

# Colby



## Colby Quarterly

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Volume 6  
Issue 4 *December*

Article 5

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December 1962

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Daniel F. Kirk

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### Recommended Citation

Colby Library Quarterly, series 6, no.4, December 1962, p.158-168

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closely cannot fail to recognize. This is to say nothing of the impressive figures of the two gods wherein are mirrored for all time, on one hand, the anguished loneliness of the esthete and, on the other, the grievous dignity of the unloved sensualist.

Yet, however true these observations may be, they fall pitifully short of explaining the miracle of invention that is *The Crock of Gold*. There is that about true fantasy, a feeling in the air, elusive airy, magical—the word cannot be avoided. It is a quality that defies logic just as the happy dream defies any effort to render it in words. It is this quality which makes *The Crock of Gold* endure, though its philosophy be discredited and its occasional flaws of structure be dissected by a hundred pedants. In *Ave*, George Moore came close to catching the rare elfin atmosphere that Stephens's book evokes:

Suddenly the songs of the birds were silenced by the sound of a lyre; Apollo and his muses appeared on the hillside; for in those stories the gods and mortals mixed in delightful comradeship, the mortals not having lost all trace of their "divine" origin, and the gods themselves being the kind of beneficent gods that live in Arcady.

He was, in fact, writing of the now neglected stories of AE, but one feels justified in stealing them to pay right tribute to the curious enchanted genius of James Stephens, as he passes on steadily towards immortality.



### A DAY IN DODGSONLAND

By DANIEL F. KIRK

THE first draft of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* was composed on July 4th, 1862, one hundred years ago. Soon after Professor Cary, editor of the COLBY LIBRARY QUARTERLY, asked me to write an article commemorating this memorable event, I began to make plans for telling all of the essential facts surrounding what happened on that July afternoon. But I eventually came to realize that the facts have already been presented so often and well by Lewis Carroll's biographers that to

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repeat them here would be little short of wasteful. Rather, I submit the following imaginary journal entry about a day I spent at Oxford during the summer of 1959. The events and impressions, however, did indeed occur as described, and are now playfully reconstructed in an attempt to capture the spirit of Lewis Carroll and his masterpiece for children.

*June 24, 1959*

Instead of describing all of my travels and ending up with just a catalogue of dates and places, I have decided to record detailed descriptions of special adventures, such as those that took place while I was at Oxford. Although what I am writing is just a sample of what I have been doing since I left America last week, it will give some idea of the kind of fun I have been having.

The first thing I had to convince myself of about Oxford is that it is *real*. For the first day or two while I was there I had the strange feeling of living in a book, although when the book was written I cannot imagine. The architecture of the colleges with their stone walls and beautiful chapels is medieval, as is the plan, or rather, lack of a plan, of the jumbled streets of the city. But the students dressed in their black academic capes suggested to me the Renaissance spirit of humanistic learning. Then again, as I strolled through the formal gardens of the various colleges I thought of the elegant Eighteenth Century; while the honking horns of the millions of little automobiles, all driving on the left side of the street, kept me almost constantly aware that now Oxford is the home of the Morris Auto Works, and that our own era has made its impression on the checkered history of this wonderful city.

Although I was mixed up about what century I was living in, I didn't spend all of my time in a confused state of mind, dreaming of a phantasmagoria of days gone by. My big interest was, of course, Lewis Carroll, and it is about my pursuit of his spirit in old Oxford that I want to tell. Just before I left for Europe I completed my doctoral dissertation on Lewis Carroll, and although its primary focus is upon his work as a mathematics professor at Oxford and his writings on symbolic logic, there is enough of the silly antiquarian about me to make me want to nose around in the city and university which he

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loved so much and where he spent most of his life. I had travel brochures with me telling about the farmlands of "Hardy Country" in southwestern England and the bleak moors of "Bronte Country" in Yorkshire. Well, as I poked around in the shops of Oxford, wandered down the crooked alleyways, and sat in the flower gardens, I had the feeling that I was in "Carroll Country," or "Charles L. Dodgson Country," or "Alice Country," or whatever you want to call it. I am tempted to say "Wonderland," but that might be carrying things too far.

