



mythLORE

A Journal of J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis,  
Charles Williams, and Mythopoeic Literature

---

Volume 22 | Number 1 | Issue 83, Autumn

Article 4

---

10-15-1997

# Where Have All the Fairies Gone?

Gwyneth Evans

Follow this and additional works at: <https://dc.swosu.edu/mythlore>

---

## Recommended Citation

Evans, Gwyneth (1997) "Where Have All the Fairies Gone?," *Mythlore: A Journal of J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, Charles Williams, and Mythopoeic Literature*: Vol. 22 : No. 1 , Article 4.

Available at: <https://dc.swosu.edu/mythlore/vol22/iss1/4>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Mythopoeic Society at SWOSU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in *Mythlore: A Journal of J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, Charles Williams, and Mythopoeic Literature* by an authorized editor of SWOSU Digital Commons. An ADA compliant document is available upon request. For more information, please contact [phillip.fitzsimmons@swosu.edu](mailto:phillip.fitzsimmons@swosu.edu).



---

# Where Have All the Fairies Gone?

## **Abstract**

Examines a number of modern fantasy novels and other works which portray fairies, particularly in opposition to Victorian and Edwardian portrayals of fairies. Distinguishes between “neo-Victorian” and “ecological” fairies.

## **Additional Keywords**

Byatt, A.S. *Possession*; Crowley, John. *Little, Big*; Fairies in literature; Fairies in motion pictures; Jones, Terry. *Lady Cottington’s Pressed Fairy Book*; Nature in literature; Wilson, A.N. *Who Was Oswald Fish?*

# Where Have All the Fairies Gone?

Gwyneth Evans

As we create gods — and goddesses — in our own image, so we do the fairies: the shape and character an age attributes to its fairies tells us something about the preconceptions, taboos, longings and anxieties of that age. I would like to consider here two significant and distinct manifestations of the fairies in the literature of our own age — the last two decades or so of the twentieth century; these two manifestations I have called the “neo-Victorian” fairies and the “ecological” fairies. Rather than looking at mainstream fantasy literature, I’ve chosen fairies which appear, directly or rather indirectly, in diverse and sometimes surprising places in adult fiction, children’s literature, and animated film. I will discuss the two groups separately here, exploring at the end one major point of relationship between them, and hope that further ideas may emerge in the discussion following the paper. Certainly, any evocation of fairies in literature involves reference to the past, to fairy tradition, and also raises the question of belief: does the author seem to expect his readers to transfer their willing suspension of disbelief from his fiction to the everyday, “real” world? Some of the works discussed here treat the fairy tradition, and hence the issue of belief, in the spirit of parody. Some take over the conventions of fairy depiction from popular literature and film, like Tinker Bell urging belief but with a self-conscious charm that rather tends to discourage it. Others reach deeper into fairy history to evoke their connection with the Fates, and human destiny. For obvious reasons, most of these works link the fairies with children; for less obvious ones, many link them with photography. Kindly or malicious, frightening or bland, this group of contemporary fairies shows the vitality of a European folk tradition — ancient, but certainly not outworn.

A number of modern books treat the subject of fairies in the context of the Victorian and Edwardian eras, seen through a late twentieth century glass. This view offers another perspective on the prettiness and ethereality of much “fairy art” of the earlier period, and explores the covert sexuality evident to a post-freudian reader. This first fictional group of fairies thus might be termed the neo-Victorian or even anti-Victorian fairies, since their authors use them to consider aspects of human nature from the double perspective of a recreated Victorian vision and a modern one — that of our own time usually presumed, of course, to be the fuller and truer picture. Each work discussed in the first part of this paper is based upon another work — real or imagined — depicting fairies and produced in the later part of the nineteenth century or the early part of this one. Novels such as A.S. Byatt’s *Possession*, A.N. Wilson’s *Who Was Oswald Fish?* and John

Crowley’s *Little, Big* present, in their very different ways, a contrast and comparison between imagined characters of a Victorian and/or Edwardian past and contemporary characters who look back, seeking to understand this past specifically in relation to its interest in or contact with the fairies, fairy lore and the supernatural dimension which they represented. A significant body of recent fiction involving the fairies thus depicts them not directly as forces in the modern world, or in some quasi-Celtic other world, but as subjects of the prolific and influential, though now largely rejected, body of fairy literature and art produced between 1850 and 1920. Why were the Victorians so interested in fairies, and why does much of their fairy art now seem sentimental, even mawkish? These novels, and other works such as Terry Jones’ 1994 spoof *Lady Cottington’s Pressed Fairy Book*, juxtapose Victorian fairies — or a Victorian view of them — with a modern, often quite sardonic, view which puts in the foreground elements of earthiness, sexuality and malice which are important aspects of traditional fairy lore but which the Victorians tended to omit or disguise. Now, it seems, we suspect that when these elements of their nature are not acknowledged, the fairies may take an appropriate revenge.

Blackly comic versions of such revenge on the part of the fairies is the anti-Victorian theme of Terry Jones’ *Lady Cottington’s Pressed Fairy Book*, and A.N. Wilson’s *Who Was Oswald Fish?* as well as several children’s poems by Dennis Lee, such as “The Abominable Fairy of Bloor Street.” Although largely ignored by the fairy sentimentalists, the malevolent aspect of many fairies in the Old Belief is vividly recalled in these modern works, and joined to a malicious sexuality also recovered from the older tradition. Playing, respectively, on the story of the Cottingsley fairy photographs admired by Conan Doyle, and the later twentieth century fashion cult of Victoriana, Jones and Wilson twist the pretty popular image of fairies into a darkly comic revelation of their vengeful and erotic aspect. These fairies take a wanton, sadistic pleasure in revenging themselves on maudlin human beings who want to see them only as an ethereal, childlike reflection of their own nostalgia for lost innocence. Children play an important part in both novels; like the fairies, children are falsely depicted in sentimental Victoriana, and Wilson, Lee and Jones take some relish in revealing a dark underside of the pretty pictures.

To begin with the spoof — the *Pressed Fairy Book* is an attractively presented picture book, with simulated leather binding and text apparently hand lettered on vellum — illustrated of course with squashed bodies of fairies, which parodies both the popularity of journals such as

*The Country Diary of an Edwardian Lady* and the widely cherished conviction that fairies were indeed photographed in England in the early years of this century. In the debunking spirit of his recent television series on the Crusades, Jones presents the supposed journal entries of a young girl who is able not only to see fairies but to capture them by snapping her book closed on them, thus squashing and pressing them like flowers. The sadistic nature of her collecting activities contrasts with the stilted propriety of the writing style in which she records them. The journal begins in 1895, when she is eight, by noting her annoyance that her nanny and family don't believe that she can see fairies, and so she begins snapping her book shut on them for proof. As she is not believed, however, she takes refuge in secrecy, and her growing addiction to her solitary fairy-pressing activities is recorded alongside unconscious references to her awakening sexual urges. As Angelica Cottington becomes increasingly mature and the subject of male attentions, which she prudishly rejects, the fairies in both their activities and the appearance of the pressed specimens become increasingly more sexual, sprouting bulbous breasts, showing their bare bottoms, and tricking Angelica into rolling naked among the wildflowers, where she is discovered by the vicar. According to the journal, the fairies are responsible for her seduction in Italy.

