

Edmund Evans: printer and proto-packager

I: The emergence of colour printing:

1816 *Marmaduke Multiply's Merry Method of Making Minor Mathematicians*. London: Printed for John Harris n.d.

**The first ed., engraved throughout, uncoloured. Shown with a very late reprint ca.1850 with hand colouring (the plates by this time very worn).*

[1825] ca.1835 *Die Geschichte der Kinder im Walde. Mit vielen bunten Bildern geziert*. Harrisburg, Pa.: Gedruckt und zu haben bei G.S.Peters. n.d.

**A (rather good) German translation of The Babes in the Wood put out for the German-American community in Pennsylvania. The English version was also published by Peters in this uniform series, all volumes of which were surely the earliest books for a popular market printed from woodblocks (three colours and black). The earliest of Peters's experimental colour printing was an ABC and catechism dated 1825.*

[1835] ca.1840 *Social Tales for the Young*. [Third ed.] By Mrs Sherwood. London: Darton and Clark. n.d

**The frontispiece is signed J.Browne del. Printed in oil colours by G.Baxter (Patentee) 3 Charterhouse Square. One of the earliest examples of "the Baxter process" to be used in a printed book.*

1845 *The History of Goody Two-Shoes...*A new edition...London: James Burns, 1845

**The paper board cover printed and signed by Gregory, Collins and Reynolds. They had been Baxter apprentices and are here printing entirely from the wood (apart from letterpress features). Their business did not last long, being incorporated in 1850 into the firm of George Leighton, one of Evans's chief competitors.*

[ca. 1845] *The Scriptural Alphabet*. With coloured plates. London: Darton and Clark.n.d.

**The text and line illustrations printed by lithography, the colouring probably done (rather roughly) by stencil. [Not in Darton]*

II: Some select examples from the progress of Evans's work as colour printer:

[1854] 1858 *Aunt Mavors [sic] History of Five Little Pigs* [drop-head title]. London & New York: G.Routledge & Co. n.d.

**See Masaki AMLL-11 noting the cover printed in two colours by EE to a design by the Dalziels, who printed the (hand-coloured) text block. EE's first printing of these covers was in 1854.*

1856 [Maria Edgeworth] *The Cherry Orchard* [drop-head title]. London & New York: G.Routledge & Co. n.d.

**See Masaki AM-28 noting the cover design by K.Hipswell printed in two colours by EE and suggesting that the book-block with its unsigned, hand-coloured illustrations may also have been his work. (The provenance of the copy shown is the New York office of the publisher McLoughlin with two pencilled comments "Very good". Was he praising it as a model or planning a piratical copy?)*

1857 *The Frog Who Would A Wooing Go*. By Charles Bennett. London: George

Routledge & Co. [cover title] n.d.

**See Masaki RSF-5, noting colour printing throughout by EE, the cover in two, the illustrations in three colours plus black.*

1859 *The Poems of Oliver Goldsmith* ed. Robert Aris Wilmot, with illustrations by Birket Foster and H.N.Humphreys. Printed in colors [sic] from wood blocks. London: George Routledge and Co...1859

**See [Evans] (1967) p.79 "printed in about six colours with some hand-colouring added" (Masaki [p.227] says "nine or ten printings"; Friedman [no.107] says "six to ten"). A second ed. of 1860 had twelve more illustrations. The binding of this noble work is notoriously 'tight', requiring careful handling. Happily, the copy displayed is well knocked-about and, hence, can be more easily examined.*

1861 *The Life and Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*. By Daniel Defoe; with coloured illustrations [after "Phiz"]...London: George Vickers...1861. Bound with: *The Travels of Baron Munchausen* [by R.E.Raspe].

**In series with the collection Grimm's Goblins displayed at the "Fisherman" talk, and, as with that volume, a bind-up of weekly parts each of which had an initial illustration printed in colours and signed by Evans, Here though the opening dramatic picture appears to be coloured by hand. Yet another, similar, bind-up of Paltock's Life and Adventures of Peter Wilkins is also to be seen. McLean (in [Evans]1967,p.80) gives a date of 1862 in his general note on the series. He mentions a Gulliver's Travels but does not note either the Defoe or Grimm titles.*

[1865] 1876 *Chattering Jack's Picture Book*...With thirty-two pages of illustrations by Walter Crane printed in colours by Edmund Evans. London [and] New York: George Routledge and Sons, n.d. [t.p. with a footnote "This Volume contains the Artist's Earlier Designs"]

