

PAULINE BAYNES



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PAULINE BAYNES is not a household name, yet her work is widely known and loved. Mention that she drew the original pictures for the popular *Chronicles of Narnia* by C.S. Lewis, and she is recognized at once. She is most closely associated with Narnia, and with books by J.R.R. Tolkien such as *Farmer Giles of Ham* and *The Adventures of Tom Bombadil*; but she has done much more in her distinguished career, which has spanned more than half a century. She has produced hundreds of pictures in a variety of styles, for books and magazines of all sorts and by many authors, as well as ephemera ranging from Christmas cards to biscuit tins. Many of the books to which she has contributed have been children's books – not least because books for children offer so many opportunities for embellishment – yet she is by no means solely an illustrator for children. She considers herself foremost a decorator and designer, rather than an illustrator; in fact she is all of these together, though she is indeed notably skilled at producing decorative designs, and many of her pictorial illustrations have decorative frames. All of her art is meticulously composed and drawn (in pen and ink) or painted (in gouache), often with flowing, rhythmic lines that suggest movement and life.

The Chapin Library is pleased to present this exhibition of some fifty books illustrated by Pauline Baynes, lent from a private local collection. All, for this occasion, are children's books, selected in honour of and as the Library's contribution to "Words Are Wonderful," a celebration of children's literature in Williamstown during the week of 18–22 October 1999. The notes are by guest curator Christina Scull, former Librarian of Sir John Soane's Museum in London, and by Wayne G. Hammond, Assistant Chapin Librarian.

Right: Aladdin and the Genie from Amabel Williams-Ellis, The Arabian Nights (1957)

Cover: The Three Plagues of Britain from Jennifer Westwood, Medieval Tales (1967)



Hans Christian Andersen, 1805–1875

Andersen's Fairy Tales

London: Blackie & Son, [ca. 1949]

Beauty and the Beast

[London]: Perry Colour Book, [ca. 1942]

Victoria Stevenson

Clover Magic

London: Country Life, 1944

Pauline Baynes, b. 1922

Victoria and the Golden Bird

London: Blackie & Son, 1948

E.G. Hume, b. 1879

Days before History

Pilgrim Way History Readers, bk. 1

London: Blackie & Son, 1952

Pauline Baynes was born on 9 September 1922 in Brighton, England, and for most of her life has lived in nearby Surrey. Her talent is natural, her skills largely self-taught. She had only a little formal art training, which she gave up to concentrate on war work during World War Two. Her first commissions for illustration came from a colleague at the Royal Engineers' Camouflage Development and Training Centre; among these was the "Perry Colour Book" *Beauty and the Beast* (ca. 1942). An illustrated letter to a pen-friend led to commissions to illustrate three books by Victoria Stevenson, including *Clover Magic* (1944). *Victoria and the Golden Bird*, written and illustrated by Pauline Baynes, was published in 1948, and at about the same time she provided pictures for an edition of Andersen's *Fairy Tales*.

In these early works one can see the artist learning her craft. By the time she illustrated the schools reader *Days before History* (1952) she was in full stride as an artist and would continue to improve.

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J.R.R. Tolkien, 1892–1973

Farmer Giles of Ham

London: George Allen & Unwin, 1949

Farmer Giles of Ham

Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1950

Farmer Giles of Ham

London: George Allen & Unwin, 1976

The Hobbit, or There and Back Again

Harmondsworth: Penguin (Puffin) Books, 1961

In 1948 several cartoons drawn by Pauline Baynes after medieval manuscript decorations came to the attention of J.R.R. Tolkien, who was looking for someone to illustrate his mock-medieval story *Farmer Giles of Ham*. Miss Baynes was given the job, and quickly produced (without preliminary "roughs") a large number of pen-and-ink pictures as well as three-colour plates. Tolkien found her drawings to be so perfectly suited to his text that he declared them to be "more than illustrations, they are a collateral theme". She also painted the cover illustration for a new edition of *Farmer Giles of Ham* published in 1976, and drew new full-page illustrations when the story was reprinted in Tolkien's *Poems and Stories* (1980). After *Farmer Giles of Ham* Miss Baynes was commissioned to illustrate other works by Tolkien, including *The Adventures of Tom Bombadil* (1962) and *Smith of Wootton Major* (1967), and to provide the dramatic wraparound cover of the first paperback edition of *The Hobbit*.

