

SARA'S TRANSFORMATION: A TEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF  
FRANCES HODGSON BURNETT'S *SARA CREWE* AND *A LITTLE PRINCESS*

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## Chapter I

*She [Frances Hodgson Burnett] was just like her own Sara Crewe. These stories were very romantic. Someone in them would be forlorn, sickly or miserable--pitiful in one way or another. And there would be someone else, who was brave and strong and helpful. The strong one would have to go through all sorts of trials and tribulations. But in the end things would come out right for everybody in a fairy tale sort of way.*<sup>1</sup>

-Edith Burnett

Frances Hodgson Burnett's life revolved around her love of story-telling, her sons, nature, and the idealized notion of childhood. Burnett had an ability to recapture universal aspects of childhood and transform them into realistic stories containing elements of the fantastic or fairy tales. Her ability to tell stories started at a young age when she and her sisters were given permission to write on old pieces of paper.<sup>2</sup> Burnett's love for storytelling, reading, and writing was fostered in her parents' household, in which a young Burnett was given free reign to explore her parents' book collection and also left unhindered to imagine and act out stories by herself and with her sisters and close friends. Later her love for telling tales became a means of providing for her family—beginning with short story submissions to magazines.<sup>3</sup> Although Burnett did not necessarily start out writing for children her career ended up along that path after the success in 1886 of her first children's book, *Little Lord Fauntleroy*. After this success, she was a recognizable author on both sides of the Atlantic. *Sara Crewe; or, What Happened at Miss Minchin's*, the 1887–88 serial publication in *St. Nicholas* magazine and the 1888 short story publication both were titled the same, and the subsequent re-workings of Sara's world in the forms of two plays, *A little un-fairy princess* (England,

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<sup>1</sup> Ann Thwaite. *Waiting for the Party: The Life of Frances Hodgson Burnett 1849–1924*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1974, 19.

<sup>2</sup> Gretchen Holbrook Gerzina. *Frances Hodgson Burnett: The Unexpected Life of the Author of The Secret Garden*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2004, 17.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 31–32.

1902), and *A Little Princess; Being the Whole Story of Sara Crewe, Now Told for the First Time* (United States, 1903), and the 1905 full-length novel which retained the American 1903 play's title, outlines the creative process that Burnett undertook while exploring the world of Sara Crewe. By examining the above forms, readers and scholars gain an insight into not only the differences between the forms, but also a view of how the author approached adapting an already published work, and the influence of editors on an author's work. The examination of the development of Sara's timeline will bring light onto Burnett's growth as a writer and specifically her transition into her role as a children's literature author.

Burnett was the third of five children of Eliza Boond and Edwin Hodges of Manchester, England.<sup>4</sup> Her childhood in England greatly influenced her later writings for both children and adults. Burnett was a prolific reader and her love of books started at a young age when her Grandmother Boond taught her the alphabet from "an alphabet flower book," which Burnett loved more than a toy.<sup>5</sup> Burnett "read voraciously, often getting into trouble for reading when they had visitors, for wanting—dreadful thought—to read at meals, for reading when out visiting."<sup>6</sup> Pretending or role playing was an early passion, and would find a more sophisticated outlet decades later in the development of the Sara Crewe protagonist. Burnett's mother caught a glimpse of her daughter's penchant for pretending one day, which at first gave her a start, since this particular pretending involved whipping a doll that Burnett had tied up to a candelabra. Her mother told a friend that Burnett had said that "she was 'pretending'. You know that is her way

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 13.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>6</sup> Ann Thwaite. *Waiting for the Party: The Life of Frances Hodgson Burnett 1849-1924*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1974, 16.

of playing.”<sup>7</sup> Burnett’s written characters do not necessarily experience physical endangerment as was given or experienced by the captive doll, they may have to endure mental and physical hardships but they are not as dramatic as Burnett’s childish acting. For example, Miss Minchin does slap Sara’s ear with enough force for it to hurt but Miss Minchin’s interaction with Sara usually consists verbal admonishment and not active physical harm. Burnett’s child-self seemed comfortable in acting out her stories, even if it startled or was not appropriate of a female child.

The family’s life changed drastically when Edwin died after suffering a stroke. Father and father figures are either absent in Burnett’s writings, and if absent are fondly remembered, or if present they are generous with their affection and wealth, and if they do not start the story off with these traits the traits are eventually gained in the end. With the absence of her husband and the children’s father, Eliza decided she would try to maintain her Edwin’s business, a home furnishing store that specialized in “brasses, chandeliers, door handles, and decorative ironworks.”<sup>8</sup> Eliza was not a business woman—her personality and demeanor did not suit her for the world of selling goods. She eventually had to dismiss servants and make several moves to smaller houses and eventually moved to a house in a “decidedly less genteel neighborhood of Islington Square, Salford,” which was only located a couple of miles from their previous address.<sup>9</sup> Burnett’s most vivid childhood memories came from this time period—her growing up near the mining families of Islington Square.<sup>10</sup> The mining families way of life, and their speech, was quite different from the Hodgson family’s. Although this dialect is not seen

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 16.

<sup>8</sup> Gretchen Holbrook Gerzina. *Frances Hodgson Burnett: The Unexpected Life of the Author of The Secret Garden*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2004, 13–15.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 15–16.

<sup>10</sup> See *That Lass O’Lowries* (New York: Scribner; London: Warne, 1877).

in any of the Sara stories—Becky’s, the scullery maid, is derived from a London working-poor dialect—Burnett does use the miners’ speech and Lancashire dialect she heard as a child in her adult novel *That Lass O’ Lowries*.<sup>11</sup> But during this period her schooling provided the most significant touchtone for her later literary career. While living in Islington Square, Frances, Edith, and later Edwina (the youngest) attended a “Select Seminary for Young Ladies and Gentlemen” in Henry Hadfield’s house run by his daughters, Sarah, Jane, and Alice. This environment would find its way into *Sara Crewe* and *A Little Princess* in the form of Miss Minchin’s Select Seminary for Girls. Ann Thwaite, in her biography, highlights the differences between Burnett’s seminary experience and the one she created for Sara Crewe. Biography evidence indicates that the Hadfield’s seminary was a pleasant and non-threatening environment to learn in, but in its fictionalized forms as Miss Minchin’s seminary, Burnett transformed it into a place where children were scolded for acting like children and where money was more important than education.<sup>12</sup> The Hadfield “select seminary” also differed from Miss Minchin’s in *Sara Crewe* because boys attended this real-life seminary. The key to this transformation was Burnett’s imaginative talent, her writing did not stem from school writing exercises but from her joy of pretending and creating stories.

Burnett began to write her stories down in a most unlikely place—in discarded notebooks. She did not show her writings to anyone and kept them hidden from her brothers, Herbert Edwin and John George, especially. Burnett also wrote poetry during this time as well; when she was ten, she was particularly pleased with a poem she had written and decided to show it to her mother. Eliza Hodgson, who knew nothing of

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<sup>11</sup> New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1877.

<sup>12</sup> Ann Thwaite. *Waiting for the Party: The Life of Frances Hodgson Burnett 1849–1924*. New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1974, 17.



Burnett's original poetry composition, thought at first her daughter had copied the poem out of a book.<sup>13</sup>

The American Civil War and its coastal blockade not only caused hardship on the continent but also in England. Times were rough and money tight in the Hodgson household. "The violent effect of American affairs on the economy of Lancashire at least made America seem nearer." Eliza's brother, William Boond, had moved to Tennessee and wrote his sister that she and her family should follow. William had launched a successful career and his business as "Grocer, Provision Dealer and Commission Merchant" had flourished during the war.<sup>14</sup> Eliza moved her family to Tennessee when Burnett was fifteen. They left Liverpool 11 May 1865 on the *Moravian* to Quebec and traveled by rail to the United States. Burnett later reflected some thirty years later she still felt like her fifteen-year-old self who had traveled to America—"that she could not see she was much wiser than she had been on that cold spring day when she left England for the first time."<sup>15</sup>

The family's move to Tennessee did not solve their money problems. But there were aesthetic and emotional consolations. Although they arrived at the end of the Civil War, Burnett was fascinated by the difference of the scenery in the United States compared to England, especially the number of trees, since there were no trees in Islington Square.<sup>16</sup> Other surprises, more personal, were less pleasant. William's letter, written the year before the Hodgsons arrived, was no longer an accurate appraisal of his current situation in Knoxville. Eliza's eldest brother could only employ their sibling

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 20.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 23.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 24.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 25.

Herbert Edwin. There was no where for the family to live in the war-ravaged city of Knoxville and so William suggested a cabin in the town of New Market.<sup>17</sup> One of their neighbors in New Market was Dr. John Burnett, whose son Swan would later marry Frances, but not until 1873 after Frances returned from an extended visit to England.<sup>18</sup> Money was very tight and Burnett was fully focused on helping her family earn a living. She began by setting up a “Select Seminary,” although she had no formal training, she only had her own English education, for the neighborhood children who would pay their school fees in food. In 1866 William’s business closed and Herbert Edwin found another job that paid better, so the family moved a few miles outside of Knoxville.<sup>19</sup> Burnett and her family’s life changed after her mother received a copy of *Godey’s Lady’s Book* magazine. This discovery opened up the rapidly expanding world of popular magazines to the maturing children of the family. Burnett and her sister Edith sold wild grapes to earn money for paper and postage for Burnett to send a story into *Ballou’s Magazine*, a magazine Burnett felt she had a better chance publishing with.<sup>20</sup> The magazine wrote back neither rejecting nor accepting her story, “Miss Carruther’s Engagement.” Burnett asked for the story back and sent it onto *Godey’s Lady’s Magazine*, edited by Sarah J. Hale in Philadelphia.<sup>21</sup> Hale’s response was that she was not convinced it was an original story. Burnett was asked to send another story, since they thought the story came from an English author, and as yet had no knowledge that the author was not a native Tennessean, to reassure Mrs. Hale she was indeed English and had moved to the United States. After

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 26–27.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 28–29.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 30.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 31–33.

<sup>21</sup> Ward. A. W. ed. *The Cambridge History of English and American Literature: An Encyclopedia in 18 Volumes (1907–21), Volume XVI*. New York; Cambridge: G. P. Putnum’s Sons; University Press.

sending in her second story, “Hearts and Diamonds,” Burnett received a letter informing her that both stories would be published. She received fifteen dollars for “Hearts and Diamonds” and twenty dollars for “Miss Carruther’s Engagement.”<sup>22</sup> The publication of these stories marked the start of Burnett’s publishing career and also her ability to provide for her family—when she was the devoted unmarried daughter, and when she married Swan Burnett, she was able to add income to the family finances.

Publishing and printing in the United States at this time, post-civil war, had really taken off and enabled printed material to have a wider audience. In the 1820s in America penny magazines became popular and soon spread reading material to a larger population. The 1870s saw a rise in two categories of readers which show the significance of Burnett’s reading preferences and her own submissions. “Two classes in particular have swelled the ranks of readers of light magazines since the 1870s—women and children....”<sup>23</sup> Also publishing could be done in several stages, a story could be published in a magazine and then later published in a book and both of these stages generated separate profit.<sup>24</sup>

Burnett profited from this publishing system—she published some of her stories in serial form in magazines and then later in book form. *Sara Crewe*, her second children’s story published serially in 1887–88 in *St. Nicholas* magazine, followed the success of Burnett’s *Little Lord Fauntleroy*. *St. Nicholas* bought the serial rights to “Sara Crewe,” which provided Burnett income from the serial version of her story quite apart

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<sup>22</sup> Thwaite. *Ibid.*, 34.

<sup>23</sup> Steinberg, S. H. and John Trevitt. *Five Hundred Years of Printing*. New Castle, NJ; London: Oak Knoll Press; The British Library, 1996, 163–64.

<sup>24</sup> Gretchen Holbrook Gerzina. *Frances Hodgson Burnett: The Unexpected Life of the Author of The Secret Garden*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2004, 116.

from the potential for a book sale and subsequent royalties.<sup>25</sup> The magazine did not have any claim to the book, *Sara Crewe*, which allowed both Charles Scribner's Sons and Frederick Warne of London to publish the story later in 1888. The American and British systems of publishing were quite different. In the United States the author received royalties for their works, but still controlled their works, and in England the publisher could buy the rights to the work completely.<sup>26</sup> Scribner's offered, and Burnett accepted, \$3,000 for *Sara Crewe*. Gretchen Gerzina in her biography notes that Frederick Warne probably "agreed to a similar request."<sup>27</sup> *Little Lord Fauntleroy* had marked her rise in popularity and with the publication of *Sara Crewe* she was established as a children's author.

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It is important to examine Burnett's rapid rise to prominence by placing her achievement in the context of children's literature as a cultural element of mid-19<sup>th</sup> century America. Although she had no plans to work in children's literature beyond her apprentice years as a writer, she unexpectedly found herself in the vanguard of change in this field. Children's literature went through quite a transformation during the 1800s and one of the most significant developments involved the fundamental character of the child as fictive protagonist. Almost without knowing it, Burnett helped to usher in and maintain the notion of the "romantic" child. As Anne Scott MacLeod notes, this was a major shift in the genre:

In fact, for the first half of the century, children's fiction was all but static in form and content. When the shift occurred around 1850, it was brought

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 117.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 117.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 119.

about the social change; the literature was reshaped and pressed into service as a form of social protest in a changing society.<sup>28</sup>

MacLeod discusses the influence of British authors on American authors writing for children, especially Maria Edgeworth. The American version of Edgeworth's children's writings gave way, prior to 1850, to "plain and sober stories of rather nice children making predictable childish errors of judgment and learning appropriately from the consequences."<sup>29</sup> The notion of the rational child existed before 1850, the idea that children learned, and were guided by, their parents. Childhood was considered a time when children readied themselves for adult life. Parents were there to instruct their children in order for them to be moral adults. Children were considered "rational but unfinished being[s]."<sup>30</sup> Starting in the mid-century authors began writing social commentary into children's stories.

By the 1850s, authors were harnessing children's literature to the cause of social protest, using sentimentality toward children to arouse public concern for the young victims of what they saw as a crisis in American urban society.<sup>31</sup>

An influx of immigrants stressed the cities and led to poorer living conditions. Children were seen dirty and forlorn begging for money and food in the city streets.<sup>32</sup> Children's literature became multifaceted following the Civil War "reflecting class lines that were becoming increasingly visible in post-Civil War Society."<sup>33</sup> Since Burnett came to the States in 1865 she was positioned perfectly to be a part of the growing trend of romanticism in children's literature. MacLeod mentions Louisa May Alcott, Horatio

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<sup>28</sup> Anne Scott MacLeod. "From Rational to Romantic: The Children of Children's Literature in the Nineteenth Century." *Poetics Today*. 13:1 (Spring 1992), 141.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 142.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 142-43.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 144.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 144.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 146.