**Masaki pp.250-279 unravels the complexities of Evans's and Routledge's relations with Walter Crane. I have no copies of the artist's individual Sixpenny Toy Books which he produced 1865-76 but the above (battered) compendium (Masaki p.773) contains reprints of four early examples (Masaki RN-24, 29, 30, and 37), three printed in three colours plus black, one in four plus black. From Evans's comment in his Reminiscences, his printing of Crane's toybooks (signalled by his inclusion in the title statement) marks the beginning of his fostering of illustrators' talents.*

[1870] 1875 *In Fairy Land; a series of pictures from the Elf-World*. By Richard Doyle, with a poem by William Allingham. Second ed. London: Longmans, Green & Co. 1875. "Engraved and printed by Edmund Evans" f.[iii]

**First published 1870 by Longmans, Green, Reader & Dyer, a facsimile of which edition (Tokyo: Holp Shuppan, 1981) is shown alongside. This was one of the run of facsimiles from books in the Osborne Collection in Toronto published as a set by Holp and marketed in Britain [rather unsuccessfully] by the Bodley Head. The so-called "second edition" was a reissue of the original sheets which had not sold in 1870. The publisher also sought to make good his financial loss on the book by converting it into The Princess Nobody. See below at 1884.*

1875 *Beauty and the Beast*. Walter Crane's Toy Books. Shilling Series. London & New York: George Routledge & Sons [cover title] n.d.

**See Masaki RS-72 and her discussion of the Shilling Series printed by EE variably in either six or seven colours, plus black (pp.274-7). She records Crane as writing*

that the Series was "a speculation pf Mr Evans's" but I am not sure what the financial implications were for the three parties concerned in the making of the books.

[1878] 2001 *The House that Jack Built*. One of R.Caldecott's Picture Books.

[London]: George Routledge & Sons, n.d. [ie. Tokyo: Holp Shuppan]

**A facsimile of the first of the Caldecott series taken from a complete boxed set published in Japan. Masaki pp.281-300 discusses the close working between Evans and Caldecott and, in her Vol.2, illustrates (I-6-12) five of the six blocks used for printing a plate from The Milkmaid. Nothing specific is said about negotiating terms, but it would appear that, while all printing and production decisions were made by Evans the royalty payments were settled with Routledge.*

1879 *Under the Window*. Pictures and rhymes for children by Kate Greenaway. Engraved and printed by Edmund Evans. London / New York: George Routledge and Sons, n.d.

**KG brought the ms. of this work to Evans in 1877 and from that time on he masterminded her career, making most of the technical and commercial decisions and working through Routledge as the selling agent. (Routledge is said to have been appalled to find that Evans had printed 20,000 copies of this book, by an unknown author, but they sold out almost instantaneously.) The "New York" designation in the imprint is writ small since a US ed. of the book was published by Routledge's New York office "Drawn on Stone and printed by Wemple & Company".*

1881 *Mother Goose; or the old nursery rhymes* illustrated by Kate Greenaway; engraved and printed by Edmund Evans. London and New York: George Routledge and Sons, n.d.

**One of the most complex of Evans's ventures with KG's work, inadequately confronted by Rodney Engen in his account of the "sketchbooks" noted below.*

1884 *The Princess Nobody*. A tale of fairy land. By Andrew Lang, after the drawings by Richard Doyle, printed in colours by Edmund Evans. London: Longmans, Green and Co. n.d.

**Evans's blocks for In Fairy Land are here cannibalised in order to be arranged in a sequence, presumably devised by Lang, to allow a (quite daft) fairy tale to be invented around them. Some coloured illustrations are reprinted from their original sets of blocks but others appear in line only (printed sepia) presumably printed from electros, quite a few of which have been hacked out of Doyle's larger designs. The late twentieth century exploitation of In Fairy Land has resulted in several curious adaptations, which also involve The Princess Nobody, intended for the popular market. An almost complete reprint of Lang's illustrated text was included the Cott volume noted in Part III below.*

II: Supplementary notes:

Edmund Evans suffered a small stroke in 1892 and handed the business over to his sons in 1898. He made efforts to continue the printing of children's books and toybooks after the death of Caldecott in 1886 and some similarly designed toybooks were published, such as Harry Furniss's "Romps" series (and see J.A.Shepherd's

unusual *A Frog he would a-wooing go*, published by Grant Richards). By this time however "process" had taken over from wood engraving in the making of illustrations and it is worth noting that the Evans firm was, in 1902, one of the first to use the three-colour process in the printing of a complete picture book: Beatrix Potter's *Tale of Peter Rabbit*.