Just as Oxford is a mixture of architectural styles, my day spent in Carroll Country was a haphazard affair. I have no idea why I did things in the order I did them. Their chronology makes no sense, but here's what happened.

In the morning I took a big red double-decker bus from Headington, an Oxford suburb where I've been staying with my English friends Betty and Colin, to the center of the city, right down the High, or Main Street as we would call it at home. At once confused and delighted, I took refuge from my disorganized early-in-the-day emotions in the safest place I could think of — a book store. It turned out to be the famous Blackwell's, which is a scholar's sanctuary if there ever was one. I was again overwhelmed; however, this time it was by books. There are myriads of them of every size, color, shape, and description. I pretended to be browsing, but apparently I appeared to be lost, for a clerk broke with Blackwell tradition by offering to help me. Desperately I struggled to think of something to ask for — after all, other than the friends I was staying with and a professor I had had when I was an undergraduate, this clerk was the first Englishman I had ever talked to. Before I knew what I was saying, I discovered myself asking if Blackwell's had any first editions of works by Lewis Carroll. At once I felt ridiculous, though, for I knew that just a few years earlier a copy of the first edition of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* had sold for over \$5000. But the kindly old gentleman who was waiting on me did not take me for the fool I feared I was. Instead he told me that yes, there were some for sale, and then he led me through the many shelves of books to those by and about Dodgson. Among them I found two volumes that I did not have in any edition: *Alice's Adventures Under Ground*, which is a printing of the original

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version of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, and *The Game of Logic*, Dodgson's first book on logic, making a kind of game of the subject for children. I supposed these first editions would cost a fortune, but they didn't. Each came to a little over £3, or about \$9 apiece. I eagerly bought them, along with a guidebook of Oxford. By this time I had worked up a good deal of confidence, and since many of my American friends had charge accounts at Blackwell's, I decided to open one also. This was easily and quickly accomplished, and, "clutching my two first editions tightly in my hand," I walked casually out into the sunlight to continue my pilgrimage.

As I went toward Dodgson's college, Christ Church, I watched many undergraduates coming from their examinations. Colin had explained that, unlike American students, those at Oxford are given exams only at the end of their first and final years. Convenient, huh! As they poured out of the examination hall, some wore gleeful expressions, others looked relieved and exhausted, and a few appeared discouraged. But in most cases I knew how they felt — glad that it was all over and at the same time empty in mind and spirit. These thoughts have little to do with Lewis Carroll, but as I describe them now I am reminded of the dozens of undergraduates to whom he taught elementary geometry. Actually he was not a great mathematician, spending most of his time as he did on what in its modern American equivalent would amount to no more than a freshman course in introductory mathematics. There is no evidence that he even understood much calculus. But he did take his teaching seriously. Most of his mathematical writings are textbooks in which he sought to present the material in a clear, orderly way. One of the best, though, *Euclid and his Modern Rivals*, is a dialogue between two crusty old dons about what is the right book for teaching geometry. The ghost of Euclid and the spirit of a professor from Germany, Herr Niemand, are conjured up to help them decide. The book is filled with puns, jokes, and complicated mathematical charts, tables, and computations, all mixed together. It is loads of fun for odd-balls like me who are fascinated by things mathematical and Victorian.

Dodgson was not a very good teacher. He stammered and felt embarrassed. Also, I believe he was afraid of students and

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behaved too stiffly when he was with them. In tutorial sessions he must have been something like his textbooks, neat and reliable, but terribly dull. The more lively, informal spirit of *Euclid and his Modern Rivals* kept in hiding while he was teaching his students.

But it did appear, most deliciously, when he was with his friends, especially if they were little girls. I am not going to go into the psychological aspects of his relationship with these children. If you are interested, you can read a Freudian interpretation by Phyllis Greenacre in her *Swift and Carroll: A Psychoanalytic Study of Two Lives* (New York, 1955), or a well-rounded interpretation in Derek Hudson's fine biography, called simply *Lewis Carroll* (London, 1954). But I think the best you can do is listen to Deems Taylor's "Through the Looking-Glass Suite" for symphony orchestra. The music is alternately gentle, playful, and ironic, with an occasional suggestion of underlying conflict. I think it successfully communicates how Dodgson felt when he was with little girls. They seemed beautiful and pure to him, loving and cute, and he treated them as if they were playful puppies.