.. my astonishment was completed by the appearance of a couple of fairies, hovering in the air just behind Lord Crowley's shoulder. I confess, that at their appearance I must have smiled, for they certainly looked properly comic. Thus the damage was done! Lord Crowley took my smile as a hint of encouragement, and in no time, he had sprung to my bedside and seized me in his arms crying: 'My darling! I knew you wanted me to come!'

Imagine my indignation and despair. As I felt his moustachios covering my mouth, I almost choked, and then as I gasped for air, I caught sight of the most ludicrous display. The two fairies were performing a ridiculous pantomime of his Lordship behind his back. One of them was pretending to be me and the other Lord Crowley — complete with vast whiskers made from the cat's tail. Unaware of all this, Lord Crowley pressed me to his breast and a gasp of laughter escaped me. This the stupid man took as further encouragement! "Yes! Yes!" he cried "Your happiness is my happiness!" Oh misery! before I knew what was happening, he had buried his face in my nightdress . . . (n. p.)

Throughout the journal Angelica expresses surprise and disapproval at the various sexual advances made towards her, refuses the fourteen proposals of marriage made to her, and eventually becomes a recluse. Just what the fairies intended towards her isn't entirely clear — to me at any rate. Increasingly they seem to provoke her into "pressing" them, and feed the obsession with them which cuts her off from human relationships. Perhaps their revenge for her squashing of them is to drive her into an isolation bordering on madness; or perhaps they are in themselves an embodiment of the sexual desires which her society thwarts and denies. Of course, we humans shouldn't expect to understand the motives of the fairies, and Jones' opacity on this score is in keeping with the tradition. The

elaborate presentation of the book, and its tongue-in-cheek Foreword describing the discovery of the album — not to mention the Publisher's Note assuring us that "no fairies were injured or killed during the manufacturing of this book" — enable Jones to simultaneously make fun and take advantage of the vogue for "gift books" and nature diaries. Unlike the supposed natural history volumes on Gnomes and Fairies of Brian Freud, although with a similar air of factitious documentation, this is a strongly satirical work, at once funny and disturbing.

Its most obvious target is the legend of the Cottingley fairies, supposedly photographed by two girls in that village who were their playfellows around 1916. Photographs were credited as scientific evidence by many public figures including Arthur Conan Doyle, who published a book on them in 1921 entitled *The Coming of the Fairies*. The sentimental equation of fairies with young girls is typical of the Victorian and Edwardian periods, and although the female fairies in the paintings of Richard Dadd, Noel Paton and some others are markedly mature, the emphasis in most fairy description and illustration in the period is on a slender delicate and asexual appearance, often deriving gesture and costume from the ballet and other theatrical representation of fairy characters. Fairies were thus linked with the sentimental idealisation of preadolescent girls which was so wide-spread in the Victorian era; belief in the one and enthusiasm for the other were often combined, for example by Ruskin in his essay on "Fairy Land". In the case of the Cottingley fairies, the need to believe both in fairies and in the innocence of young girls was stronger than common sense for Conan Doyle and many others, who disregarded the resemblance between the fairies photographed in 1916-17 and those which had been drawn by Claude Shepperson and published in *Princess Mary's Gift Book* of 1915. The controversy between believers and skeptics continued until 1983 when a definitive explanation of the fakery was published in the *British Journal of Photography*. Jones' book contains many allusions to the Cottingley story, even in its title. In a society whose public expectation is for children and women to be innocent and sexless, fantasies of the fairies may be not merely quaint and harmless but an outlet for desires which have been repressed and denied. Angelica Cottington reveals herself through her diary to be not at all a sweet little Victorian innocent, but secretive, arrogant, devious, and cruel — perhaps all the more so because she is expected to be simply sweet and innocent.

Sweetness and innocence, on the surface, are what their mother sees and all she wants to see in the horrifying little nine-year-old twins Marmaduke and Pandora of A. N. Wilson's *Who Was Oswald Fish?* The mother of this monstrous pair, a blowsy former pop-star and boutique owner named Fanny, is devoted to Victoriana and the novel becomes a kind of antique-store chamber of horrors, as its characters pursue and surround themselves with relics of the Victorian past in a futile attempt to ward off awareness of the barrenness and futility of their lives in

1980s England. Fanny delights in dressing her children in satin and lace outfits from her shops and filling their bookcase with costly first editions of nineteenth-century fairy tales. The children's response to this attempt to make their lives into an aspect of Fanny's enjoyment of Victorian interior decoration is secrecy and malice against the adult world. Like Angelica Cottington, Marmaduke and Pandora keep their real preoccupations secret, but unlike her they are very knowing about sexual matters, and use their observations of the sexual behaviour of the adults around them in deliberately vicious schemes which in two separate incidents result in someone's death. The linked motifs of children, photography and illicit eroticism are extensively developed. Fanny likes to pretend that her precious-named children are sweet little fairies, but in fact we find that they are goblins, tormenting and destroying any adults to whom they take an irrational dislike. One of their victims, meeting the "strange little figure" of Marmaduke,

found it hard to guess its age or, at first, its sex. Marmaduke looked like a toy teenager; frail and pale as if he spent every night smoking and dancing, but his pretty white features were lit up with such a knowing archness that Fred did almost wonder whether it was not some dwarf or hermaphrodite, of mature age, who stood before him in black leather and satin. (160)

Marmaduke specialises in taking surprise photographs of the erections of his mother's lovers, later using them for blackmail purposes. Although Pandora looks "in her lacy nightgown, and thick, brushed mane of hair ... like a child in E. Nesbit," (184), as she and her brother turn over the pages of their costly edition of *Grimm's Fairy Tales* they talk sneeringly in their private stage-Cockney about the ridiculously large sum their mother had paid for it and how Marmaduke had stolen money from his step-mother, and they tear pages from the book to light their turquoise Sobranie cigarettes.

'I need an ashtray' [said Marmaduke]

Opening the book at a clean page, he carefully turned back the tissue paper which covered another Dulac illustration and ground his cigarette stub into the face of The Sleeping Beauty. There was a momentary smouldering and then, as he shut the book tight with the stub inside it, the smoke subsided. (186)

At the centre of this black, satiric novel lies the contrast between the young twins' delicate Victorian prettiness of feature and dress, and their sexual preoccupations and the deliberate cruelty they practise. The revelation that the pseudo-fairies are actually goblins is more potent in this novel than the somewhat contrived revelation, answering the question of its title, that all of its major characters are descended from the philandering Victorian ironworker and architect Oswald Fish. The links between past and present are intricately forged in the novel, in terms of genealogy; but the attempt by Fanny and her style-conscious friends to use the ornamental surface of Victorian belief, dress and art as a substitute for an authentic experience of our own world, and an engagement with its very

real social and ethical problems, is seen as an irresponsible escapism which can only lead to disaster.