Alger, and Martha Finley as quintessential children's authors of the 1860s who set the stage for the full-blown notion of the romantic child seen in Burnett's *Little Lord Fauntleroy*. The children in Alcott's novels were not perfect children but were "basically good and well-intentioned."<sup>34</sup> MacLeod says that Alcott's child characters do not quite yet meet the criteria for the classification of the "romantic" child that would eventually change the adult characters for the better in later children's novels.<sup>35</sup> Alger's stories dealt with boys from the streets who worked hard. These boys were of good moral fiber who, with a bit of chance, could change their lives around for the better. "Alger wanted his fictional characters, and the real boys they represented, to move from independent poverty to regular employment."<sup>36</sup> Finley's children's stories come closer to the romantic notion of the child. Her style of writing is maudlin, which creates a good environment for the "romantic" child character to thrive. Finley focuses on "her heroine's innocent purity and power to redeem others."<sup>37</sup>

MacLeod maintains that "*Little Lord Fauntleroy* achieved the full flowering of romantic childhood in children's fiction."<sup>38</sup> In Burnett's children's fiction, as well as her 1860s predecessors, it is important to note the significant change in how children were viewed. The child's ability to be moral and to learn life-lessons and also play was a change from the idea of childhood as a time for training and grooming future adults. The roles and relationships between child and adult altered in children's stories during this time. The childhood depicted does not have adults who play the role of moral advisor; the

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 147

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 147.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 149.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 150.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 151.

adults now have the potential to learn from the child hero or heroine.<sup>39</sup> *Little Lord Fauntleroy* proved to be a trying-out of this blended protagonist; in fact, Burnett threw him right into the adventure of his fictional life. Cedric, the little Lord, is a good-natured child living in America with his mother whose circumstances change when it is discovered he is the only living heir to his grandfather's fortune (his father and his uncles have all passed away). Although his fortune has increased his temperament remains the same and he only thinks the best of his ill-tempered and cruel grandfather. Cedric is able to change people's opinions and change his grandfather for the better by being himself.

Evolving authorial sophistication was not the only factor that changed the general reader's attitude towards children's literature. The cultural filters inherent in this genre also prompted attitudinal changes in the target audience. Unlike adult fiction, where both readers and mediators (critics) are mature, the readership is juvenile but the critical legacy rests with the parents—adults—who mediate the story for the children. As Ewers discusses below, the adults' role as mediator is entwined in the very notion of what children's literature is for the child and the market:

Children's and young adult literature generally tends, as Zohar Shavit has formulated it, to have an unofficial as well as an official addressee. The "unofficial addressee" is the adult mediator, who plays a constitutive role in the process of communication of children's literature. For without his or her mediating achievement, communication could not take place. The child is not yet able to act independently in the literary marketplace. The child is dependent on others to recognize its literary needs and to select from available offerings accordingly.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 150.

<sup>40</sup> Hans-Heino Ewers. "The Limits of Literary Criticism of Children's and Young Adult Literature." *The Lion and the Unicorn*. 19.1 (1995), 81.

Where authors changed the text of children's literature, parents, especially mothers opened up the context of reader response by promoting reading for enjoyment. Reading was not just relegated to educational and religious purposes any more. One way in which parents accomplished this task was through "home reading." "Home reading" helped maintain the importance and vitality of children's literature to the child, the family and the market. "Home reading"—parents reading with their children—was pushed in the late 1890s. Not only was adult literature a part of this ritual but books specifically marketed to children. The success of home reading is noted in "A Plan for Home Reading." After the activities of the day are completed, school, play, and tea, this particular family would "banish the nurse to the kitchen, and hold the fort in high glee until 6 o'clock—the children eating, and the mother reading aloud some delightful book." The mother's reading aloud became an activity so anticipated that if the children were unruly there would be no reading that evening, which "as a result, [the children] have beautiful table manners."<sup>41</sup> By 1898, one of the recommend readings in many households was Burnett's *Little Lord Fauntleroy*. A letter to the editor regarding children's reading also addresses the value of home reading. The *New York Times* featured several articles and editorials regarding the nature and state of reading on children and on reading in the home. May MacKintosh from Weehawken, NJ, with a Master's of Pedagogy, ruminates on her reading experiences as a young girl when she came to the United States in 1875. She first deflects the notion that some people have that children's literature "is inferior to that designed for the adult reader" by saying that "[a]ny one familiar with the best literature for children will acknowledge that there are countless gems, both as regards style and

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<sup>41</sup> "A Plan for Home Reading: Which One Wise Woman Carries Out for Her Children's Benefit." *New York Times*, 3 December 1893.



matter.”<sup>42</sup> MacKintosh continues to note the positives of the parents’ reading on the child; if the parent is reading a book, the author says let the child read aloud a section of the book. She ends her editorial by saying “[t]he true province of home reading is to make the boy or girl possessor of that general information that tells more in after life than all the learning of the schools.”<sup>43</sup>

Children’s literature continued to gain acceptance in early 1900s America. In a 6 September 1902 article, “Juvenile Reading: Its Origin and Its Slow But Steady Growth,” in the *New York Times* discusses the reluctant appreciation for literature written for children. Isabel Moore, the author of the piece, reflects that “‘grownups’ are giving more and more of their consideration and efforts to the audience of childhood.” Moore’s article points out a particular type of writing for children that is applicable to Burnett’s stories for children, and specifically to *Sara Crewe* and *A Little Princess*.

A form of story of peculiar interest is that which is applicable to and appreciated by all children, and has had, in addition, some particular child as its inspiration.<sup>44</sup>

Moore’s statement could be applied to a specific character within the story, like Sara Crewe, or a child outside the story in real life, like Burnett’s youngest son Vivian, who was the model for the author’s first children’s story *Little Lord Fauntleroy*. Of course, it cannot be determined that Moore’s reference to “all children” really means *all children* or children of a particular class and ethnicity. The combination of the rush to become a grownup, according to Moore, and the low opinion of children’s literature has created a society in which “[w]e read all of these [children’s books], of course, but in our

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<sup>42</sup> May MacKintosh. “What Children Get from Books.” *New York Times*, 26 February 1898.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Isabel Moore. “Juvenile Reading: Its Origins and Its Slow But Steady Growth.” *New York Times*, 6 September, 1902.

eager, onward, grownup rush, do we give sufficient pause to consider justly the literary value and significance....?”<sup>45</sup>

Although there was growing support during the time that Burnett wrote *Sara Crewe* in 1887–88 to when she writes *A Little Princess* in 1905, there was also a rising concern of the type of material children were exposed to in the home and in school. A resolution was adopted by the Press Committee in Washington DC in 1897 to protect children from certain materials. Alice C. Robinson, the writer of the resolution, stated

“[r]ealizing the almost limitless power, for good or for evil, exerted by the daily press, and that the proper education of the youth of our land is of vital importance to the future prosperity of the State; Resolved, That we will admit into our hoses only those papers which inspire to noble thought and deed, and that our influence shall go toward cultivate the public taste, until it shall demand from the press only that which elevates and refines.”<sup>46</sup>

Margaret E. Sangster also spoke at the resolution meeting about what types of materials children should be familiar with, such as “fairy tales for children’s reading during the formative years.”<sup>47</sup> Anthony Comstock cited the frequency of the circulation of “obscene literature...in boarding schools and colleges for both sexes....” Youth, for this particular setting, encompasses a wide range of younger people—not only children who should be reading fairy tales but teenagers and college-aged youth as well. There is no indication that any of Burnett’s children’s stories came under fire for questionable content, although *A Lady of Quality*, one of her adult novels, was banned from the library in Evanston, Illinois in 1902, along with other books that were questioned on the basis of their morality.<sup>48</sup> Her stories have the element of the fairy tale, perhaps Margaret E. Sangster

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup>“Declares for a Pure Press: Resolutions Adopted at the Evening Session by Rising Vote.” *New York Times*, 19 February 1897.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> “Western Town Has Literary Censors.” *New York Times*, 6 July 1902.

would have approved. Burnett's stories were so well accepted that six of her children's books, including *Sara Crewe*, were included in the top two hundred and fifty best books for school children in 1899.<sup>49</sup>

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Burnett did not begin her writing career as a children's author, yet she seems to have stumbled onto a formula for writing for children that allowed her to be successful. Gretchen Gerzina says that Burnett found that "[c]hildren's books came more easily to her...[m]ore importantly, she found them less physically taxing to write...."<sup>50</sup> Bixler, in her biography of Burnett, says the following regarding Burnett's writing style for children.

For a child audience, however, Burnett gives her characters bolder outline; and the presumed necessity for more action in the plot of children's stories allows more rein for her earlier-touted 'art as a storyteller.'<sup>51</sup>

Bixler says that Burnett's "ability to tap the narrative and thematic power of the fairy tale allows *Little Lord Fauntleroy*...*A Little Princess* and *The Secret Garden*, to survive their occasional sentimentality."<sup>52</sup> The fairy tale was not a tolerated literary theme for the Moralists but the Romantics thought it perfectly appropriate and revived the theme in their works. In Margaret Bruzelius's chapter "Influence versus Speech: Representing the Maternal in Frances Hodgson-Burnett," she discusses Burnett's position in literature.

Burnett is usually associated with a female tradition of writers: her early 'realistic' fictions were compared to those of Mrs. Gaskell and Charlotte Yonge, while her children's books are linked to the work of Mrs. Ewing, Jean Ingelow and Mrs. Molesworth. However, her writing also demonstrates a large debt to the distinctly masculine tradition of the

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<sup>49</sup> "Books for Schools: A List of About 250 That Will Stimulate and Supplement the Work of Pupils." *New York Times*, 19 August 1899.

<sup>50</sup> Gerzina, 119.

<sup>51</sup> Phyllis Bixler. *Frances Hodgson Burnett*. Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1984, 54.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 54.

adventure novel associated with names such as Walter Scott, Robert Louis Stevenson, and Rider Haggard.<sup>53</sup>

Bruzelius's comparison of Burnett's writing with many notable authors gives a clear image of the type of writing she wrote for adults and for children. Burnett's writing encompasses all of the above, realism, fairy tale, and adventure. This discussion is also noted in *Children's Literature: An Illustrated History*.

It is difficult to do justice to the large and varied output of Mrs Ewing and Mrs Molesworth, but their engaging child characters and narrators, and their diverse adventures, in both familiar and fantasy worlds, provided a repertoire of voices, plots, and situations which their successors, notably Frances Hodgson Burnett and E. Nesbit, drew on extensively.<sup>54</sup>

Burnett continued to use her formula of placing characters into realistic and fantasy settings and only altered the formula for her children's writing by blending the two in one story. The fairy tale was always a part of reality in Burnett's writings.

Three of Burnett's books have remained in the canon of children's literature—*Little Lord Fauntleroy*, *A Little Princess*, and *The Secret Garden*. Although she wrote forty-four books and countless essays and short stories, she is only remembered for these three children's books. Her career spanned from 1868 with her first article published in *Godey's Lady's Book* to 1924, months before her death, with "In the Garden." Burnett's life was very much in the public eye. She was part of the elite society whose affairs were accounted in the papers, her career as an author was followed, as well as her personal life. The *New York Times* ran stories announcing her divorce from Swan Burnett in 1898 and her remarriage to Stephen Townsend in 1900. Not only were her divorce and marriage no

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<sup>53</sup> Barbara Thaden, ed. *New Essays on the Maternal Voice in the Nineteenth Century*. Dallas: Contemporary Research Press, 1995, 15.

<sup>54</sup> Peter Hunt, ed. "The Emergence of Form." *Children's Literature: An Illustrated History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995, 137.

secret to New York society but her ill-health also made the 1902 paper. Her success as a writer was equally covered by the *New York Times*, noting her accomplishments with play adaptations of her works and new book publications, as well as interviews.

Of these three, *Sara Crewe—Little Princess* has by far the most extended textual evolution. The importance of analyzing Sara Crewe's story gives insight into Burnett's writing process and her impact on the genre of children's literature. Sara's story began as a serial publication in a children's magazine and was eventually transformed for the London and New York stage, and then finally as a novel. By studying these expanding states of authorial intention across entire genres of literature, we learn the importance of each state as a single written entity and how each subsequent state effects the next re-telling of Sara Crewe.

## Chapter II

*Everything's a story. You are a story—I am a story.*

-Sara Crewe, *A Little Princess*

Burnett was a successful author during her lifetime and her presence is preserved in children's literature through her three most notable works for children: *Little Lord Fauntleroy*, *A Little Princess*, and *The Secret Garden*. These three have had an enduring impact on the childhood psyche as evidenced by the steady reprinting of *A Little Princess* and *The Secret Garden*, the retelling of these stories in films and play adaptations, and the reading population of children in every generation who find the stories mainstays in their early reading explorations. Like many fairytales, Burnett's more realistic juvenile romances have become a part of an idealized notion of childhood. Her talent for creating such tales was praised throughout her life, but her adult novels were not met with the same enthusiasm. After her death in 1924, only Burnett's three juvenile stories became canonized as perennially steady sellers. Each generation of children claim Burnett's stories for themselves and each generation of new parents commends them to their children as worthwhile literature.

This chapter examines the critical reception of *Sara Crewe* and *A Little Princess* along with the general response of the reading public to Burnett's works throughout her lifetime and after her death. Literary reviews and criticism provide the basis for assessing how Burnett was perceived as an author and how influential her works became within the genre of children's literature. The less well-known history of the publication of *Sara Crewe* and its transformation into *A Little Princess* adds an entirely new dimension to what we know about Burnett's popularity with the public. Affection for Burnett's writings and characters is also seen in tributes given in her memory, most notably the

children's garden in Central Park. These commercial, critical, and cultural elements combine to reveal a remarkable chapter in the history of children's literature.

*Sara Crewe (SC)* has had a long publishing history, even after Burnett achieved her final vision of the story through the publication of *A Little Princess* in 1905. *SC* was first published serially in the children's magazine *St. Nicholas* in the December 1887 and January 1888 issues. *St. Nicholas* magazine was a popular children's magazine started by Mary Mapes Dodge (1831–1905) in 1873 and continually published until 1943. Dodge was the editor-in-chief for thirty years and is best known as an author for her children's story *Hans Brinker; or, The Silver Skates* published in 1865.<sup>55</sup> *St. Nicholas* legitimized the works of children's literature and provided a filter-free public forum—not by discussing what children *needed* to read, but by discussing what they *wanted* to read:

Dodge and her staff worked intensively with contributors to create what she liked to call a “pleasure ground” for children, and *St. Nicholas* under guidance became an important influence on what has been called the golden age of American children's literature.<sup>56</sup>

Dodge spoke highly of the purpose behind the magazine in *Scribner's Monthly*:

... the child's magazine needs to be stronger, truer, bolder, more uncompromising than the other [adult periodicals]... Let there be no sermonising [sic] either, no wearisome spinning out of facts, no rattling of the dry bones of history. A child's magazine is its “pleasure-ground.”<sup>57</sup>

Dodge's efforts and accomplishments with the magazine and for children's literature were appreciated during her lifetime and, although not acknowledged by today's authors

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<sup>55</sup> Henry Steele Commager, ed. Introduction, May Lamberton Becker. *The St. Nicholas Anthology*. New York: Random House, 1948, xvi. *The Columbia Encyclopedia*, 6th ed New York: Columbia University Press, 2001–2004.

<sup>56</sup> Susan Gannon. “Introduction: What Was *St. Nicholas* Magazine?” *St. Nicholas and Mary Mapes Dodge: The Legacy of a Children's Magazine Editor, 1873–1905*. Jefferson, NC and London: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2004, 1.

<sup>57</sup> Peter Hunt, ed. *Children's Literature: An Illustrated History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995, 230–31.

and scholars, these efforts have left an imprint on the genre of children's literature.

