The illustration at the end, of Mabel Dearmer's poster for readings from Ibsen's *Brand* and *School for Scandal,* was reproduced in black and white in 1999 from a copy in Charles Hiatt's *Picture Posters* (1895). The colour version included at the end of this lecture is reproduced from a copy of the original poster with grateful thanks to the Mark Samuels Lasner Collection, on loan to the University of Delaware Library, from a copy of the original poster.

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THE FRIENDS OF THE OSBORNE
AND LILLIAN H. SMITH COLLECTIONS
OCCASIONAL PAPERS SERIES

NUMBER ONE
Douglas Chambers. *The Boy on a Horse*

NUMBER TWO
Jill Shefrin. "*Dearmerest Mrs. Dearmer*"

Mabel Dearmer, aged eighteen in 1890.
(*Reproduced courtesy of Gillian Warr.*)

The Friends of the Osborne and Lillian H. Smith Collections
Occasional Papers. Number Two

"Dearmerest Mrs. Dearmer"

A lecture given at the
Osborne Collection
in
Lillian H. Smith branch
April 22, 1999

Jill Shefrin

Toronto
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I am grateful to Gillian Warr and Juliet Woollcombe for their recollections of family stories about Mabel Dearmer and for allowing me access to unpublished material and photographs, also to Ann Excell for sharing her correspondence with Geoffrey Dearmer.

My thanks are due also to my former colleagues and current staff at the Osborne Collection for their assistance with the original exhibition at the Collection in 1992, *'Exuberant Spirits and Simplicity': the Art of Mabel Dearmer*, especially Elizabeth Derbecker and Margaret Mustard, and to Dona Acheson for her photographs of the drawings which appear in this volume.

FOREWORD

The Friends of the Osborne Collection take great pleasure in presenting the second lecture in their Occasional Papers series.

Through this lecture, we have the pleasure of being introduced to a little-known but intriguing subject, Mabel Dearmer, following the exacting research of Jill Shefrin. Born in 1872, Dearmer was an artist and book designer, an author, socialist and feminist. Possessed of a vivid and forceful personality, Dearmer brought her talent and energy to bear on artistic projects, achieving notable successes before her untimely death in 1915. Some of Dearmer's original art and many of the children's books she illustrated are among Osborne Collection holdings, but until now they have not been the subject of scholarly research. They have been studied for their artistic merit, grace and charm, but with little historical attention to Dearmer's life and works. We are indebted to Wentworth Walker for making both the Lecture and its publication possible, and to Jill Shefrin for providing a rich historical context that will further scholarship and enjoyment of the works of Mabel Dearmer.

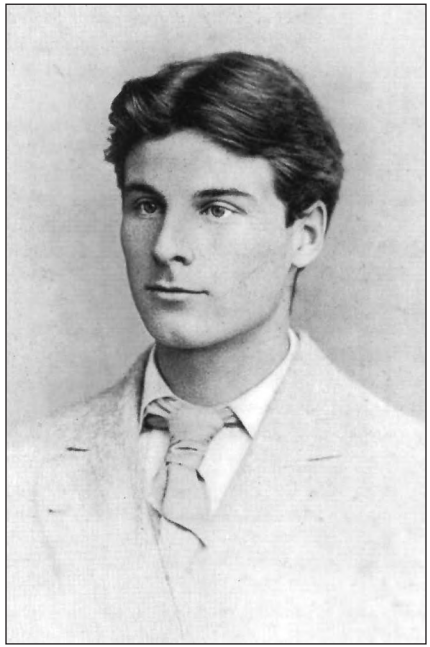
Jill Shefrin is a well-known author and researcher in the field of children's literature. She worked for many years at the Osborne Collection of Early Children's Books, producing numerous scholarly articles and preparing exhibits that earned widespread recognition both for their attractiveness and for the meticulous original research that Jill devoted to the bibliographic checklists and catalogues. Perhaps less well-known, but of no less importance, are her contributions to the successful research of each scholar who worked at the Collection and to the pleasure of each visitor who dropped by, assisting the former with her bibliographic expertise and Collection knowledge, and the latter by sharing her enthusiastic delight in early children's books.

Now an independent researcher and curator, Jill's work has been recognised and supported by distinguished bibliographical scholarships, including the 1998 Falconer Madan Award of the Bibliographical Society (Great Britain), a J. B. Harley Research Fellowship in 1998, and a Bibliographical Society of America Research Fellowship in 1997. In 1999 Jill was awarded Fellowships by Princeton, the Yale Centre for British Art, and the Children's Literature Association (United States). Jill is currently at work on studies of 18th- and 19th -century English juvenile table games, and on the biography of Mabel Dearmer.

Leslie McGrath
Head, Osborne, Lillian H. Smith
and Canadiana Collections

“Dearmerest Mrs. Dearmer”

Mabel Dearmer, aged sixteen in 1888.
(*Reproduced courtesy of Juliet Woollcombe.*)



Percy Dearmer at Oxford in about 1888.
(*Reproduced courtesy of Gillian Warr.*)

In 1991, when the Osborne Collection acquired a series of drawings by Mabel Dearmer, I knew little of her beyond her name on the covers of several attractive picture books in the Collection. I also had a dim sense that her husband had been a well-known clergyman, one of the editors of the first edition of *The English Hymnal* (1906) and *The Oxford Book of Carols* (1928), and himself the author of at least one children's book.

Researching her life and work for the exhibition here at the Collection, I discovered her last book, *Letters from a Field Hospital*, published posthumously in 1915. It is one of two published sources on her life, the other being the biography of her husband, Percy, by his second wife, Nan Dearmer. The volume of *Letters* – the first printing of which sold out in a fortnight[1] – includes a memoir of Mabel by her friend and literary executor, the writer and politician Stephen Gwynn. Some of you will have heard me tell the anecdote which captured my attention. Mabel, who from the beginning of the war had been a pacifist, decided in 1915 to join a field hospital in Serbia as a nursing orderly. Her husband Percy had recently volunteered his services as a chaplain, and together they attended a tea and meeting – what we would call an orientation session. Later, on leaving the house, Percy went to hail a cab. He was stopped by Mabel:

> "No," I said firmly, "you are going to endure great hardships in Serbia. You had better begin now and go home on the Tube."[2]

Charmed, I read on, and discovered a woman who not only wrote and illustrated books for children, but designed posters and bookplates, produced drawings for a range of periodicals as diverse as the *Yellow Book* and the *Girl's Own Paper*, wrote poetry and popular novels, and wrote, produced and directed a number of semi-professional theatre productions, especially religious works in the style of mediaeval mystery plays. None of her work was of exceptional quality, and much is merely competent, but the best of her drawings and poems for children have a timeless appeal, and it is clear from surviving letters and memoirs that she was a colourful and memorable personality with an

enthusiasm for life which charmed her contemporaries. She knew a range of notable figures throughout her adult life from her marriage in 1892 until her death in 1915, and was well-known as a professional writer and artist in her own day.

Mabel Jessie Prichard White was determined, ambitious and distinctive from an early age. Stephen Gwynn describes her as having had "a precocious and uneasy girlhood, fevered with ambition".[3] As an adolescent she was interested in both acting and drawing and, although she decided not to enter the theatre because she believed she "was not pretty enough",[4] she remained a theatrical personality. In her early forties she remarked to a friend: "If any one had told me I should have got to this age without doing something great, I should not have believed them."[5] Influenced by the actor-artist W.G. Wills, she decided to paint, and at the age of 18 entered Hubert Herkomer's art school in Bushey, in North London. Herkomer was an eclectic artist who worked in almost every medium, including not only painting, but drawing and sculpture, print-making, film, and musical drama. His lectures on theatre set design impressed the young Edward Gordon Craig. Historically his reputation is somewhat controversial. He has been described as arrogant, pompous, self-important[6] and an uninspiring teacher,[7] but he encouraged students to develop their own style and actively discouraged them from imitating his, both principles which must have appealed to the young Mabel. Students had often had previous training and applicants were required to present a portfolio. Although Herkomer admitted, on average, more women than men, he did not accept married – or divorced – women or those over the age of 28 as students. In 1892, after one year at the school, Mabel married at the age of 20, and was thus obliged to leave.

