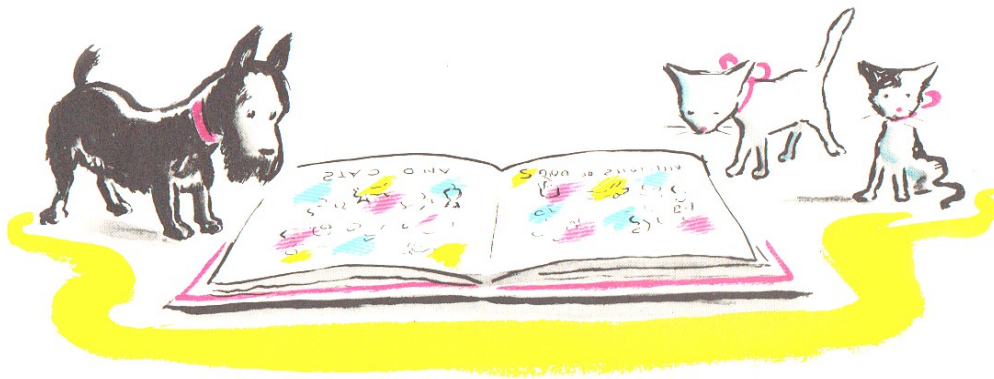


A CONCISE HISTORY OF SELECTED
NEW YORK STATE
CHILDREN'S AUTHORS
AND ILLUSTRATORS

WITH SAMPLES OF THEIR WORK FROM THE COLLECTION



■ **Sarah H. Bradford** (b. 1818) wrote children's books under the name "Cousin Cicely" and published in Auburn, NY. Bradford was a friend and amanuensis of Underground Railroad conductor Harriet Tubman and transcribed her book, *Scenes in the Life of Harriet Tubman*, in 1869. She also wrote a biography of Tubman entitled *Harriet, the Moses of Her People* in 1886. ■ **Mary Mapes Dodge** (1830–1905) was born in NYC. Widowed with two young sons by the age of 27, she began work as an editor, publisher, and writer of short stories, and produced the popular *Hans Brinker, or The Silver Skates* (dedicated to "the Boys and Girls of New Amsterdam") and the long-running *St. Nicholas* magazine. ■ **L. Frank Baum** (1856–1919) was born in Chittenango and, between failing at his first love, the theater, and discovering the Wizard of Oz, he briefly toiled as a clerk in his brother-in-law's dry goods company in Syracuse (see the musical score "There Was a Goose in Syracuse" in Manuscripts & Special Collections). NYSL houses numerous Baum books, critical works, and assorted Oziana. ■ **Carolyn Sherwin Bailey** (1875–1961) was born in Hoosick Falls and schooled at Lansingburgh Academy, near Albany. She went on to attend Columbia University and the Montessori School in Rome, where she trained to be a teacher and social worker. Bailey was a prolific writer and won the Newbery Award in 1947 for her book *Miss Hickory*.

■ **Margery Clark** was the nom de plume of Margery Quigley (b. 1886) and fellow librarian Mary E. Clark, who coauthored children's books, most notably *The Poppy Seed Cakes* (1924). Quigley was head librarian of the Endicott Free Library, which started one of the first bookmobiles in the northeast in 1916. She penned an article entitled "Parnassus on Wheels" and also wrote extensively of punch cards during the 1940s and 50s. In 1927 she was appointed director of the Montclair (NJ) Public Library where she served for almost 30 years.

■ **Virginia Olcott** (ca.1890–?) was born in Albany and privately tutored. She moved to NYC at age 17 where she taught kindergarten, spent a year as a children's librarian at the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, and devoted the next nine years to heading the Schools Settlement in Brooklyn. She traveled to 20 countries and wrote many plays and stories of an international flavor for children.

■ **Hildegarde Hoyt Swift** (1890–1972) was born in Clinton and attended Auburn High School, Smith College, and the New York School of Social Work. She later lived in a log cabin in the Adirondacks and an old house on Long Island. Swift taught children's literature at the New School for Social Research in NYC.