Admiration and a sense of significant literary loss were felt when Dodge died in 1905 at the age seventy-four as generations of her readers mourned her passing. One reader wrote in to the *New York Times* that:

She has been our fairy godmother, to whose gifts we eagerly looked forward month by month, knowing that St. Nicholas was ours, no matter how many books the elder might possess, and feeling also that its editor was the one who best knew what we most liked.<sup>58</sup>

Dodge's influence in children's literature was quite apparent during her lifetime; even when Burnett published *Sara Crewe* in 1887–88, Dodge had established herself as a popular writer for children and a successful editor. Another reader wrote a tribute in the *New York Times* that:

St. Nicholas, under her sympathetic guidance, has kept the interest of successive phalanxes of boys and girls, because it has been projected from the point of view of real flesh-and blood boys and girls.<sup>59</sup>

When Burnett joined Dodge's group of contributors, she found herself published with such accomplished and talented authors as Louisa May Alcott, L. Frank Baum, Rudyard Kipling, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Theodore Roosevelt, and Mark Twain.<sup>60</sup> Dodge was an important ally within the field of publishing and marketing of children's literature as well as in the actual composition of writings for children. *SC* did have a successful publishing history after its initial debut in Dodge's magazine, but it was actually Burnett's previous publication in *St. Nicholas* of *Little Lord Fauntleroy* that established her as a popular children's author.

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<sup>58</sup> Laura Stedman. "For Mary Mapes Dodge." *New York Times*, 2 September 1905, BR 576.

<sup>59</sup> "Mrs. Dodge." *New York Times*, 26 August 1905, BR560.

<sup>60</sup> Cannon, *Ibid.*



Charles Scribner's Sons, who started *St. Nicholas* in 1873, decided to publish Burnett's magazine story in book form. *SC*, at eighty-three pages, was printed approximately forty times before Burnett's death in 1924, either as a stand-alone story in a book or coupled with her other writings. *SC* was printed alongside *Editha's Burglar* and provided the lead-title for *Sara Crewe, Little Saint Elizabeth, and Other Stories*. All three of these titles were reissued together (though usually in separate volumes) throughout Burnett's lifetime. Interest in the original form of the story diminished after Burnett's death. *SC* was only been printed approximately sixteen times between 1925 and 2006. Nevertheless, it is interesting to note that the 1888 *SC* continued to be published even after the full-length 1905 *A Little Princess* publication and success. This parallel longevity is not hard to explain; the short original was more accessible to a younger reading-aged group than the longer and more detailed *A Little Princess*. Even so, the arrival of the full novelization was a major publishing event in its own right, and *A Little Princess* is the title that has maintained a steadier hold within the children's literature market since its publication in 1905. In fact, it continued to do well after the author's death in 1924.

The final novelized version evolves from other sources as well. *A Little Princess* (*LP*) was published in 1905 after the success of Burnett's own British and American stage adaptations, produced in 1902 and 1903 respectively. Scribner's was prompted to approach Burnett, after the success of the plays, to write a full-length novel that included aspects of Sara Crewe's story that had been expanded in the play. As Phyllis Bixler observed in her book *Frances Hodgson Burnett* "When the play was declared an equal to that earlier based on *Little Lord Fauntleroy*, Scribner's asked Burnett to turn 'Sara

Crewe' into a longer work, incorporating the changes introduced in the play."<sup>61</sup> The final novel was soon established as a generational bridge, and the publishing record reveals unequivocal proof. *LP* was printed approximately nine times between 1905 and 1924 and has been printed about one hundred and thirty-four times from 1925 until 2006. This includes less authorized editions created when publishers periodically adapted the book for different age groups and different markets.

After Burnett's death, *LP* continued to make an impact on children, society, and on the tradition of retelling fairytales. Burnett's original 1902–1903 dramatizations have continued to be produced for the stage, as well as adaptations of the story by other writers. The play was first performed in England in 1902 under the title "The Little Princess of Unfair Land," produced by Seymour Hicks,<sup>62</sup> and then as "The Little Princess," produced by Charles B. Dillingham, in 1903 in the United States. In 1927 the play was performed by the Heckscher Theatre Guild at the Princess Theatre in New York City, with a cast primarily made up of children.<sup>63</sup> In February 1931 the play was again produced at the Princess Theatre by the Children's Players, an adult acting troupe. A glowing review of this production noted that "[t]he juvenile spectators followed the varying fortunes of Sara with complete absorption and gave audible expressions of satisfaction when her true identity was established and she came into her own."<sup>64</sup> The Children's Players continued to perform various Burnett plays later that year in October at the Staten Island Academy, including *Racketty-Packetty House*.<sup>65</sup> *LP* was again

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<sup>61</sup> Phyllis Bixler. *Frances Hodgson Burnett*. Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1984, 87.

<sup>62</sup> "Gossip of the Theatres." *The New York Times*, December 8, 1902, 9.

<sup>63</sup> "Children to Give 'Little Princess.'" *New York Times*, 7 March 1927, 16.

<sup>64</sup> "Give 'The Little Princess': Children's Players Revive Burnett Work at Princess Theatre." *New York Times*, 7 February 1931, 17.

<sup>65</sup> "Burnett Play for Staten Island." *New York Times*, 23 October 1931, 28. *Racketty-packetty House: As Told by Queen Crosspatch*. New York: The Century Co., 1906.

performed at the Heckscher Theatre, in conjunction with the Clare Tree Major Children's Theatre, in 1939 for a fundraiser for Save the Children Fund.

The 1931 Children's Players performances merit further comments. There is little doubt that the Children's Players chose *Racketty-Packetty* to present after their performance earlier in the year of *LP* because of the similar subject matter the two stories share—a girl's love of a doll and the secret life that dolls lead when not in the company of people. *Racketty-Packetty House*, another Burnett creation, is a story about dolls and what goes on when their children are not in the room. This idea grew out of Sara's interaction with her doll Emily in both *SC* and *LP*. *Racketty-Packetty House* not only explores the idea of dolls coming alive but also celebrates the love and the care some children bestow on their toys. These themes are important in Sara's adventures because of Sara's need and desire to have a friend in her doll, Emily. Sara's care of and devotion to Emily remains constant even—with the addition of new toys, Emily's status as favorite never diminishes in Sara's eyes. Burnett continued to explore girls and dolls even after her success with *Sara Crewe* and *A Little Princess* in *Racketty-Packetty House*, which was published in 1906, a year after the novelization of *Sara Crewe* into *A Little Princess*.

Burnett expands on her theme of dolls as she transforms *SC* into *LP*. The first time Sara takes her new friend Ermengarde to her room to see Emily, she says to Ermengarde before they enter, "Let us go very quietly to the door," she whispered, "and then I will open it quite suddenly; perhaps we may catch her." When Sara opens the door and finds Emily still sitting in the chair she was left in she says, "Oh, she got back to her seat before we could see her!" Sara explained. "Of course they always do. They are as

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"Play Will Give Help to Children's Fund." *New York Times*, 26 March 1939, 45. "The fund aids needy children in the Southern mountains by an extensive educational and social welfare program."

quick as lightning.”<sup>66</sup> The idea of dolls having independent lives from their humans is seen in *Racketty-Packetty House* when Queen Crosspatch reminds her fairies of dolls secret lives. “When people are not looking at them, they can do anything they choose.”<sup>67</sup>

Sara’s love for Emily is seen in contrast to the little girl, Cynthia, in *Racketty-Packetty House*. Cynthia has no love or respect for dolls and dollhouses that are no longer new. When she receives “Tidy Castle,” a new dollhouse with new dolls, Cynthia demonstrates no loyalty for the old house and dolls. “I believe I will have the Racketty-Packettys burnt up! They’re too shabby to live in the same nursery with Tidy Castle.”<sup>68</sup> Cynthia is also seen in contrast to the sweet natured “real” princess in the same story. The princess is outraged when Cynthia mentions burning the Racketty-Packetty house: “Burned! Why, if it were mine I wouldn’t have it burned for the worlds!” The princess continues after Cynthia asks if she likes the house: “Oh! Yes! It’s so dear. It’s shabby and wants mending, of course, but it’s almost exactly like the one my grandmamma had, and she kept it among her treasures, and only let me look at it as a great, great treat.”<sup>69</sup> The loyal love that Cynthia has to learn didactically through a fairy-tale mentor, Sara already knows intuitively even before her story is expanded into novel form.

The textual history of Sara Crewe’s tale shows a complex evolution from short story to play to novel. The evolution of the narrative as seen through the publication of these three formats gives scholars the opportunity to examine Burnett’s process of creating, exploring, and expanding upon her original work. *SC* now is no longer just a stand-alone story but acts almost as a synoptic abstract for the *LP*. *LP* follows the

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<sup>66</sup> *A Little Princess*. New York: Scribner’s, 1905, 29–30.

<sup>67</sup> “Racketty-Packetty House: A Play in Prologue and Three Acts.” New York: Samuel French, 1927, 9.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, 60–61.

timeline and basic plot elements from the path finding *SC* text, the abstract, but Burnett expands on her original work by including more information on Sara herself, characters within and out of the school, and the daily interactions and sub-stories of these characters. *SC* therefore exists as a germinal point in the Sara Crewe continuum timeline; *LP* exists as the fulfillment of the Sara Crewe potential.

*SC* begins with Sara, age seven, and father dad Captain Crewe, meeting with Minchin, proprietor and one of the teachers at the girl's seminary. The death of Sara's father comes after Sara has been at Miss Minchin's for a year. He dies after a friend loses his money in a business deal in India. Sara is left penniless and without any family and is made to work as a servant at the school. She lives in the attic room next to the cook and not only runs errands of all kinds but must keep up with her studies and help teach the younger girls their French. Sara becomes acquainted with the Indian servant, the lascar, who is amazed to find that this British girl can speak his language. The Indian servant serves the English gentleman, known as the Indian gentleman due to his time spent in India. Later the reader will notice how convenient it is that the Indian gentleman lives next door to the seminary.

Sara's tiny, dark attic room is transformed into a comfortable place for Sara by the lascar through the means of the Indian gentleman, Mr. Carrisford. It is discovered that Mr. Carrisford is the one who "lost" Captain Crewe's fortune in a business venture that at first seems to have gone horribly wrong. In reality the business deal is successful but Captain Crewe dies before knowing the truth about his money and about his friend; Carrisford was not dishonorable in his intentions toward Crewe as both a friend and a business partner. Mr. Carrisford has been ill, it seems, from his guilty conscious about his

friend's death and the subsequent orphaning of his friend's only child. He has been searching for Captain Crewe's little girl to atone for what he feels are his wrongdoings. Sara is "found" only when Mr. Carrisford's pet monkey escapes to Sara's attic room and she must return him to his owner.

*LP* follows this plot development but with the addition of details that give more depth to the original. Sara is 8 when she arrives at Miss Minchin's seminary in this version and Burnett takes her time in developing Sara as an intelligent and beloved little girl. A major element of the novelization involves the introduction of new characters. Ermengarde and Lottie, who are introduced to the narrative in the 1902–3 dramatic versions, are further developed in the novel as foils to Sara. Both little girls remain friends with Sara after she is made a servant. Before Sara's loss of her dad and her fortune the reader sees how Sara loves to read, tell stories, and pretend. Another plot line is added to develop the schoolroom characters. This allows for Sara's introduction to the other students and reveals an inkling of her dislike of Miss Minchin. Sara is given a grand party for her thirteenth birthday and it is during these festivities that Miss Minchin is told by Barrow & Skipworth (lawyers who looked after Crewe's affairs) that Crewe has passed away and Sara has been left poor.

The dramatic version is an important intermediate layer added to *SC* that helps to create the mature narrative of *LP*. The characteristics of a drama and a novella, as developed in Holman's widely-accepted literary classifications, highlight the differences between these two genres in ways that illuminate the importance of the play as an intermediate layer in the Sara Crewe storyline. Holman notes that "Professor J. M. Manly saw three necessary elements in *drama*: (1) a story (2) told in action (3) by actors who

impersonate the characters of the story.” This is quite distinct from the formal structure of a novella, which Holman saw as: “A tale or short story....The form is of especial interest to students of English literature for two reasons: (1) many of these early *novelle* were used by English writers as sources for their own work, and (2) it was from this form that the term *novel* as a designation of a form of prose fiction developed.”<sup>70</sup>

Since the characteristics of these two genres—a short written story and a dramatic retelling of the written story—are so different, their outputs are different and varied for their particular audiences. Due to the different natures of these two genres this led Burnett to add different elements to Sara’s story as revised for the play—elements that, significantly, were kept for the novel. This dynamic of stage presentation forced an expansion of incident and action on Burnett, and these expansions became essential narrative milestones as she made the further creative leap to the novel form.

The play is a visual representation of the Sara Crewe story and the story-writer-turned-playwright must consider an audience that is watching the story and not reading or listening to the story. The play starts with Sara’s birthday party and the rapid decline of her status at the school. By beginning with the party the audience is introduced to several characters, and how they interact, and plot points in a single scene. The “large family,” the Carmichael family, is developed more extensively in the play than in *SC* and the family maintains an important role in Sara’s life in *LP*. The family lives across the street from the seminar and Mr. Carrisford and the entire family is an integral part of Sara’s life before and after her removal from Miss. Minchin’s. Mr. Carmichael, the father, is Mr. Carrisford’s lawyer in each version and his role, along with his family’s, increases in

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<sup>70</sup> C. Hugh Holman. *A HANDBOOK To Literature*. Indianapolis, IN: The Odyssey Press, 1972; 167 and 361.

importance in the play and *LP*. In the play Mrs. Carmichael and some of her children are introduced to the audience before Sara becomes a servant, which may be done partially due to the constraints of the medium of a play. In *LP* Sara notices and creates stories regarding the large family when she is a servant. It helps her to imagine happy times through others in order to manage and bear the circumstances of her new life. The introduction of Becky, the scullery-maid, into the play gives Sara a confidant who fully understands the life of a servant. This structure is in sharp contrast to the original since Sara has no one to relate to or confide in who understands completely her new station in the seminar. In *SC* Sara's attic room is next to the cook and in the play and *LP* her attic room is by Becky. Becky and Sara are able to commiserate together.

Mr. Carrisford's lascar servant is seen in all three formats and is given a name in the play that is kept in *LP*, Ram Dass. Ram Dass is responsible for the transformation of Sara's little attic room. Although he is not financially responsible, he tells Mr. Carrisford of the little girl to see if it will divert the Indian gentleman's melancholy state. Once Mr. Carrisford's decides to provide some comforts for Sara, all the while not knowing her true identity, Ram Dass is the one who carries out the alterations on the room. Ram Dass is intrigued by Sara since she is familiar with his native language and seems different than her fellow servants.

This textual legacy delineates the process through which Burnett expanded and altered her original work. The authorial intent for her work can be seen in these three separate stages (perhaps four if there are differences between the British and American plays).<sup>71</sup> In chapter three, these stages are analyzed and compared with one another in order to understand the steps Burnett took when writing Sara's story. Such textual

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<sup>71</sup> A copy of "The Little Princess of Unfair Land," could not be located.



analysis will also provide new ways to assess the Sara Crewe creative arc as both a literary and cultural artifact.

