subjects for him.

In preparation for the Final Mathematical School, he spent two months of the summer vacation with a mathematical reading party at Whitby, a seaport and resort town in North Yorkshire. In a letter to his sister he describes the stormy atmosphere: "there is a strong wind blowing off shore, and threatening to carry Whitby and contents into the sea. There is sand and sharp shingle flying in the air, that acts on the face like the smart cut of a whip, and here and there the painful sight of an old lady being whirled round a corner in a paroxysm of dust and despair."¹⁹ A member of that reading party, Thomas Fowler, later recalled that Carroll won great favor with the local children who gathered around him at the seaside to listen to his fascinating stories. In a reminiscence Fowler wrote, "It was there [Whitby] that *Alice* was incubated. Dodgson used to sit on a rock on the beach, telling stories to a circle of eager young listeners of both sexes. These stories were afterwards developed and consolidated into their present form."²⁰ While scholars are intrigued with Fowler's claim that *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* had its origin on the sands of Whitby, they are reluctant to take it as gospel. Fowler's account was written forty years after the fact and his version is unconfirmed by any other source. Nevertheless, it would be foolish to discount the testimony of an actual witness. It is not unlikely that Carroll was recalling these pleasant days on the wind-swept sands of Whitby when he later wrote "The Walrus and the Carpenter" and questioned how long it would take seven maids with seven mops to clear all the sand from the beach. During this period he managed to find time to write the poem "The Lady of the Ladle" and the story "Wilhelm von Schmitz," which he sent to the *Whitby Gazette*. Although these works are not intrinsically interesting, they are significant for being the first published works by Carroll to survive. His dedication to his mathematical studies during this long vacation was

rewarded when, at the end of October 1854, he distinguished himself by taking first class honors in the Final Mathematical School. On 18 December of that year he received his B.A.

Carroll began keeping a diary in 1855 and meticulously maintained it at regular intervals to the end of his life. Before returning to Oxford on 19 January 1855, he enjoyed a period of leisure that he dutifully records in his diary. He spent several days sketching, dabbling at his mathematics, and reading such books as *The Life of Benjamin Robert Hayden*, Richard Monckton Milnes's *The Life of John Keats*, and Samuel Taylor Coleridge's *Aids to Reflection*. When he returned to Christ Church from Croft he began tutoring and preparing his mathematical lectures. In February 1855 he was appointed sublibrarian and in May was awarded a scholarship. "This very nearly raises my income this year to independence—Courage!" he wrote in his diary.²¹ The last entry in his diary for 1855 summarizes his fortunes: "I am sitting alone in my bedroom this last night of the old year, waiting for midnight. It has been the most eventful year of my life: I began it a poor bachelor student, with no definite plans or expectations; I end it a master and tutor in Christ Church, with an income of more than 300 a year, and the course of mathematical tuition marked out by God's providence for at least some years to come. Great mercies, great failings, time lost, talents misapplied—such has been the past year."²²

Carroll always favored the company of young girls over that of boys. In fact, he developed a positive distaste for boys that increased as he grew older, an attitude that may be traced back to his early attempts at teaching them. He found his pupils noisy and unmanageable; in his diary for 1856 he records some of his unpleasant experiences in the classroom: "Feb. 15. School class again noisy and troublesome—I have not yet acquired the arts of keeping order. Feb: 26. Class again noisy and inattentive—it is very disheartening, and I almost think I had better give up teaching there for the present."²³ Finally, three days later, he decides to discontinue his lectures, noting that "the good done does not seem worth the time and trouble."²⁴