■ **Dorothy Lathrop** (1891–1980) was born in Albany and spent most of her life in a South Allen Street house she shared with her sister Gertrude, a sculptor, and their large menagerie of pets. Her mother was an accomplished painter and Dorothy taught art at Albany High School. Lathrop's work reflects her love of animals and she was awarded the very first Caldecott Medal for the book *Animals of the Bible* in 1938.

■ **Florence Crannell Means** (1891–1980) was born in Baldwinsville and as a child longed to become a writer, artist, missionary, or teacher in the Crannell Free Kindergarten in Albany, which was a memorial to her aunt Euretta. She ended up writing children's books about the Hopi, Navaho, and other ethnic minorities. Her deeply held convictions came from her father, a Baptist minister, who was "not only a scholar, a poet, and a wit, but also a man with absolutely no racial consciousness."

■ **Erick Berry** (1892–1974), whose real name was Allena Champlin, was born in Massachusetts, but grew up in Albany and went to the Albany Academy for Girls. She studied art at the Eric Pape School in Boston (from whence she derived her pen name). Her father was a reference librarian at the New York State Library. Berry and her second husband, **Herbert Best** (1894–1980), collaborated on many children's books, with Berry illustrating all of Best's and most of her own.

■ **Lois Lenski** (1893–1974) was born in Ohio, but studied at the Art Students League in NYC. She wrote many regional books for children, including the 1946 Newbery winner, *Strawberry Girl*. Her book *Indian Captive* is the true story of Mary Jemison, a white girl raised by a Seneca tribe. In the foreword she thanks the New York State Museum at Albany and “Mr. R.W.G. Vail, New York State Librarian, for first bringing the story of Mary Jemison to my attention, and for constant help and encouragement.”

■ **Elizabeth Coatsworth** (1893–1986) was born in Buffalo. She traveled widely abroad, and attended Buffalo Seminary, Vassar College, Columbia, and Radcliffe. She wrote a great many books for children and was honored with the Hans Christian Andersen Award for the body of her work.

■ **Marjorie Flack** (1897–1958) was born at Greenport, Long Island. She studied at the Art Students League and married the artist Karl Larsson and later the poet William Rose Benét. In 1939 Flack illustrated the best-selling Easter book for children (with a feminist and anti-racist message to boot), *The Country Bunny and the Little Gold Shoes*, written by DuBose Heyward, author of the novel *Porgy [and Bess]*.

■ **Ludwig Bemelmans** (1898–1962), best known as the father of *Madeline*, began his life in Meran, Austria. Born in a Tyrolean hotel, he later shot a headwaiter in his uncle’s hotel and was promptly shipped off to the United States where he spent the next 15 years working at the Ritz-Carlton in NYC. He supplied the pictures for *Luchow’s German Cookbook* and wrote and illustrated many other works for both children and adults.

■ **Grace Paul** (b. 1898) was born in Cold Brook and went to school in Utica and Glens Falls. She studied art at Pratt Institute and lithography with George C. Miller. She became an illustrator of children’s books and wrote several books herself.

■ **Kate Serey** (1899–1975) was born in Budapest and moved to the United States in her early twenties. She lived on a farm in Montgomery and opened a children’s bookstore. She designed book covers, greeting cards, and lampshades, while learning the English language. Serey illustrated around 60 textbooks and books for children and authored a few as well.

■ **Jennie D. Lindquist** (1899–1977) was born in Manchester, New Hampshire, where she also died. Lindquist edited the *Horn Book* from 1948 to 1958, was employed in the John Mistletoe Bookshop on Lark Street in Albany, and headed the children’s department at Albany Public Library. Her book *The Golden Name Day* was illustrated by Garth Williams, who also illustrated *Charlotte’s Web* by E.B. White.

■ **E.B. White** (1899–1985) was born in Mount Vernon and attended Cornell University. He was the leading contributor to the *New Yorker* in its heyday, in addition to writing a column for *Harper's Magazine*. White was an esteemed essayist and children's author and in 1978 was awarded a Pulitzer Prize for the entirety of his work.