First, however, it is important to survey the final means by which *LP* entered popular culture. The leap from written and stage productions to film adaptations adds a complicated over-layering of non-authorial changes to plot and character. *LP*'s popularity held strong in the performing arts, transferring from the stage to moving pictures, starting with a silent movie in 1917 starring the legendary silent screen star Mary Pickford as Sara Crewe. Pickford (1893–1979) began her career working with D[avid] W[ark] Griffith, the American director and producer in 1909. Pickford usually played juvenile girl roles and was given the nickname “America’s Sweetheart.”<sup>72</sup> After its silent start, *LP* debuted with sound and color with Shirley Temple’s memorable portrayal of Sara Crewe in 1939, twenty-two years after Pickford’s performance and fifteen years after Burnett’s death. Temple’s performance was praised for her representation of the forlorn little orphaned girl at Miss Minchin’s seminary. The *New York Times* review of the movie commended Temple’s performance:

The Little Princess—Mrs. Frances Hodgson Burnett must have had Shirley Temple in mind. It’s just as sweet as sweet can be, all in Technicolor, and we haven’t stopped wincing at the memory of Shirley—her little face so wan—looking through the veterans’ hospital for her long-lost papa. At the Roxy, where Miss Temple’s fans are ecstatic.<sup>73</sup>

The review is complimentary of Temple but the reviewer’s remarks cast a doubt on whether or not they are familiar with Burnett’s story at all. The reviewer rushes to commend Temple but is inaccurate when he states that Burnett would have “had Shirley Temple in mind” for the role. Sara Crewe is not necessarily a rosy-cheeked little girl like

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<sup>72</sup> *The Columbia Encyclopedia*, 6th ed. New York: Columbia University Press, 2001–04.

<sup>73</sup> “Speaking of Directors: Since the Screen Is Their Medium, They Stand Accused of Its Betrayal.” *New York Times*, 19 March 1939, 137.

Temple and she certainly does not have blond, curly hair like her avatar on screen. Sara Crewe has straight, dark hair, and has penetrating green eyes, not the blue of Temple's. Granted it is a movie, and the very nature of the medium requires abridgment and even re-sequencing of an author's original work. That aside, the more glaring inconsistency that the reviewer's remarks highlight is the fact that the movie version has a different ending from Burnett's original. In Burnett's versions, Sara does not search the veterans' hospital for her father, who (in the play version only) is supposedly a casualty of war; instead, she accepts, with grief and heartache, the death of her father in India to a sickness. Burnett's Sara does not find her amnesiac father in a stupor at the hospital but rather, finds her father's best friend, who has kept her fortune in hopes of locating and restoring her to her former glory. Clearly, then, the original plot details did not make for the right kind of movie magic, i.e. her dramatic search for her father is added to the movie version although Captain Crewe, in all three versions of the story, truly does die in India. *LP*, at the time, was considered Temple's "greatest role to date" and her "best picture to date"<sup>74</sup>—reviewers and movie-goers alike did not seem bothered at this alteration of Burnett's original and in spite of the narrative liberties, the film exposed a new generation to Sara Crewe's riches to rags and back again story. As an aside it is interesting to note that two other films released in 1939, with at least some use of Technicolor, *Gone With the Wind* and *The Wizard of Oz*, have their own issues of authorial intent and screen adaptation. In *Gone With the Wind* the studios felt it was important to have an actress with green eyes to portray Scarlet, as that is the character's eye color, so Vivien Leigh was chosen. Conversely, in the making of *The Wizard of Oz*,

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<sup>74</sup> "At the Roxy." *New York Times*, 11 March 1939, 24. "'The Little Princess' is Shirley's Best Film." *The Washington Post*, 24 March 1939, 12.

the silver slippers of Baum's story are changed to ruby slippers since red offered a better cinematic color contrast to the yellow brick road. Of the three films it is interesting to note that only the two children's stories were altered from their original descriptive elements, at least in these instances, and not the Pulitzer Prize-winner Civil War novel. Fidelity to detail, then, would seem to be of less regard in Hollywood for adaptations of children's literature; and such a de-emphasis implies that the texts of juvenile classics somehow have less value than works written for the adult reader. Classic juvenile titles may be "treasured by the public," but the adult-mediated nature of these works leaves them especially vulnerable to further (and often de-stabilizing) mediation when adapted to film.

Subsequent movie versions have not had the same lasting success as the 1939 version. There have been two made-for-TV versions aired in 1973 and 1986 and a modestly successful big screen adaptation in 1995 starring Liesel Mathews. This rendering of Burnett's story takes place in New York City and, like reviews of the 1939 movie, reviews of the more contemporary adaptations confuse the movie plot variations with Burnett's original. The *New York Times* review of the 1995 feature film is typical:

Burnett's story centers on Sara Crewe, raised by her widowed father in India, then forced to enter an oppressive New York boarding school—when her father goes to fight in World War I.<sup>75</sup>

The story *does* center on Sara Crewe and her widowed father but it takes place in an oppressive New York seminary, instead of the books' oppressive London location, and Sara's father fights in World War I, for the British, which alters Burnett's version that has Sara's father stationed in India as a captain during the British Raj era. However,

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<sup>75</sup> Stephen Farber. "Can a Maker of Sex Comedies Be at Easy With a Princess?" *New York Times*, 21 May 1995, H16.

according to another reviewer of the 1995 version, the movie does not need to be exactly like the original story. As Lynne Sharon Schwartz notes “[m]ovies are not competing with words but offering an utterly different kind of story. And, of course, as the form changes the content must change, too.”<sup>76</sup>

Debate could easily arise over this statement and countless reasons for and against could be argued on whether or not a movie should follow the same story as the book from which it sprung. It is important to be aware that some discussions of movies may lead a reader, or a viewer, to come away with a wrong or a misconstrued idea about the author and the book that the film has been based on. This may be done unintentionally, which is perhaps the case with the reviewer who stated “Burnett’s story centers on...an oppressive New York boarding school,” but in any event the intention may have simply been to note the author as the originator of the story. Yet another review just simply states that this film is noteworthy in relation to other current movies for children of today:

And as “A Little Princess” tells of Sarah [sic] Crewe (Liesel Matthews), the schoolgirl who is separated from her beloved father and forced to fend for herself in a private school—as charmingly fanciful as the other sets here, and almost entirely green—it does what today’s usual children’s film forgets to accomplish. It revives the art of storytelling and truly captures the imagination.<sup>77</sup>

This review states the core storyline of a *LP*, the affects of the loss of a parent on a child and the experiences of the child at a cruel school, and these plot elements, by this reviewer’s accounts, is translated well. The movie versions of Burnett’s *LP* indicate that her story is well-worth maintaining for each generation of children.

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<sup>76</sup> Lynne Sharon Schwartz. “Ruining the Stories of One’s Dreams.” *New York Times*, 14 April 1996, H15.

<sup>77</sup> Janet Maslin. “The Return of a Princess.” *New York Times*, 4 August 1995, C10.

Burnett was admired, and still is, by the literary community as well as the general reading population. People wanted to honor her in a way that would represent her personality and love of children. Her son Vivian Burnett, the real-life little Lord Fauntleroy, gave his mother's notes from writing *The Secret Garden* to Public School 47, a school for the deaf in New York City, in January 1929. His mother had toured the school and donated money that allowed the school to procure a "garden painting." Vivian Burnett gave a speech at the graduation and spoke about "his mother's interest in children and of her efforts to make them happy, reading to the children a letter his mother had written to a child and telling them how she had written 'The Secret Garden.'<sup>78</sup>" Vivian also wrote a biography of his mother, *The Romantick Lady: The Life Story of an Imagination*, and this work was published in 1927 by one of his mother's publishers, Charles Scribner's Sons. A reviewer in *The Washington Post* wrote a glowing appraisal of Vivian's biography of his mother. "Mr. Burnett, with a marvelous restraint and deep understanding of the nature and life of his mother, has written a book which grips one from the first page to the last one. He has enriched it with anecdotes, reminiscent of famous characters associated with his mother, and a repressed but effective sentimental coloring."<sup>79</sup>

Both the biography and its review were products of the legend that surrounded Burnett and her literary legacy, and were based more on romantic remembrances than on any true sense of her literary merit. This early critical legacy was inevitable, for Vivian was a living link to the world his mother had created. Vivian was a well-loved icon,

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<sup>78</sup> "Burnett Memorabilia Present to School: Son Gives 'Secret Garden' Notes, Photographs, Painting and Book to Institution for Deaf." *New York Times*, 31 January 1929.

<sup>79</sup> E. E. P. "Son Writes Absorbing Book on Life of Famed Author of 'Little Lord Fauntleroy.'" *The Washington Post*, 25 September 1927, S10.

representing the perfect little boy, little Lord Fauntleroy, and therefore, besides being her son, had the authority to write a biography of Frances Hodgson Burnett. His tragic death in 1937 made the papers and he was honored and commemorated, not to the extent of his mother, but he was well remembered. “Vivian Burnett, the original “Little Lord Fauntleroy,” died today as he had lived—a stout-hearted ready-witted man of action.”<sup>80</sup> Burnett helped to rescue four people from a capsized sailboat and had a heart attack on the return trip to the Manhasset Bay Yacht Club.

It did not take long for the Fauntleroy Literary Society of Washington, D.C. to honor Vivian’s death. His mother’s popularity in the nation’s capital had grown out of long-time residency. His mother had made Washington, D.C. her home after leaving New Market, Tennessee, where she had lived since coming to the United States. She lived in Washington D.C. with her husband, Swan, and their two sons, Lionel and Vivian.<sup>81</sup> The meeting took place at Frances Hodgson Burnett’s former residence in Washington, D.C. where she wrote *Little Lord Fauntleroy*.<sup>82</sup> The Burnett family established Washington, D.C. as their residence in 1877 and Vivian had continued to make it his home when he was an adult, and it’s where he passed away.

But she was also honored by the nation’s publishing capital, where her connection with Scribner’s extended to nearly half a century. The Burnett Memorial Committee, in New York City, was formed after Frances Burnett’s death with the purpose of establishing a lasting tribute to the author. The committee was headed by the publisher Frederick W. Stokes with members which included Reginald Birch, illustrator

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<sup>80</sup> ““Lord Fauntleroy’ Burnett Dies After Saving 4 as Boat Upsets.” *The Washington Post*, 26 July 1937, 1.

<sup>81</sup> Gretchen Holbrook Gerzina. *Frances Hodgson Burnett: The Unexpected Life of the Author of The Secret Garden*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2004, 68.

<sup>82</sup> “Literary Society in D.C. To Memorialize Burnett.” *The Washington Post*, 30 July 1937, 13.

of *Sara Crewe*, Mary Pickford, the first on-screen Sara, and Charles Scribner, her publisher. The Committees' choice of tribute was a children's garden within Central Park.

It is to be constructed as a memorial to the late Frances Hodgson Burnett, the writer, by her friends and admirers and will occupy a site near the Conservatory Lake, which will give maximum accessibility for children.<sup>83</sup>

The garden was to be for the children, not only to enjoy, but to maintain as well. The Park Commissioner, Walter R. Herrick, alluded to the idea that the garden would “afford an object lesson in civic housekeeping.”<sup>84</sup> The plans for the garden were drawn up by Charles Downing Lay, a “landscape architect,” and were “approved by the city authorities [and] nature societies and those interested in child welfare.”<sup>85</sup> A 24 December 1927 *The Washington Post* article reported that there were problems proceeding with the garden memorial, which was to include a fountain as well.

The following year the sculptor, Bessie Potter Vonnoh, exhibited the model for the fountain in her studio at 33 West Sixty-Seventh Street. The fountain includes “a boy lying on a rock blowing a pipe and a girl standing near him, holding a bowl. The boy is piping to the birds and the girl is offering water to them.”<sup>86</sup> At the time of the *New York Times* article the Burnett Memorial Committee was still raising funds for the fountain. The garden and fountain were not ready for Central Park until 28 May 1937 due to planning and funding concerns. The garden was dedicated by New York mayor Fiorello La Guardia who “in behalf of ‘the children of New York,’ accepted... a bronze bird bath

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<sup>83</sup> “Children’s Garden as Burnett Tribute.” *New York Times*, 18 October 1926, 23.

<sup>84</sup> “This Garden Belongs to the Children: Mrs. Burnett’s Memorial in Central Park Will Also Be a Sanctuary for the City’s Birds.” *New York Times*, 4 December 1927, SM10.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>86</sup> “Shows ‘Fountain Girl’ For Burnet Garden.” *New York Times*, 24 December 1928.

created by Mrs. Bessie Potter Vonnoh as a memorial to Mrs. Frances Hodgson Burnett....”<sup>87</sup> The Park Commissioner Walter R. Herrick only had to defend the memorial against one writer, John Nicholas Bffel, in 1927 when Bffel blamed Burnett “for having caused ‘untold pain and sorrow’ to thousands of little boys” insisting that the author had “created the fashion of dressing little boys in velvet suits, lace collars and cuffs and long curls.”<sup>88</sup> Herrick responded to Bffel writing him that: “[i]t was a beautiful, wholesome piece of fiction, and if hysterical parents chose to inflict upon their children the fictional costume of Fauntleroy I think the blame should be placed on them and not on Mrs. Burnett.”<sup>89</sup> Even Mayor La Guardia in his dedication of the memorial in 1937 recollected the incident in which his mother made him a “Lord Fauntleroy suit” which he was made “to wear...when he played in the local children’s orchestra.” Although he did not like wearing the suit he stated that he “enjoyed reading the book, very much.”<sup>90</sup> The Burnett Memorial Garden and its fountain of the two children are still a presence in Central Park. In 1999 Susan Jacoby wrote for the *New York Times* that:

The garden is maintained so meticulously that it conjures up vision of a huge work force—the equivalent of the small army of laborers visible in the great public gardens of London and Paris. Yet there are only four gardeners, supplemented by volunteers who give a least one day a week (and often more) in every season except the dead of winter.<sup>91</sup>

All of these extra-textual artifacts have boosted Burnett’s staying power, but ironically they focus on her other two children’s books. Yet it is the third tale, *LP*, that offers the most to learn about Burnett’s evolving skills as a storyteller. Chapter three will

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<sup>87</sup> “Mayor Dedicates Bird Bath in Park: Memorial to Mrs. Burnett is Placed on Greenhouse Site in a ‘Hidden Garden.’” *New York Times*, 29 May 1937, 21.

<sup>88</sup> “Park Commissioner Defends ‘Fauntleroy: Tells Objector to the Burnett Memorial That It was ‘Wholesome Fiction.’” *New York Times*, 23 December 1927, 35.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>90</sup> “Mayor Dedicates Bird Bath in Park: Memorial to Mrs. Burnett is Placed on Greenhouse Site in a ‘Hidden Garden.’” *New York Times*, 29 May 1937, 21.

<sup>91</sup> Susan Jacoby. “Almost Secret, Always Serene.” *New York Times*, 7 May 1999, E29.



explore the now-classic Sara Crewe narrative arc by analyzing all the variant texts, including *SC*'s, *LP*'s Scribner (American) and F. Warne (British) editions that were published in 1888 and 1905. Analysis of the transitional dramatic form of the text is more problematic. The Samuel French publication of the play will be used instead of originals used by actors and directors during production in 1902 and 1903 since these could not be located. Since the *St. Nicholas* text was closely followed for the 1888 *SC* text, it will not be examined as distinct amongst the publication history or used for analysis of the progression of the text. Taken together, these principal texts reveal a multiple-genre approach to extending prose narrative—a technique that Burnett uses to great and lasting effect in creating *LP*, but one that she would never attempt again.

### Chapter III

*Sara Crewe*, which Frances had finished before leaving Washington, was just what her public wanted. The child Sara is as charming and admirable a character as Lord Fauntleroy. Like him, she was ‘wise old-fashioned thoughts’ and like him she is a real child, original and individual. Where Cedric was undoubtedly Vivian, Sara was undoubtedly Frances herself.

