

1855 Lewis Carroll's Diaries

June 2. (Sat). This day died our old Dean, respected by all and I believe regretted by many. [Thomas Gaisford (1779-1855); Classical Scholar and Regius Professor of Greek, founder of the Gaisford Prizes at Oxford for Greek Verse and Prose; Dean of Christ Church since 1831.] Only Saturday last he was with Mr. Gordon and myself in the Library, putting away the new books, and apparently in perfect health; little did I suppose that was the last time I should ever see him. All this morning they have been issuing bulletins hour by hour; the one announcing that all was over came out about half-past eleven.

June 7. (Th). *The Times* announces that Liddell of Westminster is to be the new Dean; the selection does not seem to have given much satisfaction in the college. [Henry George Liddell (1811-98) had been Domestic Chaplain to the Prince Consort, and was Headmaster of Westminster from 1846 until his appointment as Dean of Christ Church. The *Greek Lexicon*, compiled in collaboration with Robert Scott, Master of Balliol, was first published in 1843, but the Dean continued to revise it as edition after edition was called for. 'In most people', wrote W. B. Richmond, 'the Dean inspired awe . . . I felt, and I know it was so, that he hated humbug. He disliked shyness in others, although he was the shyest of men himself. A certain aloofness of manner was the result, which could easily be broken down by meeting him with perfect straightforwardness. . . . I took care

1856

Feb: 10. (Sun). Heard again from Mr. Yates—he wants me to choose another name, as Dares is too much like a newspaper signature. With reference to the picture [for 'Solitude'] he says he has already handed the verses over for illustration, and that the idea he gave the artist was, a man lying stretched under a large tree on a hill, a brook meandering in the distance, and a general sense of solitude and stillness pervading the picture. [The picture was by William McConnell (1833-67), known for his illustrations to books of humour.] Dined with Fowler at Lincoln and met Pattison [Mark Pattison (1813-84), later Rector of Lincoln; famous for his *Memoirs*], Tristram and a Mr. Walesby, the other 'coach' in Law. [Francis Pearson Walesby, at one time Professor of Anglo-Saxon; Doctor of Civil Law and Fellow of Lincoln.]

Feb: 11. (M). Wrote to Mr. Yates sending him a choice of names: 1. *Edgar Cuthwellis* (made by transposition out of 'Charles Lutwidge'). 2. *Edgar U. C. Westhill* (ditto). 3. *Louis Carroll*, (derived from Lutwidge = Ludovic = Louis, and Charles [Carolus]). 4. *Lewis Carroll*. (ditto). [Dodgson adds a note on March 1, 'Lewis Carroll was chosen'.]

1856

April 24. (Th). Got a new bookcase into the little room, which I intend living in chiefly, reserving the large room for lectures. [Dodgson's rooms were in the Chaplain's Quadrangle, pulled down in 1862 to make room for the Meadow Buildings. He had lived in Peckwater Quad while an undergraduate.]

April 25. (F). Went over with Southey in the afternoon to the Deanery, to try and take a photograph of the Cathedral: both attempts proved failures. The three little 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. I mark this day with a white stone.

[This seems to have been Dodgson's first meeting with Alice and Edith, though he was already friends with Harry and Lorina. Alice was a month short of four years old at this time, Lorina six or seven, Harry eight or nine, and Edith about two. 'It would be difficult to choose between the beauty of the daughters', wrote W. B. Richmond in 1864, when painting them in his picture 'The Sisters'.]

April 28. (M). Deanery again in the afternoon. Southey tried the view of Merton from the walk before the house, a much more promising view as far as light goes—however all failed. The children were with us a good deal of the time. Boat races began.

April 29. (Tu). Went over again with Southey to the Deanery about 4, but all failed. Harry was with us most of the time, and Lorina just at the end.

April 30. (W). We went for the last time to the Deanery, and brought everything away, to wait for better chemicals before trying again. We saw none of the family this time.

May 1. (Th). My camera arrived. Did some photographs with the spoiled collodion of Southey's.