Percy and Mabel were committed socialists and feminists. Their socialism was of the middle-class sort which defined the Fabian Society and, like William Morris, they saw socialism as "opening the kingdom of art and beauty to all."[8] Gwynn described the young Mabel's "extreme socialist views ... [as] ... crudely thought out and crudely uttered; but ... [there was] no important subject on which she can be said to have

altered her convictions".[9] She met Percy in 1888 and in the following year worked with him at the Christ Church Mission in London's East End during the Dock Strike, serving meals to the dockers' families.

Mabel was born in the county of Caernarvon in Wales on March 22, 1872, the daughter of Surgeon-Major William White and Selina Taylor (Prichard) White. She had a somewhat emotionally isolated childhood; two of her novels, *The Noisy Years* (1902) and *Gervase* (1909), portray children in similar situations. She had red hair and, at least as an adult, always wore pince-nez. I have seen three photographs of her and in each she looks entirely different. Gwynn, who was at one time in love with her, claimed:

> no photograph was ever like her; what they omit is precisely her beauty – for beauty it was – the colour, the movement, the poise of her figure, crowned with its mass of brilliant hair, the living quality of her voice, all the radiation of her personality.[10]

She brought enormous energy to her work and enjoyed being at the centre of things socially, although she also loved solitude and had a contemplative streak.[11] Of the middle-aged Mabel, Gwynn wrote:

> Any belief for which a human being would suffer willingly commanded her regard, and she knew herself ready to be burnt at the stake for her own opinions.[12]

At the age of sixteen, when she met Percy, Mabel was "a slender girl with a crown of red-gold hair", "mature for her age".[13] In 1891 they decided they were in love. On 7 November Percy wrote excitedly to his friend Lord Beauchamp:

> I am writing to tell you that ... I am in love. And I am loved almost more than I love and I am engaged ... it is so wonderful and it can never have happened like this before to anyone. ... It is with Mabel: you will know we were always great friends – only all that is gone, utterly gone. This is so different. It only happened 2 days ago. ... Be fearfully secret. Our respective

parents hate us, and we are in a cloud of difficulties.[14]

They were forbidden to meet and Percy's mother and Mabel's stepfather, Alfred Beamish, both withheld the financial assistance they required. Mabel's response was an application to the Court to be made a Ward in Chancery. Their resolve seems to have finally persuaded their parents and they were married on May 26, 1892 at St. John's Church, Richmond, by Percy's vicar, W.A. Morris. (Percy was at this time a deacon.) Mabel, who had just turned 20, was allowed her "small income" and Percy's mother made a "small settlement" on him. He already had another small income from his father's estate. Percy was ordained vicar in December of the same year. Their first home was in Lambeth, in south London, and they had two sons, Geoffrey and Christopher, born a year apart on the same day in 1893 and 1894. In her 1905 novel, *The Difficult Way*, Mabel described some of the difficulties of a lively and artistic young woman who finds herself married to a curate on a limited income in a south London parish.

Although herself a woman of strong Christian faith, Mabel was deeply in love, and she came to resent the extent of the demands the Church made on Percy's time. Percy later reputedly said "Getting married is a kind of madness",[15] and he too was quite desperately in love. While he rejoiced in Mabel's talent and was proud of her, she was bored by domestic tasks and revelled in an artistic temperament. Her enthusiasms absorbed her. Her son Geoffrey remembered how, as a boy, he had resented the time she devoted to the theatre. Percy's second wife, Nan, the daughter of a close friend of the Dearmers, knew them in her childhood, and remembered the marriage as a not particularly happy one, but in the letters Mabel sent Gwynn from Serbia her relationship with Percy sounds both friendly and affectionate. In some ways they were well matched, sharing beliefs in Christianity, socialism and feminism, as well as an interest in art, gardening, animals, and holidays,[16] and, in later years, religious drama. And they had a great deal of fun. Although by the standards of their class and time they lived in genteel poverty, the domestic burden was eased by servants – at least three after their children were born. Mabel didn't learn to cook until she was over 40, when

she took it up as a hobby for about a fortnight.[17] In 1907 the Primrose Hill, Hampstead, parish, where Percy was the incumbent, acquired a vicarage. At a time when few people were doing their own interior decorating, Mabel "made the house delightful. The drawing-room had a cream paper with nine tall rose trees blossoming on it. There were rose-coloured chintzes to match and the curtains were of natural coloured glazed holland material. There was a grass-green carpet."[18]

It is clear from the remarks of contemporaries that both husband and wife were charming and that Percy was charismatic, while Mabel was colourful and dramatic with a "gift for eliciting friendship [which] won her intimates [even] among people remote ... from ... the literary world."[19] Evelyn Sharp and Laurence Housman were both close friends of the Dearmers and Mabel dedicated her *Noah's Ark Geography* (1900) to Evelyn. In his memoir, *The Unexpected Years* (1937), Housman described the young Mabel:

> in her beginnings, [she] was one of the most amusing people I have ever met. She wrote good Nursery Rhymes, with illustrations rather crudely drawn but of the right kind. These I admired and corrected for her, so far as correctness was desirable; and we had great fun together. She had social ambitions, and liked to be surrounded by an admiring crowd; probably even then she did not know that the charm of her work lay not in its cleverness, but in its exuberant spirits and simplicity; but we laughed at her so much that she did not trouble to take herself seriously.[20]

Nan Dearmer, then Knowles, kept a holiday diary when her family, the Dearmers, and Stephen Gwynn and one of his sons, vacationed together at Port na Blah in Ireland. The diary is written as a play. Prominent among the characters is Mrs. Dearmer, "a distinguished novelist often known as Aunt Mabel". The scene is the beach.

> As the curtain rises a group of bathers are seen coming down the rocks. First are the four Lambkins [the two Dearmer boys and Nan's two brothers] armed with towels and many-coloured bathing drawers, followed by Aunt Mabel who is being helped down the rocks by Mr. Gwynn. Behind are the

> President [Percy] and Sowles [Nan's mother, Marion Knowles] with Caddy Nankin [Nan], laden with golf clubs, a bathing dress and towels. ... All are attired in their ordinary costumes excepting Aunt Mabel who presents a rather amusing spectacle in a quite respectable coat and skirt surmounted by a marvellous blue cap from which her hair struggles to escape. She wears no stockings but a pair of walking shoes on her bare feet.[21]

The dialogue is devoted largely to Percy's attempts to teach Mabel to swim, Mabel shrieking that she is drowning, crying for help "in about 4 inches of water".[22] Another diary entry, this one from a *locum* at Painswick Vicarage, describes Mabel's equally hopeless – and equally dramatic – efforts to master tennis.

The young couple supplemented their income in various ways. Mabel gave theatrical readings and lectures, as well as working as a graphic artist. While still a curate, and through the early childhood of his sons, Percy would take a rural *locum tenens* which served as a family holiday in the country, and in 1895 they were sharing a house in Devenport St. in London with a friend. They took cycling holidays in England and Normandy (Percy more enthusiastically than Mabel) – once cycling from London to Yorkshire in a week – and they holidayed with friends including, more than once, Laurence Housman, Evelyn Sharp, Netta Syrett and Stephen Gwynn.

They contributed to periodicals, beginning in 1894 with *Goodwill*, Percy writing articles and Mabel providing illustrations and book reviews. In 1896 Percy's friends Henry Scott Holland and J.G. Adderley (the editors of *Goodwill*), together with Percy himself and G.H. Davies, undertook the editorship of another new periodical, *Commonwealth*, for which Mabel again provided some illustrations. She also designed posters and bookplates, did magazine art and, beginning in 1897 with Evelyn Sharp's *Wymps*, illustrated a number of children's books. She described her early children's book illustrations as "posters in miniature". The "poster method ... seemed to [her] ... admirably adapted for children". Amidst the incredible wealth of graphic art in 1890s London, Mabel's was not the most outstanding talent, although both her artistic sense and her technical skill visibly developed over the four years she