-Ann Thwaite, *Waiting for the Party*

A story does not necessarily end on the last page or with the words “the end.” Fiction, both long and short, often has another story to tell—the story of publication, revision, and further publication. The revised work maintains similarities and qualities of the previous work but, in the case of Burnett and her variations on *Sara Crewe*, many more details were introduced as the novella *Sara Crewe* was transformed into a play and novel. When working on *A Little Princess*, after the success of the play, Burnett said the following about her additions to Sara’s story, noting that she wanted:

...a nice detail-y book. ...Children love detail. The garret and Melchisedec & Becky & Ermengarde are *so* nice. And Sara standing on the old table with her head & body out of the skylight watching the clouds making islands & lakes at sunset & feeling as if she could climb up purple piles of cloud hills & gaze out upon primrose seas—ought to give you a quite queer uplifted feeling.<sup>92</sup>

Burnett seems to have relished the opportunity to tell more of Sara’s story and explore more of the “hidden” details she brought to light in the novel version. Sara’s character does not change through each version of her story—she remains good-natured, strong-willed, optimistic, and caring throughout each transformation. Although she does not change, the reader gets to experience more of Sara’s life at Miss Minchin’s, including her fall from prosperity and the restoration of her fortune.

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<sup>92</sup>Gretchen Holbrook Gerzina. *Frances Hodgson Burnett: The Unexpected Life of the Author of The Secret Garden*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2004, 238.

It is important to record and discuss the differences and similarities between not only the different published forms but also the British and American versions of each work in order to understand the possible reasons why an author would change her work after initial publication. In order to evaluate the differences and similarities in the texts in a comprehensive manner, two kinds of textual comparisons were made. First, a collation between the British and American publications provides a record of the styling, corrections, and minor revisions made by editors on both sides of the Atlantic. Second, a plot collation between all three texts which accounts for Burnett's additions and expansions of Sara's story. Below is an outline that illustrates the process of collating the texts.

A. Editorial Variants

1. Substantive edits: Changes to the story
  - a. Between Scribner and Warne's *Sara Crewe*
  - b. Between Scribner and Warne's *A Little Princess*
2. Copy-edits: Changes to style
  - a. Between Scribner and Warne's *Sara Crewe*
  - b. Between Scribner and Warne's *A Little Princess*

B. Authorial Variants

1. Differences, Consistency, and Expansion between Scribner's *Sara Crewe*, "A Little Princess," and Scribner's *A Little Princess*
2. Sara's story expanded by increments based on type of publication, public opinion, and Burnett's desire to tell more of the story
  - a. Novella version *Sara Crewe* gives "basic" story of Sara
  - b. "A Little Princess," the play, written by Burnett due to her popularity as a children's author.
  - c. *A Little Princess*, the novel, was written after the success of the play and by the prompting of Burnett's publisher Scribner's.

Editorial variants can be of the nature that alters the meaning of the text, substantive edits, and those that show a difference between the texts but do not change the meaning between the two versions, copy-edit variants. Authorial variants refer to differences between the genre forms and, in this case, between British and American publications of

each genre form. In order to note the changes in the story between each version of the story a plot collation was performed only with the Scribner publications, since the Scribner editions were published before the Warne editions and Burnett might have had a hand in corrections and alterations with these publications. Also, since the editorial variants will identify substantive variants between the texts, if a Warne publication alters the original Scribner meaning then this can be noted when discussing the plot differences.

### Editorial Variants

The copy-edits or styling variants between Scribner’s *Sara Crewe* and Warne’s *Sara Crewe* are variations between spelling and punctuation. Both publishers use spelling conventions connected with their usage of the English language. For instance in Warne “ou” is seen in words like colour and favourite, where in the Scribner edition the words would be color and favorite. Below is a table that lists the most frequent spelling differences between the two editions and the number of times that it is seen in the texts.

<b>Scribner</b>	<b>Warne</b>	<b>Number of times in texts</b>
Parlor	Parlour	9
School-room	Schoolroom	5
any one	Anyone	4
Afterward	Afterwards	5
Color	Colour	3
Some one	Someone	2
Garret-window	Garret window	2

The other notable difference in spelling is the American “z” and the British “s” in words like cozily/ cosily and sympathized/ sympathised. Included in spelling variants is the compound word. For the most part where Scribner hyphenates two words, Warne either makes them two separate words or combines the words without a hyphen. For example in the Scribner text the word “school-room” is “schoolroom” in Warne and when in

Scribner the words are “some one” in Warne it is combined to be one word, “someone.” The majority of these instances see the British version making the two words into one word. The exceptions are “garret window” and “cellar window,” which are both hyphenated in the Scribner version and “cocoa-nut,” which is one word in Scribner. Of course the meaning of the texts do not change due to the differences in spelling—Sara’s story still remains the same, in this respect, when spelling is changed to fit the convention of the publisher.

The 1905 publications have the same spelling variations and the same conventions of compounding words as the 1888. Again, the chart below only shows the different spellings that occur most often.

Scribner	Warne	Number of times in texts
Color	Colour	14
Gray	Grey	13
Parlor	Parlour	4
Up-stairs	Upstairs	10
School-room	Schoolroom	34
Down-stairs	Downstairs	16
Favorite	Favourite	6
Realized	Realised	10
Colored	Coloured	7
Diamond-mines	Diamond mines	23
Dare say	Daresay	4
Honor	Honour	3

Since Scribner’s was Burnett’s primary publisher and the Warne publications were set from the first American edition, it is important to discover if Warne altered any of Burnett’s original meaning in her text. The editorial variants between the American and British publications of *Sara Crewe* and *A Little Princess* show that Warne was not

interested in altering Burnett's text, only stylizing it to match British conventions. The Warne publication only changed the aesthetics of the text, not Burnett's story.

### Authorial Variants

The three versions of Sara's story give readers a glimpse into Burnett's writing process; a process that reveals Sara Crewe's ordeals and triumphs in stages by adding and elaborating on the original novella. In order to view the similarities, differences, and elaborations from one stage to the next it is necessary to perform a collation of the three versions, this time for author's revisions instead of substantive edits and copy-edits. Each stage tells a little more of Sara's story, still remaining true to the original *Sara Crewe*. Burnett uses the play and *A Little Princess* to round out the narrative from the earlier novella by adding more details about the school, Sara, Sara's friends and adversaries. But this expansion led inevitably to the introduction of more characters. *SC* does not have the detail and full cast of characters that is seen in the play and *LP*. Thus the play, "A Little Princess," becomes an important stepping stone between *SC* and *LP*. Although drama is a different genre than of prose fiction than novella and novel, it allows Burnett to create additions for her original and show her audience what Sara's life is like at Miss Minchin's. Burnett uses the changes she instituted in the play to add more depth of character, imagination, and complexity of plot to *LP*, and in the process, to give her audience more aspects of the story.

In order to better understand the evolution of the three versions, and where and how they deviate from the original even as they maintain the core of the original story, it is important to first look at the cast of characters for all three. Understanding the characters and the roles they play within each version leads to a better understanding of

Burnett's writing process and her alterations. The cast of characters of all three versions is listed below in alphabetical order. Also listed next to each of the characters is the story, or stories, that they play a role in.

### Cast of Characters

Name	<i>SC</i>	<i>LP Play</i>	<i>LP Novel</i>
Lascar (later Ram Dass, Carrisford's servant)	X		
Anne (beggar child)	X		X
Boris (dog)	X		X
Brown, Mrs. (baker woman)	X		X
Cook (at Miss Minchin's)	X		X
Carmichael, Mazie (member of large family)		X	
Lascars (help with attic transformation)		X	
Lilly (pupil)		X	
Barrow, Mr. (of Barrow & Skipworth)		X	X
Becky (scullery maid)		X	X
Carmichael, Donald (member of large family)		X	X
Carmichael, Janet (member of large family)		X	X
Carmichael, Nora (member of large family)		X	X
Herbert, Lavinia (pupil)		X	X
Jessie (pupil)		X	X
Last Doll (Sara's birthday present)		X	X
Legh, Lottie (pupil)		X	X
Melchisedec (rat)		X	X
Ram Dass (Carrisford's servant)		X	X
Carew, Emily (from Madame Pascal's school)			X
Dufarge, Monsieur (French teacher)			X
Eliza (Ermengarde's aunt)			X
Grange, Colonel (from India)			X
Grange, Isobel (from India)			X
Lady Meredith (recommends Sara to Miss Minchin)			X
Mariette (Sara's French maid)			X
Pascal, Madame (head of Parisian girls' seminar)			X
Secretary (to Carrisford)			X
Carmichael, Mr. (lawyer/ father of large family)	X	X	X
Carmichael, Mrs. (mother of large family)	X	X	X
Carrisford, Mr. (Indian gentleman)	X	X	X
Crewe, Ralph (Sara's father)	X	X	X
Crewe, Sara (main character)	X	X	X
Emily (Sara's doll)	X	X	X
Minchin, Amelia (teacher at Miss Minchin's and her sister)	X	X	X
Minchin, Maria (head of seminar)	X	X	X
Monkey (Carrisford's pet)	X	X	X
St. John, Ermengard (pupil)	X	X	X

Examining the characters facilitates the discussion of the differences in the storyline between the versions—the focus of the narrative shifts, is maintained, or strengthened by

the characters that Sara interacts with, may they be friend, foe, doll, or animal. Therefore, the evolving record of characters act as a guide, or a road map—a tool to use and come back to in order to explore the relationship of the texts to one another. Below is a chart of the characters organized by their relationship to Sara and also by their status of adult, child, animal, or doll.

	Child	Adult	Animal	Doll	Adversary	Friend	Neutral
Anne	X						X
Barrow		X					X
Becky	X					X	
Boris			X			X	
Brown		X				X	
Carew, Emily	X						X
Carmichael, Mr.		X				X	
Carmichael, Mrs.		X				X	
Carmichael, Donald	X					X	
Carmichael, Mazie	X					X	
Carmichael, Janet	X					X	
Carmichael, Nora	X					X	
Carrisford		X				X	
Cook		X			X		
Crewe, Ralph		X				X	
Dufarge		X				X	
Eliza		X					X
Emily				X		X	
Grange, Colonel		X					X
Grange, Isobel	X						X
Herbert, Lavinia	X				X		
Jessie	X						X
Lady Meredith		X					X
Lascar/ Ram Dass		X				X	
Lascars		X					X
Last Doll				X			X
Legh, Lotti	X					X	
Lilly	X						X
Mariette		X				X	
Melchisedec			X			X	
Minchin, Amelia		X			X	X*	
Minchin, Maria		X			X		
Monkey			X			X	
Pascal		X					X



Secretary		X					X
St. John, Ermengard	X					X	

\* Amelia is not mean like her sister Miss Minchin, but nevertheless does not protect or stand up for Sara.

By surveying the pantheon of characters we can observe the relationships with and connections to Sara throughout the three versions. Of the thirteen children listed, five are considered neutral—ones that either do not interact with Sara or cannot be divided into the category of friend or adversary—seven are Sara’s friends, and one is an adversary. One of the five neutrals, Jessie, is not an adversary like her friend Lavinia, but since she is not outwardly unkind to Sara and does not defend her against Lavinia she is considered a neutral character. A similarity can be seen in Miss Minchin and her sister Amelia. Amelia is listed in both categories because she has an impact on Sara’s life more than someone in the neutral category but again does not protect Sara from Miss Minchin’s cruelties. Amelia and Miss Minchin are two of the three adults, of eighteen total, that are classified as adversaries, the other is the cook who takes out her frustrations on Sara.

The majority of the characters are friends, or friendly, with Sara whether they are children or adults. Included in the friend category are the animals that Sara befriends or makes into companions. Boris and the monkey are specifically pets and Melchisedec, a rat who lives in the attic wall, is an animal that Sara names and finds comfort in imagining what his life is like along with his rat family.

Sara’s doll, Emily, is included as a friend as well because she becomes Sara’s confidant even though she is inanimate. Although Sara does have friends, even after her ascent to the attic, she feels she can only share her solace, openly, with Emily. Emily’s status as confidant and friend may stem from the fact that, in each version, her dad purchases Emily before he heads back to India. Even though she receives presents from him after he departs, Emily is associated with the last time Sara sees her father.

Even though Sara does maintain friendships throughout her ordeal, her life is made unbearable by two characters and the two, Amelia and Jessie, who do not speak out against the behavior. Lavinia and Miss Minchin—from their two different power advantages, one as child instigator, and the other the adult who has the ultimate authority—create an environment in which Sara, is not only belittled and ridiculed, but one in which she must arduously work to receive a pitiful amount of food and rest.

The next step in examining the list of characters is to look for significance in the patterns of appearance. All of the characters that begin in *SC* are seen in the play and/ or the *LP*. The four characters that are seen in *SC* and the *LP* but not in the play are Anne, the beggar child outside the bakery, Mrs. Brown, the baker, Boris the dog that Carrisford gives Sara as a gift, and the cook. The scene with Sara at the bakery is not in the play at all. In terms of dramatic tension, the cook is the most significant omission from the play. Sara's room, in the attic, is next to the cook's room in *SC* and in the *LP* the cook is another of Sara's adversaries since the cook is a higher rank servant and takes out her frustrations on Sara. However, this clear progression in tension as the tale grew from story to novel is interrupted by the dramatic adaptation, where genre limitations affect the way the story is told. In spite of the limitations of the stage, dramatic adaptation also forces a new perspective on the author as she rewrites. The shift in perspective is easy to understand—the book versions are an example of Burnett telling her story and the play is a chance for her to actually show the story. Since the play is a dramatic retelling of a story and is limited to stage time and stage space, it is understandable not all characters or scenes can be reproduced in Burnett's play version. Nevertheless, in its larger elements

the play is still true to Burnett's vision of Sara's story since she was the one to write the stage version as well.

There are only three characters that make their first appearance in the play who are not also in the *LP*: Mazie Carmichael, the lascars, and Lilly. Mazie Carmichael is one of the children of the "large family," the lascars help decorate Sara's attic room, and Lilly is a pupil of the school. Although the three characters are not carried on to the *LP* there are characters that take their place, so to speak. The "large family" children—a pet name given by Sara to the Carmichael family due to the number of children, still have a large presence in the *LP*, the lascars are replaced by Carrisford's personal secretary who assists Ram Dass with Sara's room, and there are other pupils from the school who take on a more prominent role than Lilly did in the play. The dramatic version is a visual representation of Burnett's tale and therefore the addition of some characters may help to show the audience the significance of a particular scene. Of the three characters excluded in the other two versions, it is the unnamed group of lascars that hold the most importance for the visual representation, or showing the audience versus the telling that the readers of the written tales experience. The lascars not only carry out the physical alteration of Sara's room they also represent Sara's past in India. So they not only push the play forward by changing Sara's room and thus continuing the plot, they are also the native Indians that she would have encountered as a small child.

The next group includes the characters that appear first in the play and continue to make an appearance in the *LP*. This set of characters alters the original in a more profound way than the other inclusions. Becky, the scullery maid, is added first in the play as the servant girl whom Sara befriends. They become friends after Sara's

transformation and her move to the room next to Becky's in the attic. In the *LP* Sara takes a friendly interest in Becky before her move to the attic. After Sara's change of status she and Becky become a support system for one another, for no one else can understand the drudgery and servitude that the two girls endure.

The inclusion of Lavinia creates a situation where Sara has, not necessarily an enemy, but an adversary who does not like Sara's popularity while a "parlor boarder," or her unassuming behavior after she is made a servant. Lavinia, Sara's foil, is jealous of the attention Sara receives from the other pupils or Miss Minchin—of course the attention from the girls and Miss Minchin is given for different reasons. The pupils like Sara for her good nature, her willingness to share her things, and her ability to tell a good story. Miss Minchin is only interested in the tuition she receives from Sara's father, this is why when Sara's fortune is lost Miss Minchin sees no use in being nice to her any longer—it no longer is advantageous. Lavinia in turn continues to be unpleasant and unkind with hopes that Sara will ruin her reputation as being the kind and perfect girl.