Such a serious implicit meaning is hardly to be found in the children's verse of Dennis Lee but, like Wilson and Jones, Lee does enjoy using the fairy motif to imply that the Victorians got it all wrong — that the physical reality of the human body is more important than fantasies of ethereal creatures with gauzy wings. One of the most prolific Edwardian poets on the subject of fairies was Rose Fyleman, whose best known poem declares, in the voice of a small child,

There are fairies at the bottom of our garden!  
They often have a dance on summer nights;  
The butterflies and bees make a lovely little breeze,  
And the rabbits stand about and hold the lights.  
Did you know that they could sit upon the moonbeams  
And pick a little star to make a fan,  
And dance away up there in the middle of the air/  
Well, they can.

There are fairies at the bottom of our garden!  
You cannot think how beautiful they are;  
They all stand up and sing when the Fairy Queen and King  
Come gently floating down upon their car.  
The King is very proud and very handsome;  
The Queen — now can you guess who that could be  
(She's a little girl all day, but at night she steals away)?  
Well, — it's ME!  
(Opie, 336)

This popular verse, from 1917 (the same year that several of the Cottingsley fairies were photographed), sentimentalises both the fairies and the child, whose identification with the Fairy Queen makes it obvious that this is self-conscious fantasy rather than an expression of a genuine belief in fairies. In response to this prettified piece, Dennis Lee in a collection from 1974 published the sardonic and absurd "A Child's Song.

There are midgets at the bottom of my garden.  
Every night they come and play on violins,  
One is named Molly and one is named Dolly,  
And one has diarrhoea, and grins.

There are wombats in the bureau of my uncle  
And they loll about and pelt him with sardines.  
But they sob like anything, when the midgets start to sing  
For it reminds them of their aunt in New Orleans.

And the beaver with the bagpipes in the basement  
Is a boarder that I know would not be missed:  
For he makes the wombats roar, when he ties them to the floor  
And he tells them that the midgets don't exist.

(Nicholas Knock and Other People, 20)

A bit of sado-masochism and the dilemma of belief are hinted at, lightly, in this parody. Lee does the child reader the flattering courtesy of inviting him or her to join in the joke, mocking the sentimental adult who presumes to speak for the child, and showing a hard-nosed understanding of the "real" facts of life — not fairy kings and queens but dwarfs and diarrhoea.

In "The Abominable Fairy of Bloor Street" (a main street in Toronto, Lee's home town), the poet attacks a parking meter which has been scolding him, and it responds:

'Wait! he cried. "I'm actually  
A fairy in disguise.  
I tempted you with gloomy thoughts,  
To see if you were wise.  
'You pass the little Sunshine test;  
Now, here's your little wand,  
I picked him up and pitched him  
In an ornamental pond.  
I don't mind parking meters that  
Get lippy now and then,  
But I can't stand fairies going round  
And doing good to men.

(*Nicholas Knock and Other People*, 29)

Parodies are one of the pleasures of childhood, mocking as they do the officially approved sentiments of national anthems, hymns and Christmas carols, popular songs and ads. In these two verses Lee manages not only to parody the sentimental fairy poems considered suitable children's fare by an earlier era, but also to make fun of modern anxieties about time and omnipresent civic regulations, deformity and difference, the embarrassing misbehaviours of the body such as diarrhoea, and self-help and positive thinking.

Parody and satire are one modern way of approaching the fairy world of the Victorians. Other writers have, however, shown that it is possible to reenter that world in a more serious spirit, without without giving way to mawkishness or credulity. Past and present can be linked in works which seek neither to show up the folly of our ancestors nor to mock us for indulging in sentimental antiquarianism. Two novels which treat the fairies in this subtle and serious way, Byatt's *Possession* and Crowley's *Little, Big*, are lengthy and complex, and so I shall spend more time on them than on other works. As in *Who Was Oswald Fish?* a group of modern Britishers pursue in their different ways an understanding of a (fictitious) Victorian artist, whom the reader comes to know through his diaries, so in *Possession*, a group of contemporary English scholars gradually learns about the long-concealed love affair of two (fictitious) Victorian poets, pieced together from letters and journal entries. The narrative takes place in two time periods, the late 1850s and 1989 - 90, as two young scholars of our time, through a suspenseful adventure of literary detection and skullduggery, not only reveal the Victorian love affair but fall in love with each other. In both time periods, this novel is essentially in the realist mode: the fairies, or any other supernatural elements, make no direct appearance, and indeed a central scene in the novel shows the male poet angrily disrupting a seance in protest against its charlatanry. The fairy dimension comes in with the subject of the female poet's major work, a long poem entitled "The Fairy Melusina." At her first meeting with

the poet Ash, Christabel LaMotte tells him of her plan to write about Melusina, a serpent woman and enchanted bride from French legend, and Ash's enthusiasm for "the fairy project" helps to further their relationship. The poem is eventually completed, and a section of it included in Byatt's text. The fairy poem is more in this novel, however, than a plot device and a clever piece of ventriloquism — Byatt writing in Victorian style. The novel is full of mythic and literary echoes and allusions, which cause scenes and characters to resonate. In this resonance, fairy lore plays an important part.

*Possession* makes an unusual link between the realms of the fairies and of literary theory through presenting the different approaches of three generations of scholars and writers to the story of the fairy Melusina. Both Christabel and her father, Isidore LaMotte, are scholars of French folklore, specifically the fantastic Celtic tales of Brittany, their family home. In tune with the spirit of early nineteenth-century mythological research, Isidore had hoped to find in the tale of Melusina a key to "a truly French mythology," as the Grimm brothers had sought the ur-myths of the German race among the tales they collected. The Victorian scholars, Christabel and Ash, have learned discussions in their early letters about the nature of Melusina and of Christabel's gifts as a writer of fantasy: she is good at the persuasive domestic detail, yet can also evoke for Ash "a world haunted by voiceless shapes . . . and wandering Passions . . . and little fluttering Fears . . . more sinister than any conventional Bat or Broomstick-witch." (176) They look at the Fairy Melusina from a moral standpoint: is she a good or an evil being, or somehow both? Christabel draws on mid-nineteenth century comparative mythology to understand Melusina: "she was not only Ghoul — but a kind of Foison — a French Ceres, it might be, or [. . .] the Lady Holda — or Freya of the Spring — or Iduna of the Golden Apples —?" (174)

The modern scholars, in turn, are shown confronting Melusina and Christabel's epic poem about her with the full artillery of post-freudian, Lacanian, deconstructionist, and feminist literary theory, with sexuality as its central concern. Byatt includes some fine, only slightly parodic, excerpts of scholarly essays about her "Victorian" poems, but her protagonist, Roland, describes himself as "an old-fashioned textual critic"(50) sceptical of and rather depressed by the obsessive refocussing of the literature he loves into the currently fashionable theoretical perspectives. On their first journey together Maud and Poland, who will become lovers, spend the evening in their separate rooms reading literary criticism: Roland eventually lays aside, "with a small sigh," the essay by American feminist Leonora Stern which makes him envision the landscape they are about to explore as "covered with sucking human orifices and knotted human body-hair. He did not like this vision, and yet, a child of his time, found it compelling, somehow guaranteed to be significant . . ." (246) Maud, for her part, plunges into a biographical study which leaves her questioning "the unstable self, the

fractured ego,... who am I? A matrix for a susurrations of texts and codes? It was both a pleasant and an unpleasant idea, this requirement that she think of herself as intermittent and partial." (251) Not surprisingly after this prelude, in the morning "Semiotics nearly spoiled their first day." (251) As for the sexual obsessions of the critics, Maud notes critically that in "the whole of our scholarship — the whole of our thought — we question everything except the centrality of sexuality." (222)