The unexpected and disorder of any kind greatly disturbed Carroll. His childhood games with their elaborate rules, his lifelong interest in mathematics, and his elaborate file and index of all his correspondence all attest to this compulsive orderliness. If he failed to regulate the behavior of the boys in his class, he was no less disturbed that same year when he witnessed one of his fellows suffering an epileptic fit. He wanted to help him but did not know what to do: "I felt at the moment

how helpless ignorance makes one, and I shall make a point of reading some book on the subject of emergencies, a thing that I think everyone should do."²⁵ Three days later he ordered *Hints for Emergencies* and began a lifelong interest in medicine. Once again, this incident suggests Carroll's methodical approach to life. If he could not control his class at least he could learn how to conduct himself in emergencies. Despite his compulsiveness and his anxieties, however, Carroll enjoyed teaching. Besides his public lectures, he was responsible for as many as fourteen private pupils. Teaching, after all, was the means by which he earned his living; and if he felt that some of his class work was a waste of time, he more than compensated for that feeling by instructing many students and scholars during his life through his serious writings on logic and mathematics. As a man who considered to his dying day that life was a puzzle, Carroll always held the art of teaching to be an essential part of his work.

Throughout the 1850s Carroll continued to read contemporary novels and poetry. His remarks on literature are not of much critical interest, but they do shed some light on his own temperament. Of *Wuthering Heights*, for example, he wrote that "it is of all the novels I ever read the one I should least like to be a character in myself. All the 'dramatis personae' are so unusual and unpleasant. . . . Heathcliff and Catherine are original and most powerful drawn idealities: one cannot believe that such human beings ever existed: they have far more of the fiend in them."²⁶ When one recalls that Carroll worked out elaborate mathematical puzzles while falling to sleep in order to check his sexual fantasies (or "unholy thoughts," as he called them), it is small wonder that the violent passions of Heathcliff and Catherine seemed fiendish and fantastic to him.

A significant day in Carroll's life was 18 March 1856, when he purchased his first camera. Discouraged by the rejection of his sketches by the *Comic Times*, he abandoned his notion to work as a free-lance humorous artist and turned to the new and exacting medium of photography. Carroll's artistic and scientific talents could thus be nicely balanced, and he greatly enjoyed mastering the complicated and awkward paraphernalia that photography required at that time. During the course of his life he photographed such famous contemporaries as Alfred Lord Tennyson, Michael Faraday, the Rossettis, John Everett Millais, Holman Hunt, and John Ruskin, as well as members of his own family, friends, and innumerable children. Helmut Gernsheim, a historian of photography, has published a collection of Carroll's pho-

photographs. In his critical introduction he states that Carroll's "photographic achievements are truly astonishing: he must not only rank as a pioneer of British amateur photography, but I would also unhesitatingly acclaim him as the most outstanding photographer of children in the nineteenth century."²⁷

It was through his photography that Carroll developed his relationship with Tennyson. In 1857 Mrs. Charles Weld, Tennyson's sister-in-law, visited the Croft Rectory with her daughter Grace. Carroll took some photographs of Grace, the most famous of which depicts her as Little Red Riding Hood. Carroll was delighted to learn later that Tennyson liked the photograph. Obviously anxious to pursue a meeting with the great poet, Carroll "just happened" to be in the area where the Tennysons were staying during the summer and called on the family. Although Tennyson was away, his wife received Carroll and introduced him to her two children, Hallam and Lionel. A few days later he returned to photograph the Tennyson boys and met the laureate himself. Having admired Tennyson's poetry since he was a boy, Carroll was star-struck. As if to immortalize the moment of their meeting in words as well as in pictures, Carroll recorded in his diary:

After I had waited some little time the door opened, and a strange shaggy-looking man entered: his hair, moustache and beard looked wild and neglected; these very much hid the character of the face. He was dressed in a loosely fitting morning coat, common grey flannel waist-coat and trousers, and a carelessly tied black silk neckerchief. His hair is black: I think the eyes too; they are keen and restless—nose aquiline—forehead high and broad—both face and head are fine and manly. His manner was kind and friendly from the first: there is a dry lurking humour in his style of talking.²⁸

It is uncharacteristic of Carroll to lavish such descriptive detail on the people he writes about, including his fictional characters. This was indeed a "*Dies mirabilis*," as he noted in his diary. Although Tennyson could not have known it at the time, it was also a remarkable day in the history of photography, for it led to some of Carroll's most memorable photographs of the poet, images that to this day help to shape our perception of Tennyson.

