
Finding Aid for the W. Heath Robinson *The Child's Arabian Nights*, [1903?]

Cataloged by Jonathan Naito with assistance from Jain Fletcher and Laurel McPhee, September 2004; machine-readable finding aid created by Caroline Cubé.

UCLA Library Special Collections

UCLA Library Special Collections staff

Room A1713, Charles E. Young Research Library

Box 951575

Los Angeles, CA 90095-1575

Email: spec-coll@library.ucla.edu

URL: <http://www.library.ucla.edu/libraries/special/scweb/>

© 2009

The Regents of the University of California. All rights reserved.

Descriptive Summary

Title: W. Heath Robinson *The Child's Arabian Nights*

Date (inclusive): [1903?]

Collection number: 170/448

Creator: Robinson, W. Heath, 1872-1944.

Extent: 94 leaves : paper, ill. ; 258 x 188 mm, bound to 265 x 203 mm.

Abstract: The manuscript consists of 84 pen and ink and watercolor images by the famous British illustrator and humorist W. Heath Robinson for *The Child's Arabian Nights* (London: Grant Richards, 1906).

Language: Finding aid is written in English.

Repository: University of California, Los Angeles. Library Special Collections.

Los Angeles, California 90095-1575

Physical location: Stored off-site at SRLF. Advance notice is required for access to the collection. Please contact the UCLA Library Special Collections Reference Desk for paging information.

Restrictions on Access

COLLECTION STORED OFF-SITE AT SRLF: Open for research. Advance notice required for access. Contact the UCLA Library Special Collections Reference Desk for paging information.

Restrictions on Use and Reproduction

Property rights to the physical object belong to the UCLA Library Special Collections. Literary rights, including copyright, are retained by the creators and their heirs. It is the responsibility of the researcher to determine who holds the copyright and pursue the copyright owner or his or her heir for permission to publish where The UC Regents do not hold the copyright.

Provenance/Source of Acquisition

Gift, 1970.

Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], W. Heath Robinson *The Child's Arabian Nights* (Collection 170/448). UCLA Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library.

UCLA Catalog Record ID

UCLA Catalog Record ID: [5357139](#)

Processing Note

Cataloged by Jonathan Naito with assistance from Jain Fletcher and Laurel McPhee, September 2004, in the Center For Primary Research and Training (CFPRT).

Biography

William Heath Robinson (1872-1944) was born into a family of artists and craftsmen in Islington, North London. After a failed attempt to establish himself as a landscape painter, he became an illustrator, joining his father and older brothers Tom and Charles in the trade. His early work includes illustrations for *Hans Christen Andersen's Fairy Tales* (1897), *Don Quixote* (1897 and 1902), *The Arabian Nights* (1899), and *The Poetry of Edgar Allen Poe* (1900); a brief association with the publisher Grant Richards led to the publication of a children's book which Robinson both illustrated and wrote, *The Adventures of Uncle Lubin* (1902). More ambitious illustrations include those for Shakespeare's "Twelfth Night" (1908) and "Midsummer Night's Dream" (1914), Kipling's *A Song of the English* (1909), Kingsley's *The Water-Babies* (1915), and *The Works of Rabelais* (1904). After World War I, the market for finely illustrated books declined and Robinson turned toward humorous subjects, producing illustrations for weeklies including *The Tattler*, *The Bystander*, and *The Sketch*. Today, he is best known for his drawings of overly complicated machines that carry out simple and often ridiculous tasks; the contraptions known as Rube Goldberg machines in the United States are referred to as Heath Robinsons in Britain.

Scope and Content

The manuscript consists of 84 images created in 1903 by W. Heath Robinson for *The Child's Arabian Nights*, the third and final book that he illustrated for the publisher Grant Richards. This was Robinson's second opportunity to produce illustrations for *The Arabian Nights*--the first being in 1899--but his first chance to serve as lone illustrator. The Child's Arabian Nights was Robinson's first attempt to produce a significant number of color plates. The manuscript includes full-color proof copies for all twelve color plates found in *The Child's Arabian Nights*, with pen and ink and full-color watercolor drafts of each. Also included are proof copies and pen and ink originals of 26 line drawings produced for the book, with a sketch titled "The Talkative Barber" that is marked "unused". The manuscript also includes a table of contents from the rare children's book.

Indexing Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library's online public access catalog.

Subjects

Robinson, W. Heath (William Heath), 1872-1944. Child's Arabian nights --Illustrations.

Genres and Forms of Material

Watercolors.

Artists' proofs.

Related Material

[Bound Manuscripts Collection \(Collection 170\)](#) . Available at UCLA Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library.

[Collection of Original Works of Art on Paper \(Collection 99\)](#) . Available at UCLA Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library.

Beare, Geoffrey. *The Art of William Heath Robinson*. London: Dulwich Picture Gallery, 2003.

ff. 1-3: blank

ff. 4r-5r: Watercolor and color proof of the title page for *The Child's Arabian Nights*

ff. 6r-11r: Illustrations for "The Fisherman", including 1 color proof

ff. 12r-18r: Illustrations for "The Magic Horse", including 1 color proof

ff. 19r-29r: Illustrations for "Aladdin" (Parts 1 and 2), including 1 color proof

ff. 30r-36r: Illustrations for "Ali Baba", including 1 color proof

ff. 37r-43r: Illustrations for 'The Sea Monster' (Sinbad's First Voyage), including 1 color proof

ff. 44r-50r: Illustrations for "The Valley of Diamonds" (Sinbad's Second Voyage), including 1 color proof

ff. 51r-57r: Illustrations for "The Old Man of the Sea" (Sinbad's Fifth Voyage), including 1 color proof

ff. 58r-64r: Illustrations for "Abu", including 1 color proof

ff. 65r-71r: Illustrations for "Alvaschar" (Barber's Fifth Brother), including 1 color proof

ff. 72r-78r: Illustrations for "Shakalik" (Barber's Sixth Brother), including 1 color proof

ff. 79r-85r: Illustrations for "The Fish-Bone" ("The Hunchback"), including 1 color proof

ff. 86r-87r: Illustrations of a boy reading, pen and ink

ff. 88r: Illustration with the caption "The Talkative Barber"; holograph note: "Unused"

ff. 89v-90r: Table of contents for *The Child's Arabian Nights* has been sewn into the volume

ff. 89-94: blank; end.