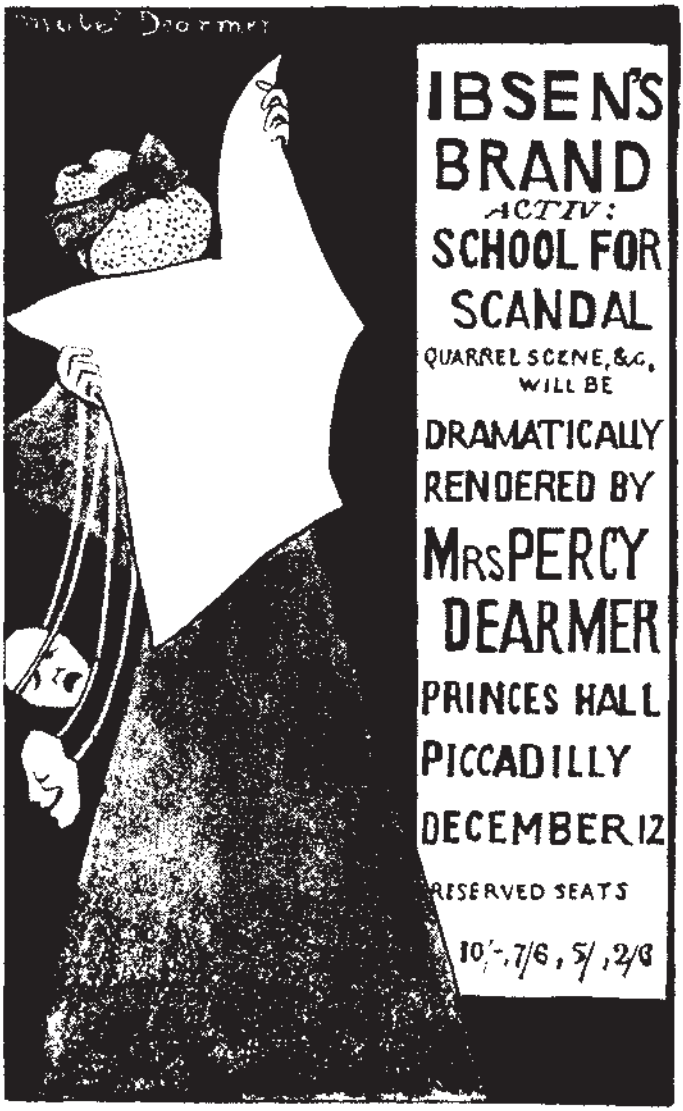
illustrated children's books. Even Gwynn commended her creativity – her "brain teemed with invention" – rather than her skill, noting that he himself had advised her "on literary technique".[23] But she secured regular work and "brought in ... considerable sums when money was badly needed."[24]

In the interview in the periodical the *Poster*, Mabel was asked, "What made you take to the poster?" She replied:

> "Well, I was about to give a recital, and it seemed to me only natural to design my own poster for it ... it brought me a great deal of work ... it was exhibited at London, Chicago, and Paris, as well as minor exhibitions." [25]

In fact, her posters have proved extremely difficult to trace, and I have found only one example so far, a poster printed in red and white, advertising "Ibsen's *Brand* Act IV, *School for Scandal* quarrel scene, &c. will be dramatically rendered by Mrs. Percy Dearmer, Princes Hall, Piccadilly, December 12".[26] It was done no later than 1895, for it was reproduced – unfortunately in black and white – in Charles Hiatt's *Picture Posters. A Short History*, published in that year. Hiatt discusses Beardsley's influence on contemporary poster design, citing this work by Mabel and one by the artist J. Hearn (who used the suggestive pseudonym of "Weirdsly Daubery") as examples. According to Hiatt, Mabel's poster "proves ... she has been affected by the simplicity and directness which are so conspicuous among the merits of Mr. Beardsley['s] ... essays in the art of the hoarding."[27]

Percy's father, Thomas Dearmer, was an artist and amateur musician and his mother, Caroline Miriam Turner, a "staunch Evangelical"[28] who ran a girls' school in Maida Vale – a career she seems to have continued after her marriage, only giving up the school on her husband's death in 1877. Percy was educated at Westminster School, at a Lutheran school at Vevey, on Lake Geneva, and at Christ Church. At Oxford Percy, who was extremely good-looking, wore "loud checks, bright blue shirts and flowing Liberty ties."[29] His earliest political opinions were conservative but, influenced by York Powell, later Regius



Poster design by Mabel Dearmer. Reproduced in Charles Hiatt's *Picture Posters. A short history of the illustrated placard, with many reproductions of the most artistic examples in all countries.* (George Bell, 1895).

Professor of Modern History, he became instead an ardent socialist, profoundly affected by the writings of William Morris and Ruskin. Mabel dedicated her *Book of Penny Toys* (1899) to York Powell.

> Professor, take my nursery book;
> And, as you turn the page and look,
> That faint uncertain star may shine,
> Through halting verse and doubtful line,
> That led me down forgotten ways
> Of wistful happy childish days.[30]

Percy decorated his rooms with Morris hangings, Burne-Jones engravings and William de Morgan jars. He graduated with a Third in Modern History – perhaps because academic work was only one of his interests – and decided to read divinity at Pusey House.[31] In 1890 he joined the Fabian Society and in 1895 served on the Executive of that organisation. He became a supporter of the Women's Suffrage Movement and, more unusually, actively endorsed the idea of women in the Anglican clergy. In the years after the turn of the century, when the enfranchisement of women was a major public issue, Mabel worked hard as a moderate suffragist, but Percy supported the entire movement and spoke "in support of Mrs. Pankhurst on more than one occasion".[32] After Mabel (and their son Christopher) died in 1915, Percy resigned the living in Primrose Hill – which he had held since the turn of the century – and spent a year in India. On his return, it was fifteen years before he had another appointment: he had been too visibly radical for the Church Establishment.[33] Besides musical, juvenile and more purely theological works, his numerous and varied publications included *Christian Socialism. Practical Christianity* (1897), *The Church and Social Questions* (1910), *Sermons on Social Subjects* (1911), and *Russia and Britain* (1915).

Percy had been at Oxford with Richard Le Gallienne, and through Le Gallienne Mabel became a contributor to the *Yellow Book*. In his memoir of his own life, *Experiences of a Literary Man* (1926), Gwynn recalled how Le Gallienne was noted for his "dazzling" good looks.

Illustration by Mabel for the *Yellow Book*. January 1897: "The Muslin Dress".
(*Reproduced courtesy of the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto*.)

"Mabel ..., who had then all the devilishness of a tormenting young woman, used (so she told me one day) frequently to praise the regularity of his teeth, because she thought they were a feature with which he had provided himself."[34] After the departure of the misogynistic Aubrey Beardsley as Art Editor, she was the first woman to design a *Yellow Book* cover (v. IX, April 1896). Her drawings were also published in the *Savoy* (Sept. 1896, Nov. 1896) and in a number of other periodicals including the *Commonwealth*, the *Girl's Own Annual* (Jan. 1897), and the sole volume of the *Parade* (1897), also a children's annual. This last was a lovely example of contemporary book design, sold in both cloth and vellum bindings. Other contributors included Beardsley, Housman, Leslie Brooke, Max Beerbohm, Charles Robinson, Paul Woodroffe, Paul Creswick and Mrs. Molesworth.

Illustrations by Mabel for the September and November issues of the *Savoy* for 1896. (*Reproduced courtesy of the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto.*)

Mabel was also a friend of Henry Harland, the literary editor of the *Yellow Book*, and his wife Aline. She designed the binding for his *Comedies and Errors* (1898) – the title of my lecture is taken from Harland's inscription to Mabel in her copy of the book. The full inscription reads: "To dearmerest Mrs. Dearmer (the author of the cover) from H. Harland (the author of the inside) March 1898".[35] Gwynn, who may have been prejudiced by his attachment to Mabel, claimed that all of Harland's "leading ladies ... have a family likeness, and in a sense Mabel Dearmer sat for all of them."[36] Mabel's drawing room became one of the "centres of the 'Yellow Book' set. Or perhaps rather, what had been the 'Yellow Book' set, for Aubrey Beardsley was dead, and the Yellow Book, although it continued to appear, languished". Evelyn Sharp called these gatherings "Mabel's lurid Mondays".[37]

Although Housman recollected assisting Mabel with technique as "her draughtsmanship was far from impeccable",[38] she was nonetheless demanding regarding the quality of reproduction of her children's book illustrations. This is clear from her surviving correspondence with Macmillan over the publication of *The Book of Penny Toys* (1899). She signed a "formal letter of agreement" with Macmillan in January of that year and, beginning as she meant to go on, declared:

> I hope you will see your way to reproducing the book the *same size.* ... My drawings were not made for any reduction & dealing with colour in large masses it is essential to cover a certain amount of space. Mr. William Nicholson's works are always large as he deals with flat browns and blacks.
>
> I should not like it to be any smaller than the specimen I sent you as it does not give that kind of 'poster'-work a chance. I did Roundabout Rhymes on a smaller scale because there was only one colour & minimal pen work in places.[39]

On March 2nd she continued:

> In looking over my rhymes I find I shall have to cut them down considerably & spoil them very much unless I have seven verses on one page or a few

extra leaves slipped in. The seven verses look so very bad that I really think it would be worth while to give me four or five extra pages of type, & have four verses on each page, & then that will be about the same size as the drawings. It will make the work look thicker and more important. ... & then you would be able to have the big black type that is so important for a child's work.