[A good idea of the complicated collodion process followed by Dodgson and other early photographers may be obtained from his poem 'Hiawatha's Photographing' which was written later in this same year. The relevant lines (which are omitted from later editions such as *Rhyme? and Reason?* and the *Nonesuch Omnibus*) run as follows:

Mystic, awful was the process.  
First, a piece of glass he coated  
With collodion, and plunged it  
In a bath of lunar caustic

July 4. (F). Atkinson brought over to my rooms some friends of his, a Mrs. and Miss Peters, of whom I took photographs, and who afterwards looked over my album and stayed to lunch. They then went off to the Museum, and 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 micro-photographs, and restored them to the Deanery just before nine. [On the opposite page Dodgson added on Feb. 10, 1863,]: On which occasion I told them the fairy-tale of *Alice's Adventures Underground*,

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.

[Concerning the telling of the tale we have, besides the three poems included in the *Alice* books, the testimonies of three of the party:

Dodgson himself, writing about 'Alice on the Stage' in *The Theatre*, April 1887:

Many a day had we rowed together on that quiet stream—the three little maidens and I—and many a fairy tale had been extemporised for their benefit—whether it was at times when the writer was 'i' the vein', and fancies unsought came crowding thick upon him, or at times when the jaded Muse was goaded into action, and plodded meekly on, more because she had to say something than that she had something to say—yet none of these many tales got written down: they lived and died, like summer midges, each in its own golden afternoon until there came a day when, as it chanced, one of my little listeners petitioned that the tale might be written out for her. That was many a year ago, but I distinctly remember, now as I write, how, in a desperate attempt to strike out some new line of fairy-lore, I had sent my heroine straight down a rabbit-hole, to begin with, without the least idea what was to happen afterwards. . . . In writing it out, I added many fresh ideas, which seemed to grow of themselves upon the original stock; and many more added themselves when, years afterwards, I wrote it all over again for publication . . . .

Full many a year has slipped away, since that 'golden afternoon' that gave thee birth, but I can call it up almost 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: from whose lips 'Tell us a story, please' had all the stern immutability of Fate!

Duckworth, in a letter to Collingwood printed on pp. 258 and 260 of *The Lewis Carroll Picture Book*, 1899:

I rowed *stroke* and he rowed *bow* in the famous Long Vacation voyage to Godstow, when the three Miss Liddells were our passengers, and the story was actually composed and spoken *over my shoulder* for the benefit of Alice Liddell, who was acting as 'cox' of our gig. I remember turning round and saying, 'Dodgson, is this an extempore romance of yours?' And he replied, 'Yes, I'm inventing as we go along.' I also well remember how, when we had conducted the three children back to the Deanery, Alice said, as she bade us good-night, 'Oh, Mr. Dodgson, I wish you would

write out Alice's adventures for me.' He said he would try, and he afterwards told me that he sat up nearly the whole night, committing to a MS. book his recollections of the drolleries with which he had enlivened the afternoon. He added illustrations of his own and presented the volume, which used often to be seen on the drawing-room table at the Deanery.

Alice herself is quoted by Collingwood on p. 96 of *The Life and Letters of Lewis Carroll*, 1898:

Most of Mr. Dodgson's stories were told to us on river expeditions to Nuneham or Godstow, near Oxford. My eldest sister, now Mrs. Skene, was 'Prima', I was 'Secunda', and 'Tertia' was my sister Edith [in the prefatory verses to *Wonderland*]. I believe the beginning of Alice was told one summer afternoon when the sun was so burning that we had landed in the meadows down [*sic*] the river, deserting the boat to take refuge in the only bit of shade to be found, which was under a new-made hayrick. Here from all three came the old petition of 'Tell us a story', and so began the ever-delightful tale. Sometimes to tease us—and perhaps being really tired—Mr. Dodgson would stop suddenly and say, 'And that's all till next time.' 'Ah, but it is next time,' would be the exclamation from all three; and after some persuasion the story would start afresh. Another day, perhaps the story would begin in the boat, and Mr. Dodgson, in the middle of telling a thrilling adventure, would pretend to go fast asleep, to our great dismay.