Over the years Carroll had a few occasions to visit or correspond with the Tennysons. Whatever friendship may have developed between the two men, however, came to an abrupt halt in 1870. Carroll wrote to Tennyson requesting permission to keep and show to his friends a copy

of one of the poet's unpublished poems that had been printed for private circulation. He also requested permission to keep a copy of an unpublished poem that Tennyson had written when he was eighteen. Displeased with both of these works, Tennyson was apparently irritated by Carroll's request. His wife, Emily, replied that "when an author does not give his works to the public he has his reasons for it."²⁹ Believing that he was being charged with being ungentlemanly, Carroll fired off a response that made clear that he had always acted with scrupulous concern for the Tennysons' wishes. Tennyson's reply to Carroll's defensive but conciliatory letter has not been discovered, but Carroll's response to Tennyson's letter shows that a near irreparable breach in their friendship had taken place. Carroll's letter opens with a dialogue that appears to summarize the Tennysons' accusations and Carroll's response to them:

"Sir, you are no gentleman."

"Sir, you do me grievous wrong by such words. Prove them, or retract them!"

"I retract them. Your conduct has been dishonourable."

"It is not so. I offer a full history of my conduct. I charge you with groundless libel: what say you to the charge?"

"I once believed even worse of you, but begin to think you may be a gentleman after all."

"These new imputations are as unfounded as the former. Once more, what say you to the charge of groundless libel?"

"I absolve you. Say no more."

The other side of the letter reads as follows:

Thus it is, as it seems to me, that you first do a man an injury, and then forgive him—that you first tread on his toes, and then beg him not to cry out!

Nevertheless I accept what you say, as being in substance, what it certainly is not in form, a retraction (though without a shadow of apology or expression of regret) of all dishonourable charges against me, and an admission that you had made them on insufficient grounds.³⁰

Carroll was perhaps guilty for having been too insistent and forthright in his requests. But Tennyson, who was frequently hounded by the public, also apparently overreacted to Carroll's letter. Both of the poems in question were later published anyway. The two men lived on

two different planes: Tennyson, the most famous poet of his age, did not seem very interested in Carroll, except for his photography; Carroll, however, hero-worshiped the laureate. Hudson's analysis of Carroll's character, as revealed through his relationship with Tennyson, is noteworthy:

Endowed with a most exacting conscience, he set himself the highest standards of personal conduct and was incessantly engaged in a struggle for perfection. Thus from one aspect he might appear fussy, difficult, touchy; from another—the side that was turned most often to women and children—he would be all generosity and kindness. Of his essential goodness there is no doubt; but an artist had been mixed up with a puritan—and Dodgson's goodness was not of the sort that makes for inner tranquility.³¹

Among the most important children in Carroll's life were the Liddell sisters: Lorina, Alice, and Edith. Soon after Henry George Liddell became dean of Christ Church in 1855 Carroll befriended his children. He first met Alice on 25 April 1856, when she was approaching her fourth birthday. He and a friend had gone to the deanery to photograph the cathedral, and his diary for that day reads, "The three girls were in the garden most of the time, and we became excellent friends: we tried to group them in the foreground of the picture, but they were not patient sitters." Apparently Carroll was very impressed with the children, for the entry concludes, "I mark this day with a white stone,"³² a comment that he reserved for extraordinary occasions. The attention he gave the Liddell children was soon interpreted by some people as an attempt on his part to win the good graces of their governess, Miss Prickett, and this rumor led him to write that he would "avoid taking any public notice of the children in future, unless any occasion should arise when such an interpretation is impossible."³³

Although Carroll's family expected him to emulate his father by marrying and establishing himself as a parish priest in one of the Christ Church livings, he grew apprehensive about such a life as the date of his ordination grew nearer. He decided to take deacon's orders, and was ordained on 22 December 1861; but despite the urging of Dean Liddell, Carroll chose not to go on to take priest's orders. Meanwhile, his work in mathematics was progressing; and in 1860 he published his first book, *A Syllabus of Plane Algebraical Geometry*. In the same year

he published a small pamphlet entitled *Rules for Court Circular*, which set forth the rules for a new card game he had invented.