Byatt's humorous sense of the relativity of approaches to understanding narrative and fantasy represents one dimension of her depiction of the fairy element in the novel. (One should also mention in this context the attitude of the beefy squire Sir George Bailey, present owner of the house in which Christabel spent her last years and where her love letters are found: finding neither poetry or fairies of any interest at all, he dismisses her with contemptuous affection as "our silly fairy poetess" (86) — a common enough later response to Victorian fantasy writers.) Humorous yoking of fairy lore and comparative literary criticism leads, however, into other and more suggestive dimensions of fairy reference in the novel. On this level, we recall that the fairies are descendants of the Fates. When she comes to know Ash, Christabel is living with an artist, Blanche Glover, who uses Christabel as a model for Nimue and other fairies and enchanted maidens of Arthurian legend. Her journal records their pleasant evenings reading aloud of the Fairie Queene, and Christabel's caution that "it was only to be hoped no wicked Fairy envied us our pleasant lot." (45) Blanche's love for Christabel and the idealised isolation of their lives together is indeed threatened by the attentions of Ash, and fairy images are again used to record her fear: "Something is ranging and snuffing round our small retreat, trying the shutters and huffing and puffing inside the door. In old days they put mountain ash berries and a cast horseshoe over the lintel to frighten away the Fairy Folk. I shall nail some up now, to show, to prevent passage, if I may." (46) More than mere metaphor is involved here: the imagination which leads Blanche, like Burne-Jones and many other Victorian painters, to cast their own experience into images of an Arthurian faerie world, justifies her jealousy by putting it in epic terms, and leads to her suicide. Blanche herself takes on an aspect of Melusina, who in Christabel's words became, after her husband broke his promise to her, "a kind of Dame Blanche or Fata Bianca" visiting her descendants "to foretell deaths." (33) A lesbian, Blanche also symbolically partakes of the serpentine androgyny of Melusina who "from the waist down . . . was a fish or a serpent, Rabelais says an 'andouille,' a kind of huge sausage, the symbolism is obvious, and she beat the water with her muscular tail." (33)

If Blanche partakes of some of the qualities of Melusina, the identification is far stronger, though unstated, in the two central female characters — Christabel, the Victorian poet who wrote of Melusina, and Maud — the modern scholar who studies the Melusina poem and eventually discovers herself to be the direct descendent of

Christabel. The Melusina of legend was a fairy who married a mortal to gain a soul, making a pact that he must never spy on her at certain times. Breaking his vow, he peers through the keyhole of a door and discovers her disporting herself in a great marble bath, with her lower parts transformed into a tail. This betrayal eventually causes her to turn into a dragon and fly away. Byatt not only implies many parallels between Maud and Christabel, she also hints that the two women have something of the fairy about them. Both are repeatedly described in terms of the colour green, the fairies' colour. When Roland first meets Maud she is dressed all in green, and drives "an immaculately glossy green Beetle," the play on the car's nickname inevitably suggesting the chariot of Mab, the Fairy Queen. While we do not hear of Christabel wearing green garments, her lover Blanche writes in a green-bound journal, and Christabel brings a green jade ring to pass as a wedding ring when she goes to Yorkshire with Ash, who sees her not as *wearing* green but as *being* suffused with green.

He studied the pale loops of hair on her temples. Their sleek silver-gold seemed to him to have in it a tinge, a hint of greenness, not the copper-green of decay but a pale sap-green of vegetable life, streaked into the hair like the silvery bark of young trees, or green shadows in green tresses of young hay. And her eyes were green, glass-green, malachite green, the cloudy green of seawater perturbed and carrying a weight of sand. (277)

Melusina is of the race of fairies associated with water, and Christabel and Maud share this quality with her, in imagery and in the imagination of their lovers. During their early, uneasy acquaintance, Roland several times finds himself imagining Maud in her bath — not an erotic fantasy, specifically, but part of his sense of her difference and mystery. He finds Maud's bathroom "a chill green glassy place, glittering with cleanness, huge dark green stoppered jars on water-green thick glass shelves, a floor tiled in glass tiles into whose brief and illusory depths one might peer, a shimmering shower curtain like a glass waterfall, a blind to match, over the window, full of watery lights. Maud's great green-trellised towels were systematically folded on a towel-heater." (56) Waiting to use the bathroom at Seal Court, Roland kneels to peer in the keyhole to see if the light is on, so that he can avoid disturbing Maud if she is still in there: thus of course he is caught, in the posture of the unfortunate husband of Melusina. Maud emerges from the bathroom not literally transformed into a dragon but wearing a splendid silk robe embroidered with a dragon. She is damp from her bath, and her hair is hanging wet and loose:

The whole thing appeared in this half-light to be running with water, all the runnels of silk twisted about her body by the fiercely efficient knot in which she had tied her sash. . . . He went into the bathroom. Behind him, the long Chinese dragon wavered palely away, on its aquamarine ground, along the shifting carpets, and the pale hair gleamed coldly above it. (147-8)

Unwittingly, and without comment from the author, Roland and Maud thus reenact the central episode of the Melusina story, an enactment which leads however not to separation but to their union.

In their love-making, Ash finds Christabel like the sea, "as though she was liquid moving through his grasping fingers, as though she was waves of the sea rising all round him" (283), and when they walk by the sea her footprints snake away from his and back (280), a telling image in the context. He thinks particularly about her waist, "just where it narrowed, before the skirts spread," and thinks then too of the Fairy Melusina, a woman . . . as far as the waist." (287) "And what was she, the Fairy Melusina?" Christabel's poem begins with this question, and by the end of the novel we see that Christabel herself, like the fairy woman of her epic, is caught between the needs of her woman's nature — her longing for lost lover and lost child, her grief for her lost friend — and the demands of her art. To this extent she clearly identifies with the double nature of Melusina: like the fairy's, her later life is one of "pain and loss." (289) The fragment of the Melusina epic which Byatt includes in the novel provides a description of the fairy which closely resembles the descriptions we are given of Christabel, and of her descendent, Maud, even to the face

Queenly and calm, a carved face and strong  
Nor curious, nor kindly, nor aloof,  
But self-contained and singing to itself. (297)

In the poem Melusina meets her future husband at a pool beneath a waterfall, whose description recalls the Yorkshire landscape where Christabel and Ash become lovers. In a nice bit of understated authorial irony, Byatt has the modern scholars take a day off from their researches and enjoy a visit to a cove, which we later find to be the very spot most vividly associated by Christabel and Ash with their own love affair. Byatt also reveals to us the readers, though again not to her scholars, that Christabel has named her daughter after the Yorkshire waterfall which was the model for the fairy's in her poem.