Later in March she returned an unacceptable proof: "The face is very bad & I think a new block must be made."[40] The next week, having already specified that she would not commence colouring the proofs until she had them all at the same time, she was complaining:

I find I cannot get on in colouring the proofs because they have not been printed on paper that will take colour. I made a particular note of this when I sent you the first drawings. I have done my best but it is impossible to lay a flat tint on paper with a [gloss?] to it.

Will you please let me have immediately fresh proofs of each drawing. I am afraid it will delay the work ... I enclose a specimen of the kind of paper necessary for colour.

In May she went to see the colour proofs:

I saw Mr. Edmund Evans yesterday about 'The Book of Penny Toys'. I did not think the green was satisfactory & I find now that to get a really good green – the green I have used [–] a separate printing is necessary. It cannot be got by the blue over the yellow. I did not know this when I described my picture as arranged for four printings as there are only eight pictures with any blue in them the entire printing would only be for 1 sheet & the expense would not be very great. Mr. Evans says it is something quite slight. I do hope you will have it done. The murky green simply ruins my work. The look will be a different thing if you will give Mr. Evans a free hand. ... I have suffered so much from bad reproduction & it will help so much if it is printed in good colours.[41]

But by the autumn Evans had come in for some scathing criticism. In a

letter to Macmillan on November 10th, she wrote:

> I should be glad if you would let me have the £75 due to me on publication of 'The Book of Penny Toys'. I do hope it will do well, but I dont [*sic*] think Mr. Edmund Evans had done anything to add to his reputation. I am moving heaven & earth to find somebody who will take up this wood block printing & work it intelligently. I believe the only thing to do will be to go to Japan & get the work reproduced there. I have met a little Jap[anese,] Tanosuki who has a printing firm in Tokio [*sic*]. He would reproduce English work but it has never been done since the world began. I am making inquiries about it now. A work printed on Japanese paper with Japanese line & colour might have a tremendous success.[42]

She was equally demanding on other fronts:

> I wrote to Mr. Evans immediately I came home from Normandy for an advance copy of 'The Book of Penny Toys' and he tells me that the printing has not even begun. Surely the book will be very late? ... When will it be possible for me to see an advance copy? I do really think it should be hurried. The other work I have illustrated 'The Seven Young Goslings' will be out next week & I have already got my copies.[43]

Her tone with the readers of *The Book of Penny Toys* is quite different. In the preface she explains that some of the toys in the poems are not, in fact, available for a penny, some, like the Little Stuffed Dog are more expensive but with the "soul of a happy penny dog", some are from her own childhood, and the Michaelmas Goose "was a present to me, and ought not to have gone in the book at all, for of course from politeness I never asked the price, and then one day I met him walking along Victoria Street, marked 15."[44] In her correspondence with Macmillan over both *Penny Toys* and, later, the novel *Gervase*[45], she constantly suggests ways to promote her books, including extensive advertising in various church papers like *Goodwill*, where, "Most of the readers know my name very well."[46]

Mabel's first children's book illustrations were done for her friend

Evelyn Sharp's *Wymps and Other Fairy Tales* (1897) and *All the Way to Fairyland* (1898), both published by the Bodley Head. Aline Harland wrote to Evelyn Sharp about these "Fairy books":

> They really are very unusual I think, & I am sure unless my children are quite unlike all the others that they will be a terrific success. ... I think the stories ... too good for the pictures which *please* don't breathe to Mabel.[47]

Geoffrey Dearmer's copy of *Wymps* is inscribed: "This book is for the use of Geoffrey & Toby [Christopher] Dearmer, for whom these drawings were made – from their Mummy. Christmas 1896".[48]

In 1898 Mabel illustrated Laurence Housman's retelling of the folk tale, *The Story of the Seven Young Goslings* (Blackie & Son) – for which she received £50 and he £30.[49] Between 1898 and 1900 three of her own children's books, *Round-about Rhymes* (1898), *The Book of Penny Toys* (1899) and *The Noah's Ark Geography* (1900), were published. Apart from *The Cockyolly Bird. The Book of the Play* (1914), which was a prose version of her play *The Cockyolly Bird* (1914) – itself essentially a reprise of *The Noah's Ark Geography* – she did no children's book illustration after this date, or none that I have yet discovered. Blackie had purchased her drawings outright – as had Macmillan – and thus held copyright to them. They reprinted illustrations and poems from *Round-about Rhymes* in more than one anthology, sometimes with the colouring changed, and brought out different editions of *The Seven Young Goslings* with different colouring.

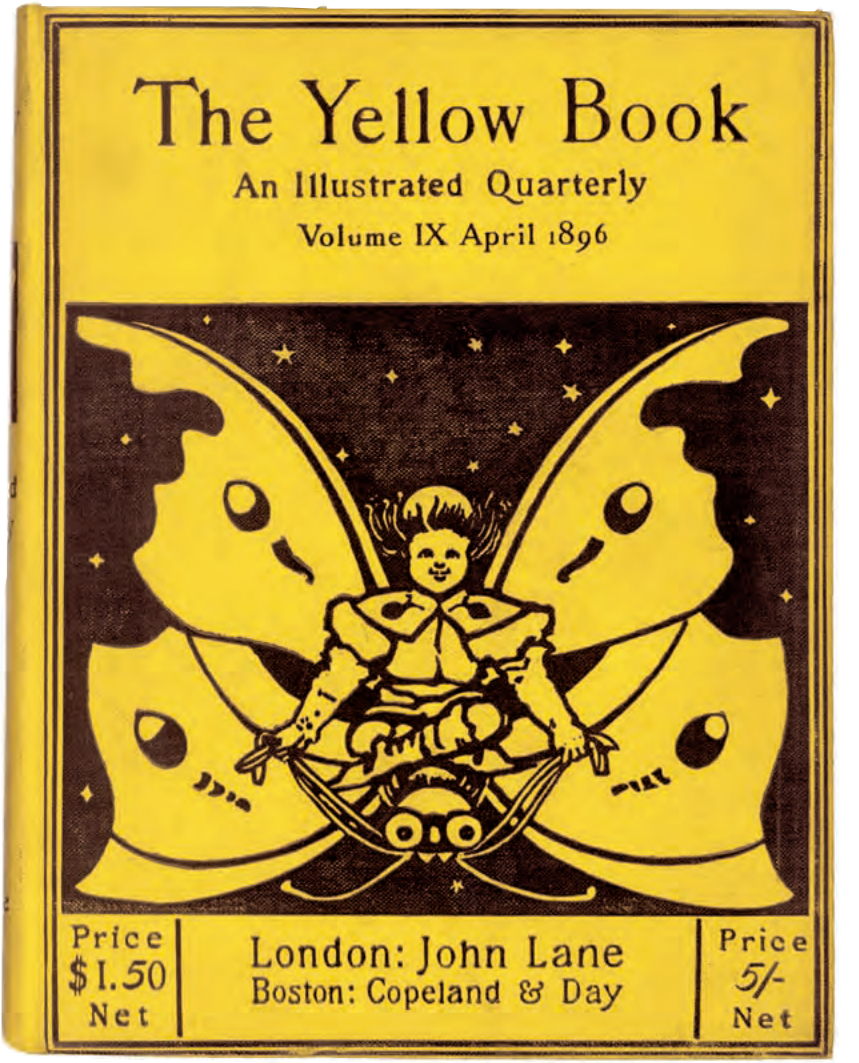
In 1906 *The Child's Life of Christ* was published by Methuen with illustrations by Eleanor Fortescue-Brickdale. Mabel's style here is typical of popular writing for children in the Edwardian period.