These thoughts passed through my mind as I walked toward the river where *Alice's Adventures* was composed. I had been wandering around Oxford, soaking in atmosphere as I tried to find Christ Church College, and now it was lunch time. I bought a meat pie and a bar of chocolate, and carried them to the banks of the Isis — the part of the Thames that flows through Oxford.

Oh my, how sentimental I became! There I sat, munching my chocolate, first edition of *Alice's Adventures Under Ground* before me, dreaming of the day on which Dodgson took the three daughters of the new Dean, Dr. Liddell — Lorina, who was thirteen, Alice, aged ten, and Edith, eight — rowing on the Isis. The date is easy for Americans to remember, July 4th. The year was 1862. With Canon Duckworth as a companion, the party went to nearby Godstow for a picnic, and on the way up the river the children begged Uncle Charles to tell one of the funny stories he was so good at inventing. He did, and upon their return Alice said that she had liked the story so much that she wished it were written down. Dodgson complied again, and two years later presented her with a neatly printed and

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personally illustrated manuscript entitled *Alice's Adventures Under Ground*. Both Duckworth and Henry Kingsley advised Dodgson to publish what he had written, as did also George MacDonald, author of the popular children's story *At the Back of the North Wind*. MacDonald had been introduced to Dodgson's book by his little son Greville, who, after the story had been read to him, "wished there were sixty thousand volumes of it!" Thus encouraged, Dodgson revised and augmented the story, which finally made its public appearance in 1865 as *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*.

My sentimentality reached a climax as I sat there by the Isis in the warm sunlight, reading the little dedicatory verse of *Alice's Adventures* beginning:

"All in the golden afternoon  
Full leisurely we glide."

But I knew better! The book is not a sentimental one. How sharply the picture of the "golden afternoon" contrasts with the pompous annunciations of the Caterpillar, the violence of the Duchess's lullaby:

"Speak roughly to your little boy  
And beat him when he sneezes,"

the harshness of the Queen of Hearts' frequent command "Off with his head," and the metaphysical enigma of the Cheshire Cat which fades slowly away until nothing is left but its grin! As I strolled through Christ Church Meadow back toward St. Adgate's Street I pondered to find some connection between the quiet Isis and the fantastic world of Wonderland. Then as I approached the tiny candy store that was transformed into the Sheep's Shop in *Through the Looking-Glass*, the answer came to me. Oxford was the connecting link, or at least one of the important ones. Little Alice Liddell served as a model for the fictional Alice, Duckworth was the Duck, Lorina the Lory, Edith the Eaglet, and Dodgson himself was the Dodo. I had read this, and I also knew that on a previous occasion the same party had been driven indoors by a rain storm, seeking refuge just as Alice and the animals joined in the Caucus Race to dry out after their swim in Alice's pool of tears.

That Oxford politics and religious disputes, and most certainly Dodgson's mathematics and logic, were often and clearly

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reflected in the two Alice stories was a familiar fact to me — I had just written a Ph.D. thesis on the subject. And some commentators had suggested that the Caterpillar's haughty manner was that of an Oxford don and that the Mad Hatter was based on a furniture dealer in the High; while "Speak gently to your little boy" is a parody of an anonymous poem of Dodgson's time, surely the kind of parody a whimsical academic man would enjoy making.

So here around me was my answer: what linked Wonderland with everyday life was this half-real, mixed up place called Oxford, the city that contained adorable little Alice along with cantankerous professors, the home of mathematics and memories, of Newman and Newton. While earlier that day I had thought of myself as visiting Dodgson Country, I was now reminded of Gerard Manley Hopkins' poem named "Duns Scotus's Oxford":

Towery city and branchy between towers;  
Cuckoo-echoing, bell-swarmed, lark-charmed, rook-racked,  
river-rounded;  
The dapple-eared lily below thee; that country and town did  
Once encounter in, here coped and poised powers;

Thou hast a base and brickish skirt there, sours  
That neighbour-nature thy grey beauty is grounded  
Best in; graceless growth, thou hast confounded  
Rural rural keeping — folk, flocks, and flowers.