Lottie Legh, the youngest of Miss Minchin's students, attaches herself to Sara in both the play and the *LP*. Lottie, like Sara, lost her mother but unlike Sara tends to use this fact to manipulate others to give in to her wishes. Sara has Lottie pretend that Sara is her mother; this seems to give comfort to both girls where one can receive attention and love and the other can enjoy looking after another and also receive affection. Sara used to look after her father in India after her mother died and the opportunity to take care of Lottie seems to fill this gap for Sara since being separated from her father.

Melchisedec is the new animal character added to this grouping. Although rats are mentioned in *SC* they are not anthropomorphized until the play. Sara names the rat in her

attic room Melchisedec and creates a persona for him, in hopes of minimizing the despair over her situation. In having a relationship with the rat, where the rat receives Sara's crumbs and Sara finds comfort in thinking about his life as a rat, Sara can deal with the dismal surroundings in her room and imagine a tale around her life in the attic.

Melchisedec cannot reject Sara like some of the human characters and therefore can be unconditional with his acceptance of the little girl—to continue the idea of anthropomorphosis, at least partially, by this analogy.

The remaining characters in this last grouping are important to the story but do not have the same effect as the addition of Becky, Lavinia, and Mechisedec. Mr. Barrow brings the news to Miss Minchin of Captain Crewe's death, the three Carmichael children that are named not only amuse the ailing Mr. Carrisford but are also a part of the large family that Sara daydreams about, Jessie makes a nice counterpart to Miss Amelia as Lavinia's friend, and the Last Doll signifies, in a physical manner, the change in Sara's life. The Last Doll is the last present bought by Sara's father for her birthday, but it all too soon becomes a part of her lost and irrecoverable past because Sara cannot keep it since Captain Crewe did not pay the bill. The inclusion and loss of the Last Doll as a character magnifies the importance placed on Sara's doll Emily and the connection she has with her before and after her father's death.

The last group includes the nine characters that are not introduced until *LP*: Emily Carew, Monsieur Dufarge, Eliza, Colonel Grange, Isobel Grange, Lady Meredith, Mariette, Madame Pascal, and Carrisford's secretary. The addition of new characters adds depth to the final version—there are more characters in the *LP* than the other two versions. Of the nine new characters in the *LP*, three are introduced to the action of the

story and the other six are mentioned in passing. Monsieur Dufarge is the French teacher for the older students of the school, Mariette is Sara's French maid, and Carrisford's secretary aids Ram Dass in transforming Sara's attic room. The other six add to the texture of the story but their action takes place behind the scenes. Emily Carew is the little girl from Madame Pascal's French school who Mr. Carmichael, at first, thinks may be Sara. Eliza, Ermengarde's aunt, is mentioned by Ermengarde's father out of frustration regarding his daughter's intelligence; this aunt is apparently not very smart. Sara thinks of Isobel, Colonel Grange's daughter, and her beauty when Sara's appearances are mentioned. Lady Meredith's, an acquaintance of Captain Crewe, girls attended Miss Minchin's school and because Captain Crewe thought highly of the Lady Sara was sent to the school as well.

The successive variations in the cast of characters is a significant aspect of these versions, and these changes can help illustrate the continuities as well as the new stages of creativity that span the evolution of the text. The categorization of characters now becomes a useful catalyst to analyze the plots for each version. Each genre form acts as a layer to be placed onto each subsequent version to create a more detailed look into Sara Crewe's life and experiences.

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It is important to first look at brief synopses of the three versions of Sara's story to understand the basic plot points and then following the brief synopses is a more in-depth synopsis of the Sara Crewe storyline as seen through the three different versions, which examines the similarities and alterations that Burnett maintained throughout Sara's narratives or included or elaborated upon.

## SC Synopsis

Burnett begins *SC* with Sara and Captain Crewe arriving at Miss Minchin's seminary. Sara's dad prepares her for her life at the school by buying her new clothes and a new doll. After her father leaves to return to India Sara's status at the school is as Miss Minchin's "favorite pupil." After a bad business deal, Sara's father passes away and she is left without an inheritance or legal guardian. Miss Minchin makes Sara a servant in the school, which includes errands and odd jobs and helping the younger students with their French. After Miss Minchin informs Sara of her new status as a servant she is also told that her room is now in the attic next to the cook.

Sara does not have any friends before her fall, a factor that focuses the importance of human connection and interaction on her doll Emily. Much is made of the importance of Emily and Sara's affection and reliance on the doll. Sara does gain one friendship with the pupil Ermengarde, who is not very bright or perceptive. Sara and Ermengarde bond over books that the latter's father sent to her and expected her to read. The two decide that Sara will read the books and retell the events of the books to Ermengarde in a way in which she'll be able to retain the information.

On one of her errands Sara finds some money in the street and decides to buy some bread from the bakery and ends up sharing them with a beggar girl who is sitting outside the shop. On her way back to the seminary Sara imagines about Miss Minchin's neighbors, including the "Large family," so named due to the number of members, and the Indian gentleman and his servant. The next day Sara wakes to find that her dingy little attic room has been transformed. Each night there are new additions to her room that make it comfortable and lavish for an attic room. On one occasion the Indian gentleman's

pet monkey escapes to Sara's room and Sara returns the pet to the next-door neighbor. The Indian gentleman asks to see Sara and it is discovered that he has been looking for her, his British friend's daughter, since he felt such guilt regarding the business venture that caused Captain Crewe to think his old friend (the Indian gentleman) had lost all of his money. The business was successful and Mr. Carrisford, the Indian gentleman, has been searching for Sara to return her fortune to her and to redeem himself from any cowardice he had shown in dealing with the Captain before his death.

### Play Synopsis

The play begins with a birthday party for Sara and the elaborate preparations that have been made for the celebration. The pupils interact before the party begins and all talk is about Sara, her background, and the party that is to come. Miss Minchin makes a great fuss over Sara and Sara in turn is very sweet natured in responding to the remarks made and the fuss over her birthday. Sara asks that Becky, the scullery-maid, get to stay to watch the festivities. This is an important plot point since Becky remains hidden in the room when the party is interrupted by the news of Captain Crewe's death. A representative from Barrow & Skipworth talks with Miss Minchin in the party room that has been vacated on Miss Minchin's orders and Becky, who did not have time to get out before Miss Minchin and the gentleman arrived, is the first to hear the news of Captain Crewe's death. Miss Minchin is furious over the loss of income from Sara's father and orders Sara to come before her. Sara is told that she will be a servant at the school, which will include teaching the younger pupils French, and will be moved to the attic next to Becky's room.



The attic room opens the next act of the play with Ram Dass, the Indian servant next door, peaking into the room. It has been decided by servant's master to transform Sara's room. Measurements are taken of the room while Sara is out and plans made to bring in the new items for the transformation. Sara returns to her room and the audience sees that she is talking with a rat she's named Melchisedec. Sara is upset that Emily, her doll, cannot be a better companion. Ermengarde and Lottie, friends of Sara's before her change of status, remain her friends afterwards and visit her in her attic room. Ermengarde receives books from her father and Sara agrees that she will read them and tell Ermengarde in way that she'll be able to retain the information.

Ermengarde, Sara, and Becky pretend to have a grand feast in Sara's room with a hamper of food that Ermengarde has been sent and wishes to share with the hungry attic dwellers. Miss Minchin surprises them all when she enters during their little party. Miss Minchin punishes them all, in varying degrees of severity. The next morning Sara wakes up to find that her room has been transformed.

The start of act three opens in Mr. Carrisford's house with the children of the "large family" attempting to cheer the gentleman up. Their father, Mr. Carmichael, is Mr. Carrisford's attorney and, as in *SC*, has been attempting to find the missing daughter of Captain Crewe who, shortly before his death, thought his fortunes were lost in a diamond mine venture he took up with his friend Mr. Carrisford in India. Sara enters the scene to return Mr. Carrisford's pet monkey that escaped to her room the night before. Mr. Carrisford asks Sara to tell him her story since his interest has been peaked by her knowledge of India. Sara explains what happened after her father's death and Mr. Carrisford realizes that she is the child he's been searching for. Mrs. Carmichael, the

mother of the “large family,” comes over to help explain the situation to Sara. As in *SC*, Miss Minchin is horrified to find out that she has lost Sara, in her renewed status in regaining her fortune, as a pupil, for she will be remaining with Mr. Carrisford. At the end it is arranged that Becky will also come to live with Mr. Carrisford but still in her role as a servant.

### *LP* Synopsis

*LP* keeps the majority of the plot additions and character introductions that Burnett incorporated into the play. *LP* begins with Sara and her father traveling to Miss Minchin’s seminary. Sara and her father Captain Crewe meet Miss Minchin upon their arrival at the school. At this time Sara already gets the feeling that Miss Minchin is not a truthful lady and only tells people what they want to hear especially if it will be a benefit to her. Sara and her father go shopping for clothes and a doll, Emily, before he returns to India.

*LP* has a description of Sara’s first day in class with the other pupils, which is not seen in *SC* or in the play version. Her first day of class is not only described but we also see her interact with fellow classmates and her teachers, Miss Minchin and Monsieur Dufarge. After class Sara and Ermengarde meet for the first time, establishing their friendship from the beginning of Sara’s stay at the seminary.

Ten years pass (instead of the one year presented in *SC*) before Sara’s life is altered in *LP* by the death of her father and the loss of her fortune. During this time Sara is treated almost like a “distinguished guest” than a pupil. It is more firmly established that not all the students like Sara, particularly Lavinia who is jealous of the attention Sara receives. There are many students who admire Sara, including the youngest pupil, Lottie,

who attaches herself to Sara as a surrogate mother figure. Sara is the only person at the school who can help control Lottie's tantrums.

Becky, the scullery-made, is introduced in this version of the story when she is caught listening to a story Sara is telling the other girls. The first occasion the two girls meet is in Sara's room where Becky has fallen asleep out of exhaustion from all her chores. Sara decides that she'll tell Becky a little bit of a story each time they meet in her room.

Sara receives letters from her father in India in *LP*; one particular letter tells Sara about the diamond mines and the old friend he has become reacquainted with who will make him a partner in the mines. Sara and her friends find all of this fascinating and of course Lavinia is again jealous of anything that elevates Sara in the eyes of the other girls, prompting her to make disparaging remarks about the whole affair. Sara also receives another letter from her father establishing that he hasn't been feeling well.

Sara's birthday party festivities are kept in this version of Sara's story just as they were established in the play. Before the party starts Sara opens a present Becky has left for her in her room. Again, as in the play, Sara asks that Becky get to stay for the party and Miss Minchin grudgingly agrees. Miss Minchin makes a great fuss over Sara, probably her most lucrative pupil, before presents can be opened and cake cut. Mr. Barrow comes in the middle of the party to tell Miss Minchin that Captain Crewe has passed away and that all of his money was lost in the diamond mine venture. As in the play, Becky cannot exit the room fast enough before Miss Minchin returns with Mr. Barrow. Miss Minchin tells her sister, Amelia, to stop the party and have Sara come to

her immediately. Miss Minchin informs Sara of her change in roles and that she'll be a servant at the school and live in the attic next to Becky's room.

After Sara's change in fortune it is established that the friendship with Ermengarde will remain intact even though there are not many opportunities for the two girls to talk. Lottie too still likes Sara but does not understand Sara's new life, Lottie still thinks of her as the old Sara and treats her the same. Sara's other "friend," the rat Melchisedec, is again included in *LP* with more detail in Sara's interactions with the animal than in the play. Another distraction for Sara is the "large family" who are Miss Minchin's neighbors. Sara imagines and pretends what their lives must be like and gives them names. On one occasion when Sara is out one of the children of the "large family," the one she's named Guy Clarence, gives her his Christmas money because she looked hungry. Guy Clarence's siblings don't think Sara could be a beggar because of how she acted and how she talked, which makes them intrigued over her circumstances. Sara's doll Emily still plays a role as confidant even when Sara is frustrated that the doll cannot really act in this role and talk with her, which she so desperately wants.

The Indian gentleman and his servant, Ram Dass, move in next door to Miss Minchin's. The Indian gentleman's pet monkey escapes to Sara's room and Sara allows Ram Dass to come across to her room to retrieve the pet. There is a conversation between Mr. Carrisford, the Indian gentleman, and Mr. Carmichael, the father of the "large family" regarding the former's ill health and the search for a lost girl.

On one of Sara's outings she finds some money in the street and buys some buns from a bakery and decides to share them with the beggar girl outside the shop. This scene is also in *SC*. On the way back to Miss Minchin's Sara watches the "large family" and the

commotion made by the father apparently leaving on a trip. The father is off to look for the little lost girl that was talked about earlier with Mr. Carrisford. While Sara is out Ram Dass and Mr. Carrisford's secretary take notes and measurements of Sara's room.

Ermengarde receives books from her father and it is decided that Sara will read them and then tell Ermengarde the information in a way she'll be able to remember. It is on this occasion that Ermengarde realizes how hungry both Sara and Becky are and decides to share a hamper of food that was a gift. The girls decide to make a party of the occasion and Sara and Becky prepare Sara's room for the event. Of course much imagination and pretending must go into the preparation. Miss Minchin catches the girls and punishes them. When Sara wakes up the next morning she finds her room has been transformed. New things are added each day and more food is left for both Sara and Becky. Sara even receives a package of clothing that instructs that she is to wear the new clothes and new ones will be provided when needed.

Mr. Carmichael has returned without the little girl, to the great disappointment of Mr. Carrisford. During this visit Sara has come to return the pet monkey who has escaped to her room again. Mr. Carrisford asks Sara to tell her story and it is discovered that she is the little lost girl he has been trying to find. Mrs. Carmichael, the mother of the "large family" comes over to explain the details to Sara. Miss Minchin comes over thinking that Sara is being an impudent servant by forcing herself on Mr. Carrisford. Miss Minchin discovers that Sara will not be returning to the school and tries to convince Sara to return to the school. Becky will also be coming to live with Mr. Carrisford but of course still as a servant. The book ends, like *SC*, by Sara and Mr. Carrisford returning to the bakery.

Sara wishes to pay for bread for hungry children that the bakery woman may have at her shop.

### In-Depth Synopsis of Sara Crewe Storyline

Now that chronological synopses have been laid out the next section will discuss the timeline of Sara's story by interlacing the versions to get a better picture of how Burnett maintained, altered, or expanded her work each subsequent time. *SC* begins with Sara and her father arriving at Miss Minchin's school. In *LP* Burnett sets the scene more vividly before having Sara and her father reach the school house. There is a description of their trip from India to England, an account of why Sara is coming to live in England while her father will return to India, and a sketch of how Sara is different from other little girls. All of these expository expansions by Burnett help readers understand the emotions that Sara and her father are experiencing on coming to England. But the play, written between the story and the novel versions, begins *in medias res* with Sara's birthday party and the interactions between the other girls at the school. The birthday party does not occur in *SC* and does not happen in *LP* until page seventy-two. The party in the play is an excellent scene to begin, for it introduces many characters at one time to the audience and also establishes several plot points. This new scene is beneficial to the cohesiveness and advancement of the story, but it also serves to engage a viewing audience and overcome the challenge of showing events rather than telling them as in a written story.