The story of Melusina thus provides a framework for the later love stories, whose endings are different but in which character and feelings are not so very different. Like Melusina, the formidable builder of cities, Christabel and Maud are creators, absorbed in their work and both initially showing a rather reptilian chilliness to ward off emotional involvement; their sense of difference from the ordinary lot of humanity holds them apart, until it — at least temporarily — dissolves under the influence of love. "And what was she, the Fairy Melusina?" The novel's implied answer links the fairy with a sense of destiny or fate, and with the novelist herself. Fata or "fate" is believed to be one of the probable origins of our word "fairy," and the fairies of the folk tales often preside over the major celebrations of our life passages — weddings, christenings and deathbeds. Just as Christabel feared that "some wicked fairy" might interfere with her happiness, and Ash

wrote to her of "the plot or fate which seemed to hold or drive" them (421), so Roland "thought, partly with precise postmodernist pleasure, and partly with a real element of superstitious dread, that he and Maud were being driven by a plot or fate that seemed, at least possibly, to be not their plot or fate but that of those others." (421) Knowing that he is indeed a character in a book, we may be amused to find him troubled that he is caught in "the plot of a Romance;" Byatt turns this self-reflexive literary game on us, however, in asserting that "the expectations of Romance control almost everyone in the Western world, for better or worse, at some point or another." (425) Maud protests that there seems "something unnaturally determined about it all. Daemonic." (505) Ultimately, of course, the daemon behind the plot, the fata or fairy who determines how these humans paths will cross and their lives become intricately linked, is the author herself. The Fairy Melusina is an artist, a builder of cities; Byatt builds worlds within her novels, and in this one makes the characteristically Victorian equation of the fairy world with the world of art. As in Tennyson's *Idylls of the King* the fairy mage Merlin builds Camelot to music, so Byatt in this remarkable romance of literary detection is the final avatar of the Fairy Melusina, the magical artificer who creates from nothing an enchanted world.

Unlike the works discussed thus far, John Crowley's *Little, Big* can truly be called a fantasy novel, and as such it is also the work in which fairies play the most direct role. As its title suggests, *Little, Big* plays with the concept of worlds within worlds, an alternative reality somehow contained within this one. There are doors within our world leading directly to the other, the realm of the fairies, and one of those doors is within a grand old country house and estate in upper New York State called Edgewood. Woods are traditionally the home of the fairies, and this particular house — and its inhabitants as well — are at the edge of another dimension, the world of the fairies. Characters can occasionally move back and forth from one world to the other, and Crowley offers several tantalising glimpses of fairy folk manifesting themselves in an ordinary human context, but the world of the fairies is uncanny and disturbing, and humans can not reach it simply by desiring to do so. The fairies are very much in charge of the border crossings, and the gift of being aware of them and their world is a troubling privilege to those characters who have it, and a painful longing for some who do not.

Although Crowley is evidently concerned with fairies in this novel, he seldom gives them that name. Traditionally the fairies are referred to as "the wee folk" or "the good folk" in order to ward off the evil that might come from talking about them too directly. Similarly, those of Crowley's characters who are aware of the world they live at the edge of, and its inhabitants, rarely mention them directly; rather, there are many allusions to Elsewhere, and things happening Somehow, and a recognition that Edgewood and the family are Protected. Only occasionally do the fairies appear in person, and the fantasy of *Little, Big* is



more effective inasmuch as it preserves most of the conventions of realist fiction and usually only hints at the supernatural world existing alongside the ordinary reality. On their wedding trip Daily Alice and Smoky Barnable visit the woodland cottage of Mrs. Underhill, deceptively tiny from the outside and opening on the inside into all sorts of mysterious depths, and we come to realise that Mrs. Underhill is queen of the fairies. The fairies appear again, in a less benign aspect, to steal away the baby Lilac and substitute a changeling; and later, in a scene reminiscent of nineteenth-century fairy tales such as "The Little Lame Prince," Mrs. Underhill takes Lilac riding on the back of a stork to look at Edgewood house and her sleeping mother. Generally, however, the fairies are kept just out of sight; the central characters have a profound sense that their lives and fates are being directed by the fairies, as part of the great Tale unfolding for all of us, but they do not expect to have regular congress with them (or Them, as Crowley would have it).

Like *Possession*, this novel moves between different time periods, and begins its fairy story in Victorian England. Once again, the link between us and the fairy world is a young Victorian girl. Violet Bramble's ability to see the fairies is exploited by her father, a Theosophist of sorts, who takes Violet on reading tours during which she is expected to reveal her psychic powers. She is rescued on one of these occasions by the young American architect John Drinkwater. In quest for spiritual realities more complex and satisfying than the intricate Beaux Arts facades of his designs, Drinkwater had visited the Brambles in England, and been moved by the sight of Violet sitting in an apple tree in the twilight and holding a lamp which shone through its branches. Hoping to share her vision, he marries Violet, and sets into motion the Tale which governs his family for six generations and comes to its extraordinary fulfilment at the end of the novel. Drinkwater is the architect and owner of Edgewood, the splendidly eccentric Victorian country house and its elaborately landscaped grounds. The fairies manifest themselves, however, not only at Edgewood but in New York City, particularly in the complex of apartments suggestively named Old Law Farm, designed by Drinkwater and converted by one of his descendants into a veritable farm, with hens, goats, and a shy household Brownie who is given offerings of eggs and milk. Edgewood and Old Law Farm are Victorian buildings, and even many generations later the lives lived in them are curiously Victorian. Late in the twentieth century the curriculum in the Edgewood school consists exclusively of reading, penmanship and math, and none of the Edgewood women ever work outside the home. Old Law Farm itself becomes an extraordinarily Dickensian place in its juxtaposition of old, crumbling and decrepit city buildings, secured against the outside world by fantastically elaborate locks, with the teeming organic life of the farm enclosed inside. The text of *Little, Big* is presented in a Victorian style, with chapter descriptions on the table of contents, and curlicues decorating titles and capital letters.

The fairies of *Little, Big* seem drawn to Victorian environments and old-fashioned ways of doing things — for example, a condition of Smoky Bramble's marriage is that he must make the journey from the city to Edgewood on foot. Part of the Protection given Edgewood is to be shielded from the modern world.

They sat on one of Drinkwater's seats of bent and knobby wood. Through the screen of naked trees they could see across the land a great grey distance. They could just make out the grey back of the Interstate lying coiled and smooth in the next country; they could even hear, at moments, carried on the thick air, the far hum of trucks: the monster breathed. Smoky pointed out a finger or Hydra's head of it which reached out tentatively through the hills this way, then stopped abruptly. Those bits of yellow, sole brightness on the scene, were sleeping caterpillars — the man-made kind, earth-movers and -shakers. They wouldn't come any closer; the surveyors and purveyors, contractors and engineers were stalled there, mired, bogged in indecision, and that vestigial limb would never grow bone and muscle to punch through the pentacle of five towns around Edgewood. Smoky knew it. 'Don't ask me how,' he said. (150-1)

More explicitly in this novel than in any of the other works studied thus far, the fairies are associated not only with nature and the natural landscape but with a conscious desire to preserve it. Thus they protect Edgewood, through the generations and into the 21st century, from the incursions of super-highways and the dependence on machinery which marks the lives of almost all of us in North America. America itself may have been a disappointment to the fairies, one character speculates:

'if they came here to this new world in the first place at about the same time the Europeans did . . . and if they came for the same reasons, freedom and space and scope; then they must have eventually been disappointed, just as the men were. . . . The virgin forests where they hid themselves gradually logged, cities built on the river-banks and lake shores, the mountains mined, and with no old European regard for wood-sprites and kobolds either.' (444)

Violet, who knows her fairies, assures her son August that they don't like the smell and noise and "boldness" of motor cars; the rebellious August doesn't heed the warning, and eventually is turned into a trout. Most of the family, however, through the generations seem content in their various ways with the mysteries and interests of the house and the natural world around it, and don't yearn for the world and its devices.