> I am going to tell you a very wonderful story, children. It is the most wonderful and beautiful story that has ever been written since the world began. It is a story of adventure, of peril, of brave deeds, and of conquest. All boys and girls like stories of noble daring. Here is one. It is the story of a hero, but a hero greater than the Red-Cross Knight or king Arthur. ... It is the story of our Lord Jesus Christ – the Son of Man and the Son of God.[50]

Like many writers, she may have had less interest in writing for children as her own grew, but she seems also to have been in search of a genre more personally satisfying. Stephen Gwynn records that he encouraged her to write novels and only later, when she turned to playwriting, realised the latter was her true medium. While her drawings for *Wymps* are primitive, her children's picture books, both those for which she supplied the verses and her drawings for *The Seven Young Goslings*, stand the test of time considerably better than her other work. The opening of *The Book of Penny Toys* is pleasantly evocative:

> Behold, upon the carpet spread
> The nursery cupboard's disarray;
> Blue, brown, and orange, green, and red,
> The friendly toys of every day.
> From tangled heaps of colours gay,
> From whistles, trumpets, drums and noise,
> I made this book. One glance, I pray!
> This is the Book of Penny Toys.
>
> See one by one before you led,
> The little clockwork mouse all grey,
> Pierrette who lost her silly head,
> The foreign lamb who could not stray.
> Creatures whose only work is play,
> Whom nothing worries or annoys.
> Be courteous ere you turn away!
> This is the Book of Penny Toys.[51]

The children's books, like her first novel, *The Noisy Years* contained material about her own family. The boy in *The Noah's Ark Geography* is Kit – her younger son Christopher – and Geoffrey Dearmer remembered a number of the events in *The Noisy Years* from his own childhood. Mabel enjoyed children, and she was fascinated by the way their imaginations worked. She "knew well how to keep children amused and happy ... Children hung on her words when she told stories."[52] Like the mother in *The Noisy Years*, she was tender-hearted and gentle



Cover design for *The Yellow Book* April 1896. Mabel was the first woman to design a *Yellow Book* cover. (*Reproduced courtesy of the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto.*)

Frontispiece to Evelyn Sharp's *Wymps* (The Bodley Head, 1897), illustrating the story "Wymps".

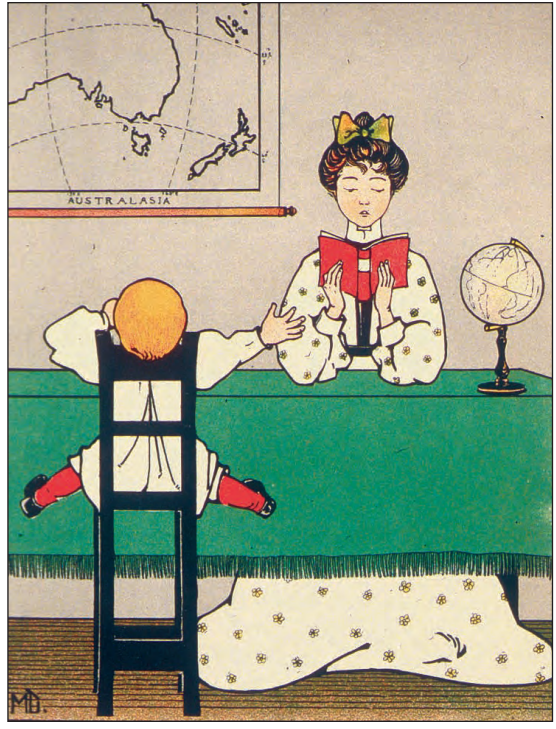


Illustration for *The Noah's Ark Geography* (Macmillan, 1900).

Original pen and watercolour drawing for *Round-about Rhymes* (Blackie, 1898). Mabel's son Geoffrey posed for the child gardening.

Original watercolour drawing by Mabel Dearmer for *The Story of the Seven Young Goslings* (Blackie, 1899) Percy posed for the Tinman.

Frontispiece to *The Book of Penny Toys*. (Macmillan, 1899).

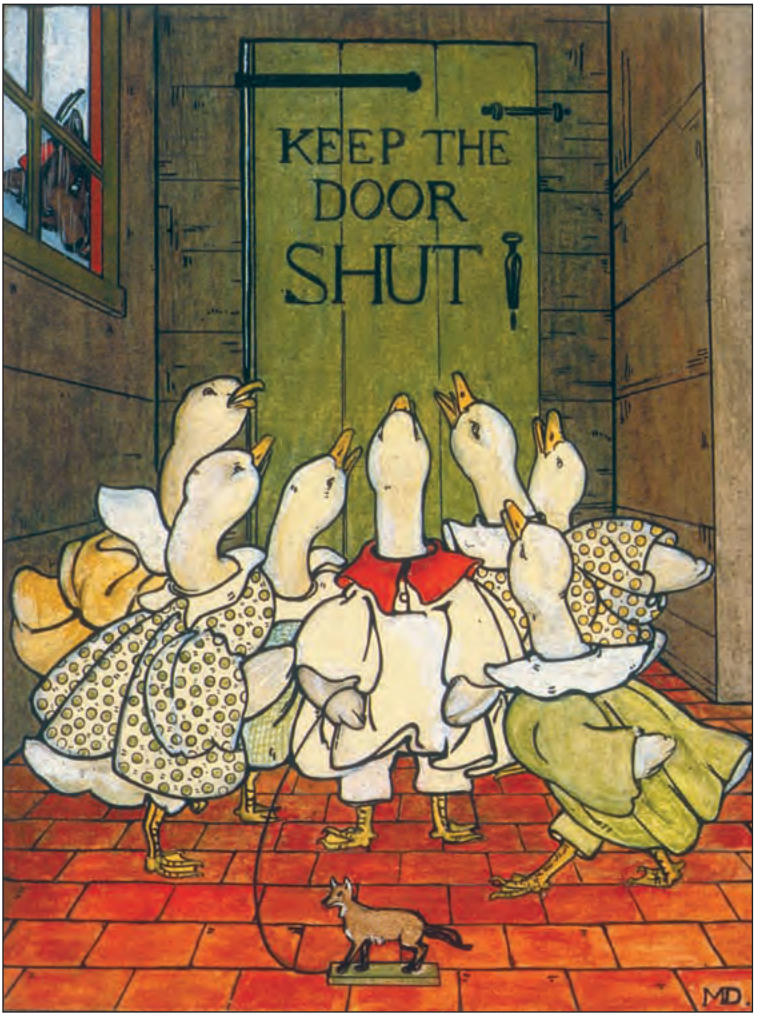
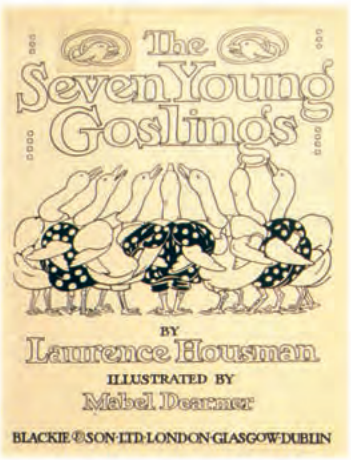
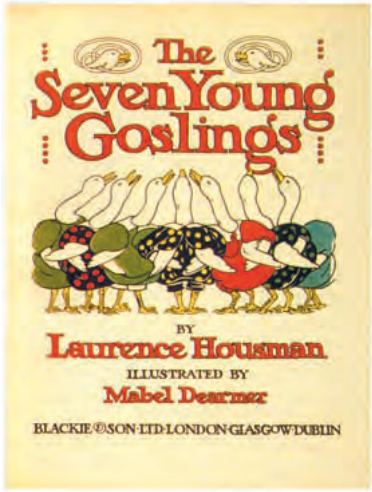
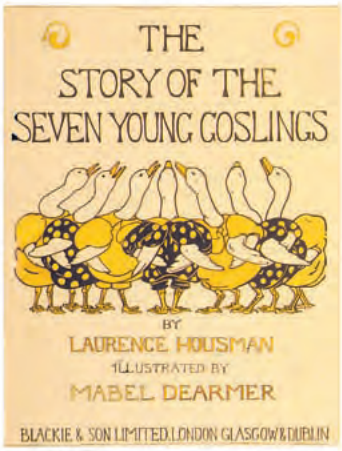
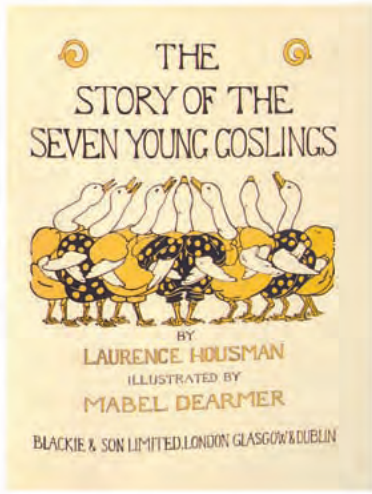


Illustration for *The Story of the Seven Young Goslings*.