Yet ah! this air I gather and I release  
He lived on; these weeds and waters, these walls are what  
He haunted who of all men most sways my spirits to peace;

Of realty the rarest-veined unraveller; a not  
Rivalled insight, be rival Italy or Greece;  
Who fired France for Mary without spot.

Although neither Scotus nor Hopkins knew of the Morris Auto Works, Hopkins had written "Glory be to God for dappled things," and he had seen the wonder and mystery of mixtures, paradoxes, and contrasts. So here was Lewis Carroll's Oxford, in a way the same as that of my friends Cardinal Wolsey, Christopher Wren, and Matthew Arnold. And, as these thoughts played in melodious counterpoint with my careful



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counting out of shillings and pence to buy postcards in the dark little shop, I began to ask myself: Oxford or Wonderland? Or Oxford and Wonderland? Two names for the same thing? I was tempted to make a portmanteau word of the two, for Dodgson, I now understood, had made a portmanteau portrait in his richly illogical children's stories.

From the shop I crossed the street, passed through the porter's gateway, and entered the huge quadrangle of Christ Church College. As soon as my eyes grew used to the dazzling green lawn set amidst the yellow stone buildings that surround it, I began to search for the temporary wooden belfry Dodgson satirized so comically in his essay "The New Belfry of Christ Church, Oxford," which begins:

The word "Belfry" is derived from the French *bel*, "beautiful, becoming, meet," and from the German *frei*, "free, unfettered, secure, safe." Thus the word is strictly equivalent to "meatsafe," to which the new Belfry bears a resemblance so perfect as almost to amount to coincidence.

But my search was in vain, as I knew it would be — the structure really was temporary. Years ago it was removed, and now the college buildings stood around me, unblemished as a memorial to the centuries.

I asked a student where to find Professor D. (I'll explain shortly why I must not refer to him by name), and was given directions to his lodgings, once Dodgson's, within the College. Through dark passages and up dim stairs I made my way until I came to a door marked with D.'s name. I timidly knocked. There was no answer. I knocked again. Again no answer. But since I heard someone moving about inside, I knocked for the third time. Then at last I heard footsteps shuffling to the door. It was opened by a gray old man with a cross expression on his face. "What do you want?" he abruptly asked. Frightened speechless, I handed him a letter of introduction written by a professor of mine who was himself a Christ Church man and had known D. in their younger days. D. took the letter and disappeared into his rooms with it. I waited, wishing I had never heard of Lewis Carroll, Christ Church, Oxford, and, especially, of D. Finally he returned, his pace slightly quickened. "I'm busy now; come back in an hour," he commanded as he shut the door in my face.

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I slowly retreated to the sunny quadrangle, insulted and discouraged. Then I felt a surge of American stubbornness and pride. "This old guy isn't going to buffalo me," I told myself. "No sir, you stick to it," I returned. And below this pseudo-dialogue I knew that I simply was curious to see Dodgson's rooms, and that D. probably did want me to return or else he would not have told me to. Glancing at my watch, I saw that the time was three p. m. I made up my mind that at exactly two minutes before four I would be again knocking at the door of this formidable person.

What to do in the meantime? There was Christ Church Cathedral, of course. I looked inside, but decided that it was too lovely to mix with the day's pursuits and would have to wait until tomorrow, when I could devote several hours to its architectural beauties. So I went off to the College library.

A kindly gentleman met me at the door and wanted to know if I would like a tour of the library. Upon my nodding that I would, he proceeded to show me around the ground floor, where there were many second rate Italian Renaissance paintings about which my guide gave detailed descriptions. Gradually we were joined by other visitors, including a little girl, golden haired and about ten. She reminded me of Alice, and this in turn reminded me of Lewis Carroll. I asked if there were any of his memorabilia to be seen in the College library, and was told that we were coming to that right now. The guide led us up the stairs, stopping at a window that opened on the College garden. He told us that from this window Dodgson used to watch the Liddell children playing, and then he pointed out a little door in the garden wall. This door, he explained, is thought to have been the one Dodgson had in mind when he described a tiny door through which Alice looked into the lovely flower garden. The little girl in our party smiled knowingly, and so did I, although I have no idea what it was that we privately knew. Then we were shown a collection of numerous first editions of English literary masterpieces, including a few by Dodgson, along with some of his drawings. I would liked to have lingered over these, but my watch said that I had no time to spare if I was to keep my rendezvous. So I rushed down the stairs, across the quadrangle, through the dark passage, and knocked once more for D.