One mechanical device — developed in the Victorian era — does seem to interest Crowley's fairies and they put it to an important use: that device is, of course, the camera. *Little, Big* is full of allusions to literary fantasy and spirit quests of the Victorian and Edwardian periods: there are references to *Alice in Wonderland* and Carroll's minor fantasy *Solvie and Bruno*, the nature stories of Thornton Burgess, *The Wind in the Willows*, *Winnie the Pooh*, the drawings of Arthur Rackham, Walter de la Mare's "Listener," and H.C. Andersen's fairy tales, as well as to Keats, Theosophy "spirit rapping," and Mme. Blavatsky. The episode of the

Cottingley fairies enters Crowley's novel alongside Lewis Carroll's predilection for photographing young girls, sometimes in the nude. One of Violet's sons, Auberon, is like Carroll a very shy and scholarly man fascinated by the camera and by girls. Discovering that his sisters and later his nieces are able, as young girls, to see and play with fairies, much as the two girls in Cottingley claimed to do, he accompanies and photographs them, then spends much of his later life pouring over the photographs trying to determine whether or not he really *has* captured an image of a fairy. The obsession seems to cloud his life, much as Terry Jones has it do for poor Angelica Cottington, and as in Jones' spoof, there is a strong erotic charge to the combination of fairy, young girl and photograph. The devious fairies of Crowley's novel make an interesting use of the sexually-charged photographs, bequeathed to the girls who had been their subjects; a visiting cousin sees them, and is aroused to seduce one of the girls. The baby born from this seduction is Lilac, whom the fairies raise to become, eventually their new queen. Crowley thus makes an inventive and highly satisfying use of the "fairy photograph" motif common to so many of these books: the fairies know what they are doing when they allow themselves to be photographed, and put a repressed and prurient sexuality to work in the service of procreation.

The allusive and understated approach taken by Crowley to his tale of the fairies at work in New York State is best appreciated at a second or third reading. Much is suggested, or hinted at, and never fully explained, although a second reading reveals how often baffling or apparently trivial events and comments fit into the pattern of the Tale. As in *Possession*, some characters seem linked to mythological prototypes: the three daughters of Smoky and Alice, accomplished needlewomen who take their fabric and threads to sit by the bedsides of childbirth and death, take on the nature of the classical Fates or the Norns, spinning and cutting off the threads of life. At one point in the novel two of the characters believe that a great conflict or war between the fairies and men is about to occur, but in fact it never happens. At the end of the novel, the descendants of Violet pass into the other dimension, the little world which sustains this one is renewed and grants them immortality. The house of Edgewood, door to the other world, gradually crumbles back into nature:

Rain and wind came in through the open windows. . . summer storms stained the drapes and the rugs, scattering papers, blowing shut the closet doors. Moths and bugs found holes in the screens, and died . . . or did not die but generated young in the rugs and tapestries. Autumn came . . . fallen leaves piled up on the porches; snow drifted in its rooms, snow capped its cold chimneys... Then there was a dark house made once of time, made now of weather, and harder to find; impossible to find and not even as easy to dream of as when it was alight. (536-8)

The physical decay of the house and the spiritual translation of its former inhabitants into the realm of faerie both occur as part of the life of nature, as it is seen in this novel;

the moving sense of nostalgia for lost beauty, with which the novel ends, is tied to an awareness of the cycle of the seasons, as they occur in one particular, beloved place.

. . .

The link between the fairies and one beloved place is an essential element in tales of what I have termed the ecological fairies — supernatural beings who are associated with the natural environment of a particular place, and concerned with its preservation. These fairies embody the spirit of a place, sometimes to the extent of being given its name; they are often particularly attached to flowers and to trees, and have an interesting literary heritage. While native British spirits were often traditionally associated with landscape features such as wells or springs — as Melusina was, or a certain woodland might be considered a haunt of the fairies, when Victorian and modern writers identify a fairy with a certain tree or flower they are probably hearkening back not so much to indigenous British fairy belief as to the dryads, the tree nymphs of the Greek and Latin classics. The Flower Fairy books of Cicely M. Barker, first published in 1923 and continuously popular ever since, associated the fairies not just with pretty children (the models were in her sister's kindergarten class) but with individual trees and flowers of the garden and wayside, as did the Gum-Nut Babies books of Australian May Gibbs. A specific concern for preservation, however, and for the plants as part of a unique environment and its history, is needed to produce a real ecological fairy. The first such fairy that I'm acquainted with is Kipling's Puck in *Puck of Pook's Hill* and its sequel, *Rewards and Fairies*. He is "the last survivor in England of those whom mortals call Fairies. Their proper name of course is 'The People of the Hills.'" (*Rewards and Fairies*, xi). Puck takes two modern English children time-travelling, to experience characters and episodes from English history in the same way they have come to know the landscape around their home. All of the adventures occur around this particular hill in Sussex, and move back and forth from the deeds of mediaeval knights and ancient heroes to encounters with the little creatures of the streams and hedgerows — otter, fox and dormouse. The stones, trees, animals and human history all together form the essential character of this place, revealed to us by the fairy Puck, and the aim of his endeavours is to help the children appreciate both the history and the natural history of their home.

In its vision of human artifacts going back to nature, a poem from *Rewards and Fairies* recalls the ending of *Little, Big*:

They shut the road through the woods  
 Seventy years ago.  
 Weather and rain have undone it again,  
 And now you would never know  
 There was once a road through the woods

. . .

Only the keeper sees  
 That, where the ring-dove broods,  
 And the badgers roll at ease,

There was once a road through the woods. (71)

Such passages imagine nature taking over from man, as it does also in a more spectacular way in images from Kipling's *Jungle Books* of a ruined city overgrown and inhabited only by cobras, and of the elephants trampling a village and "letting in the jungle. In the later 20th century, however, we seem to have less confidence in the ability of nature to compete against the inexorable and blighting influence of man. We grieve the loss of wilderness and even the cultivated pastoral landscapes which are being destroyed by highway, factory and subdivision. The English literary tradition of the fairies has for centuries imagined and lamented the passing away of the fairies from an increasingly built-over landscape populated by increasingly sceptical and materialistic human beings. Even in the early 17th century Richard Corbet lamented,

Farewell, rewards and Fairies,  
 Good housewives now may say,  
 . . . .  
 At morning and at evening both  
 You merry were and glad,  
 . . . .  
 Witness those rings and roundelays  
 Of theirs, which yet remain,  
 Were footed in Queen Mary's days  
 On many a grassy plain;

But now, alas, they all are dead,  
 Or gone beyond the seas . . . .

