had achieved something truly impressive in Bewick scholarship. In whatever way we use these splendid volumes, it is clear that they should be the starting point for any investigation about the illustrious artist, his illustrative work, and the fascinating complexities of his business.

ROBERT DESMARAIS
University of Alberta

John R. Turner. *A Bibliography of Unauthorised American Editions of The Tale of Peter Rabbit by Beatrix Potter 1904–1980*. London: Ian Hodgkins & Co. Ltd.; New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll Press, 2012. 228 pp.; US \$60.00 ISBN 9780906460139

The tale of Beatrix Potter (1866–1943) is well known, documented in biographies, her extensive correspondence, exhibitions, recent movies, and Hill Top house that she left to the National Trust. Her childhood populated by pets, her study of science and art, and her natural talent as a meticulous observer and illustrator of fossils, insects, and fungi have all been explored as keys to what later made her famous. From the first private publication of 450 copies of *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* in 1901–02, the book was a huge success. Those rare copies sell for eye-watering sums – www.AbeBooks.com is currently showing one at well over \$100,000, and 1902 first commercial editions can sell for tens of thousands. But as ever with children's books, well loved and well read, finding them in good condition is difficult. Entering the American market for unauthorized early editions in good condition is to compete with a handful of avid collectors, and the stakes are similarly high.

Beatrix Potter was an astute businesswoman, yet while securing copyright for her tales, toys, dolls, and painting books in Britain was easy enough, the complexities of American copyright at the turn of the twentieth century meant that when her publishers, Frederick Warne and Company, sent copies of *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* to their New York office they failed to register the copyright of this foreign-printed edition correctly, and the book entered the public domain. The two-hundred-odd pages of Turner's *Bibliography* make sad reading as a case study in the loopholes of copyright. The loss affected both the integrity of Potter's text and its illustrations, as well

as her income, matters not discussed by Turner. This is a bibliography for avid collectors rather than those concerned with the moral rights of authors.

The *Bibliography* describes over three hundred unauthorized books published between 1904 and 1980, versions of the original *Tale of Peter Rabbit* and books that include the character's name in the title. Turner points out that once Warne had failed to establish the copyright, these subsequent editions were not piracies. Indeed several publishers established their own rights to the text and illustrations, often only minimally revised from the originals.

Turner lists these publishers alphabetically, the basic structure of this *Bibliography*, which is not easy to navigate unless you are familiar with the names of American children's book publishers. There is no list of the publishers, their names are not prominently displayed at the start of each new section, and entries within sections are chronological, so there are disconcerting leaps back and forth in publication time page to page. But it is worth persevering through this confusing and rather dull format for the story that emerges. The publishers include some big names, including Houghton Mifflin, Rand McNally, and Random House, an indication that unauthorized editions were fair game in the respectable publishing market. Houghton Mifflin, for example, was happy to note in a 1920 edition, *Stories for Little Children*, that the author and illustrator was Beatrix Potter and that all rights were reserved by the copyright holders, but then did not acknowledge her in their list of the "proprietors ... of the stories."

The first unauthorized publisher, Henry Altemus of Philadelphia, was a respectable company. Altemus very correctly registered its edition of *Peter Rabbit* at the Library of Congress in 1904, but was unable to prevent other publishers from bringing out their own editions since the book was already in the public domain. Turner lists fifty or so companies that subsequently published Potter books, some reprinting the original text almost intact, others substantially revising it, some introducing their own illustrations, and a few using earlier Beatrix Potter drawings of rabbits that had separately entered the American public domain. The *Bibliography* entries list the author – not always Beatrix Potter; the illustrator, often unnamed; a quasi-facsimile title page transcription; and notes on pagination and binding. The locations Turner lists are frustrating in that the copies he has seen and describes all belong to a handful of private collectors. I have seen copies and read contemporary documents about them in the Cotsen Children's Library at Princeton University, seemingly

overlooked by Turner, and in the excellent Beatrix Potter collection in the Rare Book Department at the Free Library of Philadelphia, but he lists none of them. The Free Library's website has a superb finding aid (libwww.freelibrary.org/ead/view.cfm?name=Potter). The Princeton books and some illustrations are accessible via its library catalogue (www.princeton.edu/main/library).

The story of these American publishers and the unauthorized editions is not new. The Beatrix Potter Society and Frederick Warne have tended to label the publications as piracies. Turner lists a few books and articles as further reading, but there are many more. The Society webpage (www.beatrixpottersociety.org.uk) is a good starting point for a fuller investigation of literature on the subject. Turner includes a few paragraphs on each of the publishers, mainly derived from the two *Dictionary of Literary Biography* volumes on American literary publishing houses, volumes 46 and 49.

The *Bibliography* includes eight pages of coloured illustrations from unauthorized editions. Some of these are presented as a slide show on the Oak Knoll website (www.oakknoll.com) along with some sample pages from the *Bibliography*. What is immediately obvious is the crude execution of much of the drawing and painting: the garish colours in place of Potter's delicate watercolours, the twee bunnies that replace her realistic animals, even when she dresses them in jackets and slippers: the cartoon-like images in contrast to the exquisite detail of Potter's originals. The books I examined were similarly shabby imitations of Frederick Warne and Company's Beatrix Potter books. There was no delight in them as physical objects. Altemus's series title, *Wee Books for Wee Folks*, is a good indication of their nature. There are illustrations of several of Altemus's unauthorized Potter editions on www.AbeBooks.com via an advanced search of "Peter Rabbit" and "Altemus."

Turner's *Bibliography* has a cut-off date of 1980. He says that nothing of significance has appeared since then. The Princeton collection, however, has plenty of books that suggest American unauthorized Potter publication continues.

GILLIAN FENWICK
University of Toronto