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He answered, offered his hand, smiled with a bit of force, and told me to follow him. We entered a rather large, poorly lighted sitting room where bookcases, filled with dusty volumes, covered the walls and worn furniture cluttered the floor. D. motioned me to a sofa, where I sat down across the room from him. "This was Lewis Carroll's parlor," he dryly commented, "and there is the bedroom." He gestured toward a doorway. "Would you like to see the darkroom where he developed his pictures?" I told D. that I would like very much to see it, and he led me up some stairs and directed me into an unlighted closet which was empty. I stood there alone, trying to create visions of Dodgson's happy hours spent as an amateur photographer and to think of the many pictures of cute children he had tenderly developed — but I couldn't. Feeling foolish, I returned to the sitting room.

Then D. began to talk. He complained of his failing health and of the problem of heating these drafty rooms. He asked about my interest in Dodgson, and I described for him the thesis I had written. His questions, which indicated that he was listening closely, made me concentrate as only those of an experienced Oxford tutor can. I realized that he enjoyed baiting me, and soon I found myself enjoying our conversation. We both had forgotten our self-consciousness.

D. prepared tea for us, and served cookies out of a box. While we were drinking our tea he cautioned me not to mention his name in connection with Dodgson and certainly not to reveal the location of Dodgson's rooms. D. explained that if the general public were aware that these were the rooms of Dodgson, they would have been visited by "three million American G.I.'s during the War." I promised that I would keep his identity and the location of Dodgson's quarters a secret.

This started D. to rambling about the difficulties Dodgson had caused for the College. Evidently Christ Church is proud of having had the writer of *Alice in Wonderland* as a member, but is unhappy that outsiders are aware of the connection. From listening to D. I got the impression that too many visits like mine would not be welcomed by the College. D. told me that upon the death of Mr. Parrish, an American who owned the largest private collection of Dodgson materials, his library was willed to Christ Church. "But where were we supposed to put

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it?" D. asked with a tone of ironic disgust. I shrugged my shoulders and smiled as if I already understood his point. D. continued, "The executors came over and suggested that this room be turned into a museum where the books could be kept. But of course the College said 'No, someone lives there.'" Now D. pounded his knee with delight as he went on, "Then the executors suggested the little gardener's room opening on the quadrangle. But again the College disagreed, 'No! That's where we keep the lawn mower!' So the Americans gave up and went home." Then D. asked me if I knew what had ever happened to Parrish's collection, and I told him that it was now at Princeton University where it is being well cared for.

After tea I took my leave of D. He had warmed up considerably and asked me to come to see him again if I returned to Oxford, which I may someday do. Anyhow, by the time I left D. it had begun to rain gently. I was without a raincoat, so I ran down the street to catch a bus back to Headington. On the way I stopped to buy Betty a pretty flowered nineteenth century print that I saw in a store window. Then I caught a bus and rode on the top deck through Oxford, past swarms of students and workers on bicycles, past colleges and shops, past old stone houses and rose gardens, now somewhat bedraggled-looking in the rain, to the snug little cottage of my friends.

Betty was delighted with the print. She had prepared a Yorkshire pudding and roast beef for our supper — all very English. Then Colin built a fire in the fireplace, and as we sat warming ourselves I told Betty and Colin of Dan's adventures in Oxford. Soon it was bedtime. I quickly fell off to sleep, and perhaps I dreamed of Dodgson and D., Christ Church and Alice, Morris cars and lawnmowers — I don't remember. I do remember, though, that I was very, very happy.

I'll write more as I have more adventures. Tomorrow I leave for London and 11 Baker Street.