("The Fairies' Farewell")

There is a natural connection between the theme of the departure of the fairies and our anxiety about what is happening to the environment. Among the many powerful images of ecological interest in *The Lord of the Rings* are Tolkien's engaging Ents or tree shepherds who are roused in Book Two to move against the wanton destruction of the woods. Like the dryads, Ents sometimes actually turn into trees, and the Ents and the Wood-Elves are both attached by Tolkien to particular forests and their trees. Over the existence of all these beings — Ents, elves and trees — there hangs a sense of impending loss and sorrow. Treebeard, the oldest of the Ents and also called Fangorn after the great woodland which is his home, remembers that the Elves brought language to the Ents and roused some of the trees to consciousness and speech: trees even join their Ents in marching against Saruman at Isengard. They are successful in this battle, but the Ents have lost their Entwives, and cannot continue their race; the forests are gradually being diminished, and the Ents will like the Elves one day have to take the "road beneath the bitter rain . . . the road that leads into the West." (81) Treebeard laments the passing of the great woodlands:

In the willow-meads of Tasarinan I walked in the spring.  
 Ah! the sight and the smell of the Spring, in Nan-tasarion!  
 And I said that was good.  
 I wandered in Summer in the elm woods of Ossiriand.  
 Ah! the light and the music in the Summer by the Seven

Rivers of Ossir!

And I thought that was best.  
 To the beeches of Neldoreth I came in the Autumn.  
 Ah! the gold and the red and the sighing of leaves in the  
 Autumn in Taur-na-neldor!  
 It was more than my desire.  
 To the pine-trees upon the highland of Dorthonion I climbed  
 in the Winter.  
 Ah! the wind and the whiteness and the black branches of  
 Winter upon  
 Orod-na-Thon!  
 My voice went up and sang in the sky.  
 And now all those lands lie under the wave . . .

(*The Two Towers*, 72)

Although Tolkien does not depict fairies by that name, he gives a moving sense of a personal life force and spirit inhabiting a specific element in nature. The influence of Tolkien's fantasy on ecological awareness, in both writers and readers, has been considerable. Two summers ago in British Columbia, more than 800 people were arrested for sitting down on a road to protest the logging of Clayoquot Sound, one of the last major stands of old growth forest in Canada, and I wonder if the image of Fangorn didn't have some influence on the protesters who faced huge fines and jail sentences in defence of the trees.

It is not Tolkien's Ents but his Barrow-Wights, eerie beings guarding the barrows or ancient burial mounds, who are evoked in a modern ecological fantasy by David Wiseman called *Blodwen and the Guardians*. Written for children, this novel depicts a sleepy English village about to become the victim of a super-highway, but saved by the joint efforts of two children and some fairies who are the guardians of an ancient burial mound in the highway's path. This mound, called the Mow, is encircled by a grove of trees also protected by the fairies. They are highly suspicious of all human beings, and troubled by despairing deserters within their fairy ranks, but some are resourceful and ingenious. They sabotage construction equipment, move surveyors' stakes, and — shades of Dennis Lee — give the workers diarrhoea! Eventually, however, they concede that human help is needed, and permit the archeological treasures of the Mow to be discovered and, of course, immediately set under state protection. While it is the human artifacts which eventually save the area, the novel builds a strong sense of the tragic destruction of the natural landscape by human "progress" and "development." The oldest inhabitant of the village denounces the construction boss, Mr. Grubitout:

You and your beastly machines have torn away hedgerows and coppices that have stood since before King Arthur, I reckon. You have swallowed up Wildy Wood, trampled down Bluebell Lea, filled in Badger Deli, flooded Long Meadow ... Should you be mad enough to seek to destroy the Mow, then you will destroy yourselves. I doubt you will ever get near it, for things will be done to stop thee. . . . not by me, but by the little folk. (56-7)

Wiseman's fairies are conventionally tiny and delicate-looking, but not identified with trees and plants so much as with the ancient human past. Nonetheless, their loyalties and their actions are ecological, in saving the whole area of which the burial mound is a part.

The fairies of the popular children's film *Fern Gully*, based on stories by Diana Young, are strictly nature fairies, unacquainted with human beings; their task in the film is to preserve their beloved rainforest from the predatory road-building and logging equipment which is advancing upon it. Again this is done through a hesitant alliance with a human being, a naive young urbanite named Zach, who is working in the forest for the summer. The other members of the logging crew are shown as lazy slobs, who munch continually on junk food and strew their garbage behind them. Their only physical activity is pushing levers on a control board, and they shield themselves from nature by remaining enclosed behind the plexiglass windows of their huge machines. They epitomise Wordsworth's grief that the materialistic

world is too much with us; late and soon,  
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers:  
Little we see in nature that is ours;  
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!

The diminutive fairies of *Fern Gully*, on the other hand, live entirely in nature, and in a state of constant and ecstatic physical activity — flying, chasing, sliding down waterfalls, free-falling through the forest canopy. When Zach encounters the fairy Crystal and is shrunk down to her "bug" size, he experiences first-hand the beauty of the rain-forest and the variety of creatures who live in it, and chooses to join the fairies in their apparently hopeless efforts to fend off the gigantic machines which are devastating this world. In the nick of time, Zach manages to turn off the Leveller, just before it gobbles up the Fairy Tree which is the fairies' refuge and home. The evil spirit Hexus, whose body is made of smoke, oil and fumes, is defeated when Crystal flies into his mouth with a seed. He is overcome by the power of organic life, as vegetation grows up through him and covers the Leveller as well. The film thus joins the works of literature which show nature, and specifically the forest, swallowing up the transitory works of man. The triumph of nature, and the fairies which love and guard it, seems limited and temporary, however, since the city still lurks in the distance and may again send out Levellers to destroy the forest in the name of Progress and Development.


The qualified optimism of the ending of *Fern Gully* is characteristic of most of the ecological fairy stories: one forest or grove may have been saved, but the larger problems remain. Unfortunately, the focus on environmental awareness can lead to didacticism, and some of these children's stories preach rather than developing a deeply imaginative vision as Kipling and Tolkien did. A picture book called *Mirrna and the Marmots* by Peggy Capek

shows "a small, lonely faery named Mirrna" deciding to leave southern Vancouver Island "because most of her friends, the crabs, starfish and seabirds had [already] left the littered beaches and polluted waters. . . . She would search for her family and other faeries who had drifted north when children had ceased to believe in them a long time ago. (1-2) During her flight Mirrna is aided by marmots, an endangered species, and decides to "plant an instant-growing forest over the logged out area on the mountain side so that the marmots could travel to other mountains in safety." (14) The rather slight story is put into focus by an Introduction by the Vancouver Island Marmot Preservation Committee:

We hope the regions where marmots live will be protected from people with guns, motorcycles, and four-wheel drive vehicles. . . Endangered creatures such as white-nosed marmots and faeries need places where they can live their lives in peace.

The themes of the departure of the fairies, modern loss of belief, and the destruction of the natural environment are thus once more combined. "Where have all the fairies gone?" I might answer the question of my title, in terms of contemporary children's books anyway, by saying "Gone to Greenpeace, every one."