In the *Cornhill* article, written thirty-four years later, Alice says: <sup>1932</sup>

Nearly all of *Alice's Adventures Underground* was told on that blazing summer afternoon with the heat haze shimmering over the meadows where the party landed to shelter for a while in the shadow cast by the haycocks near Godstow. I think the stories he told us that afternoon must have been better than usual, because I have such a distinct recollection of the expedition, and also, on the next day I started to pester him to write down the story for me, which I had never done before. It was due to my 'going on, going on' and importunity that, after saying he would think about it, he eventually gave the hesitating promise which started him writing it down at all.

The scene of the picnic was about three miles up the stream of the Isis (or Thames) from Folly Bridge (where the boat would have been taken), still countrified, and then in the very depths of the country, with not even a village nearer than half a mile. There was a farm-house in the neighbourhood, and by the river-bank stand the ruins of the old nunnery, built in the reign of King Stephen (by the Lady Edyve 'widow of Sir William de Lancelm', most of which

1862

serve the purposes of a farmyard. The towers and spires of Oxford are visible across the wide, flat Port Meadow, and in 1862 there would have been nothing else except possibly the little village of Summertown, and the spire of the new 'North Oxford' church, St. Philip and St. James, with perhaps one or two of the new 'Gothic' houses between it and the canal. There was no lack of rabbit-holes on the Godstow shore, nor of rabbits either—even if the only white one to appear on the afternoon of Friday, July 4, 1862, was created by Lewis Carroll.]

July 5. (Sat). Left, with Atkinson, for London at 9.2, meeting at the station the Liddells who went up by the same train. [On Sept. 13, 1864 (the day on which he finished the pictures), Dodgson noted concerning *Alice's Adventures Underground* 'headings written out (on my way to London) July 5, 1862', the text was not finished until Nov. 13, 1862.] We reached 4 Alfred Place about eleven, and found Aunt Lucy, Frances and Elizabeth there.

July 7. (M). Visited the Exhibition: my first impression was of its being smaller than the '51 one, caused by the galleries.

July 8. (Tu). We all went to the Exhibition again. Met the Liddells in the picture-gallery at 12.

July 9. (W). First down to the Great Northern to see Frances and Elizabeth off for Croft. Then to Tudor Lodge, where I met Mr. MacDonald coming out. I walked a mile or so with him, on his way to a publisher with the MS. of his fairy tale 'The Light Princess' in which he showed me some exquisite drawings by Hughes. [The story was included in the novel *Adela Cathcart* in 1864, and, with the Arthur Hughes illustrations, in *Dealings with the Fairies*, 1867.] Then to Moxon's, who told me that more than five hundred copies of the Index are sold. [This was the *Index to 'In Memoriam'*, published anonymously earlier that year, which was suggested and edited by Dodgson, though most of the work of compiling was done by one or more of his sisters.] Left for Oxford.

Lewis Carroll Letters

To Lilia MacDonald

MS: Yale

The Residence, Ripon  
January 5, 1867

My dear Lily,

I have ordered a little book *The Fountain of Youth* to be sent you as a New Year's gift, and hope this note may reach you in time to warn you of its

coming, that it may not be too great a shock for your nerves. The book is intended for you to look at the outside, and then put it away in the book-case: the *inside* is not meant to be read. The book has got a moral - so I need hardly say it is *not* by Lewis Carroll.<sup>1</sup>

The moral is, that if ladies *will* insist on being considered as children, long after their hair has begun to get gray and their faces to be covered with wrinkles (I know a family in Kensington where the eldest daughter does this - and she is *nearly* 57!) they will end at last in being hermitesses, and building 50 small crosses up the side of a hill. However, never mind the moral. I hope you will be a child still when I see you next.

There are 2 reasons for not sending love to your brothers and sisters - one is, they *will* keep sending it back to me; as if they didn't value it a bit; the other is, it will lose all its warmth on the way this bitter weather. The trees look so lovely about here - as if you had taken the summer woods and frozen all the green out of them: it quite looks like Fairy Land.



With love to all you young ones, I remain

Your affectionate "Uncle,"  
C. L. Dodgson


I hope you will succeed in getting to the Pantomime today. Thank your Mama for her letter which came this morning. My sisters send their kind regards to your Mama, and best New Year's wishes for you all.