C.S. Lewis, 1898–1963

The Chronicles of Narnia

Harmondsworth: Penguin (Puffin) Books, 1959–65

The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe

London: Geoffrey Bles, 1950

The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe

London: HarperCollins, 1991

Prince Caspian

London: Geoffrey Bles, 1951

The Voyage of the "Dawn Treader"
London: Geoffrey Bles, 1952

The Voyage of the "Dawn Treader"
London: Collins, 1974

The Horse and His Boy
London: Geoffrey Bles, 1954

A Book of Narnians
Text compiled by James Riordan
London: Collins, 1994

On the strength of her illustrations for *Farmer Giles of Ham* Pauline Baynes was invited to illustrate a children's book by C.S. Lewis, a close friend of J.R.R. Tolkien. The book was *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (1950), the first of the *Chronicles of Narnia*. In succeeding years Miss Baynes illustrated the six other books in the series with increasing skill: *Prince Caspian* (1951), *The Voyage of the "Dawn Treader"* (1952), *The Silver Chair* (1953), *The Horse and His Boy* (1954), *The Magician's Nephew* (1955), and *The Last Battle* (1956). Her illustrations have contributed greatly to the success of the books, which Lewis himself recognized. When the last of the series won the Carnegie Medal (Britain's equivalent of the Newbery) in 1956, and Lewis received congratulations from his illustrator, he replied, "Is it not rather 'our' Medal?"

Pauline Baynes' association with the Narnia books has continued for almost fifty years. Between 1959 and 1965 she painted wraparound covers for the Puffin paperback editions, and later two decorative boxes for them. In the 1970s she made new dust-jackets for the hardback editions. Her poster *A Map of Narnia and the Surrounding Countries* was published in 1972. She contributed new colour illustrations for the Narnia stories to Brian Sibley's *The Land of Narnia* (1989), and some of these were among her nineteen colour plates (and panoramic endpapers) printed in a special edition of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (1991). *A Book of Narnians* (1994) featured still more new Narnia art by Pauline Baynes, accompanied by text by C.S. Lewis

compiled by James Riordan. Even more recently she added colour washes to her original black and white illustrations for editions of the Narnia books published to celebrate the centenary of Lewis's birth.

Over the years Pauline Baynes has used a variety of techniques and styles in her art for the Narnia books. For the most part she has drawn in pen and ink, sometimes with remarkably fine lines and close detail. For *The Horse and His Boy* she provided four halftone plates. Her growing mastery of colour and movement can be traced from the frontispieces that appeared in British editions of the first two books in the series, through her various jacket designs, to her late illustrations for *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* – in the one exhibited, one can almost hear Aslan roar as he leaps through a beautiful spring landscape – and her dramatic Eustace transformed into a dragon, which sprawls across two pages in *A Book of Narnians*.

Sadly, even in the earliest printings of the Narnia books the reproductions of Pauline Baynes' drawings do not do justice to the delicacy of her original art, and the quality of reproduction has deteriorated further through successive printings, with lines thickened and details lost.

Amabel Williams-Ellis, 1894–1984

Fairy Tales from the British Isles
London: Blackie, 1960

Henri Pourrat, 1887–1959

A Treasury of French Tales
London: George Allen & Unwin, 1953

Jennifer Westwood

Medieval Tales
London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1967

Pauline Baynes has illustrated many books of fairy stories and legends. For *A Treasury of French Tales* she produced headpieces for each tale and nine halftone illustrations. The frontispiece displayed shows the influence of Rex Whistler (1905–1944),

whose work Miss Baynes much admires. It is hard to believe that she drew this fine, very accomplished picture only nine years after her tentative illustrations for *Clover Magic* (shown earlier in this exhibition). That the variety of her imagination continued to grow is shown by her vignettes on the dust-jacket of *Fairy Tales from the British Isles*; the interior of the book is illustrated with many small black and white pictures and full-page colour plates. The broader style of her illustrations for *Medieval Tales* was influenced by woodcuts, and the details by medieval illustrations. In her drawing depicting the plagues of Britain Pauline Baynes combines several scenes from the legend in a beautifully intricate composition.