■ **Esther Averill** (1902–1992) was born in Connecticut, but spent much of her life in NYC. She graduated from Vassar College and got a job at *Women's Wear Daily*, which may have contributed to the panache of her most memorable creation, Jenny Linsky, the little black cat with the red scarf. In 1925 Averill went to Paris and started the Domino Press, where she published children's literature, most of it illustrated by the Russian artist Fedor Rojankovsky. She returned to NYC, worked at NYPL (New York Public Library), and studied painting at the Brooklyn Museum Art School. ■ **Louis**

Slobodkin (1903–1975) was born and raised in Albany. He attended the Beaux-Arts Institute in NYC and became a renowned sculptor. After meeting NYPL librarian Eleanor Estes, he agreed to illustrate *The Moffats* and several more for her, including the Newbery Honor Book *The Hundred Dresses*. He ultimately illustrated nearly 90 books, more than half of which he wrote himself. Slobodkin received the Caldecott Medal in 1944 for James Thurber's *Many Moons*. (James Thurber, 1894–1961, was born and raised in Ohio, but spent most of his writing life in NYC. He wrote several books for children, including *The Great Quillow*, *The 13 Clocks*, and *The Wonderful O*.) ■ **Eloise Wilkin** (1904–1987) was born in Rochester and attended Rochester

Institute of Technology. She won the Ewald Eisenhardt Memorial Merit Award for excellence in printmaking for her lithograph "Lilybet" and was honored for her work by the Child Study Association of America and the *New York Times Book Review*. Wilkin illustrated more than 100 books, many of them "Little Golden Books." She was also a doll designer; Nikita Krushchev once bought 13 of her "Baby Dear" dolls at FAO Schwartz on a visit to New York. ■ **Ellen Tarry** (1906–) was born in

Birmingham, Alabama, but in 1929 she moved to NYC where she befriended some of the leading lights of the Harlem Renaissance and became involved with Lucy Sprague Mitchell's progressive Bank Street School in Greenwich Village. She wrote a newspaper column and published four picture books for children, including *Hezekiah Horton*, which was illustrated by Oliver Harrington (born in Valhalla), the first African American to gain international fame as a cartoonist. Tarry recently turned 100.

■ **Crockett Johnson** (1906–1975) was born in NYC as David Crockett Leisk. He drew political cartoons for the left-wing *New Masses* and the comic strip “Barnaby” for the experimental newspaper *PM*. Johnson married fellow children’s author Ruth Krauss and is well known for his *Harold and the Purple Crayon* series. ■ **Augusta Baker** (1911–1998) was born in Baltimore, Maryland, and graduated from the State Teachers College in Albany with a degree in library science. Starting at the Harlem branch, she had a distinguished career with NYPL as a storyteller, librarian, and writer. She founded the James Weldon John Memorial Collection of African-American children’s literature, among other notable accomplishments. ■ **James T. Brady** (1913–1986) and his wife **Rita G. Brady** (1912–1979) were born in Brooklyn and wrote juvenile short stories and novels. Rita also taught children’s literature in the Albany area. Their papers are held at the State Library. ■ **Ezra Jack Keats** (1916–1983) was born in Brooklyn, the child of Polish immigrants. His given name was Jacob Ezra Katz, but in 1948 he officially changed it in response to the anti-Semitism of the times. Keats wrote and illustrated many children’s books, including *The Snowy Day*, the 1963 Caldecott Medal winner in which he introduces an African-American boy named Peter. Peter reappears in six more books by Keats and was inspired by a photograph the author saw in an issue of *Life* magazine (May 13, 1940). ■ **Marcia Brown** (1918–) was born in Rochester and studied at the Woodstock School of Painting and the New School for Social Research, obtaining her bachelor’s degree from the New York College for Teachers (SUNY Albany). She taught English and drama at Cornwall High School and worked in the Central Children’s Room at NYPL, primarily as a storyteller. Brown enjoys the distinction of having received three Caldecott Medals and her papers now reside with the University at Albany. ■ **Tom Feelings** (1933–2003) was born in Brooklyn and attended the School of Visual Arts in NYC. He worked as an artist in London, Ghana, and Guyana, returning to New York in 1974. Feelings illustrated the award-winning book *To Be a Slave* by Julius Lester.