The events in *SC* move quickly in comparison to the longer *LP*. By page twelve in *SC* Sara's father has passed away and the readers learn about a business deal in India that has gone wrong. In both the play and the *LP* Sara finds out about the death of her father during her grandiose birthday celebrations—the juxtaposition of these two events

illustrates the extreme divergence of Sara's life after her father's death. The length of time between Sara's arrival and her change in fortune is also different between the two book versions. In *SC* Sara is eight years old when she arrives and a year passes before the death of her father. The *LP* starts with Sara arriving at Miss Minchin's at the age of seven and a much longer time span, ten years, lapses until the news of her father.

The *LP* spends the seventy-one pages prior to explore Sara's interactions with the other pupils of the school and in general delve into the details of life "left out" of *SC*. For example, in the *LP* there is a scene in the school room in which Miss Minchin misunderstands Sara's intentions on learning French. Sara tries to tell Miss Minchin she can already speak French and does not need the beginner French book. Sara must wait until Monsieur Dufarge, the French teacher, arrives to explain herself, which she does in French. In *SC* the reader finds out Sara can speak French when she is made a servant and part of her duties will be to help with the younger pupils' French class. It is also in the *LP* that Burnett reveals that the reason she can speak French so well is that her mother, who died when she was a baby, was French. Burnett does mention that Sara spoke French with her father in *SC* but no explanation is given to why they did so.

The addition of the scullery maid, Becky, exemplifies the dichotomy that exists between Sara and the servants, including Becky, before and even after Sara becomes a servant. Becky is inserted into the story for the play and continues her role in the *LP*. In both the play and the *LP* Becky is treated kindly by Sara before the death of Captain Crewe. Sara and Becky become closer and develop a friendship after Sara is made a servant. Becky is the first child, although not a pupil of the school, who finds out about Captain Crewe's death. Sara continues to treat people well and also maintains her studies

and therefore still stands apart from the other servants even while being one—this is not to say that all of the servants of the house act poorly but Sara’s carriage is different from the others. When Mr. Barrow comes to inform Miss Minchin of the death, Becky has to hide under a table because she does not have time to leave the party room, which has been cleared of students attending the party.

In all three versions Sara’s encounter with Miss Minchin, after the news of Captain Crewe has been revealed, is the same. Miss Minchin feels that she is being magnanimous by continuing to keep Sara on as a servant and does not understand why Sara will not thank her for the kindness. Sara does not agree with Miss Minchin and the supposed favor shown to her—she will not thank someone who has behaved so ill toward her.

In *SC* Sara’s new room is up in the attic next to the cook’s room. In the play and the *LP* Sara’s room is still in the attic but it is now next to Becky’s room. This allows the audience to see more interaction between Sara and the other children in the house, both servants and students. Sara and Becky talk up in the attic and Sara’s friends come to visit her in the sad little room. This expanded view of Sara’s dramatically reduced circumstances offers a major advance of dramatic effect for both the play and the novel—a reader or audience member can see the stark contrast between Sara’s life before and after by getting a glimpse of Sara’s room.

Ermengarde, a pupil, appears in all three versions as a foil to Sara in terms of her intelligence and appearance. In all other respects she and Sara are quite comfortable and content with their friendship. Ermengarde is portrayed as a chubby little girl who is not very smart but sweet in personality. In *SC* none of the pupils visit Sara up in the attic,



including Ermengarde but this is changed in the play and the *LP*. Ermengarde visits Sara and continues to be friends when Sara is made a servant. In all of the versions Ermengarde is distraught over books her father has sent her to read. Since Sara loves to read she comes up with the plan that she will read the books and then tell Ermengarde, in story form, what happens in each one. This plan is hatched, in the play and *LP* and in *SC* when Sara comes across Ermengarde crying, one evening when Ermengarde has come to visit and finds both Becky and Sara quite hungry. Ermengarde fetches a hamper of food that she has received and shares it with the two other girls. They pretend it's a grand party they are attending when Miss Minchin interrupts their festivities. Becky and Ermengarde are sent to their rooms and both Sara and Becky must go without food the next day for their punishment.

*SC* and the *LP* include a scene with a beggar girl and a baker woman that is cut from the play but restored in *LC*. Sara finds some money on one of her errands and decides she will buy some warm buns since she is so desperately hungry. On her way into the shop she stumbles on a beggar girl huddled up on the steps. The baker woman, Mrs. Brown, is taken with Sara that she decides to give her two additional buns (total six). Sara notices how hungry the beggar girl is and ends up giving the poor little girl five of the six buns. On her way back to Miss Minchin's after running her errands, in *SC*, Sara runs into the next door neighbor's servant, a lascar from India, and talks with him in Hindustani. In the play Sara meets the lascar, Ram Dass, who receives a name first in the play, when a pet monkey escapes into Sara's room. Ram Dass retrieves the ill Mr. Carrisford's pet. Mr. Carrisford is also called the Indian gentleman in all three due to his time spent in India. This scene also takes place in the *LP*; in both of these versions, *LP* and *SC*, this is the

occasion that Sara speaks Hindustani with Ram Dass. It is the pet monkey, who escapes into her room for the first time in *SC* and for the second time in the other two that eventually causes Sara to visit Mr. Carrisford, Captain Crewe's friend responsible for the business deal that is thought to have gone wrong.

Sara has an active inner life before and after her father's death in all three versions of the story. She likes to tell stories and pretend, and this especially comes to her aid after she is forced to become a servant. Sara has the ability to take her mind off of reality with her imagining and telling stories to her friends. For example, "the large family," called that due to the number of children, is a great resource for Sara. She imagines what their lives are like and gives all the children fictitious names. Sara becomes acquainted, in real life, with "the large family," the Carmichaels, in the end when she returns the monkey to Mr. Carrisford.

Besides the death of Sara's father, another pivotal moment in all three stories is when Sara's attic room is transformed. The transformation of the room from dingy, cold, and pathetic to warm, inviting, and cheerful—well as much as possible, it is still an attic room—is more amazing when the before and after picture has been painted in so much detail. Sara is not only excited because of how the room looks and the food that is left by a lovely fire but she is warmed by the idea that she has a friend. In *SC* and the *LP* packages of new clothes are delivered to Sara by the same mysterious friend after her room has been altered. After Sara is told to change into her new clothes, Miss Minchin invites her to return to the school room in which she had been barred entering as a student. Miss Minchin is afraid she has made a mistake in thinking Sara had no outside friends or family. Also in *SC* and the *LP* new things are constantly being added to her

room and food is always left on a little table. In the play and the *LP* Becky also gets to enjoy the food that is brought to Sara's room. In *SC* and the *LP* Sara writes a thank you note to her friend who she calls a "magician" and leaves it in her room.

A few days pass after writing the thank you note, in *SC* and the *LP*, and the monkey from next door gets into Sara's room—the monkey also gets into Sara's room in the play version. The monkey is the catalyst that leads to a resolution and a happy ending. It is because Sara returns the monkey to Mr. Carrisford's house that he discovers that Sara is the little lost daughter of his good friend Ralph Crewe, who he has been searching for with help from Mr. Carmichael, who is the father of "the large family" and is Carrisford's lawyer. It is explained to Sara that Mr. Carrisford meant no harm to her father and that the business deal, which involves diamond mines in the play and the *LP*, actually turned out favorably. Sara's fortune is to be restored and she is to live with Mr. Carrisford. She also finds out that Mr. Carrisford is her "magician" who transformed her room, that is with the help of Ram Dass, because he felt so terrible about Crewe's daughter he wished to help another forlorn little girl. Of course it is not realized that the two little girls are the same until this encounter.

In all three versions Miss Minchin comes over to Mr. Carrisford's house to take Sara back to the school, she thinks Sara is being an impudent servant by coming to the gentleman's house. Miss Minchin is told that Sara's fortune has been restored and that she will not be returning to the school. Miss Minchin, seeing an opportunity for monetary gain slipping away, tries to convince Sara to return to the school. Her request is denied and she is escorted out of the house. In *SC* and *LP*, after Sara is established with Mr. Carrisford, she devises an idea to help feed hungry children. She and Mr. Carrisford

return to the bakery that Sara met the beggar girl and told the baker woman, Mrs. Brown, of her plan. If Mrs. Brown will give bread to any hungry child that comes into her bakery Sara will pay for the expense. Sara discovers that Mrs. Brown was so touched by how Sara gave so much of her food to the beggar girl, Anne, that she gave her a job and a home for Sara's sake.

Becky, in the play and the *LP*, is also helped by Sara's return of fortune. She will be brought to Mr. Carriford's house to wait on Sara. Although not given more or raised to the same status as Sara, Becky's life will greatly improve with her removal from Miss Minchin's.

Throughout each version Sara tells stories, pretends, and uses her imagination. The most important pretend or imagining that occurs in all three is Sara's make-believing she is a princess. Sara equates good and noble behavior with a princess and wishes to emulate these attributes even when she is a servant. Even though her outward appearances have changed Sara wants to maintain her internal identity. Burnett establishes the idea that one can act the role of a princess without riches.

Burnett's reworking of Sara's tale illustrates the ongoing writing and revision process for a particular work if, as in this case, the author is given the opportunity to alter and expand upon an earlier work and publish these versions. Burnett does not drastically change the core of her work, which is the rise, fall, and return to prosperity of a sweet-natured orphaned girl. Burnett reveals more of Sara's life in each subsequent version; her interactions with other characters and the settings in which the tale unfolds. Even though the basic plot remains intact that does not make the reworking any less remarkable or enjoyable to the audience. Texture is added in the play and in *LP* by adding characters

like Lavinia and Becky, for by doing so Burnett not only adds more characters who are children but shows Sara's harrowing circumstances in contrast to the poor, bumbling, sincere scullery-maid Becky and the rich, selfish, self-important Lavinia. Burnett's main objective appears to be to add to Sara's narrative in order to make a more complex and detailed work, which is enhanced by character studies and plot augmentations and additions.

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The last chapter will examine what this textual history reveals about Burnett and her texts as evolving works of fiction. The content of the story will be discussed in light of the textual analysis and what these revisions and additions reveal about the story itself. It is rare to be able to look so deeply into a writer's creative process where there are three different genres—novella, play, and novel—in which the same basic story actually reaches print in three different, and yet similar, forms. This evolving record allows readers to explore Burnett's writing process; one in which Burnett stays true to the character of Sara Crewe—maintains the same essence—but where the author alters the story to fit the medium in which it is being told. Burnett's reworking of her story shows her dedication (perhaps a combination of literary drive and monetary gain) to one of her works and her desire to keep telling the tale until all of it was told.

## Chapter IV

Burnett is usually associated with a female tradition of writers: her early 'realistic' fictions were compared to those of Mrs. Gaskell and Charlotte Yonge, while her children's books are linked to the work of Mrs. Ewing, Jean Ingelow and Mrs. Molesworth. However, her writing also demonstrates a large debt to the distinctly masculine tradition of the adventure novel associated with names such as Walter Scott, Robert Louis Stevenson, and Rider Haggard.

- Margaret Bruzelius<sup>93</sup>

The evolving textual progression of *SC* into *LP* reveal narrative progressions that reveal significant aspects of the author's own character, hopes, and fears. Certain aspects of Burnett's life can be seen in her narratives, which include similarities between her and her heroine Sara Crewe. Life events and character traits and personality included in these progression of stories are: the death of her father, her family's fall from fortune, her ideal concept of the princess figure, and her gift of storytelling, this specific trait she imparted to Sara. These similarities, discussed in this chapter, give insight into Sara's story and show what traits and values Burnett prizes in a character.

Sara Crewe's rise, fall, and redemption are, according to Gretchen Gerzina, similar to Burnett's own childhood:

Although Frances wrote the original "Sara Crewe" in her Washington house, it resonated with her own childhood, with the dead father, the child's slide into poverty, and her faculty for reading, storytelling, and pretending, all apparent enough in her 1893 memoir *The One I knew the Best of All*.<sup>94</sup>

Burnett's close attachment to Sara's story may be better understood through Gerzina's interpretation; she not only saw herself in Sara, but saw her childhood as well. Burnett's

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<sup>93</sup>Bruzelius, Margaret. "Influence versus Speech: Representing the Maternal in Frances Hodgson-Burnett." *New Essays on the Maternal Voice in the Nineteenth Century*, edited by Barbara Thaden Dallas: Contemporary Research Press, 1995, 15.

<sup>94</sup>Gretchen Holbrook Gerzina. *Frances Hodgson Burnett: The Unexpected Life of the Author of The Secret Garden*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2004, 117.

reworking of Sara's tale was perhaps not just the desire of an author to perfect her work but the need for her to remember and reimagine memories of her own past.

This is not to say that Burnett's life mimics Sara's; the real life is only similar in a very general way to the fiction story she fashioned for Sara. By including pieces of her own childhood, Burnett perhaps comes to terms with the struggles she and her family experienced after her father's death. Burnett's lasting interest and critical significance resides in the imagination and creativity of the writing process and by including these interests with her own experiences Burnett creates a tale that has elements of fairy-tale and reality. "Frances Hodgson Burnett's work embodied fantasies of wish-fulfillment, consolation, or reconciliation often drawn from fairy-tales or popular romantic form."<sup>95</sup>

This observation offers insight into the core elements that appear in all of the versions of Sara's story: the death of a father, loss of wealth and status, the ability to act as a princess, and the skill of storytelling. Burnett maintains these elements throughout the reworking of her narrative even when she adds characters, enhances the plots, and adds to the story. Burnett and Sara share these attributes and it seems logical that these fundamentals stay the same throughout the evolution of the narrative.

The death of Burnett's father and Sara's father is the catalyst that changes both of their lives. "His [Edwin Hodgson's] death, of course, made a great difference to their lives. He died intestate." Burnett was three years old when her father passed away and the financial burden was left to her mother who decided to take on her husband's business. "Mrs. Hodgson, recovering from the shocks of death and birth [Edwina was born that

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<sup>95</sup> Peter Hunt, ed. "Transitions." *Children's Literature: An Illustrated History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995, 168.

same year], decided to run the family business herself.”<sup>96</sup> Sara’s life changes more quickly than Burnett’s; from privileged child to servant waif, her new daily life shares little with her old life. In all three versions Sara must go before Miss Minchin, who is much more concerned with the loss of tuition and her own status than of Sara’s misfortunes, after hearing the news of her tragic fall from fortune. In *SC* the conversation between the two is not given for the audience but only alluded to: “Miss Minchin’s cold and fishy eyes had never looked so cold and fishy as they did when Sara went into the parlor, on being sent for, a few days after the letter was received [announcing Captain Crewe’s death].”<sup>97</sup> And then a couple of pages later Miss Minchin tells Sara “Your father is dead. You have no friends. You have no money. You have no home and no one to take care of you.” In the play Miss Amelia must break the news to Sara but this too is only referred to and not read by the readers as in *SC*. Miss Minchin asks if Sara understands what has happened and Sara responds: “Yes, I understand, Miss Amelia told me. My papa is dead—my papa is dead.”<sup>98</sup> In *LP* Sara again is brought in front of Miss Minchin after Miss Amelia has had to give the news and again she is belittled and given no comfort. Miss Minchin wants to make sure that Sara understands what this loss means: “You are a beggar...It appears that you have no relations and no home, and no one to take care of you.”<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> Ann Thwaite. *Waiting for the Party: The Life of Frances Hodgson Burnett 1849-1924*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1974, 7–8. Burnett’s father was a “General Furnishing Ironmonger and Silversmith” (Thwaite, 1).

<sup>97</sup> Frances Hodgson Burnett. *Sara Crewe or What Happened at Miss Minchin’s*. New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1888, 12, 14.