Mary Norton, 1903–1992

The Borrowers

The Borrowers Afield

The Borrowers Afloat

The Borrowers Aloft

Harmondsworth: Puffin Books, [ca. 1980]

David Henshall

Starchild and Witchfire

London: Macmillan Children's Books, 1990

Rumer Godden, 1907–1998

The Dragon of Og

London: Macmillan Children's Books, 1981

Marjorie Phillips, b. 1910

Annabel and Bryony

Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1953

James (Jan) Morris, b. 1926

The Upstairs Donkey and Other Stolen Stories

London: Faber and Faber, 1962

Pauline Baynes's successful work on the Narnia books led to her being asked to illustrate other works of fantasy. She designed wraparound covers for the Puffin editions of the "Borrowers" books, and a slipcase to contain them; a few years later she provided interior illustrations and the dust-jacket for the fifth story in the series, *The Borrowers Avenged* (1982). The dust-jackets for *Annabel and*

Bryony and *The Dragon of Og* are among her most attractive works; she also contributed interior art to these books. *The Upstairs Donkey* includes halftone illustrations by Miss Baynes, details from some of which decorate the dust-jacket. *Starchild and Witchfire*, a more recent publication, has no interior pictures, only dramatic cover art by Pauline Baynes which repays close study.

Iona Opie (b. 1923) & Peter Opie (1918–1982), eds.

A Family Book of Nursery Rhymes

New York: Oxford University Press, 1964

Rosemary Harris, b. 1923

Colm of the Islands

London: Walker, 1989

These two books provide good examples of the variety of Pauline Baynes's work, the former illustrated with many small vignettes in black and white, the latter with full- or double-page colour pictures. *A Family Book of Nursery Rhymes* was originally published in 1963 as *The Puffin Book of Nursery Rhymes*, and won the Italian Caorle Prize for the best children's book of the year. *Colm of the Islands* is the story of a young man who rescues a friend from giants and escapes the enchantment of a sea princess in an underwater kingdom; for this thrilling tale Pauline Baynes rose to the occasion with splendid Hebrides landscapes and seascapes, drawn in gouache.

Amabel Williams-Ellis, 1894–1984

The Arabian Nights

London: Blackie, 1957

Rosemary Harris, b. 1923

The Enchanted Horse

Harmondsworth: Kestrel, 1981

Pauline Baynes made a close study of Persian and Mughal manuscript illumination to help her illustrate *The Arabian Nights* and other works with Eastern settings. Her colour illustrations capture these styles so well that at least one person thought that they were copies of original works rather than

newly invented. She illustrated selections from the *Arabian Nights* several times; her pictures for the Amabel Williams-Ellis edition are among her personal favourites of her own work.

Grant Uden

A Dictionary of Chivalry

London: Longmans Young, 1968

Pauline Baynes won the 1968 Kate Greenaway Medal (Britain's equivalent of America's Caldecott Medal) for her art for *A Dictionary of Chivalry*. The book as a whole was given a special commendation from the Carnegie Committee (the equivalent of a Newbery Honor Book award). The outer margin of each of its 346 pages contains an illustration in either colour or black and white; most of these combine several separate elements, so that the total number of pictures is more than a thousand. All were meticulously researched, and many are based on medieval manuscripts, paintings, tombs, etc. The illustrations took Miss Baynes over two years to complete.

Rhoda D. Power, 1890–1957

From the Fury of the Northmen

Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1957

Richard W. Barber

A Companion to World Mythology

Harmondsworth: Kestrel, 1979

Mary Cathcart Borer

Alexander the Great

Famous Lives, no. 8

London: Longmans, Green, 1965

Mary Cathcart Borer

Richard I

Famous Lives, no. 5

London: Longmans, Green, 1965

Geoffrey Squire

The Observer's Book of European Costume

London: Frederick Warne, 1975

Some of Pauline Baynes's commissions have

required her to do a great deal of research into history and geography. The room where she works is filled with reference books. She is always concerned to be accurate.