The 


My  Ina,



Though  don't give birthday presents, still 



April






... write a birthday 


June



came 2 your  2



wish U many happy returns of the day,  the  met

me,  took me for a 

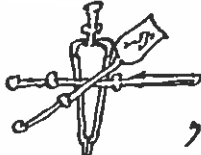

 hunted me  and  till  could hardly 



However somehow  got





into the ,  there


a  met me,  took me

for  a , and pelted me

with , , , ,

  . Of course  ran into the street again,  a  met me  took me for a ,  dragged me all the way 2 the 

 the worst of all was when a  met me  took me for a 

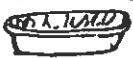

. I was harnessed 2 it,  had 2 draw it miles and miles, all the way 2 Merrow. So UCI couldn't get 2 the room where U were.


However I was glad to

hear U were hard at work  
learning the 

	2	3	4	5
2	4	6	8	10
3	6	9	12	15
4	8	12	16	20
5	10	15	20	25

 for a  
birthday treat.

I had just time to look  
into the kitchen, and  
your birthday feast  
getting ready, a nice  
 of crusts, bones, pills,  
cotton-bobbins, and rhubarb  
and magnesia. "Now," I  
thought, "she will be happy!"  
and with a  I went  
on my way.

Your aff<sup>le</sup> friend  


To Georgina Watson<sup>2</sup>

Facsimile: Hatch, pp. 113-5

The Chestnuts, Guildford  
[After October 5, 1869]

My dear Ina,

Though I don't give birthday presents, still I may write a birthday letter. I came to your door to wish you many happy returns of the day, but the cat

met me, and took me for a mouse, and hunted me up and down till I could hardly stand. However somehow I got into the house, and there a mouse met me, and took me for a cat, and pelted me with fire-irons, crockery, and bottles. Of course I ran into the street again, and a horse met me and took me for a cart, and dragged me all the way to the Guildhall,<sup>1</sup> but the worst of all was when a cart met me and took me for a horse. I was harnessed to it, and had to draw it miles and miles, all the way to Merrow. So you see I couldn't get to the room where you were.

However I was glad to hear you were hard at work learning the multiplication tables for a birthday treat.

I had just time to look into the kitchen, and saw your birthday feast getting ready, a nice dish of crusts, bones, pills, cotton-bobbins, and rhubarb and magnesia. "Now," I thought, "she will be happy!" and with a smile I went on my way.

Your affectionate friend,  
C.L.D.

## To Margaret Cunnyngame<sup>1</sup>

MS: Berol

Christ Church, Oxford

January 30, 1868

Dear Maggie,

I found that the "friend," that the little girl asked me to write to, lived at Ripon, and *not* at Land's End – a nice sort of place to invite to! It looked rather suspicious to me – and soon after, by dint of incessant enquiries, I found out that she was called "Maggie," and lived in a "Crescent"! Of course I declared "after *that*" (the language I used doesn't matter), "I will *not* address her, that's flat! So do not expect me to flatter."

Well, I hope you soon will see your beloved Pa come back – for consider, should you be *quite* content with only Jack? Just suppose they made a blunder! (Such things happen now and then.) Really, now, I shouldn't wonder if your "John" came home again, and your father staid at school! A most awkward thing, no doubt. How would you receive him? You'll say perhaps "you'd turn him out." That would answer well, so far as concerns the *boy*, you know – but consider your Papa, learning lessons in a row of great inky school-boys! This (though unlikely) *might* occur: "Haly" would be grieved to miss him (don't mention it to *her*).

No carte has yet been done of me that does real justice to my *smile*; and so I hardly like, you see, to send you one – however, I'll consider if I will or not – meanwhile, I send a little thing to give you an idea of what I look

like when I'm lecturing. The merest sketch, you will allow – yet still I think there's something grand in the expression of the brow and in the action of the hand.



Have you read my fairy-tale in Aunt-Judy's Magazine? If you have, you will not fail to discover what I mean when I say "Bruno yesterday came to remind me that *he* was my godson!" On the ground that I "gave him a name"!