A surprise visit by Queen Victoria, Albert, the prince consort, and some of their children to Christ Church in December gave Carroll his first close-up look at the queen. "I had never seen her so near before," he wrote, "nor on her feet, and was shocked to find how short, not to say dumpy, and (with all loyalty be it spoken), how *plain* she is."³⁴ Like most of the English, Carroll was fascinated by the queen, but unlike them, he enjoyed a playful irreverence, as evidenced in his well-known depictions of queens in the *Alice* books. In his correspondence he occasionally feigned an acquaintance with the queen, as when he wrote a child friend that he refused to give a photograph of himself to Her Majesty. He explains that he wrote to the queen that "'Mr. Dodgson presents his compliments to Her Majesty, and regrets to say that his rule is never to give his photograph except to *young* ladies.' I am told she was annoyed about it, and said, 'I'm not so old as all that comes to,' and one doesn't like to annoy Queens, but really I couldn't help it, you know."³⁵

At the outset of 1861 he began his compulsive "Register of Correspondence," which was to include details of every letter he wrote or received from that year to 1898. The last piece of correspondence is numbered 98,721. The register he kept of the letters he sent and received as curator of the Common Room has not survived. Also, it is not known how many letters he wrote during the first twenty-nine years of his life. The total sum of his correspondence, therefore, must be a staggering number. In 1890 Carroll published an essay entitled "Eight or Nine Wise Words about Letter-Writing" as part of *The Wonderland Postage-Stamp Case*. Both whimsical and practical, the essay has four divisions: On Stamp-Cases, How to Begin a Letter, How to Go On with a Letter, and On Registering Correspondence. Had Carroll not been such a methodical and indefatigable letter-writer (and had not Morton Cohen spent twenty years tracking down most of the letters) we would have been denied several volumes of fascinating insights into Carroll's mind and character. Unlike some authors who, when they become famous, write their letters with an eye to their future publication, Carroll painstakingly designed his letters exclusively for their recipients. Like the original story about Alice, a large number of his letters, sparkling with wit and nonsense, were directed exclusively to children.

The Birth of *Alice*

Between 1856 and 1862 Carroll continued to visit the Liddell children and amused them with many stories; but the date 4 July 1862 is special, even though Carroll recorded it straightforwardly in his diary: "Robinson Duckworth and I made an expedition *up* the river to Godstow with the three Liddells: we had tea on the bank there, and did not reach Christ Church again till quarter past eight, when we took them on to my rooms to see my collection of microphotographs, and restored them to the Deanery just before nine." On the opposite page Dodgson added in February 1863: "On which occasion I told them the fairy-tale of *Alice's Adventures under Ground*, which I undertook to write out for Alice, and which is now finished (as to the text) though the pictures are not yet nearly done."³⁶

Twenty-five years later the diary's matter-of-fact account of that eventful day was superseded by Carroll's idyllic description: "Full many a year has slipped away, since that 'golden afternoon' that gave thee [*Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*] birth, but I can call it up as clearly as if it were yesterday—the cloudless blue above, the watery mirror below, the boat drifting idly on its way, the tinkle of the drops that fell from the oars, as they waved so sleepily to and fro, and (the one bright gleam of life in all the slumberous scene) the three eager faces, hungry for news of fairy-land, and who would not be said 'nay' to: 'tomm whose lips 'Tell us a story, please' had all the stern immutability of Fate!"³⁷ It is little wonder that a man whose imagination thrived on the idealized past turned to photography in order to strike out against the passing years that were to steal his many child friends from him.