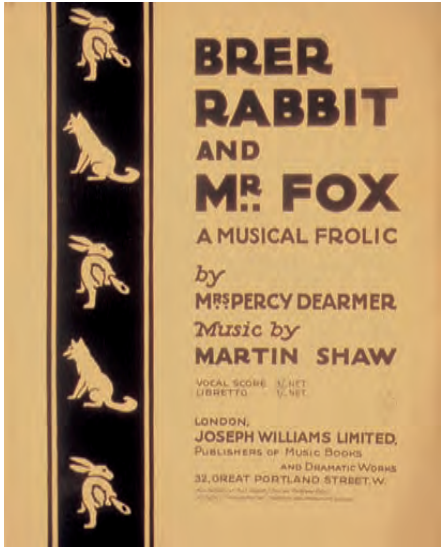


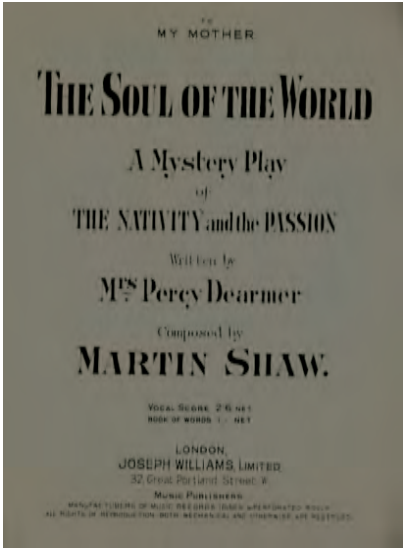




Four versions of the title-page for two editions of *The Story of the Seven Goslings*. Top: original pen drawing, printed title-page; bottom: hand-coloured proof and printed title-page.

Binding design for Henry Harland's *Comedies & Errors*, published by The Bodley Head in 1898 (*reproduced courtesy of the Bodleian Library, University of Oxford (256.e.11470*) and binding lettering designed by Mabel for *The Difficult Way* (1905), and *The Alien Sisters* (1908), both published by Smith, Elder & Co., (*reproduced courtesy of Juliet Woollcombe.*)





Title-pages for *Brer Rabbit and Mr. Fox* (1914) and for *Soul of the World* (1911), both published by Joseph Williams. (*Reproduced courtesy of Juliet Woollcombe.*)

with her children but also impatient with them and frustrated by the constraints and demands of motherhood.[53] *Round-about Rhymes* was dedicated "To Geoffrey and Christopher".

> This book was really made by you:
> You showed me all I had to do, –
> A picture here, and there a rhyme,
> A record of your nursery time.
>
> And now I give you back your own,
> For it was made by you alone.
> So reach your chubby hands, and take
> This book, if only for my sake.[54]

Her family also served as models for her drawings. Geoffrey recalled "standing as a model for digging in the garden aged 5 in 1898",[55] Percy appears as the Tinman in *The Seven Young Goslings*, and a number of red-haired girls and women (possible self-portraits) appear throughout her drawings.

Although written and marketed for adults, the style of *The Noisy Years* is closer to her children's books and would have appealed to older children even though the child characters are quite young – still dressed in smocks and not yet in school. The story is that of a young woman with two small sons whose husband is in India. Mabel drew heavily on her experiences with her own children in the writing of it. There are two boys, very close in age, the family lives in a flat with three servants – cook, housemaid and a French nursemaid – and the children call their mother "pet-lamb-tulip", a term of endearment which Mabel encouraged her children to use towards her. It is her best-written novel, free of the stilted language found in the later books which attempt to address complex emotional or spiritual problems. At its best, *The Noisy Years* recalls Edith Nesbit and other successful Edwardian children's authors. Contemporary reviewers repeatedly – and rightly – commended the sympathetic portrait of real children although, to the modern reader, their praise does seem excessive: "Quite one of the most sympathetic

books about children which to our knowledge has been written. Robin and Toby are two thoroughly healthy, natural, real children" (*Pilot*);[56] "One of the most delightful books about children and their ways which has ever been written." (*Court Journal*);[57] "A faithful and charming picture of childhood in the present day." (*Spectator*).[58]

In one chapter the younger child, Toby, is sent to stay with a great-aunt while his brother is seriously ill. He is unhappy, not just at being away from home, but because his great-aunt has no comprehension of a child with a vivid imagination, perceiving his flights of fancy as lies and his inarticulate attempts to explain them as more lies. Toby discovers that his mother spent a great deal of her childhood with the same aunt and suffered from the same misunderstandings. Mabel's unpleasant memories of her own lonely childhood and of her censorious and uncomprehending relationship with her stepfather are reflected here. She was determined not to bring up her own children in this environment. These are a few verses from her poem, "Picture-book Time", in *Round-about Rhymes*.

> When the rain falls down all day,
> And leaves us hours and hours for play,
> Nurse says the time has come to look
> At rhymes and pictures in a book.
>
> The books of Andersen and Grimm,
> Shock-headed Peter, Little Tim,
> The tale of John and Sister Jane,
> We always want to hear again.
>
> For half the children here are bad,
> And make their mothers very sad;
> The rest are well-behaved and good,
> And do the things all children should.
>
> ... if you're good with all your might,
> And try your best to be polite,

Your mother and your nurse will take
Great pains to find you lots of cake.[59]

When Percy was appointed to the living of Primrose Hill at the beginning of 1901, Mabel withdrew somewhat from literary circles, although she retained many close friendships from that time. She concentrated her energies on the parish and developed her interest in theatre, beginning with the parish Christmas play. Laurence Housman described the change in her personality which is reflected in her writing:

> how or why it came about, I don't know; but all at once she began to take herself seriously; ceasing to write funny books for children, she turned to sombre novel writing, and then to things of a mildly mystical character; and as her writing changed, she changed also; she became 'good'; and it did not improve her, for it diminished her sense of humour, and still more the unconscious comedy of her behaviour. We remained good friends, but we saw less of each other as time went on; and when she began producing her plays by the aid of committees including archbishops and bishops, I was not of the company.[60]

Between 1902 and 1909 she wrote six novels. The first was *The Noisy Years. The Difficult Way* also contained autobiographical material, but I find it difficult to believe that Mabel was ever as insecure or unhappy as the heroine in this story of a young art student who marries the curate of a south London parish. Her later novels dealt increasingly with conflicts arising between personal inclination and temperament and religious faith. The last, *Gervase*, is the story of a young man raised in an extremely religious environment. His father is dead, his mother, belonging to "that part of the Church of England which is Catholic rather than Protestant",[61] is delicate and as a small child he is in the care of a "Salvationist"[62] nurse. Later, orphaned, he passes into the care of an extremely high Anglican tutor. As an adult he is manipulated into marrying a young woman when he is really in love with her sister. She dies and he declares his love for the original sister. The House of Commons is about to vote on the Deceased Wife's Sister's Bill, the

passage of which would allow them to marry. Gervase is a M.P. and thus is a position to vote on the bill. In the end, his religious beliefs will not permit him to support the bill and the woman nobly saves him from himself by leaving the country, returning to Paris to pursue her career as an artist. In all her novels (with the possible exception of *The Noisy Years*) the writing is pedestrian and the tone earnest and occasionally melodramatic, but Mabel addressed contemporary issues and her work was popular in its own day, being reprinted extensively and widely reviewed. In both style and content the novels wear less well than any of her other writing. I have mentally labelled them as topical Anglican potboilers, although this classification denigrates the social messages in some of her work. *The Alien Sisters* (1908), for example, paints a grim picture of the economic realities affecting working-class women and other female outsiders.