Several oddments may nonetheless make for an amusing coda:

1887 *The Complete Collection of Pictures and Songs by Randolph Caldecott*. Engraved and printed by Edmund Evans; preface by Austin Dobson. London, Glasgow, New York: George Routledge and Sons, 1887

**Advertised on the top board as "Large Paper Edition" (and heavy with it) the volume is a "prestige printing" of all the toybooks in an edition of 800 copies with EE's printed signature on the limitation page, This is copy no.603.*

1900 *Walter Crane's Picture Book, comprising The Baby's Opera, The Baby's Bouquet, The Baby's Own Aesop* with the original designs in colour printed by Edmund Evans. London: Frederick Warne, 1900

**By 1900 Routledge were withdrawing from children's book publishing and transferred their rights to the firm of Frederick Warne, whose founder had come into the trade as an apprentice to GR. Here we find them following the model of the foregoing volume with limitation (500 copies for Britain, 250 for America -- this is no.360), EE's printed signature and a two-page introduction by Crane reproduced from his ms. copy, including a correction. The three books reprinted were not toybooks but substantial picture books which, in the twentieth century, became Crane's best-known children's books.*

1887 *My Diary Illustrated*. Edmund Evans engraver & printer. London, Paris & New York: Cassell, Petter, Galpin & Co. n.d.

**A battered copy is displayed to show a comparison of one of the colour plates with its watercolour original. The illustrator is not known.*

[ca.1896] *Three intaglio prints after drawings by Randolph Caldecott made by Edmund Evans during his retirement. The plates (two steel and one copper) were not hand-etched but were an experiment devised by EE to make intaglio plates as "reverse electrotypes". See BA's account in The Book Collector 46.3 (Autumn 1997) pp.448-453*

III: References

Brian Alderson *Sing a Song for Sixpence; the English picture-book tradition and Randolph Caldecott*. Cambridge University Press, 1986

[Caldecott] *Yours Pictorially; illustrated letters of Randolph Caldecott*. Edited by Michael Hutchins. London: Frederick Warne, 1976

**Although there are only two letters to EE there are many references to him throughout (especially notable those in letters to Mrs Ewing about her Dadddy Darwin's Dovecot). Most confirm the entrepreneurial role of Evans.*

Simon Cooke. Richard Doyle's "In Fairyland". *The Private Library*. Fifth series. 8.4 (Winter, 2005) pp.153-171 + 7 col. plates

Jonathan Cott, ed. *Victorian Color Picture Books*. Commentary by Maurice Sendak. London: Allen Lane in assoc. with The Stonehill Publishing Co...New York, 1984
*A skimpy pictorial anthology which includes an almost complete reprinting of Lang's *Princess Nobody* and has some bracing critical observations by MS.

Rodney Engen (intro.) *Kate Greenaway's Mother Goose...the complete facsimile sketchbooks*. From the Arents Collection, The New York Public Library. Foreword by Bernard McTigue. New York: Harry N.Abrams,Inc., 1988

[Evans] *The Reminiscences of Edmund Evans*. Edited and introduced by Ruari McLean. Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1967

Joan M. Friedman. *Color Printing in England 1486-1870*. [New Haven, MA]: Yale Center for British Art, 1978
*A discursive exhibition catalogue.

[Michael Hutchins] *Huntin' and Hollerin'*; a selection of line illustrations for *Three Jovial Huntsmen* engraved on wood by Edmund Evans and John Heywood. Beckenham: The Chimæra Press, 1982

Göte Klingberg. *Denna Lilla Gris Går Till Torget och andra brittiska toy books i Sverige 1869-79*. With a summary in English. Stockholm: Rabén & Sjögren, 1987
*A notable study of the translation of British toy books for the Swedish market. The valuable bibliographical appendices were precursors of Masaki's more detailed work. NB. Copies of this book are available free to any students at the meeting who may wish to have one.

Ruari McLean. *Victorian Book Design and Colour Printing*. Second edition, revised and enlarged. London: Faber, 1973
*Chapter 14 is on "Colour printing from wood: Vizetelly, Edmund Evans, and the Dalziels" (pp.171 - 190).

Tomoko Masaki. *A History of Victorian Popular Picture Books: the aesthetic, creative, and technological aspects of the Toy Book through the publications of the firm of Routledge 1852-1893*. 2vv. Tokyo: Kazamashobo, 2006
*Volume I contains the commentary and a superb bibliography of Routledge's toybooks; volume II contains some nine hundred illustrations mostly in colour.

Geoffrey Wakeman. *Victorian Book Illustration; the technical revolution*. Newton Abbot: David and Charles, 1973

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