In 1863, one year after the famous outing up the Isis, Carroll was no longer to see Alice Liddell with any regularity. In fact, by the time that Alice was thirteen, in 1865, Carroll wrote that she "seems changed a good deal, and hardly for the better—probably going through the usual awkward stage of transition."³⁸ The idyllic Alice he preserved in fiction, but the real girl, entering puberty, was now lost to Carroll forever. No one knows precisely what caused the rupture of Carroll's relationship with Alice, but in June 1863 the Liddell family withdrew its friendship from him and Mrs. Liddell destroyed all the letters that Carroll had written to her daughter. Morton Cohen speculates that a "disagreement between her and Dodgson may have led to the act, it may reflect her own personality, or it may have been her way of breaking off a relationship between the thirty-three-year-old

don and her eleven-year-old daughter that she feared was growing too serious or moving outside the limits of propriety."³⁹

During the 1860s Carroll made the acquaintance of several literary and artistic figures, including the poets Dante and Christina Rossetti, the painters John Everett Millais, Holman Hunt, and Arthur Hughes, the dramatist and editor of *Punch* Tom Taylor, and the novelist Charlotte Yonge. Carroll saw to it that many of the presentation copies of *Alice* got into the hands of such prominent and influential people. Christina Rossetti's acknowledgment reads, in part: "My Mother and sister as well as myself have made ourselves quite at home yesterday in Wonderland, and (if I am not shamefully old for such an avowal) I confess it would give me sincere pleasure to fall in with that conversational rabbit, that endearing puppy, that very sparkling dormouse. Of the Hatter's acquaintance I am not ambitious, and the March Hare may fairly remain an open question."⁴⁰ Her brother, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, thought that "Father William" and Alice's snatches of poetry were the funniest things he had seen in a long time.⁴¹

In 1863 Carroll spent several days photographing the drawings of Dante Gabriel Rossetti in the artist's studio. As Jeffrey Stern has pointed out, Carroll had been in Rossetti's studio and photographed his work before he illustrated (though after he wrote) *Alice's Adventures under Ground*.⁴² Rossetti's Pre-Raphaelite women, especially his portrait *Helen of Troy*, bear an uncanny resemblance to Carroll's drawing of Alice in the White Rabbit's house. Stern suggests that both Rossetti and Carroll exhibit a desire to be Pygmalion. Rossetti worked with a model named Annie Miller, a poor, uneducated girl whom he idealizes in some of his paintings. Carroll worked with the image of a child model, Alice Liddell, which he romanticizes under Rossetti's powerful influence. Stern writes that "The vital similarity was that they were both seen as an intellectualized visualization of an emotional and psychological need. To men captivated by an image, it may also have been important for Annie and Alice to have been intellectually inferior to their admirers."⁴³

Carroll's relationship with the artist Arthur Hughes also had an influence upon his visualization of Alice. A common theme in Hughes's paintings is the celebration of female innocence, a theme that endeared his work to Carroll. The only important original painting that Carroll owned, in fact, was Hughes's *Girl with Lilacs*, a portrait of a rather melancholy looking maiden. Carroll's drawing of Alice holding the "Drink me" bottle seems clearly modeled after Hughes's young girl.

Both figures have their heads tilted at the same dramatic angle and both faces are remarkably similar in execution and expression. As Stern points out, one reason that Carroll was drawn to such artists as Rossetti, Millais, and Hughes is that they were obsessed with a vision of threatened innocence and virginity.⁴⁴ If Alice seems less melancholy in Tenniel's drawings than in Carroll's, the fact remains that she, like all innocents, is heading for a fall.

Ever since he was a child writing plays and manipulating the puppets of his marionette theater Carroll was entranced by theatrical performances. During his Oxford days he delighted in visiting London in order to attend the plays at the Princess's Theatre. His especial joy, however, arose from watching child actors. In 1856 he had the good fortune of witnessing the debut of Ellen Terry who, at age nine, played Mamilus in *A Winter's Tale*. Although Carroll had no way of knowing that she would eventually become one of the most popular actresses of her day, he instinctively sensed something extraordinary about her. He later described her as someone he had always most wished to meet. It was not until 1864 that he finally was introduced to her. Although now married and much in demand as an actress, she seemed to enjoy Carroll's attentions and to share his interest in child performers.