In a relatively short life Mabel covered a lot of territory, both literally and figuratively. She travelled to France, Italy and Germany, and to Tobago, British Guiana and Venezuela. En route to Serbia in 1915, she stopped in Athens where "all the things one had seen clean and dead in pictures [were] here alive and dirty and a thousand times as beautiful."[63] After a visit to see the passion play at Oberammergau in Germany in 1910, she became involved in producing and writing mystery plays, founding the Morality Play Society. When George Bernard Shaw saw her morality play, *The Soul of the World* (1911), he wrote to her, "You are one of the few people living who can write plays."[64] Her theatre work resulted in friendships with actors and theatre managers including Edith Craig (the sister of Edward Gordon Craig and daughter of Ellen Terry), Gertrude Kingston, John Martin-Harvey and Lillian Braithwaite. The composers Ralph Vaughn Williams and Martin Shaw, both of whom worked with Percy on *The Oxford Book of Carols*, contributed musical scores for her plays. Stephen Gwynn believed that, had she survived, she would have ended up with her own professional theatre. Through her work in parish theatre she became skilled at working with child actors, and her own first children's play was *The Cockyolly Bird* (1913). Like her adaptation of the Uncle

Remus stories, *Brer Rabbit and Mr. Fox* (1914), it was quite successful and was performed professionally on several occasions. With the advent of the First World War she became involved with the Belgian Refugee Committee, including organising a charity matinee of *Brer Rabbit and Mr. Fox* "on behalf of the Belgian Fund – the children of England for the children of Belgium"[65] although this production was abandoned.

When the war started various suffrage groups organised women's war efforts with the intention of demonstrating once and for all that women contributed equally to society and must therefore be granted the vote. Two groups in particular recruited women doctors, nurses, orderlies, assistants and administrators to work in front-line hospitals in Belgium, France and Serbia, although the Red Cross also sent out individual women. The Scottish Women's Hospitals – in fact internationally staffed – were originally funded by the Federated Suffrage Societies of Scotland and, with the Serbian Relief Fund, sent over 600 women to Serbia in the course of 1915. The Third Serbian Relief Fund Unit, to which Mabel Dearmer belonged, was a field hospital bound for Kragujevatz under the command of Mrs. Mabel St. Clair Stobart. Mrs. Stobart, who had pioneered in the South African veldt, founded the Women's Sick and Wounded Convoy Corps which she took to Bulgaria in the Balkan War in 1912. This was the first time female doctors and surgeons had been in the front lines. In her 1916 memoir of her war experiences, *The Flaming Sword in Serbia and Elsewhere*, Mrs. Stobart explained why she had "occupied ... [herself] within the sphere of war":

> It was natural that woman's first cry should be for the political vote: influence without power is a chimera. ... was woman incapable of taking a responsible share in national defence? I believed that prejudice alone stood in woman's way. ... Practical demonstration that prejudice is prejudice, will alone dissipate the phantom.[66]

She decided that, although

> In these days of the supremacy of mechanical over physical force, woman's ability as a fighting factor could have been shown ... woman could not fight

> better than man, even if she could fight as well, and, as an argument for the desirability of giving woman a share in the national responsibility, it would be unwise to present her as a performer of less capacity than man. ... woman must not encumber herself with legacies of male traditions likely to compromise her freedom of evolvement ... the Woman's Movement must tend to the furtherance of life, and not of death. ... therefore ... the capacity of woman to take a useful share in national defence must be given in a sphere of work in which preservation, and not destruction of life, is the objective. Such work was the care of the sick and wounded.[67]

By the time she came to organise a Unit to take to Serbia early in 1915

> The principle that women could successfully conduct a war hospital in all its various departments had now been amply proved, and had been conceded even by the sceptical. The original demonstration had already borne ample fruit. Units of Scottish women were doing excellent work in France, and also in Serbia, and even in London, women doctors had now been given staff rank in military hospitals.[68]

Shortly after the declaration of war in August Mrs. Stobart took a women's medical corps to Belgium but, hearing of the conditions in Serbia where, besides the war, there was an epidemic of typhus, decided to lead a unit there.

In March of 1915 Percy Dearmer conducted a farewell service for the Unit under the auspices of the Church League for Women's Suffrage. Mabel attended, not so much to hear Percy as at the request of a friend, Dorothy Picton, who was a member of the Unit. Both Mabel's sons had enlisted and, in the course of the service, Percy announced that he would be accompanying the Unit to Serbia, having that day been appointed Chaplain to the British Units of the SRF. She later wrote, "During the singing of the last hymn an idea struck me. Here was the work for which I had waited. I had no doubt and no hesitation."

Mabel and Mrs. Stobart both provide first-hand accounts of her decision. Mabel approached Mrs. Stobart as they were leaving the church and asked to accompany the Unit to Serbia.

"What can you do? What are you trained for?"

"Nothing. But I am an ordinary sensible woman and can learn quickly."

She looked at my garments. I liked pretty clothes and wore a green silk dress and a fur coat. Her eyes were caught by my long earrings. Then she touched my coat. "You must leave this at home."

"Of course", I said rather impatiently; "I told you I was an ordinary sensible woman."[69]

Mrs. Stobart's account is less flattering:

> [A]t the conclusion of the service, Mrs. Dearmer, with tears on her face, came up to me. "This is the first I have heard of my husband going to Serbia; Mrs. Stobart, you *must* take me with you – as an orderly. My sons are both at the front, and now my husband is going, I must go too." I'm afraid I was brutal. I pointed at her earrings and pretty chiffons. "This kind of thing isn't suitable," I said.
>
> "I will leave them all behind, and wear – well, your uniform!" as she looked bravely at my dull grey clothes.[70]

But Mrs. Stobart was converted and later wrote: "she ... was a huge success. ... none of her various roles in life were better played than her role of orderly in a Serbian camp hospital. She never asserted herself as Mrs. Dearmer", "a woman who was an artist, successful in drama, drawing and romance", but "kept scrupulously to her own new part; in a word, she played the game. I had only known her slightly, and I had feared difficulties with the artistic temperament. ... My instinct about her suitability had only been right in regard to her physique."[71] The Unit arrived in April. Mabel wrote to Gwynn, "I am like a young lion – no – a middle-aged and very cheerful lion – but I am feeling very fit indeed. [And a week later] ... I feel it would be horrid to get typhus just now when life is so delightful."[72] Although there were no cases of typhus among the staff, several fell ill with "enteric fever" or typhoid, which was considered to be less dangerous. By the middle of June Mabel too was ill. (In fact, she seems to have been constantly ill, with a cold, a swollen knee, an extended reaction to her typhoid inoculation,

etc. but none of these seriously impeded her work.) A few weeks before her death from a combination of typhoid and double pneumonia her telegram read: "Down enteric slight very cheerful".[73] On her deathbed she said, "I don't want to hear about your silly telegrams. I want to hear about God." After her death Percy wrote, "On the 9th they still hoped to save her. But I am sure that long before this her face was set for the last journey, and she would not willingly have turned back."[74] Her deep faith was strengthened by her war experiences.

In one of her letters, Mabel refers to a speech by Sir Thomas Lipton – the tea baron who transported medical personnel to and from Serbia on his private yacht – in which he described the work of two suffragettes already in Serbia nursing the dying. She remarks, "He did not seem to realise the enormous compliment he was paying to the pioneers of that women's movement."[75] Throughout her life she was firm in all her convictions – strongly Christian, a convinced Socialist and pacifist, and a supporter of women's suffrage. These convictions came from an emotional response to the ills of the world grounded in her Christianity. Her "vivid intelligence and courageous instinct had adopted [them] upon faith and abstract thoughts"[76] . Although I have been unable to confirm this, she was almost certainly a member of the Church League for Women's Suffrage, and possibly of other suffrage organisations as well. She had friends on the executives of the Actresses' Franchise League (Lillian Braithwaite), the London Society for Women's Suffrage (Maude Royden – with whom Mabel became friends in the early days of the war over their shared pacifism), the Women's Tax Resistance League (Clemence Housman) and the Women Writer's Suffrage League (Evelyn Sharp).[77]

It is easy to see Mabel as a highly-coloured personality, a little out of touch with practical realities and living more on emotion than reason. But this would be to ignore the practicality and the organisational and business skills she brought to her theatre work, skills also apparent in the field hospital and, at home, in her role as landlord. She inherited two houses in Kilburn "let out in small tenements". Advised to sell the property, "she insisted on keeping control, and with her usual competence made them a model of what such a property should be."[78] The

combination of individual charm and practical skills inspired the affection of her co-workers in Serbia. In one of the letters to Stephen Gwynn, she wrote:

> Mrs. Stobart is frightfully keen on coming out of this without losing one of us [to the typhus epidemic] – she works night and day at her precautions. If the unit comes back whole it will be the first to do so. – It would be *mean* to go and die and spoil its chance of winning such a reputation – wouldn't it?[79]

I was drawn to Mabel by her personality, the variety of her talents, the humour of her drawings, her interests, her connections, and by her feminism and concern for social change. I discovered – am still discovering – a complex and turbulent personality; a woman who, despite an enormous capacity to enjoy life, was seldom content or at ease with her world. She was a 'new woman' in several aspects: interested in the avant-garde, holding strong opinions on political and social issues, and maintaining a publicly visible career while raising a family, but she was still grounded in her time and class. Considering the extensiveness of her oeuvre (text or illustration for nine children's books and for numerous adult and juvenile periodicals, six novels, seven plays, and posters, binding designs and bookplates, all in twenty-one years) and the impact she made on her contemporaries, at least those within the wide circle of her acquaintance, her total obscurity today is surprising – but not uncommon for women.