Your affectionate friend,  
C. L. Dodgson

P.S. I would send, if I were not too shy, the same message to "Haly" that she (though I do not deserve it, not I!) has sent through her sister to me. My best love to yourself – to your Mother my kindest regards – to your small, fat, impertinent, ignorant brother my hatred. I think that is all.

## To Alfred Tennyson

MS: Yale

Christ Church, Oxford

March 3, 1870

Dear Mr. Tennyson,

It is so long since I have had any communication with your family that you will have almost forgotten my name by this time, I fear.<sup>3</sup> I write on a matter very similar to what I have written about to you on two previous occasions. My deep admiration for your writings (extending itself to your earlier poems as well) must be my excuse for thus troubling you.

There is a certain unpublished poem of yours called "The Window" which it seems was printed for private circulation only.<sup>4</sup> However it has

been transcribed, and is probably in many hands in the form of MS. A friend, who had had a MS copy given to him, has in his turn presented me with one. I have not even read it yet, and shall do so with much greater pleasure when I know that you do not object to my possessing it. What I plead for is, first, that you will make me comfortable in possessing this copy by giving your consent to my preserving it – secondly, the further permission to *show* it to my friends. I can hardly go so far as ask for leave to give away copies of it to friends, though I should esteem such a permission as a great favour.

Some while ago, as you may remember, I had a copy lent me of your "Lover's Life," and a young lady, a cousin of mine, took a MS copy of it. I wrote to you about it, and in accordance with your wish prevailed on her (very reluctantly, I need hardly say) to destroy the MS. I am not aware of any other copies of *that* poem in circulation – but *this* seems to me a different case. MS copies of "The Window" are already in circulation, and this fact is unaffected by *my* possessing, or not possessing, a copy for my own enjoyment. Hoping you will kindly say you do not object to my – first reading – and secondly preserving the MS that has been given me, and with kind remembrances to Mrs. Tennyson and your sons, I remain

Very truly yours,  
C. L. Dodgson<sup>1</sup>

To Alfred Tennyson

MS: Yale

Christ Church, Oxford

March 7, 1870

Dear Mr. Tennyson,

Understanding the letter I received this morning as coming really from yourself, though written by Mrs. Tennyson, I must trouble you with one or two remarks on it.

First, let me express my sincere sympathy with you in all the annoyance that has been caused you by the unauthorised circulation of your unpublished poems. Whoever it was that thus wantonly betrayed the confidence you had reposed in him, he has, in my opinion, done a most dishonourable thing.

Next, as to your conclusion that Mr. Moxon is to blame for this new instance of such circulation – as my silence on this point might be interpreted

as assent, let me, in justice to Mr. Moxon, assure you that, so far as I know, he has had nothing to do with it.<sup>1</sup>

Lastly, I must in justice to myself call your attention to your concluding sentence. "It would be well that, whatever may be done by such people, a gentleman should understand that, when an author does not give his works to the public, he has his own reasons for it." This sentence certainly implies, however unintentionally, a belief that I have done something ungentlemanly. Let me then remind you that in all these matters I have been a purely passive agent, and that in all cases I have consulted your wishes and scrupulously followed them. It is by no act of mine that this poem is now in circulation, and that a copy of it has come into my hands. Under these circumstances I may fairly ask you to point out what I have failed to do that the most chivalrous sense of honour could require.

I hope I have not written harshly. I have not intended to do so. Feeling as I do, that I have done nothing which could deserve so grave a charge, I would fain hope, and am quite ready to believe, that you had no intention of implying it. With kind regards to Mrs. Tennyson, I remain

Sincerely yours,  
C. L. Dodgson

To Alfred Tennyson<sup>2</sup>

MS: Yale

"Sir, you are no gentleman."

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

"I reiterate 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."

(Turn over)

March 31, 1870

My dear Sir,

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.

Sincerely yours,  
C. L. Dodgson



To Mrs. J. Barry

Text-MS; Berol<sup>1</sup>

Christ Church, Oxford  
February 15, 1871

Dear Mrs. Barry,

I am sending you, with this, a print of the proposed frontispiece for rough the Looking-Glass. It has been suggested to me that it is too terrible

a monster, and likely to alarm nervous and imaginative children; and that at any rate we had better begin the book with a pleasanter subject.