<sup>98</sup> “The Little Princess: A Play for Children and Grown-up Children in Three Acts.” New York: Samuel French, 1911, 28.

<sup>99</sup> Frances Hodgson Burnett. *A Little Princess: Being the Whole Story of Sara Crewe Now Told for the First Time*. New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1905, 92.



Besides the loss of a father, Burnett and Sara also share the loss of wealth and status within the community as Knoepflmacher observes, such circumstances often worked their way into mainstream as well as juvenile fiction:

This beneficial “lowering,” in which bourgeois characters are reschooled in values that come from ungentle work, is as much a feature of “adult” Victorian fiction as of children’s classics such as Frances Hodgson Burnett’s *A Little Princess* (a work actually indebted to Ewing in other ways).<sup>100</sup>

Although Burnett’s mother made an attempt to take over the family business, could not compete with the economics of the time period: “Brave as she was in taking over Edwin’s business, Eliza was no match for the combination of hard work and general economic downturn of the early 1860s.” The family eventually made their way to America to be near Burnett’s uncle William who had success in Tennessee.<sup>101</sup> Burnett crafts a similar fictional fall as Sara’s economic and social statuses are altered after the death of *her* father and the loss of *his* income. A comment made by Sara at her birthday party in *LP* foreshadows her fall: “I *believe* I could...If one was a beggar, one would have to suppose and pretend all the time. But it mightn’t be easy.”<sup>102</sup> In *SC* Miss Minchin informs Sara of what this change in social status means for her life at the school: “Now listen to me...and remember what I say. If you work hard and prepare to make yourself useful in a few years, I shall let you stay.” Miss Minchin is not understanding and wishes to make it painfully clear to Sara what has happened: “You are not a parlor boarder now. Remember that if you don’t please me, and I send you away, you have no home but the

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<sup>100</sup> U. C. Knoepflmacher. *Ventures into Childland: Victorians, Fairy Tales, and Femininity*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1998, 405n.

<sup>101</sup> Gretchen Holbrook Gerzina. *Frances Hodgson Burnett: The Unexpected Life of the Author of The Secret Garden*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2004, 24–25.

<sup>102</sup> Frances Hodgson Burnett. *A Little Princess*. New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1905, 78.

street.”<sup>103</sup> The situation is very similar in the play: “If I do not choose to keep you out of charity you have no home but the streets....Then listen to what I say. If you work hard, and try to make yourself useful I make let you stay here.”<sup>104</sup> In *LP* the mood again is quite the same and the dialogue nearly the same: “You can do anything you are told....You are a sharp child, and pick up things readily. If you make yourself useful I may let you stay here.”<sup>105</sup> Miss Minchin has no compassion for Sara, although before Captain Crewe’s death she *appeared* to like Sara, and now wishes to make use of her and to appear magnanimous in keeping her on at the school. Miss Minchin’s statement is an important plot point in all three versions of the narrative, *SC*, *Play*, and *LP*. Burnett draws the readers’ attention not only to Miss Minchin’s cruel and cold demeanor and calculating manner to get work out of Sara but also that this moment, in all three versions, is the catalyst that alters Sara’s life. Although it was touched off by her father’s death it is Miss Minchin’s reaction and decision that mark Sara’s fall from fortune.

Burnett’s desire to help provide for her family in Tennessee and maintain a pleasant countenance in the face of economic hardship may very well have been the prime motivational factor in her writing escapist literature for adults and children.

She continued to rely on the Cinderella tale, as she had done in many of her early love romance and *Little Lord Fauntleroy*; the first work she published in the new century was a modern setting of this take for adults, *The Making of a Marchioness* (1902), and she soon followed it with another version of the Cinderella tale for children, *A Little Princess*.<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> Frances Hodgson Burnett. *Sara Crewe or What Happened at Miss Minchin’s*. New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1888, 17.

<sup>104</sup> “The Little Princess: A Play for Children and Grown-up Children in Three Acts.” New York: Samuel French, 1911, 29.

<sup>105</sup> Frances Hodgson Burnett. *A Little Princess: Being the Whole Story of Sara Crewe Now Told for the First Time*. New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1905, 93.

<sup>106</sup> Phyllis Bixler. *Frances Hodgson Burnett*. Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1984, 75.

It seems perfectly appropriate that Burnett would want her heroine to have the qualities of a princess, or at least those qualities as Burnett imagined them to be. It is important to note that Burnett has given considerable time and effort to Sara's character, who is her only *overt* princess character, as seen in three versions written over a span of seventeen years, from the first publication of *SC* in 1888 to the publication of *LP* in 1905.

In the Sara tales, a princess is one who acts kindly toward others, who is pleasant and helpful, and does not look down on someone because of their social station in life. Sara pretends to be a princess to help her combat the negative encounters she must have every day with other servants and with her new superiors. "When Miss Minchin is cruel to her, Sara, imagining herself a princess, can spare her the executioner's block, knowing the teacher is a poor, stupid old thing, who doesn't know any better."<sup>107</sup> The term is also used by Lavinia, a pupil, to degrade and mock Sara before and after her fall. Lavinia is jealous of Sara and uses the word princess to ridicule and belittle Sara; to make Sara appear to be an arrogant child even though this is farthest from the truth. This confrontation is carefully developed as Burnett refashioned her text. In *SC* Sara says to herself "[y]ou don't know that you are saying these things to a princess, and that if I chose I could wave my hand and order you to execution."<sup>108</sup> In the play, one of the first times princess is used to refer to Sara is when Lavinia says: "You'd stop fast enough if it was Princess Sara talking."<sup>109</sup> The word then has both a negative and positive connotation, one to refer to the supposed putting on airs and the other in reference to the

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<sup>107</sup> Ann Thwaite. *Waiting for the Party: The Life of Frances Hodgson Burnett 1849–1924*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1974, 105.

<sup>108</sup> Frances Hodgson Burnett. *Sara Crewe or What Happened at Miss Minchin's*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1888, 32.

<sup>109</sup> "The Little Princess: A Play for Children and Grown-up Children in Three Acts." New York: Samuel French, 1911, 9.

positive attributes a princess possesses even in the face of adversary. In *LP* Becky, the scullery maid, thinks Sara looks like a princess in her dancing outfit. When she tells Sara this Sara replies “I’ve often thought...that I should like to be a princess; I wonder what it feels like. I believe I will begin pretending I am one.”<sup>110</sup> In all three versions of the tale there are different intimations of what princess means to Sara and the other characters. Princess can mean arrogance perceived, strength and courage realized, or physical appearance.

One of Burnett’s lasting contributions to the genre was the ability to tell a story. This ability was first actualized as storytelling for family and friends and then the ability was turned into a means to support her family through publishing her stories that helped support her family when they were new to the United States. She was able to maintain her passion and success as storyteller even after her fame was realized, which shows that storytelling was not just a means for monetary gain but a true calling. Burnett was:

from her very infancy making everything into a story, reading voraciously from less than five years of age, absorbing the symbol, adopting the method, becoming expert at the trick, and steadily educating herself to set forth her own ideas—or imitate others’ ideas—in romance form.<sup>111</sup>

Sara too has the ability to tell stories to entertain herself and others. It is the creativity and imagination of the stories, which Sara tells that truly make her kin with Burnett. One of the first times, in *SC*, Sara’s ability to tell stories is seen when Sara helps Ermengarde to remember Robespierre and the French Revolution.<sup>112</sup> Sara not only makes her own stories up but can recall and tell historical facts in story form in order to help Ermengarde

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<sup>110</sup> Frances Hodgson Burnett. *A Little Princess: Being the Whole Story of Sara Crewe Now Told for the First Time*. New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1905, 55–56.

<sup>111</sup> Gretchen Holbrook Gerzina. *Frances Hodgson Burnett: The Unexpected Life of the Author of The Secret Garden*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2004, 16.

<sup>112</sup> Frances Hodgson Burnett. *Sara Crewe or What Happened at Miss Minchin’s*. New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1888, 30.

retain information. More “stories-within-the story” appear in later forms of the text. The significance of Burnett’s use of adding more stories within the larger framework of the main story is that they, the “stories-within-the-story,” add texture, detail, and show Sara’s imagination, and her ability to play and pretend during happy and sad times. In the play Sara confesses to Mrs. Carmichael, the wife of Mr. Carrisford’s lawyer, that she makes up stories about her family who live across the street from the school. “I hope you won’t mind. I can see your house out of my window, and there are so many of you, and you all look so happy together that I like to pretend I know you all. I *suppose* things about you.”<sup>113</sup> Pretending about and telling stories, even to herself, about other peoples’ lives is for Sara a creative past time before her loss of fortune and afterwards it is not only a mental exercise to maintain her sense of self but a way to escape her circumstances. In *LP* one of Sara’s first forays into storytelling is again with Ermengarde. Sara pretends that her doll Emily moves about when no one is watching and this confuses Ermengarde, who is not an imaginative child, and does not understand what Sara is up to. “At least I believe she can. At least I *pretend* I believe she can. And that makes it seem as if it were true. Have you never pretended things?”<sup>114</sup> Pretending and storytelling go hand in hand and Sara has to explain to Ermengarde how much fun it can be to make believe.

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The study of and thorough examination of an author’s work can reveal important insights into their creative process and also show connections between the author’s life and their stories and characters. The process of investigating these connections has

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<sup>113</sup> “The Little Princess: A Play for Children and Grown-up Children in Three Acts.” New York: Samuel French, 1911, 21.

<sup>114</sup> Frances Hodgson Burnett. *A Little Princess: Being the Whole Story of Sara Crewe Now Told for the First Time*. New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1905, 30.

revealed a multifaceted endeavor taken by Burnett over seventeen years of her writing career.

Burnett's early years were marked by a passion for storytelling and reading, traits that continued throughout her childhood and on as an adult. She was fortunate to have a supportive family, especially her mother and her sister Edith, in which she felt comfortable writing poetry and stories, storytelling, and pretending. Burnett's ability to not only tell a good story but to transfer that to ink and paper allowed her to help support her siblings and mother after their move to Tennessee in 1865. Her first publication in 1868 with *Godey's Lady's Magazine* began her long career as a lucrative writer, which enabled her to have control over her financial well-being that many women could not share with her at the time.

Burnett's experiences growing up in England were ones that had a great impact on her writing. Her schooling at a seminary, for boys and girls, and her attempt to set one up in Tennessee as a teenager are events that shaped her understanding and her imagination on how and what Sara should encounter at Miss Minchin's seminary. Although Burnett's experiences with schooling are not a direct correlation to her Sara Crewe stories since her experiences with schooling were not negative, repressive, and demeaning like that of her heroine. After Burnett's father passed away and her mother struggled to maintain his business, the family had to move to different quarters in Islington Square, which was surrounded by the working-poor, a group of people that the young Burnett had not encountered much before. Her observations of the children of the working-poor became a source to draw from when she would include characters and situations that might be typical of a poorer neighborhood. In the play version of *LP*, and

also the 1905 novel *LP*, Burnett inserts Becky the scullery-maid into the story as a foil to Sara.

The study of Burnett's Sara Crewe stories shed light on the author's creative processes as seen through her reworking of one serialized story, which became quickly a novella, *SC*, into a play, produced on both sides of the Atlantic, and lastly into a novel published in 1905, *LP*. This allows for the opportunity to view an author's writing and rewriting processes seen clearly through publications at all stages of creativity. In Burnett's case the publication of each version and genre of Sara's story is what allows readers and scholars to view this process not by manuscripts that were tucked away in family papers or archives that never came to fruition. There may be aspects of Sara's stories that never made it to publication but for the most part the audience gets to read each version in published form.

Burnett's popularity was established by the publication of *Little Lord Fauntleroy* in 1886. The serialization of *SC* in *St. Nicholas* children's magazine in 1887 to 1888 followed quickly her 1886 success with a boy in the title role. Charles Scribner's Sons, who owned *St. Nicholas*, decided to publish *SC* in book format as a short novella. Her success as a writer established Burnett as a children's author more than one for adult fiction, although she continued to write for an adult audience. Burnett is best remembered for her children's stories, *Little Lord Fauntleroy*, *A Little Princess*, and *A Secret Garden*.

Burnett was part of a new trend in children's literature—romanticism in juvenile fiction. During this time in children's literature the genre was gaining acceptance within the general reader population. Burnett's writing for children mirrored the times but she

also added to the romantic notions of children and childhood. Her writings include elements of realism, the fairy tale, and also adventure.

The textual history of Burnett's Sara Crewe stories shows the complex evolution from novella to play to novel. First the printing history shows that both the novella and novel were popular. *SC* was reprinted approximately forty times before Burnett's death in 1924 and sixteen times between 1925 and 2006. Even after the publication of the novel in 1905 the novella still had a niche in the market. *LP* was printed approximately nine times between its debut and Burnett's death and approximately one hundred and thirty-four times between 1925 and 2006. The play's success, in 1902 and 1903, provided the impetus for Scribner's to approach Burnett to write a new version of Sara's story. Each version of the work was a stepping-stone for the next and the success of each one was a catalyst for Burnett to delve into Sara's world in greater detail each subsequent time. The original serialized and 1888 novella (the same work) became the abstract for the following versions. By looking at the textual history, beyond the texts' publication history, the process of how Burnett expanded and altered her own work is also revealed.

The textual history of these works also includes how they were altered and what was maintained between each version. In order to evaluate the differences and similarities editorial collations were performed between the American and British publications that created a record of the styling, corrections, and minor revisions that were made by editors and then a plot collation was performed between the three versions that accounted for Burnett's additions and expansions. These collation records show how each subsequent version after the original *SC* maintains the core Sara Crewe story and also shows that Burnett added detail and expanded plots in order to give more information on Sara's



experiences and world. Burnett's main objective seems to be to include more to Sara's narrative, which makes for a multifaceted work with more elements of Sara's life and her surroundings. Sara herself doesn't change, her nature and personality remain the same in each story, it is the details and plot expansions that add to the flavor and depth of the original work.

By looking at the evolving text we come to the last element examined in the textual history of Burnett's work: how the author's life is reflected in her work and the impact that these connections have on the story itself. The in-depth look into the text of her Sara Crewe stories not only illuminates editorial alterations and character and plot additions and changes but how certain aspects of Burnett's life have been included in Sara's narrative. This allows for an analysis of the evolving story in terms of the similarities that Burnett and her heroine share and their differences that make Sara a fictional character. The specifics of how their fathers died and the impact that death had on their families, or in Sara's case the impact on her and her guardians, and how their fortunes were lost and restored are quite different. Both Sara and Burnett share a love of storytelling and this trait of the author's is used quite effectively as a trait of Sara's. Sara uses this ability to imagine and pretend before, after, and restoration of her fortune. Lastly Burnett's ideal notion of a princess figure is brought to light in how she presents her heroine. Sara encapsulates these ideals and becomes an ambassador of Burnett's princess archetype.

All of these elements of the publication, textual history and analysis of the Sara Crewe versions illuminate Burnett's ability to tell a story and to elaborate on a core idea. The opportunity to study the growth and changes of one work of an author are not always

readily available or easily pieced together due to missing pieces of the puzzle. In this case and this particular study the pieces were available, the published works, except for the play (a later published version was used not one from either the British or American play), to collate in terms of editorial and authorial variants that allowed for an examination that created records that showed character and plot alterations and additions. These technical aspects of the study, the historical context of the time period Burnett's works were published, and the connections between Burnett's life and her Sara Crewe stories gives way to a thorough understanding of the creative, reworking process that an author may undergo in order to attain her "final" version of a story.

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