From the Fury of the Northmen is one of the few books commissioned from her directly by an American publisher, though many of her books have had American editions after being first published in Britain. *The Observer's Book of European Costume* is unusual in that the illustrations were made before any text was written; the book provides a visual cavalcade of changing fashions between the first century A.D. and 1900. *A Companion to World Mythology* contains hundreds of illustrations in colour and black and white, in a variety of national or cultural styles. Unfortunately its printer was given the wrong dimensions for the finished book, which resulted in some of the pictures being cropped at the fore-edge.

Helen Piers

Snail and Caterpillar

London: Longman Young, 1972

Claude Nicolas

The Roe Deer

Questbooks: How Life Goes On

Edinburgh: W. and R. Chambers, 1977

Cecil Frances Alexander, 1818–1895

All Things Bright and Beautiful

Cambridge: Lutterworth, 1986

Many of Pauline Baynes's illustrations show her interest in nature, from detailed depictions of individual flowers and insects to panoramic landscapes. Much of what she shows comes from her own observations made while walking her dogs twice daily. The landscape shown here in *All Things Bright and Beautiful* is based on the actual one near Miss Baynes's home in Surrey. For works such as *Snail and Caterpillar*, the runner-up for the Kate Greenaway Medal in 1972, she also consults reference books. *The Roe Deer* is one of a series of books which chronicle the life cycle of a particular animal, bird, or insect.

Anne Malcolmson, b. 1910

*Miracle Plays: Seven Medieval Plays
for Modern Players*
Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1959

Enid Blyton, 1897–1968

The Land of Far-Beyond
London: Methuen, 1973

For Anne Malcolmson's book of miracle plays adapted for performance by boys and girls, Pauline Baynes produced small black and white illustrations in a medieval style similar to those she had made for Tolkien's *Farmer Giles of Ham*. Her dust-jacket design shows a dramatic moment during a performance, with devils emerging from the Mouth of Hell. She effected a more contemporary style for Enid Blyton's *The Land of Far-Beyond*: inspired by John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, the book tells the story of children who make a journey from the City of Turmoil to the City of Happiness in the Land of Far-Beyond in order to be freed of their burdens. The illustration shown depicts the children outside the City of Folly talking to Lady Extravagance and Sir Arrogance.

Noah and the Ark

Text from the
Revised Standard Version of the Bible
New York: Henry Holt, 1988

In the Beginning

Text from the Authorized Version of the Bible
London: Dent Children's Books, 1990

Let There Be Light

(American edition of *In the Beginning*)
New York: Macmillan, 1991

In recent years Pauline Baynes has worked mainly in colour. This is partly because she thinks that she can no longer produce the same fine detail in black and white as when her eyes and hand were younger, but also because of a change in publishing demands. Once she would have produced line drawings for books for older children, but few

such books today have illustrations; however, books for younger children are typically illustrated, and for these, publishers almost invariably call for colour. Children's books in fact, as here, allow the graphic artist a freedom of expression and invention denied by most other categories of publishing. Pauline Baynes has made the most of them, especially when given a large format like that of *In the Beginning*: her pictures are often full of sweeping action, sometimes exploding across the spread.

Pauline Baynes, b. 1922

Good King Wenceslas

After the carol by J.M. Neale (1818-1866)
Cambridge: Lutterworth, 1987

The Song of the Three Holy Children

Text from the Apocrypha,
Authorized Version of the Bible
London: Methuen, 1986

In some of her books Pauline Baynes has been influenced by medieval and early Renaissance illuminated manuscripts, wall paintings, and frescoes. Such works inspired the grouping of the figures, the block-like buildings, and the rising landscape in the illustration shown for *Good King Wenceslas*. The illustrations for *The Song of the Three Holy Children* are based more specifically on those in the *Beatus* manuscripts produced in northern Spain during the tenth and eleventh centuries.



Above: From Grant Uden, *Dictionary of Chivalry* (1968)