So I am submitting the question to a number of friends, for which purpose I have had copies of the frontispiece printed off.

We have three courses open to us:

- (1) To retain it as the frontispiece.
- (2) To transfer it to its proper place in the book (where the ballad occurs which it is intended to illustrate), and substitute a new frontispiece.
- (3) To omit it altogether.

The last-named course would be a great sacrifice of the time and trouble which the picture has cost, and it would be a pity to adopt it unless it be really necessary.

I should be grateful to have your opinion (tested by exhibiting the picture to any children you think fit), as to which of these three courses is the best.

I have no idea which of your daughters I ought to send the new volume of *Alice* to. Which of them has the English *Wonderland*? And what are their names in full?

I have called on John, but haven't yet succeeded in seeing him. There is not, or at least ought not to be, any etiquette to prevent Dons and Undergraduates associating – but we are apt to be rather shy of each other, and I fancy the Undergraduates, as a rule, don't care for our society.

Very truly yours,  
C. L. Dodgson

To Arthur Sullivan<sup>3</sup>

MS: Morgan

Christ Church, Oxford  
March 24, 1877

Dear Sir,

I thank you for your letter. I thought it needless to trouble you with any particulars till I knew if my proposal were at all possible. And now, though your answer gives little or no ground to hope, I think I may as well, before giving up all hope, tell you what it is I want, as perhaps it might change your view of my question. I am the writer of a little book for children, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, which has proved so unexpectedly popular that the idea of dramatising it has been several times started. If that is ever done, I shall want it done in the best possible way, sparing no expense – and one

feature I should want would be good music. So I thought (knowing your charming compositions) it would be well to get 2 or 3 of the songs in it set by you, to be kept for the occasion (if that should arrive) of its being dramatised. If that idea were finally abandoned, we might then arrange for publishing them with music. In haste,

Faithfully yours,  
C. L. Dodgson  
("Lewis Carroll")<sup>1</sup>

To Arthur Sullivan

MS: Morgan

The Chestnuts, Guildford  
March 31, 1877

My dear Sir,

I have again to thank you for a letter which, like the last, is nearly final, but just leaves the gate of Hope ajar. Excuse my troubling you with more questions, but I should much like to know what the sum is, which you say you thought "absurdly extravagant," for the copyright of the musical setting of a song: and also what the terms would be, supposing you had a "royalty" for every time it was sung in public. For my own part, I think the "royalty" system the best of the two, usually: but the other has the advantage of finality.

You speak of your readiness to enter on the matter, if I should ever carry out the idea of dramatising *Alice* – but that is just what I don't want to wait for. We might wait an indefinite time, and then, when the thing was settled, have to get our music prepared in a hurry – and, worse still, you might not then be able or willing to do it. That is my reason for wishing to get something ready beforehand: and what I know of your music is so delicious (they tell me I have not a musical ear – so my criticism is valueless, I fear) that I should like to secure something from you, now, while there is leisure time to do it in. Believe me

Very truly yours,  
C. L. Dodgson

My address is as above till April 12, and afterwards "Christ Church,



To Agnes Hull

MS: Keith

Why, how can she know that no harm has come to it? Surely I must know best, having the book before me from morning to night, and gazing at it for hours together with tear-dimmed eyes? Why, there were several things I didn't even mention, for instance, the number of beetles that had got crushed between the leaves. So when I sign myself "your loving" you go down a step, and say "your affectionate"? Very well, then I go down another step, and sign myself "yours truly, 'Lewis Carroll.'"

[Christ Church, Oxford]

October 22, 1878

Why, how can she know that no harm has come to it? Surely I must know best, having the book before me from morning to night, and gazing at it

for hours together with tear-dimmed eyes? Why, there were several things I didn't even mention, for instance, the number of beetles that had got crushed between the leaves. So when I sign myself "your loving" you go down a step, and say "your affectionate"? Very well, then I go down another step, and sign myself "yours truly, 'Lewis Carroll.'"