It should be pointed out that Carroll took a courageous stand toward the theater at a time when such men as Bishop Wilberforce openly condemned public theaters as places of sin and debauchery. His apology is expressed in a letter he wrote to Alfred Wright in 1892. Having befriended Wright's nine-year-old daughter, he sent her one of his books and in return received a letter from her father saying that he teaches his children that no true Christian can attend theaters. Carroll's response is worth quoting in its entirety:

Dear Sir,

I thank you for your kind and candid letter, with the *principle* of which I am in hearty sympathy, though, as to the practical *application* of that principle, our views differ.

The main *principle*, in which I hope all Christians agree, is that we ought to abstain from *evil*, and therefore from all things which are *essentially* evil. This is one thing: it is quite a different thing to abstain from anything, merely because it is *capable* of being put to evil uses. Yet there are classes of Christians (*whose motives* I entirely respect), who advocate, on this ground only, total abstinence from:

- (1) the use of wine;
- (2) the reading of novels or other works of fiction;

- (3) the attendance at theatres;
- (4) the attendance at social entertainments;
- (5) the mixing with human society in any form.

All these things are *capable* of evil use, and are frequently so used, and, even at their best, contain, as do *all* human things, *some* evil. Yet I cannot feel it to be my duty, on that account, to abstain from any one of them.

I am glad to find that *you* do not advocate total abstinence from No. (2), which would have obligated you to return the book I sent to your little daughter. Yet *that* form of recreation has sunk to far more hideous depths of sin than has ever been possible for No. (3). Novels have been written, whose awful depravity would not be tolerated, on the stage, by any audience in the world. Yet, in spite of that fact, many a Christian parent would say "I do let my daughters read novels; that is, *good* novels; and I carefully keep out of their reach the *bad* ones." And so I say as to the theatres, to which I often take my young friends, "I take them to *good* theatres, and *good* plays; and I carefully avoid the *bad* ones." In this, as in all things, I seek to live in the spirit of our dear Saviour's prayers for his disciples: "I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from evil."⁴⁵

In 1866 Carroll attempted to write a play for Ellen Terry and Percy Roselle (who, though eighteen years old, could play roles of younger boys). He sent a synopsis of the play to Tom Taylor, the famous dramatist, asking him to show the outline to Terry. The hero of the play, played by Roselle, is to be kidnapped from his widowed mother, played by Terry, by his father's younger brother. Carroll wrote that "The main idea is that the boy should be of gentle birth, and stolen away, and (of course) restored at the end. This would exhibit him in scenes of low life, with thieves, in which he should show heroism worthy of his birth."⁴⁶ Taylor was at first enthusiastic about the idea but after he showed the synopsis to Terry they decided that the play lacked the melodrama necessary to please the popular taste.

Carroll's own taste in this proposed drama leaves much to be desired. The play is highly derivative of Dickens's *Oliver Twist* and is filled with characters and actions that are sorry stereotypes. Like his serious poetry and much of *Sylvie and Bruno*, this work illustrates Carroll's failure as a creative artist when he wanders outside of the nonsense mode. Victorian drama seems to have had a corrupting effect upon some of the era's greatest writers, including Tennyson, Browning, and Arnold, all of whom were tempted to write for the stage and all of whom produced theatrical failures. Perhaps, however, we can thank Carroll's intense interest in theater for the crisp dialogue of the *Alice* books—dialogue

that anticipates the work of such modern dramatists as Samuel Beckett and Harold Pinter.