To the end of her life, her religious beliefs and her principles remained central to her existence. The posthumous *Letters from a Field Hospital*, her account of her work with the Third Serbian Relief Fund Unit edited by Gwynn, was in its fourth printing by April of 1916. On the subject of war she wrote:

> This war will not bring peace – no war will bring peace – only love and mercy and terrific virtues such as loving one's enemy can bring a terrific thing like peace.[80]

Although Gwynn excluded most of the personal content from the published letters, Mabel's spiritual development and the satisfaction she derived from selfless work is still clear. She was a woman who put everything she had into any project or cause and she saw her own life as a turbulent one. Gwynn refers to one passage in which she wrote "the storms were over".

Her feminism too was basic to her and remained important.

> In the last resort she stood for freedom, above all woman's freedom. It was her deepest conviction that a woman no less than a man must be free to follow her own ideal.[81]

Gwynn's epitaph, though not couched in the vocabulary of the modern women's movement, is still an endorsement of the depth of Mabel's commitment to peace, to her other political and social beliefs, and to her faith.

> The work for which she gave up life, not recklessly but willingly, was woman's work; she was proud to take part in it because it was a woman's enterprise, for she was above all utterly proud of her womanhood.[82]

Jill Shefrin
April 22, 1999

NOTES

1 Percy Dearmer to Geoffrey Dearmer, 14 December, 1915.
2 Mabel Dearmer. *Letters from a Field Hospital* (London: Macmillan, 1915), 65.
3 Ibid., 5.
4 Ibid., 5.
5 Ibid., 30.
6 John Saxon Mills. *The Life and Letters of Sir Hubert Herkomer* (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1923).
7 Colin Campbell. *The Beggarstaff Posters: The Work of James Pryde and William Nicholson* (London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1990), 12.
8 Nan Dearmer. *The Life of Percy Dearmer* (London: The Book Club, 1941), 35 quoting Joseph Clayton, a friend of Percy's at Oxford.
9 M. Dearmer. *Letters*, 6.
10 Ibid., 12.
11 Ibid., 32.
12 Ibid., 16.
13 Ibid., 36.
14 N. Dearmer. *Life*, 76-77.
15 Juliet Woollcombe, Conversation. September 1997.
16 Ibid.
17 M. Dearmer. *Letters*, 41.
18 N. Dearmer. *Life*, 151.
19 Ibid., 15.
20 Laurence Housman. *The Unexpected Years* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1937), 128.
21 Nan Dearmer. MS. holiday diary, 1906.
22 Ibid.

23 Ibid., 9.
24 Ibid., 9.
25 Annie Collyer. [Interview with Mabel Dearmer] the *Poster,* 2 (January 1899), 19-21.
26 Charles Hiatt. *Picture Posters. A Short History* (London: George Bell and Sons, 1895), 223.
27 Ibid., 224.
28 N. Dearmer. *Life*, 30.
29 Ibid., 33
30 Mabel Dearmer. *The Book of Penny Toys* (London: Macmillan, 1899), 4.
31 N. Dearmer. *Life*, 40.
32 Ibid., 124.
33 Gillian Warr, Conversation. October 1998.
34 Stephen Gwynn. *Experiences of a Literary Man* (London: T. Butterworth, 1926), 138.
35 Gutala Krishnamurti. *Women Writers of the 1890s* (London: H. Sotheran, 1991), 33.
36 Gwynn. *Experiences*, 140.
37 Ibid., 138.
38 M. Dearmer. *Letters,* 9.
39 Mabel Dearmer to Macmillan & Co., January 7, 1899.
40 Mabel Dearmer to Macmillan & Co., March 29, 1899.
41 Mabel Dearmer to Macmillan & Co., April 7, 1899.
42 Mabel Dearmer to Macmillan, November 10, 1899.
43 Mabel Dearmer to Macmillan, September 25, 1899
44 M. Dearmer. *The Book of Penny Toys*, 7.
45 Her novels were published by Smith, Elder & Co. with the exception of *Gervase*, which was published by Macmillan.
46 Mabel Dearmer to Macmillan, November 1, 1899.
47 Aline Harland to Evelyn Sharp, 1897 (Bodleian MS. Sharp MSS. Eng. Lett.d.276)
48 Mabel Dearmer inscription, 1896.
49 Geoffrey Dearmer to Ann Excell, March 16, 1988.
50 Mabel Dearmer. *A Child's Book of Christ* (London: Methuen, 1906).
51 M. Dearmer. *The Book of Penny Toys*, 9.

52 N. Dearmer. *Life*, 144.
53 J.Woollcombe, Conversation. September 1997.
54 Mabel Dearmer. *Round-about Rhymes* (London: Blackie & Son, 1898), 7.
55 Geoffrey Dearmer to Ann Excell, May 16, 1988.
56 *The Pilot.* Quoted in: Mabel Dearmer. *The Orangery*. (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1904) "Press opinions" in publisher's advertisement at end.
57 *The Court Journal.* Quoted in M. Dearmer. *The Orangery*. "Press opinions" in publisher's advertisement at end.
58 *The Spectator.* Quoted in M. Dearmer. *The Orangery*. "Press opinions" in publisher's advertisement at end.
59 M. Dearmer. *Round-about Rhymes*, 8.
60 Housman, 129.
61 Mabel Dearmer. *Gervase* (London: Macmillan, 1909), 17.
62 Ibid.
63 M. Dearmer. *Letters*, 90.
64 Ibid., 24.
65 Ibid., 56.
66 Mabel St. Clair Stobart. *The Flaming Sword in Serbia and Elsewhere* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1916), 2.
67 Ibid., 2.
68 Ibid., 13.
69 M. Dearmer. *Letters*, 62-64.
70 Stobart. *Flaming Sword*, 52.
71 Ibid., 53.
72 M. Dearmer. *Letters*, 106; 113.
73 Ibid., 174.
74 Ibid., 175.
75 Ibid., 65.
76 M. Dearmer. *Letters*, 6.
77 *The Suffrage Annual and Women's Who's Who*, ed. A.J.R. (London, 1913).
78 M. Dearmer, *Letters*, 34.
79 Ibid., 99.
80 Ibid., 158-159.
81 Ibid., 69.
82 Ibid., 181.

PRELIMINARY BIBLIOGRAPHY OF THE WRITINGS OF MABEL DEARMER

This list is far from complete. Mabel Dearmer contributed artwork, poems, reviews and other pieces to a number of periodicals throughout her working life. Much of this work appeared earlier or later in her own books. As yet I have identified only a few periodicals and anthologies and I suspect there may also be more binding designs. I have confined my list of periodicals to titles and, where I have information which suggests that these were her only contributions, the year of publication.

Children's Books & Plays

Dearmer, Mabel. *The Book of Penny Toys.* London: Macmillan, 1899. Pp. 94.
Illustrated by Mabel Dearmer.

Dearmer, Mabel. *Brer Rabbit and Mr. Fox. A Musical Frolic*. London: Joseph Williams, 1914. Pp. 54.

Dearmer, Mabel. *A Child's Life of Christ*. London: Methuen & Co., 1906. Pp. xiii, 290.
Illustrated by Eleanor Fortescue-Brickdale.

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Dearmer, Mabel. *The Alien Sisters*. London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1908. Pp. vi, 404.

Dearmer, Mabel. *Brownjohn's*. London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1906. Pp. 312.

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Dearmer, Mabel. *Gervase*. London: Macmillan & Co. Limited, 1909. Pp. vi, 443.

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Dearmer, Mabel. *The Noisy Years*. London: Smith, Elder, & Co., 1902. Pp. viii, 277.
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Dearmer, Mabel. *The Orangery. A Comedy of Tears*. London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1904. Pp. viii, 372.

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