Ms. B. 1. 29  
 Nov. 24/83

My dear Daisy,  
 I enclose for you the Rules for that game I taught you. Also the puzzle of ablets for your sister. I was very nearly writing on it "for Polly," when I remembered that she is probably very old, and would be very much aged. Would you give me a list of your names, ages, and birthdays?  
 Yours affectionately,  
 Lewis Carroll

To Margaret Brough<sup>a</sup>

MS: Berol

Christ Church, Oxford

November 24, 1883

dear Daisy,  
 enclose you the Rules for that game I taught you. Also the puzzle of ablets for your sister. I was very nearly writing on it "for Polly," when I remembered that she is probably very old, and would be very much aged. Would you give me a list of your names, ages, and birthdays?

Yours affectionately,  
 Lewis Carroll

To Mrs H. G. Liddell

MS: Liddell

Christ Church, Oxford  
November 12, 1891

Dear Mrs. Liddell,

I have been very busy, and have put off writing to you about your kind invitation,<sup>1</sup> feeling I could not possibly write, in a hurry, and that it is very hard to express, to my own satisfaction, all that is in my mind.

It is *very* hard to find words which seem to express, adequately, how strongly I feel the very *great* loss, to the University, the College, the City, and to myself, involved in the going away of the Dean and yourself. We, as the Governing Body, have had a chief of such exceedingly rare qualities that it would be vain to hope that *any* successor can *quite* fill his place.<sup>2</sup> I am sure that the whole of Oxford, and all the good and charitable work carried on in it, will suffer great and permanent loss by the absence of yourself. And, to *me*, life in Christ Church will be a totally different thing when the faces, familiar to me for 36 years, are seen no more among us. It seems but yesterday when the Dean, and you, first arrived: yet I was hardly more than a boy, then; and many of the pleasantest memories of those early years – that foolish time that seemed as if it would last for ever – are bound up with the names of yourself and your children: and now I am an old man, already beginning to feel a little weary of life – at any rate weary of its *pleasures*, and only caring to go on, on the chance of doing a little more *work*.

It is also *very* hard, at such a time, to say a word that could at all look like a want of readiness to do anything you may happen to wish. But I will trust to your kindness, and tell you candidly what I feel about it.

Years ago, I began declining *all* invitations out, feeling *very* weary of Society, and also thinking I had done my full share of it. But, years before that, I refused all *Sunday* invitations, on principle (though of course allowing to others the same liberty, which I claimed for myself, of judging that question). If you could kindly leave me out of the list of those who have the honour of being asked to meet your Royal guests, I should personally be grateful: and I am sure there are *many* who would be most happy to fill

my place: and there is no fear that the Duchess could notice, in the bewildering stream of faces she has to meet, who is, and who is not, present.

Sincerely and gratefully yours,  
C. L. Dodgson

To Alice (Liddell) Hargreaves

MS: Berg

Christ Church, Oxford  
March 1, 1885

My dear Mrs. Hargreaves,

I fancy this will come to you almost like a voice from the dead, after so many years of silence – and yet those years have made no difference, that I can perceive, in *my* clearness of memory of the days when we *did* correspond.<sup>2</sup> I am getting to feel what an old man's failing memory is, as to recent events and new friends (for instance, I made friends, only a few weeks ago, with a very nice little maid of about 12, and had a walk with her – and now I can't

recall either of her names!) but my mental picture is as vivid as ever, of one who was, through so many years, my ideal child-friend. I have had scores of child-friends since your time: but they have been quite a different thing.

However, I did not begin this letter to say all *that*. What I want to ask is – would you have any objection to the original MS book of *Alice's Adventures* (which I suppose you still possess) being published in facsimile? The idea of doing so occurred to me only the other day. If, on consideration, you come to the conclusion that you would rather *not* have it done, there is an end of the matter. If, however, you give a favorable reply, I would be much obliged if you would lend it me (registered post I should think would be safest) that I may consider the possibilities. I have not seen it for about 20 years: so am by no means sure that the illustrations may not prove to be so awfully bad, that to reproduce them would be absurd.

There can be no doubt that I should incur the charge of gross egoism in publishing it. But I don't care for that in the least: knowing that I have no such motive: only I think, considering the extraordinary popularity the books have had (we have sold more than 120,000 of the two) there must be many who would like to see the original form.