Russia

Unlike his fellow nonsense writer, Edward Lear, Carroll was not a great world traveler. He did, however, spend several holidays at various seaside resorts in England. He loved the sea, the sand, the open sky, and the children he would meet in these places. The many allusions to the sea in his writings stem from these memorable escapes from his busy but routine life at Oxford. He also made a few short excursions to Wales and the Isle of Wight to enjoy new vistas but on the whole he seemed quite content to stay at home. His only trip abroad came in 1867 when he and Henry Parry Liddon, later canon and chancellor of St. Paul's, visited Russia. He prepared for the tour with the greatest care that he be provided for every contingency. All details of the journey were meticulously planned in advance. He even packed letters requiring answers and the stamped envelopes in which to mail his replies. He also kept a diary during his travels; it reveals, besides the tourist's eye for churches and art works, some very colorful sketches of human interest. When they landed at Calais he noted that the usual swarm of friendly natives greeted them with offers of services and advice: "To *all* such remarks I returned one simple answer 'non!' It was probably not strictly applicable in all cases, but it answered the purpose of getting rid of them; one by one they left me, echoing the 'Non!' in various tones, but all expressive of disgust. After Liddon had settled about the luggage, we took a stroll in the market-place, which was white with the caps of the women, full of their shrill jabbering."⁴⁷

Carroll frequently records the play and appearance of children he came upon. In Germany he encountered a large group of children dancing around in a ring, holding hands, and singing: "Once they found a large dog lying down, and at once arranged their dance around it, and sang their song to it, facing inwards for that purpose: the dog looked thoroughly puzzled at this novel form of entertainment, but soon made up his mind that it was not to be endured, and must be escaped at all costs." (974). Two days later he saw a less pleasant sight: "On our way to the station, we came across the grandest instance of the 'Majesty of Justice' that I have ever witnessed—A little boy was being taken to the magistrate, or to prison (probably for picking a pocket?). The achievement of this fact had been entrusted to two soldiers in full uni-

form, who were solemnly marching, one in front of the poor little creature, and one behind; with bayonets fixed of course, to be ready to charge in case he should attempt an escape" (975).

When he at last gets to St. Petersburg it appears to him as a sort of spacious and colorful wonderland:

We had only time for a short stroll after dinner, but it was full of wonder and novelty. The enormous width of the streets (the secondary ones seem to be broader than anything in London), the little droshkies that went running about, seemingly quite indifferent as to running over anybody (we soon found it was necessary to keep a very sharp lookout, as they never shouted, however close they were upon us)—the enormous illuminated signboards over the shops, and the gigantic churches, with their domes painted blue and covered with gold stars—the bewildering jabber of the natives—all contributed to the wonders of our first walk in St. Petersburg. (977)

His description of Moscow is equally picturesque, with the ubiquitous droshky drivers adding the touch of unreality:

We gave 5 or 6 hours to a stroll through this wonderful city, a city of white and green roofs, of conical towers that rise one out of another like a foreshortened telescope; of bulging gilded domes, in which you see as in a looking glass, distorted pictures of the city; of churches which look, outside, like bunches of variegated cactus (some branches crowned with green prickly buds, others with blue, and others with red and white), and which, inside, are hung all round with Eikons and lamps, and lined with illuminated pictures up to the very roof; and finally of pavement that goes up and down like a ploughed field, and droshky-drivers who insist on being paid 30 per cent extra today, "because it is the Empress' birthday." (983)

After being abroad for over two months Carroll described his return to England with poetic nostalgia: "I remained on the bow most of the time of our passage, sometimes chatting with the sailor on the lookout, and sometimes watching, through the last hour of my first foreign tour, the lights of Dover, as they slowly broadened on the horizon, as if the old land were opening its arms to receive its homeward bound children" (1005). Carroll never again left England and seldom mentioned his Russian tour in later life. As Hudson points out, the trip "seems not to have touched him vitally, but if anything to have deepened his patriotic insularity."⁴⁸ Florence Lennon sees him as a paradox-

ical traveller who was "most English when travelling, and most foreign at home."⁴⁹