Ecological fairies and neo-Victorian fairies: cute gauzy-winged fairies engaged in saving the rain-forest, sardonic and sexualized fairies engaged in persecuting the fatuous, or eerily mysterious beings of real power — all can be found in contemporary literature, even outside the specialised area of fantasy fiction. Different as they are, both the ecological fairies and the neo-Victorian fairies trace their ancestry back to Celtic belief and to old traditions in folk lore and literature, of which one of the most influential is the tradition of the fairies' departure. What unites Virtually all of these works is a sense of loss — loss of the natural environment and the fairies' presence in it, or loss of our ability to recognise or believe in such a presence. This feeling of loss can be sensed in even the most sardonic of the anti-Victorian works: the cruelty of Wilson's jaded children is implicitly contrasted to the beauty of the old fairy-tale books they desecrate, and Terry Jones' editorial comments twice point out that in another act of desecration the old house in which Angelica Cottington lived and saw her fairies has been bulldozed to make room for "a Prestige Office Block." There is thus a curious unity of feeling about the fairies in these books, a fear that we may be losing a world in which fairies, or belief in fairies, was possible, and that we shall all be poorer for this loss. In the sense that the fairies embody the creative powers of the human imagination, however, they have not altogether left us, but are very much present in the best work of those who write about them. ♡

intrinsic value. Moreover, humans are obligate, because they are the kind of beings they are in God's created world, to be stewards over creation. This stewardship involves more than conserving resources for future generations or minimizing the suffering of animals. For human beings are obligated to help animals attain the highest perfection of which they are capable, namely consciousness and personality. The fruit of this perfection is immortality. 

**Endnotes**

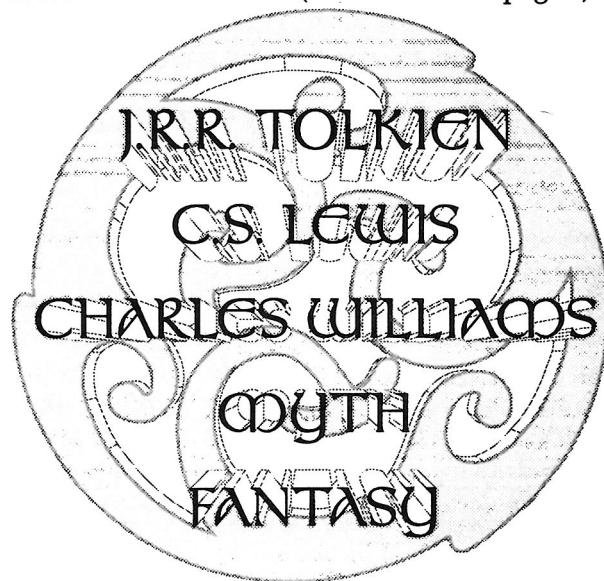
- 1 Bernard Rollin, *Animal Rights and Human Morality* (Prometheus Books, Buffalo, NY: 1981), p. 6.
- 2 Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles*, Book II,
- 3 *Ibid.*, p. 268.
- 4 Mandonnet, Siger De Brabant et L'Averroisme Latin au XIII Siecle, (Louvain,
- 5 The abbreviations for Lewis' works are as follows:  
*The Problem of Pain* (Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., New York, NY: 1962), PP;  
*God in the Dock* (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, MI: 1970), GD;  
 "Pain of Animals", 161-171 in GD, PA;  
 "Vivisection", 224-228 in GD, Viv;  
*The Great Divorce* (Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., New York, NY: ~946), GDiv;  
*That Hideous Strength* (Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., New York, NY: 1948), THS;  
*Perelandra* (Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., New York, NY: 1944), Per;  
*Miracles* (Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., New York, NY: 1960), Mir;  
*The Abolition of Man* (Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., New York, NY: 1947), AM;  
*The Four Loves* (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, New York, NY: 1960), FL;  
*The Screwtape Letters* (Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., New York, NY: 1961), SL.
- 6 A word needs to be said about Lewis' use of the terms sentience and consciousness. At some points, Lewis says that sentient animals have a disconnected series of perceptions with no awareness of themselves over time and no memory. At other times, Lewis speaks of sentient animals as animals with no real awareness of pain. He compares them to comatose patients and says that they never build the letters "apni" into the word "pain." Conscious animals he sometimes characterizes as the same as self-conscious. At other times, he opposes the self-conscious to the merely conscious. In the latter case, the confusion may result from Lewis' belief that there is a gradation in levels of awareness and his belief that part of our obligation is to raise animals up to a higher level of consciousness.
- 7 In some respects this view is similar to Averroes' on the immortality of the human soul and thus provides just as little satisfaction for individual animals as one active intellect does for individual human immortality. One important difference, however, is that individual sentient animals have no self to be raised. As always, Lewis is only willing to raise something of unique value and something whose resurrection makes sense.



**MILESTONE:** Arwen Joy GoodKnight, born April 21, 1972 when the Society was four and a half years old, was married 25 years later to Kenneth Michaels in Boston on October 11, 1997, close to the 30th anniversary of the Society. All four parents of the bride and groom were present.

MYTHLORE  
 Seeks a New Associate Editor

If you enjoy this journal, support its purposes and want to help in its production, you may be able to help as a new Associate Editor. You need to have a PC computer, email and ability to send and receive faxes. Please contact the Editor to discuss the further details (details at end of page 7).



**Selected References to "Where Have all the Fairies Gone?," ending on page 21**

**Selected References**

- Byatt, A.S. *Possession: A Romance*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1990.
- Capek, Peggy. *Mirra and the Marmots*. Penticton, B.C.: Theytus Books, 1994 (first pub. 1982).
- Corbet, Richard, "The Fairies' Farewell," in *The New Oxford Book of English Verse*, ed. Helen Gardner. Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1972, pp. 218-219.
- Crawley, Geoffrey. "That Astonishing Affair of the Cottingley Fairies," *The British Journal of Photography*, Dec. 24, 31, 1982; Jan. 7, 21, 28, Feb. 4, 11, 18, Apr. 1, 8, 1983.
- Crowley, John. *Little, Big*. New York: Bantam, 1994 (first pub. 1981).
- Doyle, Arthur Conan. *The Coming of the Fairies*. New York: Samuel Weiser, 1979 (first pub. 1921).
- Fern Gull: the Last Rainforest*. Dir. Bill Kroyer. 20th Century Fox Video, 1992.
- Fyleman, Rose. "Fairies," in *The Oxford Book of Children's Verse*, ed. Iona and Peter Opie. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973, p. 336.
- Jones, Terry. *Lady Cottington's Pressed Fairy Book*. ill. Brian Freud. Atlanta: Turner, 1994.
- Kipling, Rudyard. *Puck of Pook's Hill*. London: Macmillan, 1965 (first pub. 1906)
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Rewards and Fairies*. London: Pan Books, 1975 (first pub. 1910).
- Lee, Dennis. *Nicholas Knock and Other People*. Toronto: Macmillan, 1974.
- Princess Mary's Gift Book*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1915.
- Ruskin, John. "The Art of England, Lecture, IV, Fairy Land," *The Works of John Ruskin*, ed. E.T Cook and Alexander Wedderburn. London: George Alien, 1908. Vol XXXIII, pp. 327- 349.
- Tolkien, J.R.R. *The Two Towers*. London: George Alien & Unwin, 1954.
- Wilson, A.N. *Who Was Oswald Fish?* London: Seeker & Warburg, 1981.
- Wordsworth, William. "The world is too much with us," in *The New Oxford Book of English Verse*, ed. Helen Gardner. Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1972, p. 237.