Always your friend,  
C. L. Dodgson

## To the Lowrie children<sup>1</sup>

Text: "A Letter from Wonderland," *Critic*, vol. xxxix, March 5, 1898, pp. 166-7

Care of Messrs. Macmillan  
29 Bedford Street, Covent Garden, London  
August 18, 1884

My dear Children,

It was a real pleasure to me to get your letter; but, before I answer it, I have two humble requests to make: One is, please don't make it generally known that I have written to you, so as to bring on me a flood of letters from all the American children who have read *Alice*, and who would all expect answers! I *don't* want to spend all the rest of my life (being close on the age when Dr. O. W. Holmes says "old age" begins)<sup>2</sup> in writing letters! (I wonder if you know his *Autocrat of the Breakfast Table*? I delight in it.) And my other request is, please never again *praise* me at all, as if any powers I may have, in writing books for children, were my own doing. I just feel myself a trustee, that is all – you would not take much credit to yourselves, I suppose, if a sum of money had been put into your hands and you had been told "spend all this for the good of the little ones"? And besides *praise* isn't good for any of us; love is, and it would be a good thing if all the world were full of it: I like my books to be loved, and I like to think some children love me for the books, but I don't like them *praised*. I'll tell you what I like to think of best, about the *Alice* books. I've had a lot printed on cheaper

paper, in plain bindings, and given them to hospitals and Convalescent Homes – for poor, sick children: and it's ever so much pleasanter to think of one child being saved some weary hours, than if all the town followed at my heels crying, "How clever he is!" I'm sure you would think so too.

Some rather droll things happened about those hospitals: I sent round a printed letter,<sup>1</sup> to offer the books, with a list of the Hospitals, and asking people to add to the list any I had left out. And one manager wrote that he knew of a place where there were a number of sick children, but he was afraid I wouldn't like to give them any books – and why, do you think? "Because they are Jews!" I wrote to say, of course I would give them some: why in the world shouldn't little Israelites read *Alice's Adventures* as well as other children!

Another – a "Lady Superior" – wrote to ask to see a copy of *Alice* before accepting it: for she had to be very careful, all the children being Roman Catholics, as to what "religious reading" they got! I wrote to say, "You shall certainly see it first, if you like: but I can guarantee that the books have no religious teaching whatever in them – in fact, they do not teach anything at all." She said she was quite satisfied, and would accept the books.

But, while I am running on in this way, I'm leaving your letter unanswered. As to the meaning of the Snark? I'm very much afraid I didn't mean anything but nonsense! Still, you know, words mean more than we mean to express when we use them: so a whole book ought to mean a great deal more than the writer meant. So, whatever good meanings are in the book, I'm very glad to accept as the meaning of the book. The best that I've seen is by a lady (she published it in a letter to a newspaper) – that the whole book is an allegory on the search after happiness. I think this fits beautifully in many ways – particularly, about the bathing-machines: when the people get weary of life, and can't find happiness in town or in books, then they rush off to the seaside, to see what bathing-machines will do for them.

Would you mind giving me a more definite idea of who I am writing to, by sending me your names and your ages? I feel as if we were kind of friends already, but the one idea of "The Lowrie Children" is too shadowy to get hold of fairly. It is like making friends with a will-o'-the-wisp. I believe nobody ever succeeded in making an intimate friend of one of those things. Read up your ancient history, and you won't find a single instance of it. I would have added, to "names and ages" "and your cartes," only I'm afraid you'd then expect mine, and that I never give away (my reason is that I want to be personally unknown: to be known by sight, by strangers, would be intolerable to me), so I'm afraid I can't, with a good grace, ask for yours.

I'm very fond of inventing games; and I enclose you the rules of one, *Mischmasch*: see how you like it. One advantage is that it needs no counters

or anything: so you can play it out walking, or up in a balloon, or down in a diving-bell, or anywhere!

Your loving friend,  
Lewis Carroll

After posting the letter, I remembered I had never said a word about Jabberwocky and *Der Tyroler und sein Kind*. Thank you very much for it: it is one of the loveliest airs I know – and oh, so much too good for such words!<sup>1</sup> Once more, your loving friend (your twopenny-halfpenny friend this time),  
Lewis Carroll