Shortly after his return from Russia in 1867 Carroll sent a short fairy tale called "Bruno's Revenge" to *Aunt Judy's Magazine*. This story, which he later developed into a novel, *Sylvie and Bruno* (1889), greatly pleased the editor, Mrs. Gatty, who wrote, "It is beautiful and fantastic and childlike. . . . Some of the touches are so exquisite, one would have thought nothing short of intercourse with fairies could have put them into your head."⁵⁰ The news he received from Croft, however, provided no occasion for joy: his father had suddenly taken ill and died. It was the "greatest blow that has ever fallen on my life," Carroll reflected years later.⁵¹

As the new head of the family, he spent the next seven weeks at Croft looking after the needs of his brothers and sisters. Since the rectory had to be vacated, Carroll found temporary lodgings for his family until he could locate a permanent home for them. In August 1868 he went to Guildford and discovered a handsome four-story house called "The Chestnuts." He signed the lease in his name, but before he moved his family into their new home he made several trips to Guildford in order to meet with some of the local residents and to establish important social contacts for his family. As Anne Clark observes, "Dodgson's tendency to withdraw from society in the latter years of his life makes it easy to overlook the essential gregariousness of his nature. His eagerness for social links for himself and his family is clearly demonstrated in his early visits to Guildford."⁵²

Some months after his father's death Carroll's life began to assume a quiet regularity. In October he moved into a suite of rooms on the first and second floors of Tom Quad. One of the best suites in the college, it consisted of a large sitting-room, a study, two bedrooms, and an entrance lobby. Furthermore, he was granted permission to erect a photographic studio on the upper floor. Surrounded now by his books, paintings, and photographs of his child friends, Carroll would reside at Tom Quad for the remainder of his life.

Looking-Glass and Snark

On 24 August 1866 Carroll wrote to his publisher, Macmillan, "It will probably be some time before I again indulge in paper and print. I have, however, a floating idea of writing a sort of sequel to *Alice*, and if it ever comes to anything, I intend to consult you at the very outset,

so as to have the thing properly managed from the beginning."⁵³ In 1868, with the idea progressing, Carroll began writing. After considerable persuading, John Tenniel agreed to illustrate the new book. Carroll incorporated many of his earlier writings into the manuscript, including "Jabberwocky" (the first stanza of which he completed in 1855), and "Upon the Lonely Moor," the parody of William Wordsworth which he published in 1856 in the *Train*.

The first inspiration for *Through the Looking-Glass* came from a conversation Carroll had with his little cousin, Alice Raikes, in August 1868. Alice later recorded the incident:

We followed him into his house which opened, as ours did, upon the garden, into a room full of furniture with a tall mirror standing across one corner.

"Now," he said, giving me an orange, "first tell me which hand you have got that in." "The right," I said. "Now," he said, "go and stand before that glass, and tell me which hand the little girl you see there has got it in." After some perplexed contemplation, I said, "The left hand." "Exactly," he said, "and how do you explain that?" I couldn't explain it, but seeing that some solution was expected, I ventured, "If I was on the other side of the glass, wouldn't the orange still be in my right hand?" I can remember his laugh. "Well done, little Alice," he said. "The best answer I've had yet."⁵⁴

While working on the early chapters of *Through the Looking-Glass* Carroll prepared a small volume of poetry, most of it previously published in magazines, which he published in January 1869 under the title *Phantasmagoria*. The title poem deals with the unhappy experiences of a naive little ghost. The other notable comic poems are "Hiawatha's Photographing" (a parody of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's "The Song of Hiawatha"), "The Three Voices" (a parody of Tennyson's "The Two Voices"), and "Poeta Fit, Non Nascitur" (a humorous account of the making of a poet).

Meanwhile, after much negotiating over meticulous details insisted upon by Carroll and Tenniel, Macmillan published *Through the Looking-Glass* in time for Christmas, 1871. The sales were encouraging. Macmillan first printed nine thousand copies but the public demand was such that they quickly printed an additional six thousand. The reviews were generally more enthusiastic than they had been for *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. The *Athenaeum*, for example, wrote that "it is with no mere book that we have to deal here . . . but with the potentiality of happiness for countless children of all ages."⁵⁵